

THE PASSING OF THE ENGLISH PIERROTS.

Much regret will be felt by many thousands of people throughout Australia and New Zealand to hear that Messrs. Will and Rob Thomas's famous combination, the English Pierrots, disbanded at the termination of the summer season at Perth, where they have been in season for over thirty weeks. It is not, in this instance, the failure of the company to command financial success, but a series of unfortunate circumstances of which the prolonged shipping strike and the 'fludemic conditions prevailing, have contributed no small part. For many years the Pierrots have paid annual visits to New Zealand, each successive tour being more successful than the last. The 'fludemic trouble made its first appearance with them at the termination of the Wellington season last year, when several members of the company were overtaken by influenza, which was the cause of closing down for two weeks, and they were just sufficiently recovered to enable them to leave New Zealand by the s.s. Westralia, the last vessel to depart for about 16 weeks. However, they were enabled to get over to Perth (Westralia) in time to open the season there on due date, in spite of a strike on the transcontinental railway, and another strike with the seamen on board the steamer on which passages had been arranged from Melbourne to Freemantle. All arrangements had been completed for the reappearance of the company for the 1919 season (which was to have commenced at the Wellington Town Hall in May), and a tour had already been mapped out by the New Zealand representative, Mr. Victor Beck, who has been looking after their interests in the Dominion for the past eight years. The English Pierrots set the fashion and were the pioneers of amusements at St. Kilda, building a pavilion suitable for fresco entertainments. They formed the first Pierrot Company in Australia in 1903, from which date they have been showing summer seasons at St. Kilda, and touring in Victoria during the winter months, until 1912, when they first came to New Zealand, since which time they have been frequent visitors here. Clustered round the Pierrots are a host of names of artists who have joined them at different periods, principal among them being that of Miss Elsa Langley, the bright star who has been leading comedienne of the company since she first twinkled in their midst some 12 years ago. A list of the names may be of interest now that the old combination is breaking up in the order they came, viz.: Miss May Campion, Mr. Collard, Mr. Ernest Gollmick, Mr. Charles Thorsby, Mr. Warwick Armstrong, Mr. Maynard Dakin, Mr. Harold McAuliffe, Miss Jean Brunell, Miss Vie Parsons, Mr. Norman Churton, Mr. Roland Pryce, Mr. Sydney Kingsley, Miss Ethel Hampton, Mr. Roy Cooke, Miss Ruby Guest, Miss Margaret Caraher, Miss Elsie Rosslyn, Miss Essie McNeill, Mr. Chas. E. Lawrence, Mr. George Horton, Miss Sylvia Duff, Mr. Bert Byrne, Mr. Kenneth Scott, Miss Billie Wilson, Mr. Geo. Denby, Mr. Hugh Terrence, Mr. David Lyle, Mr. Louis Mitchell, Miss Madge Scott, Miss Gwyne Watt, Miss Edith Harold, Miss Shirley Cooke, and Miss Rima Young.

"A simple, hard and fast story, culled straight from the heart of life."—A London opinion of "Hindle Wakes."

Mr. R. H. Sarsfield, who is well-known on the vaudeville stage of the provincial theatres at Home, returned to New Zealand by the Mamari, and is at present recuperating in Auckland. Mr. Sarsfield, who was born with the spirit of enterprise, started the first permanent picture theatre in Ireland, and coming over to Australia some few years ago toured the West with pictures and vaudeville, his own particular specialty being light refined chorus work, with songs specially written for him. Arriving in New Zealand he enlisted in Christchurch, and now on his return he is on the look out for talent with a view of securing a small company of returned soldiers to tour the smalls. More particulars of his scheme will be given later on, when it is more thoroughly formulated.

One day while waiting by the "phone" To send a message of my own, I heard across the lines a call, In urgent, anxious accents fall— "Is that you, Central? Hurry, do! Please put me on to 2-0-2. It's closing time, I'm late, I'm sure; I'm after Woods' Great Peppermint Cure."



MISS WENDY DALE, who, with Alphonse, gives an entertaining turn of melody and humour that is proving very popular on the Fuller circuit.

In the soubriquet of Wendy and Alphonse is hidden the identity of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Luks, both well-known to Aucklanders for their gifts in entertaining. Mr. Luks recently returned home from the war, and as he sings, plays and has a nice comedy sense, he built up the present little act, which is graced by his piquant partner. The latter features her husband's latest song success, "I'm Going Back to New Zealand," which enjoys a wide popularity with the diggers.

The Wellington Amateur Operatic Society has arranged the following cast for "The Mikado," to be produced early in November: The Mikado, Mr. W. W. Crawford; Nanki Poo, Mr. Herbert F. Wood; Ko-ko, Mr. A. W. Newton; Pooch-Bah, Mr. F. G. Twiss; Pish-tush, Mr. Charles Moore; Yum Yum, Miss Helen Gardner (Dunedin); Pitti Sing, Miss Anne Sullivan; Peep-Bo, Miss Queenie McInerney. The part of Katisha has not so far been allotted.

The southern tour of the "Digger" Pierrots proved a great triumph. In Dunedin last Thursday week—a return performance, as the "Diggers" passed through on their way to Christchurch—the house, at 5s., 3s., and 2s. totalled some £270, and many had to be turned away. At Balclutha, Gore, Invercargill, Oamaru and Timaru the "Diggers" had the same royal welcome. It is understood that after their demobilisation, they will make a comprehensive tour through the Dominion.

"O.K.," in the "Bulletin": Fred Leslie, who made his mark in London as Ivy Shilling's partner, has scored now as a comedian. His part in a musical medley is a character sketch of "a fatuous English general, who tells his German wife all his campaign plans"—which, by the way, indicates a healthy English irreverence where the intelligence of English generals is concerned. English critics find him not merely a dancer, but a most versatile and resourceful



THE PONY BALLET.—A feature each week in new dances and poses of Bert La Blanc's revues, now in full swing at the Opera House, Auckland.

Mr. Victor Roberts, the only son of Mr. F. Roberts, of the Auckland Opera House staff, has recently returned after four years' active service, and has joined the Allan Wilkie Company.

Mr. and Mrs. Kennedy Black, the well-known musicians, have returned to Christchurch permanently; Mr. Black having been appointed manager of the Liberty Theatre and Christchurch representative of the New Zealand Picture Supplies, Limited, and Mrs. Black musical directress at the Liberty. Mr. and Mrs. Black were entertained at various farewell parties in Gisborne, and general regret was expressed at their departure.

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comedian. With Leslie as with little Percy, hard work and extravagance seem to have found keener admiration in London than they did in Australia. He was hardly thought of as a "resourceful comedian" here. His success in acting parts was based on his agility, supported by his raucous, incisive voice and his brisk mechanical style. He never rivalled Lauri in public estimation, any more than W. S. Percy did. One remembers him in "The Orchid" as the man who returned from the "wilds of far Peru-oo-oo" chiefly because of his somersaults with the aid of a walking stick.

WELLINGTON NOTES.

(By "Lorgnette.")

WELLINGTON, August 25.

Once again we are in the throes of trouble, the seamen and firemen having decided to prolong the strike. If things go on as they are doing it

seems a remote chance of New Zealand playgoers witnessing the pantomime, "Goody Two Shoes." The combination is due in Melbourne in November to rehearse the coming Christmas attraction, and if the panto gets to the Dominion it will be a hand-gallop tour. Mr. Charles M. Berkeley, Mr. John Farrell and Mr. Wills have been in Wellington for some weeks past, working like Trojans in the preliminary business, but their efforts seem to go for nothing.

Mr. "Billy" Low is back again in town, looking considerably pinched. His last bout of sickness was a bit over the ordinary, but he hopes to be on the road again with some attraction that is sure to catch the public eye.

MUSIC NOTES.

(By "G" String.)

For some time past it has been reported that Sir Harry Lauder is about to retire from the music hall stage, and colour, if not confirmation, is given to this statement by the fact that he is taking into his own hands the management of all the farms on his recently-acquired Glenbranter Estate in Argyllshire.

Mr. Peter Dawson, the well-known singer, has been engaged by the J. C. Williamson firm, and will become a member of the Grand Opera Company.

Mr. Marion Green, the new American baritone, who recently scored a big success in Messager's romantic opera, "Monsieur Beaucaire," in England, is still on the sunny side of 30, and unmarried. He is a graduate of the Upper Iowa University, whence, after obtaining his degree, he proceeded to Epworth College, where he studied music and singing. Ultimately, he became a pupil of Campanari, at one time a popular Covent Garden tenor. Now that the young singer has made his mark in London it need be a secret no longer that Beaucaire is the first role he has essayed on any stage. Until he made his first appearance on the Prince of Wales' stage at Birmingham a couple of weeks previous to his London appearance it is a fact that he had never worn grease paint or stage costume, so that the undeniable success he scored is all the more remarkable.

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