

# THE STAGE

## OPERA HOUSE.

Off with the old love and on with the new! Mr. Walter George and his Sunshine Players stepped into the Bert La Blanc revue vacancy on Monday night, and were given a flattering welcome from a crowded audience. This company shine in musical plays characterised by plots, and their new offering, "My Gipsy Maid," is a good example of their particular business. The comedian plays a very large part in the popularity of any revue, and Mr. George Storey fills the bill with exceptional aptitude. His quiet, intimate and unobtrusive methods make him a general favourite. As an arcadian shepherd he evoked peals of laughter with his grotesque make-up, and he made the most of one or two ditties. Miss Hylda Shannon was also chosen for special favour, her singing being most acceptable. Miss May Geary is another good singer, her voice blending charmingly with Miss Shannon in the "Barcarolle" duet. Miss Ada Scaddon is a new soubrette who promises to claim attention. Mr. Reg. Hawthorne, baritone, and Mr. Barry Hitchings, basso, were heard to agreeable effect, pointing conspicuously to the musical success. Dainty Miss Dulcie Milner was piquant and vivacious in song and action. Mr. Walter George as a gipsy poacher and Miss Georgie Martin in a male impersonation gave the parts able characterisation. The danseuse of the company, Miss Polly McLaren, was delightful in a sylvan dance, assisted by a graceful ballet. The vaudeville section was headed by Signor and Signora Molinari, whose singing was rapturously applauded. An Italian excerpt by Signor was rendered with dramatic vigour, and both artists were heard to fine advantage in the duets "Beneath Thy Window," "Funiculi, Funicula," and "Adio." Brightie and Carlyon met with a hearty reception on their return from a southern tour. Their original waltz "Destiny" was enthusiastically demanded, and their patter and dance work was smart and catchy. Pinto, the contortionist, lent variety to the proceedings with his facility for bending. Astras, "Queen of Mystery," and her panther are now augmenting the bill with a weird act. Silvester, the magician, is also included with an offering that never fails to arrest attention.

The appearance of Amy Castles with the J. C. Williamson, Ltd., Grand Opera Company has added to the prima donna's brilliant reputation. During the Sydney season, Miss Castles has so far enacted the following roles: Mimi in "La Boheme," Marguerite in "Faust," and Cho Cho San in "Madam Butterfly."

## HIS MAJESTY'S THEATRE.

### "THE GONDOLIERS."

#### HIGH STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE.

The Auckland Amateur Operatic Society has launched itself most successfully on the sea of popularity with its opening production, "The Gondoliers," enthusiastic audiences at His Majesty's Theatre showing their appreciation of the local presentation of one of the brightest of the Gilbert and Sullivan operas. The piece runs with a crispness and smoothness worthy of a professional performance, the deus ex machina being Mr. Tom Pollard, who was specially engaged to give the veneering touches. The staging, as might be expected when that experienced veteran takes things in hand, is capital, and the colour scheme and groupings are most artistic, while the performers at his inspiration appear to have thoroughly absorbed the Gilbertian idea. That the acme of excellence is also reached in the orchestral and chorus work is due to Mr. Colin Muston, L.R.A.M., whose masterly control is apparent. It is admitted on all sides that the choruses have not been excelled in any previous local production. The part of Casilda is entrusted to Miss Madge Higgins (formerly of Napier), whose sweet soprano voice is of captivating charm. Mrs. Patrick Cole makes a fascinating picture as Gianetta, revealing true dramatic instinct both in her singing and acting. Miss Myrtle Burns is bright and animated in the role of Tessa. Miss Muriel Barr is graceful and imperious as the Duchess of Plaza-Toro, and her solo in the second act is effectively handled. Mr. George Warren, who can always be looked upon for a polished interpretation of any role he essays, is admirably placed as the Duke of Plaza-Toro, the librettists' perception of the character being subtly and artistically suggested by him. Notably is this the case in the gavotte incident. The part of the Inquisitor is carried through with much skill by Mr. F. E. de Guerrier, who traces it in with the correct blending of dignity and drollery. Mr. Cliff Crowther is undeniably good as Giuseppe, the Gondolier, giving his lines full value and acting up to the spirit of his role. Marco, his fellow Gondolier, is also happily cast in Mr. Norman Kent, who is heard very pleasingly in the solo "Take a Pair of Sparkling Eyes." Mr. Robert Geddes gives a good account of himself as Luiz. Miss K. Wood as Inez, the King's foster mother, puts significance into her few lines. An outstanding feature is the cachuca danced by the full chorus and principals, and super-

intended by Miss Nita Webster. Deafening applause greets this item, which invariably has to be repeated. The dresses in the production were designed by Mr. W. J. Crowther after the original Savoy models. "The Gondoliers" will be played each evening this week. Its artistic success, let alone the financial side, stands as an amateur record, and must be distinctly encouraging to the revivers of the society.

## WILLIAMSON ANNUAL PANTOMIME.

### "GOODY TWO SHOES."

The fairy story of the fascinating "Goody" and the magic pair of shoes that after much pleasurable tribulation eventually brought her wealth and happiness, will be told at His Majesty's Theatre next week, the interpreters being the pantomime company under the banner of Messrs J. C. Williamson, Ltd. The book (by the famous Drury Lane panto. librettist, Mr. Frank Dix) holds closely to the immortal fairy tale. The production, as is usual with the big firm, is on a grand scale, some of the features easily surpassing anything hitherto attempted in a J.C.W. pantomime. The fact that some 150 people take part in the play, that there are no less than 700 costumes worn, with wigs, shoes and tights to match, 19 important scenes, hundreds of costly and intricate properties, several miles of special electric lighting installation, two extraordinary attractions in the Kenna Brothers and Jewel's Marionette Circus, 12 resplendent ballets, with marches and ensembles innumerable, should undoubtedly make for a more than ordinarily brilliant and satisfying entertainment. Miss Dorothy Hastings comes with the most flattering credentials. She is said to be everything that a first-class principal boy should be—brilliant singer and dancer, and possessing a fine and cultured voice. Miss Madeline Harrison will be the principal girl, playing the name part, "Goody." Miss Harrison hails from the principal New York theatres. Miss Nellie Wilson is an artist of piquancy and much natural charm, who gives a dashing performance of Ronnie. Miss Maude Gray is another well-known American artist. In Miss Toby Claude the company have an ingratiating comedienne with a novel style. Ballets in a pantomime are a very essential item, and "Goody Two Shoes" is lavishly supplied with them. To this end Miss Maggie Dickinson has been engaged as premiere danseuse, and she is associated artistically with Mr. Sydney Yates. There are comedians galore. As in past years, Mr. Arthur Stigant will be the dame, which is sufficient re-

commendation in itself to go and see the pantomime. What is said to be one of the most striking performances is that of Mr. Fred Walton as the Toy Soldier. Mr. Walton is continuously on the stage, but during the whole of the entertainment he says not a word, everything is conveyed by pantomime. It is said to be an extraordinarily clever performance.

The Monday matinee was inaugurated at the Opera House this week.

The Cherniavskys commence another tour of America in November. Next year they fulfil a number of engagements in England.

Miss Carlien Jurs, who is accompanist and solo pianist with Mr. Harry Dearth, is the daughter of a well-known Adelaide doctor.

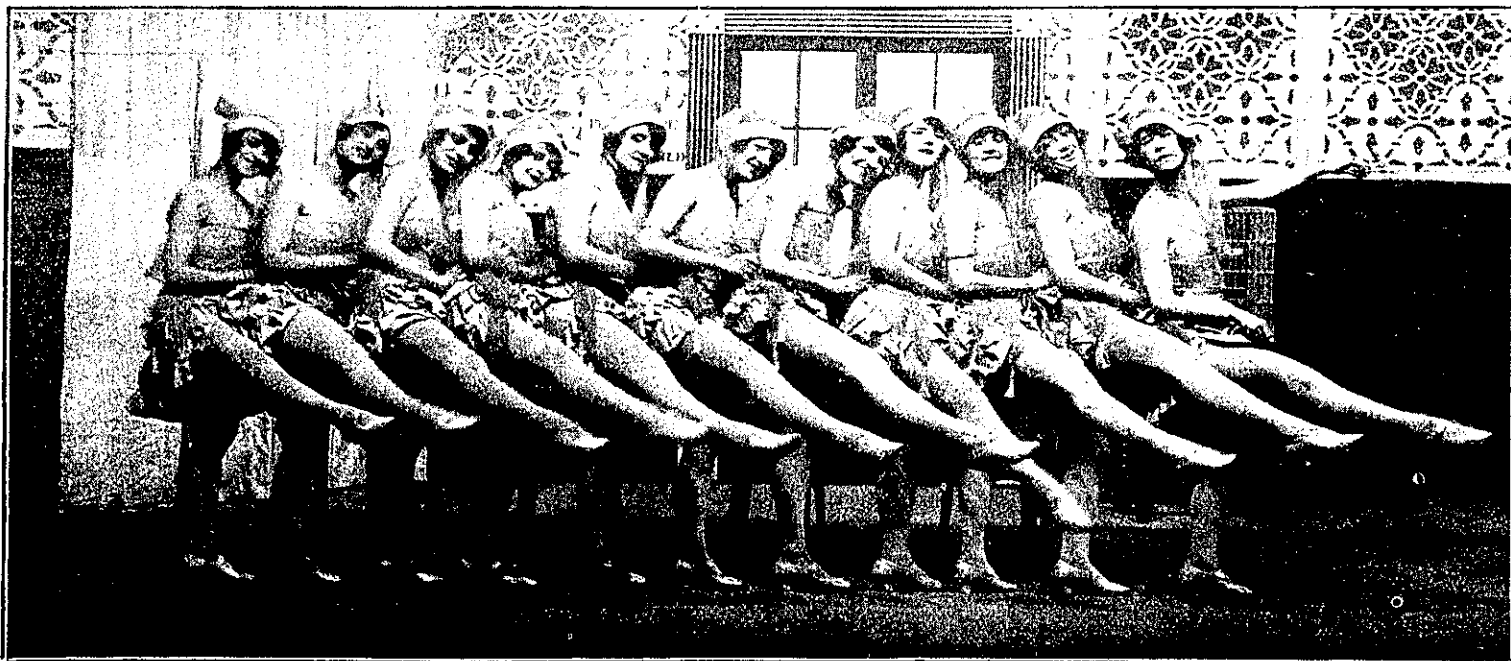
Mrs. McIntyre (remembered out here as Miss Blanche Brown of "Our Miss Gibb" memories) has arrived in Tasmania with her husband, where they have a farm.

Miss Minnie Love and Mr. Phil Smith are taking important roles in "Buzz-Buzz," Mr. H. D. McIntosh's latest revue.

In Christchurch, Mr. Harry Dearth was greeted with an enthusiasm such as had not been witnessed for years, and encores three and four were insisted on and given.

Miss Kate Howarde made a big success in Sydney with her production of "Possum Paddock," an Australian drama on the lines of "On Our Selection." Mr. Fred McDonald, the never-to-be-forgotten Dave of the latter play, again gives a picture of the gauche wayback youth.

Possibly no J.C.W. pantomime of recent years has been so looked forward to as "Goody Two Shoes." This in a great measure is due to the exceptionally fine cast. Again Mr. Arthur Stigant is the dame. A new principal boy will be found in Miss Dorothy Hastings, who comes with an enviable reputation. Miss Madeline Harrison is the principal girl and hails from America. Miss Maggie Dickinson is seen in several beautiful ballets and specialty dances. A tower of artistic strength is Mr. Fred Walton as the Toy Soldier—a performance quoted as being absolutely inimitable. Then there is Miss Toby Claude, who plays Ariminta. Miss Claude is recognised as one of America's foremost eccentric comedienues. Other people of importance in the glittering show are Misses Nellie Wilson, Floie Allen, Herbert Walton, Gus Bluett, Charles Howard, Sydney Yates and Arthur Elliott.



THE FASCINATING FRENCH BALLET, ONE OF THE MANY CHARMING ATTRACTIONS IN THE "GOODY TWO SHOES" PANTOMIME WHICH WILL BE PRESENTED AT HIS MAJESTY'S THEATRE, AUCK LAND.