

"THAT WOMAN FROM FRANCE."

MR. GEORGE MARLOW'S LATEST PRODUCTION.

Mr. George Marlow's "Married to the Wrong Man" Company that opens at His Majesty's on Easter Saturday, has a very extensive repertoire of new plays, including a typical production that has been meeting with crowded houses in Australia. Concerning "That Woman from France," which will probably be the second of the Marlow productions at Auckland the "Daily Mail" Brisbane of March 7th had the following:—Phenomenal success has been attending Mr. Geo. Marlow's Brisbane season. The production of "That Woman from France" at His Majesty's Theatre on Saturday proved no exception to the rule, and another large audience followed with great interest the scheming of the daring Countess Donati and her gang of robbers. The seats in the popular portion of the house were filled shortly after the doors had opened, and those who came late had to be contented with standing room.

The piece, which is written by Frank Thorne, proved a great success in London, and had not been produced in Australia before. Its initial production, however, stamps it as a first-class melodrama, and it is sure to be a great draw card. The story deals with the doing of a notorious gang of thieves, the leaders of which call themselves the King, Queen, Ace, and Knave. The Queen, who is tired of her husband, the King, sets him out to do a difficult piece of work, during which he is captured and sentenced to four years' imprisonment. The play opens with a scene at Bellagio, an Italian watering place, where preparations are being made for the carnival. The Queen, who is staying at the leading hotel, under the soubriquet of Countess Donati, schemes to win the love of a rich young Englishman, Cecil Carrington, who eventually succumbs to her infatuation and asks her to be his wife. She accedes to his request—to filch him of his wealth. At this point Latimer Londer and Phillip Charrington, known as the Ace and Knave, arrive upon the scene and demand a share of the spoils. Fate is playing into their hands, when John Beaumont (the King) turns up and threatens to hand them over to justice. To escape, the Countess stabs the King, and departs for England, where she is to be married. The scene then changes to the Manor House, Desmond, where Sir Edward Charrington forbids his son, Cecil, the house, for refusing to give up the Countess and marry his cousin, Beryl Stancliffe. They part in anger, and Sir Edward disinherits his son, leaving all his property to Beryl. The Knave, who is Sir Edward's eldest son, informs the Countess of this change, and together they plot to murder the old man and obtain the will. This they do, but during the struggle the will is picked up by the Ace. Cecil, who is suspected of the murder, escapes, and his brother Phillip marries the Countess and reigns in the Manor in his stead. The King, who recovered from the knife wound, comes to England in search of vengeance. He is befriended by Beryl, and after making his pile on the gold-fields of Australia returns to England and befriends the escaping Cecil. He has everything ready for his escape from the country, when the Countess and the Knave discover them hiding in the Abbey ruins. Latimer Londer, suddenly remembers where he left the will, and on producing it ruins the plans of the other members of the gang. The Knave is arrested, but the Countess cheats the law by jumping over the cliffs.

As Camille Nicol, alias the Queen and Countess Donati, Miss Essie Clay left nothing to be desired. Her acting was forcible, and showed that this versatile young lady acts equally as well as a scheming adventuress as she does in the role of a persecuted heroine. Mr. Hubert Bentley played the rather thankless part of John Beaumont, the King, effectively, while Messrs. J. H. Goodall and Hilliard Vox as Cecil and Phillip Charrington respectively, gave excellent renderings of their characters. Mr. Tom Curran and Miss Louise Curbasse, as Latimer Londer and Winnie Williams, kept the house in good spirits with their humorous passages. The remainder of the characters were ably sustained by the other members of the company. A specially trained choir had been engaged to sing the music in the old village church, and the scenic effects and costuming of the piece were excellent.

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