

# The Stage

## "THE BING BOYS ON BROADWAY."

Melody and revelry, running riot for nearly three hours, make up the composition of "The Bing Boys on Broadway," and with a host of lovely girls enriching scene after scene of novelty and splendour, audiences at His Majesty's agree that never has there been such a consistently amusing, beguiling and stimulating production as the present big revue presented by J. C. Williamson. The adventures of Lucifer Bing and his cousin, Potifer in America, and the safeguarding of the diamond garter of Emma (now Duchess of Dullwater), are reason enough for the producers to elaborate on wonderful settings in distinctive scenes. These include the roof-garden of a fashionable New York hotel, the interior of a Chinese opium den, and a moving picture town with an Indian setting. Miss Jennie Hartley, who takes the part of Emma, the little cockney elevated to Duchess and crazy to act in the pictures, has a personality of instant fascination. Her piquancy and East End-cum-West End manners are an unending delight, and her methods of handling a ditty denote her sure sense of humour. "My Position" has some sly touches that she makes much of, and in the sentimental duet "First Love" with Mr. Phil Smith she also scored popularly, while in a catchy effusion, "Day After Day," she and Mr. Smith made the hit of the performance. Mr. Phil Smith as Lucifer Bing is droll to a degree. The part suits him to perfection, and he was never in happier vein than when steering Emma through the danger zones. "Remember your rank," he said to Emma, who was "slanging" the waiter in best Billingsgate style. "I'm what?" screamed Emma with indignation, and the audience got one of its best laughs. He was a scream in every phase, and none more so than as an Indian chief in the pictures. Mr. Gus Bluett was amusing as the inane young American cousin, Potifer Bing. Mr. Reginald Roberts made a pleasing feature of his song "In Mandalay," in which he was assisted by a very charming new arrival in Miss Edith Drayson. Miss Drayson was also eminently successful in "Something Oriental," the allurements being enhanced by the shadowy effect of dancers just visible through the haze of smoke. "Bubbles" with Mr. Roberts was another number gracefully done, a tiny little girl also being heard in the solo. Miss Maggie Dickinson, as usual, was an enchantment in her dances, which included a sailor's hornpipe, a jazz and a fantasy. Miss Phyllis Amery was another appealing little dancer, with whom Mr. Jan Caryll was effectively partnered in the cabaret scene.

## THE SPIRIT OF REVUE.

### WHAT JENNIE HARTLEY HAS.

"Every little movement has a meaning of its own." Somehow the words of that lilting ditty come to you when you think of Miss Jennie Hartley and her attitudinising as Emma in "The Bing Boys on Broadway." For the past nine months she has been playing the part in Australia for J. C. Williamson, Ltd., and has built up an enviable popularity by her live-wire work and magnetic charm. And Aucklanders have taken her to their hearts as Australia did. "Emma" is a role she fits well conversant with, having played it in England. Music halls have kept her busily engaged, though for the past five years revue has been her specialty, her versatility enabling her to make perfect cameos of each character study. "The Passing Show" is the eighth in which she has been leading girl. "The first time I ever wore tights was in that revue," she says in that rippling tone of hers, "but it won't be the last, as the near future will see me figuring as principal boy in pantomime for the firm. I'm keenly looking forward to it, too."

In "The Passing Show" this revuical sprite has eleven changes and five distinct songs, appearing as a coster girl, a baby, a stowaway, principal boy, and an Italian with a hurdy-gurdy. Full of energy and the joy of living is Miss Hartley, and when she tells you she loves the audiences here, believe me she means it! It is a case of mutual reciprocity.

## A FEAST OF ATTRACTIONS.

### CONTINUOUS FLOW FOR NEW ZEALAND.

Mr. John Farrell has returned from a short trip to Sydney and Melbourne, arriving in Auckland with the J. C. Williamson Revue Company, of which he is business manager.

"Things are booming in the theatrical world over there," he said in the course of a chat. "And the public, it is worth noting, pay much more for their amusements than they do in New Zealand. On Saturday nights to reserve a seat it costs 10s. 10d., and on ordinary nights it's over 5s." Some very fine attractions are being presented. In Melbourne I saw the Gilbert and Sullivan Opera Company in "The Gondoliers." They are doing record business, and deservedly so, for their representations are regarded as being the best yet given in the Gilbert and Sullivan operas. "Three Wise Fools," at King's Theatre, was proving as big a success as "Lightnin'." Mr. John D. O'Hara (Lightnin' Bill) is looking forward to a trip to New Zealand next year with "Three Wise Fools," and probably another play, as well as a revival of "Lightnin'." At the Theatre Royal was Marie Tempest in "The Marriage of Kitty." Messrs. Tallis, Meynell, and Wenman (of the directorate) are all concentrating on their next pantomime, "Humpty Dumpty," which they anticipate will eclipse any of the previous productions in gorgeousness and novelty. Mr. Meynell intends paying a visit to New Zealand shortly, as it is the intention of the firm to keep the theatres in Auckland, Wellington, and Christ-

church going continuously with attractions, and he wants to make arrangements accordingly. New Zealanders, from all indications, are in for a rare feast of theatrical fare from now on.

While in Sydney Mr. Farrell was present at Her Majesty's Theatre when Miss Dorothy Brunton made her first appearance in "Yes, Uncle" after her return from London. "It was a great night," said Mr. Farrell. "As soon as she appeared on the stage the crowds cheered and cooed, and there was wild applause from the whole house for over five minutes. Miss Brunton took the part of the widow (Gracie Lavers' former role), and it was generally conceded that her experience in the great metropolis has helped to give a delightful finish to her performance. At the conclusion she was inundated with flowers. Never has there been such a floral display on the stage. It was literally covered with them. Designs of every description were handed up, from lampshades to kewpies. It was a sight to be remembered." Miss Brunton will appear in a series of revivals until "Baby Bunting" is ready for production. This is the piece in which she made her greatest London success. She will visit New Zealand some time next year.

"Irene" was another outstanding Sydney attraction. "A most delightful musical play" is Mr. Farrell's opinion. "Totally different to any other piece of its kind. Quaint,

clever, and pretty, with specially imported leads for its interpretation. It is now in its ninth week at the Criterion, and to get a seat you need to visit the box office a week ahead. It will be seen here next year."

"The Christmas attractions for New Zealand will be the Royal Comic Opera Company with 'Kissing Time,' 'The Boy,' and 'Theodore and Co.' probably opening in Auckland; and 'The Man From Toronto,' arrangements for which are being made with Hugh D. McIntosh to send it over. This has achieved a great success in Australia. It will most likely start off from Wellington. There will probably be another attraction, but it has not yet been decided."

### WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS.

"Mr. E. J. Tait, managing director in Sydney, looks happy in his old quarters again. He is specially interested in New Zealand, and looks forward to a run through at an early date. His last visit was on holiday, but next time it will be purely business. The Tait's next pantomime will be 'Sinbad, the Sailor,' and all concerned are directing their efforts to make it a production of cardinal excellence. Both 'Humpty-Dumpty' and 'Sinbad' will be sent over here in due course. Mr. C. B. Westmacott, of the directorate, sends his greetings to old New Zealand friends.

"People who see these productions," said Mr. Farrell, "hardly realise the wonderful organising work necessary at the head office for the arranging of tours all over Australia and New Zealand. And it's not surprising the directors are going from early morn till late at night. Just take the attractions at the present time. In

## OPERA HOUSE.

All-vaudeville goes with a swing at the Opera House, the new programme on Monday meeting with general satisfaction. A first appearance was made by Balmus in an attractively set act consisting of an exhibition of scientific muscular control and a series of classic poses artistically carried out. Huley and Bent, a jolly pair of newcomers, kept the audience in roars of laughter with their cross-fire talk and broad comedy business. Miss Helen Charles was a pronounced factor in the success of the bill. Her act is well out of the ordinary, and her quiet mannerisms strike a new note. After making the audience laugh heartily at her child stories, she concluded with a clever character sketch of a London flower girl, in which "Bill" from a vantage position in one of the boxes added colour to the situation. Miss Ella Airlie found much favour with her songs at the piano, her imitation of a small child being particularly good. Kenneth Maclaine provided a pleasant few minutes with his bright comedy songs and likeable manner, and told some snappy stories that got the laughs direct. Miss Eileen O'Neil, the "musical doll," was novel in her entry and built up her act with a demonstration of her talent on the violin, cornet and trombone. Ernie Brinkman was heartily applauded for his "Fireman" song, and the Steele Sisters joined him to effect in an Irish harmony. The Darwinians created thrills and laughter with their nerve-wracking swinging on ladders, and the man's monkey-like tricks. Fuller's Nine Wonders were as usual a riot, and they seemed to vie with each other in the somersaulting line. One fair-haired girl has a special faculty for turning "flips." Champion's Dogs wound up the bill with their clever tricks.

### LOWELL THOMAS.

With a story that has a tremendous appeal to New Zealanders, and with what are said to be the most fascinating coloured and motion pictures ever thrown on a screen, Mr. Lowell Thomas, a famous American journalist, world-traveller, explorer and raconteur, has come to New Zealand to tell us of our own exploits, as he says, "through the nose of a Yankee." He will appear here at His Majesty's Theatre on Tuesday next, under the direction of J. C. Williamson, Ltd. For two years Mr. Thomas has been telling his story of the brilliant campaign of our boys in the Holy Land and the war in the "land of the Arabian Nights" to nearly two million people in America and Europe. His entertainment is described by the London press as the greatest triumph in the history of the combined speaking stage and motion picture screen. The London newspapers, in describing "With the Anzacs in Palestine and with Lawrence in Arabia," under which title Mr. Lowell Thomas produces his narrative, say that it is neither a lecture nor a mere motion picture show, but is a unique combination of both.



LOWELL THOMAS, who will give his Travelogue entertainment at His Majesty's, Auckland, next Tuesday.

New Zealand there are the Revue Company ("The Bing Boys on Broadway" and "The Passing Show"), "Tiger Rose," "Tilly of Bloomsbury," Carter the Great, Lowell Thomas, the Australian Smart Set Diggers, and Adelaide Van Staveren (singer). In Australia, Irene, Marie Tempest, the Royal Comies, "Lightnin'" Company, the New Musical Comedy Company ("Yes, Uncle"), "Luck of the Navy," Gilbert and Sullivan Opera Company, and another company of Aussie Diggers. With all these operating simultaneously and with large interests in the moving picture industry, and other projects on hand for the expansion of business, it can be readily conjectured that the mammoth organisation of J. C. Williamson, Ltd., and J. and N. Tait can hold its own in the world for colossal enterprise."

It is three years since Mr. Farrell was in Sydney, managerial engagements keeping him continually employed on this side, and the wonderful strides the city had made in that time amazed him beyond measure. He considers the cost of living is not as high in Sydney as in New Zealand. He was over there in time for the races, and says the deadheat between Kennaquhair and Poitrel was something to remember!

The greatest revue of all, "The Passing Show," succeeds "The Bing Boys" at His Majesty's to-night. It is a revelation in beauty, fashion, melody and splendour.



MAIE BAIRD, picturesque dancer in "The Passing Show."