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HIS MAJESTY'S THEATRE.

During this week the J. C. William-son's Gilbert and Sullivan Opera Company have been presenting "Iolanthe" or "The Peer and the Peri" which is perhaps one of the most charming, as it is one of the most far-fetched, of the Gilbert and Sullivan collaborations. Still there is a peculiar charm about this operetta that never fails to attract and, presented as it is by an excellent all round combination, the good houses of the past week are not to be wondered at. The story or plot, if plot or story there be, is to well known to need recapitulation but there are times which even the most hard-hearted of the audience feel pity for Iolanthe and sympathise with the love affairs of Strephon and Phyllis. As the Lord Chancellor, Mr. Chas. R. Walenn was as excellent as in the other parts which he has portrayed while the magnificent voice of Mr. Derek Hudson was heard to great advantage in the part of Private Willis. Mr. Albert Kavanagh took the part of Earl Mountararat but on the night that we saw the production, Earl Tolloller was portrayed by Mr. Louis Sigel owing to the unfortunate indisposition of Mr. Edward McKown. Mr. Sigel took on the role at very short notice and played it remarkably well the only disadvantage being that he was not thoroughly conversant with his words in the last act. and as every member of the Company on the stage was anxious to assist him out of his difficulties, the outcome was an unnecessary amount of *sotto voce* mutterings. As Phyllis, an Arcadian shepherdess, Miss Ruth Lincoln had ample opportunity for vivacious display and Mr. Arnold as Strephon was as bright and lively as necessary. In her topical songs—or topical as they were at the time they were written—Miss Ethel Morrison as the Queen of the Fairies was heard to great advantage the music she rendered affording her better opportunities than in the previous roles which she has essayed. It only remains to add, while dealing with the caste, that as Iolanthe Miss Pearl Ladd was sweetly charming and gave a finish presentation which could not fail to appeal. The scenery of this operetta is particularly beautiful and in the Arcadian landscape which forms Act I. Mr. W. Little, the artist responsible for that scene, has surpassed himself while as regards Act 2. it would have done Mr. Leslie Board good to have been present and heard the deep drawn "ah" which greeted the presentation of the Westminster Palace Yard when the curtain drew up. The production is beautifully dressed although one is inclined to wonder why ordinary common or garden Earls are allowed to wear strawberry leaf coronets.

THE EMPIRE.

We have so often remarked upon the excellence of the programmes submitted by the management of the above Music Hall that we are almost afraid this phrase might be considered a

facon de parler and should rather state that excellent programmes continue. To-day we have to record a noteworthy innovation in the history of the above popular place of amusement, a departure—to our knowledge for the first in its history—from the time-honoured usual course adapted by past and present managements. This innovation consists of one continuous performance during the whole of one evening and it is the spectacle "Splash me" which has brought about this variation. That this change is thoroughly appreciated by the local public is testified by the enormous crowds which nightly flock—and which have done so since its inception—to the Empire. *Nomen et omen*, or in plain English, what is in a name? Nothing, as far as "Splash me" is concerned, for there is no water about, except in the last scene and then there is very little splashing. But the spectacle is also called "a revue" and that name suits the occurrences, as they are unfolded on the stage, better. There is very little of present-day interest which is not illustrated, as it were, during the course of a long evening's performance. Foremost among this we get treated at some real tango dancing ragtime in galore, ballet, fishing, boating, swimming, telephoning, a harem scene and an attempt—although a somewhat weak one at ballooning. All this interwoven with a bit of love-making and a good deal of fun-making, the whole backed up by some beautiful scenery and splendid lighting effects and crowned by catchy music—partly written for the occasion by the excellent conductor, Mr. Dave Foote—should satisfy the most fastidious gourmet—figuratively speaking, of course—and judging by the hearty applause and rounds of laughter, it just does. A footbridge, tastefully illuminated, is erected from the stage right into the centre of the auditorium, over which all the artistes originally enter and which is made use of a good deal during the performance, much to the delight of the stalls *roues*. This week brought a noteworthy change in the events of the Revue. Instead of the harem scene, the piece opens with an hotel scene and from the very start the comedians Messrs. Wheeler and Wilson and Mr. Guest are very much to the fore and keep up the fun fast and furious. Miss Flora Cromer has again the principal part during the whole performance and enchants the audience with her singing, dancing and acting, in fact, she is the heart and soul of the whole spectacle. Woolmer Young's fine tenor voice is heard to great advantage in many solos and duets and Miss Matheson fills her part in a very appreciable manner, especially in the third scene, entitled "Sumurun" which has taken the place of the harem [scene]. The Misses Woods execute a Tango dance very gracefully, impressing one with the fact that they are giving the "real" thing, which is not half bad! After that the Misses Linden perform a very graceful dance in waltz time with tango and ragtime variations, in which they score a big success. Mr. Frank Wheeler is not only a comedian, but also a good singer of which he gave proof in "Piccadilly Farm"

with the chorus and we would mention here that this latter rendered splendid service throughout the performance, as well in singing, as in dancing and as statists. The statue scene was full of fun and created much merriment. Miss E. Zajah, the balletuse par excellence gave renewed proof in her virtuosity as a desciple of Terpsichore receiving very flattering applause. In her song "Hallo! Miss Ragtime," which she performed partly on the footbridge, Miss Cromer scored heavily. Ford and James, some old Empire favourites brought the first scene to a successful close. The second one was taken up entirely by the "Telephone Exchange" which was "conducted" by Miss Cromer with the assistance of some of the other principals. This scene is very cleverly arranged and effective none the less because it had a slight "Home" touch about it. A duet between Miss Matheson and Mr. Young with the chorus was much appreciated and Miss Zajah's Eastern dance was loudly applauded. The second portion of the spectacle contains some pretty songs, solos and duets, many with choruses, all of which are constantly interwoven with dances, acting and comic interludes and it may safely be stated that there is not a dull moment in this whole revue from the moment the curtain rises till the final chorus "Band, Band, Band" in which Miss Cromer again takes the leading part, this time as the conductor of a ladies' band. The costumes and dresses are throughout exquisite and sometimes spicy and daring, but never offensive. In short "Splash me" is just IT and it would take much to beat it, taking it all round.

Matters of Interest.

A meeting was held Wednesday afternoon at the Hebrew School, Wolmarans Street, to discuss the date of the postponed annual juvenile fancy dress ball, which is being held in aid of the South African Jewish Orphanage. It was decided to have the ball on March 12, if the Wanderers Hall is available on that date.

Train children to virtue; habituate them to industry, activity and spirit. Make them consider every vice as shameful and unmanly. Fire them with ambition to be useful. Make them disdain to be destitute of any useful knowledge. Fix their ambition upon great and solid objects, and their contempt upon little frivolous and useless ones—*John Adams*.

Finish each day, and be done with it. You have done what you could. Some blunders and absurdities no doubt crept in; forget them as soon as you can. To-morrow is a new day; begun it well and serenely, and with too high a spirit to be cumbered with your nonsense. This day is all that is good and fair. It is too dear with its hopes and invitations, to waste a moment on the yesterdays.—*Emerson*.

At the anti-Semitic meeting which

was held recently at Frankfort-on-the-Maine to protest against the erection of a memorial to Heinrich Heine in that city, it was stated that the Kaiser had said that he would never visit Frankfort, because he is antagonistic to Heine's influence. The story is not believed, but it is being used by the anti-Semites wherever they speak.

Count von Berchtold, Austro-Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs, replying recently in the Hungarian Delegation to the suggestion that the powers which were parties to the Berlin treaty take joint action to obtain equality of treatment for the Jews in Roumania, said he did not believe that the powers could be induced to take such action.

Dr. Yahuda has written to the Warsaw paper, *Hasefiah* denying the statement that he is busy with vast schemes for Jewish immigration into Spain, and that the Spanish Government has treated such plans seriously. That Government, he says, is indeed anxious to improve the position of those Morocco Jews who are under its protection. Hence its establishment of the faculty of Jewish learning.

Paderewsky, the piano virtuoso, has issued a written denial to the St. Louis "Modern View" of the statement that he made a large money contribution to the fund for carrying on the cruel anti-Jewish boycott now in force in Poland, or otherwise giving it assistance. He says the statement that has been making the rounds of the press, is absolutely contrary to the truth. The "Modern View" is not inclined to take this as quite final and is conducting an investigation.

"Leslie's Illustrated Weekly Newspaper" (New York), referring to the new United States Ambassador to Turkey, says: "The appointment of Mr. Henry Morgenthau as Ambassador at Constantinople, hailed as a 'notable' event by the Jewish press has attracted much attention throughout Europe. His rise in life and his appointment as Ambassador evidence the opportunity this country affords to every industrious and aspiring person, and the absence amongst us of that most absurd of racial and religious prejudice—that against the Jew."

An Imperial Trade has just been

published appointing Samuel Effendi Israel to be Political Director of the Department of Public Safety of the Ottoman Empire. This important post of confidence is our co-religionist's reward for the heroism he displayed at the time of the arrest of the assassins of the Grand Vizier, Mahmoud Chefket Pasha, when he was fired upon by the miscreants with such serious effect that he was kept in hospital five months. Samuel Effendi, who is barely thirty-five, has already had a successful public career in the police administration, and prior to his new appointment he was Judicial Director at the Prefecture of Police.

The *Cercle Hebraique*, the society for the advancement of Hebrew literature in France, promises to put in French translations of Achad Ha'am, Bialik, Gordon, Smolenskin and others.

The appearance of the new translation of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament published by the Oxford University Press and edited by Dr. Charles is by far the most important literary event of the season says an Exchange. These weighty volumes contain practically all the extant literature of Israelites from the close of the Biblical canon up to the appearance of the *Mishnah*. Most of them are only extant in Greek but a large number, according to the opinion of most recent scholars, were originally written in Hebrew, and the original.

George Brandes, the noted literary critic and historian, who has often declared that he regards himself as a Dane, cannot enter Russia because the Russian government still regards him as a Jew, Brandes was invited to lecture before the St. Petersburg Society of Arts and the University of Helsingfors. The Russian Consul at Copenhagen refused to vize his passport on the ground that his parents were Jews. The case was appealed to the Russian Minister of the Interior through the Danish Legation, and a reply was received refusing to permit Brandes to enter Russian territory.

Many people are called firm because they haven't the courage to own their second thoughts.

Leave business to idlers and wisdom to fools: they have need of them.

The whole game of woman is to baffle the looker-on.

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