## AMUSEMENTS IN CARDIFF.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

ROYAL.—Lessee and Manager, Mr Robert Redford.—There was a packed Bank Holiday audience at the Theatre Royal, Cardiff, on Tuesday afternoon, when Mr R. Redford's pantomime season commenced. *Jack the Giant Killer* is the subject chosen for this year, and a very pretty show has been put on. Mr Milton Bode's company is a well-chosen one. Amongst the principal fun-makers are Messrs Denby and Dent, who appear as Spareribs and Brisket, the giant's cooks, and introduce some clever variety business. Another pair who add a goodly quota to the amusement of the audience are Dessey and Dassey. The first-named (Mr Brian Dale) is cast as Dick Dewyt, and creates much fun, most especially when he comes on with a dummy character and sings "What, ho! he bumps." His companion is Miss Daisy Vol Becque, a charming Daisy. Mr Harry Brayne as Dame Gabble is a quaint old woman, and his songs, gags, and patter evoke hearty merriment. Miss Violet Gordon is good as Mephisto, and Miss Florrie Haydon is an ideal Jack, playing throughout with much vivacity. Miss Lulu Louden does well as Margery Daw. Mr Charles Grant is a capital Giant Blundermore. Several of the scenes give opportunities for the Edene Troupe, the young dancers whose dances are as artistic as they are pretty. Other names on the programme that ought to be mentioned are:—The Spirit of Love, Miss Hetty Cornwallis; the Old Year, Miss Mona St. Clair; the New Year, Miss Violet Burton; Jollity, Miss Pitt; Mischief, Miss Louie Oakshott; Folly, Miss Una Franklin; Laughter, Miss Blanche Aling; Good Humour, Miss Flo Vickers; King Fat, Mr Billy Harman; Queen Caressa, Miss Marie Beaufort; Sir Chippy Chase, Miss Madeline Duval; Simple Simon, Mr Leonard May; Suckthumb, Mr Harry Thornton; the Wonderful Cow, Mr Frank Lloyd. The scenery also deserves notice. The Ruined Abbey, the Village of Primrose Dale, Jack's Cottage, are all extremely pretty sets, and the Giant's Kitchen is almost gruesome in its realism and suggestiveness. But out of the dozen scenes into which the pantomime is divided, the Enchanted Cherry Grove, will surely be the most popular. By the aid of mechanical means the scene is changed to the Realms of King Frost, with a reasonable clothing of snow. The comic harlequinade has been invented by Billy Harman, who takes the principal part with his half-dozen merry companions.

GRAND.—Lessee and Manager, Mr E. Quigley.—*Dick Whittington* is the subject chosen for the grand pantomime which was produced on Boxing Day by Mr Frank Bateman, who has certainly succeeded in getting together a capital all-round company. Miss Lottie Walton with a charming voice and a charming personality, makes a very happy Dick Whittington. Miss Ethel Dove is a dainty representative of Alice; Sir Juggins De Fay, an old English exquisite, is well portrayed by Miss Lizzie Montague with the aid of a handsome presence and exquisite costume; Mr Fred Keene is a nimble Thomas, the cat; Sarah, the cook's eccentricities are shown up by Mr Dawson Dewick; Mr Dan Rolyat as Jack provides the quaintest fun of the pantomime; the Twins, two eccentrics, whose laughter-moving powers may be guessed from the names of the artistes the Two Kimberley Boys, and a number of other curious and eccentric personages figure in the story. Miss Lizzie Montagu, as a Red Cross nurse, in khaki uniform, recites "The Absent-Minded Beggar." Highgate-hill is a much-applauded scene, and the wreck gives opportunity for a remarkably smart scenic change. The Palace of Sultan Flukenpush calls for special mention. Broad marble terrace steps—the whole width of the stage—rise in the background from glistening Oriental pillars and columns, beneath which the whole company gather in gay costumes. A variety entertainment which is given includes a song and dance by the Mayen Quartet in brilliant costumes of scarlet, black, and gold, and a patriotic song, "Under the Same Old Flag," by Miss Lottie Walton. A transformation scene, depicting the Home of Venus, is greeted with much applause. In the inevitable harlequinade the Kimberley Boys appear as clown and pantaloon.

EMPIRE.—Managing Director, Mr Oswald Stoll; Acting-Manager, Mr W. Lea.—ANDREW'S HALL.—At this hall the Cardiff Empire performances are temporarily taking place. The company includes Miss Lydia Yeamans, who, accompanied on a grand pianoforte by her husband (Mr F. J. Titus), gives a number of her original and some new imitations of singers with marked success. The Two Arnatos are amusing comedians. Rosco's performing pigs astonish. Clayton and Jenkins, with the aid of their trained donkey, Jasper, imitate a circus performance. The Bedford sketch company appear in a well-played little scene. The Sisters Dacre are charming duettists and dancers; and Gracie Drew sings a capital song anent the war. Albert Collins sings a good comic song; and the Vernon Troupe delight the audience with their expert manipulation of the xylophone.

## AMUSEMENTS IN NORWICH.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

THEATRE ROYAL.—Lessee, Mr Fred Morgan.—Mr Ben Greet's *Belle of New York* company, under the direction of Mr J. Bannister Howard, is here this week, and has been liberally patronised. Mr Philip Williams was excellent as Ichabod Bronson; Mr John Doran as Harry Bronson acted agreeably; Mr Peter Gardiner was a good Karl Von Pumperkinck; and Mr D. O'Regan did well as Doc Spifkins. Mr Mark Olive was exceedingly clever as Blinky Bill, both in dancing and whistling, and Mr James La Fane was excellent as Kenneth Mug. The Brothers Helm as the Twin Portuguese appeared to advantage; and the same may be said of Mr T. Graves as Twiddles. Miss Lucie Fitzroy was exceedingly charming as Violet Gray, and Miss Hertzfield as Fifi Fricot deserved praise. Miss Daisy Baldry acquitted herself well as Cora Angelique, and gave a characteristic representation. The remainder of the company did excellent service, and under the direction of Mr Guy Jones the piece went well. The dresses were very effective.

AGRICULTURAL HALL.—Circus Proprietor, Mr George Gilbert.—Mr Gilbert opened here on Boxing Day for the season with two performances. Little Eva (a native of Norwich) in her equestrian act was well received; Young Cæsar, an excellent rider, did well; Mr Arthur Powell introduced his troupe of trained Arabs, Achmed and Ahmed; the Andos Troupe of Japanese showed marvellous feats of juggling; Little All Right comes in for a fair share of praise; Mdlle. Clarissee Luttgen exhibited some fine performing parrots; whilst Professor Luttgen brought out his performing dogs. The musical Palmers are very clever; the Almasios, a clever combination, did some good tricks; Sammy Watson and Piccolo were responsible for the clowning. The band is under the capable conductorship of Mr W. J. Parr; and Mr Richard Hull is to be very highly commended as the ringmaster.

EMPIRE PALACE.—Proprietor, Mr Norman Mills.—This hall is well patronised nightly, and the performances of the artistes are good. The two Brothers Obo, comedians, head the bill. Miss Jesmond Dene is a favourite. Mr Charles Woodward has made many friends. Eaton and Allen are good; Mr Harry Vane continues popular; Miss Lottie Arlington deserves every praise; whilst Miss Lottie Lonsdale succeeds in pleasing.

THE death of Madame Marietta Piccolomini is announced. She was born about 1834, and came out at Florence in *Lucrezia Borgia*, and three years later she sang at Turin in *La Traviata*. She was the original Violetta in Paris and in London, and it remained her best impersonation. Norma, Maria in *La Figlia*, Adina in *L'Elisir*, Zerlina, Susanna, and even Arline in the Italian version of Balfe's *Bohemian Girl*, were, in subsequent seasons, added to her répertoire. In 1858 she went to America, and in 1860 she took her farewell of the stage at Her Majesty's on her approaching marriage to the Marquis Gaetani della Fargia. In 1883 she gave four performances at Drury-lane for the benefit of her old manager Lumley.

MR AND MRS S. F. CODY entertained the members of their *Klondyke Nugget* company at dinner, at Bolton, on Christmas DAY. Covers were laid for twenty, and a most enjoyable evening was spent.

## THE LONDON HIPPODROME.

The above building, which will be opened on Jan. 6th with Mr Chance Newton's musical piece, *Giddy Ostend; or, The Absent-Minded Millionaire*, is remarkable for the originality of the design which Mr Frank Matcham prepared at the request of that mammoth entrepreneur, Mr H. E. Moss. The site includes an area of about 3,000 yards, and the principal frontages are in Cranbourne-street, Charing-cross-road, and Newport-street, which has been widened by 10ft. at the company's expense. The remaining side is in Ryder's-court, which has also been increased in width to 20ft.

The corner of Cranbourne-street and Charing-cross-road is occupied by the entrances to the Hippodrome, containing three bays, divided by rich granite piers; the centre contains two handsome mahogany doors leading to the vestibule, the entrance to the left being an extra exit and the official entry; the entry to the right is filled with a handsome bow window, giving light to the pay office. Over the entrance is a boldly designed façade with pilasters and columns, and semi-headed windows divided by marble columns with artistic carving. The centre portion is raised considerably, and contains a panel with the words "London Hippodrome" in gold raised letters. Above this is "the Tower," which is crowned with a very beautiful open ironwork ornament, the eight sides being carried up with a graceful curve to a boldly moulded and ornamental top, on which is placed a fine artistic group in bronze, representing a chariot and horses drawn by a Roman figure. The terminations of the piers and columns above the parapet are surrounded by Roman figures, carrying long spears with hammered work lamps hung to the ends fitted with electric lights. Hanging from the centre of the open iron-domed roof is a very powerful arc lamp, and are lamps with ornamental iron brackets are also fixed to the front façade. It is proposed to erect a handsome iron and glass verandah over the front entrances of the Hippodrome, and along the whole length of Newport-street to shield the patrons from inclement weather. The remainder of the frontage in Charing-cross-road is taken up by shops and the Crown Hotel, the elevation being a continuation of the very handsome design already erected in Cranbourne-street and Charing-cross-road. The frontage in Newport-street and Ryders-court is of a plainer character, but is bold and striking in design. A portion of the site facing Ryders-court is converted into a handsome block of well-arranged offices containing large waiting-rooms, private offices, and clerk's offices for carrying on the business of Moss's United Empires, Ltd. On entering the building at the corner under the elegant glass and iron shelter, pairs of richly-carved polished mahogany doors admit to the vestibule. The floor is laid with mosaic and the wall covered with specimens of beautiful Italian marble, the ceiling is formed in heavy ornamented plaster work with a domed centre beautifully decorated. To the left is the official entrance, a white marble staircase leading to the manager's offices and waiting-rooms above. White marble stairs, mosaic floors, and marble walls with rich moulded work and artistic paintings furnish the wide entrance corridor that leads through a quaint semi-circular opening into the grand foyer. This is one of the handsomest in London; it has eight rich marble columns, forming the apartment into eight sides, the walls are lined with marble, and the whole is surmounted with a large oval ornamental plaster ceiling. In the centre of the ceiling is a painted glass dome which at night is illuminated by electric light. The foyer is sumptuously furnished with velvet pile carpet and luxuriously upholstered settees, &c. To the right of the foyer is the grand saloon. The whole room is fitted and furnished as a ship's saloon, the walls and ceiling are covered with fumed oak; the counter, fittings, &c., are in keeping with the idea, even to the portholes, showing a view of the sea beyond. A gallery is formed at the top, with a skylight over, every detail being studied down to the attendants, whose costumes are semi-naval. The saloon, as also does the foyer, opens into a wide corridor, leading into a large crush-room. Here a glimpse of the interior of the auditorium is gained; mahogany doors open on either side into the stalls and the private boxes, which are set back under the grand circle, and form the ground-floor.

The dress and grand circles can be approached either from the grand entrance or from a wide staircase from Newport-street. On the left-hand side of the grand circle is the minstrels' gallery, with a large shell cover for throwing forward the music of the orchestra of forty performers under the conductorship of M. Georges Jacobi. The amphitheatre and gallery are erected over the circle, and contain rows of comfortably upholstered seats, with promenade at the rear and the sides; the ceiling here is very lofty, and is artistically decorated. The building is erected on the cantilever system, and is decorated in the Flemish Renaissance style. A feature of the ceiling is a large square opening in the centre, surrounded by an open collonnade with a handsome balcony front supported on large brackets, springing from the main ribs of the ceiling. Being over the centre of the arena, high dives can be taken from this into water below. Snow storms and limelight effects will also be worked from here. The arena occupies the centre of the ground floor, and the stall and fauteuil seats radiate from this back to the private boxes which surround these seats. It has a capacity of about one hundred thousand gallons, in girth is 230ft., and the average depth 8ft. It is made of steel boiler plates, the weight of which when full of water is approximately 400 tons. This weight is supported by a strong steel platform, with eight radiating lattice steel girders and circular bearers; the space under the tank for a depth of 4ft. to 5ft. is therefore open for a variety of purposes in connection with the working of the tank. In the sides and bottom of the tank holes are cut and portlights inserted (fourteen in all). These lights are constructed of gun-metal frames and plate glass three-quarters of an inch thick. Inside this tank is a steel-framed table; this table is similar in shape to the familiar railway turntable, but instead of revolving it works up and down the tank, it being attached in the centre to a very powerful hydraulic ram, the two exits on either side being similarly arranged, and each works by an independent hydraulic ram. During the water entertainment these tables are sunk to the bottom of the tank; when required for a different entertainment the tables are raised to the surface of the water by means of the hydraulic rams, the centre one being capable of raising 40 tons. The centre table is then slewed on to its bearings round the tank by a pair of hydraulic rams fixed to the side of the tank, the whole then forming a firm platform, the time taken for this operation being about one minute. Entering the tank at the bottom are eight fountains worked by the pressure of the water in the mains; these fountains force themselves to the top of the water in the tank and immediately commence playing, throwing up jets of water some 20ft. high. In addition to these there are fountain jets round the edge of the tank, set at such an angle as to throw the water in a graceful curve to the centre of the tank. Round the outside of the tank a series of eight hydraulic rams are placed upon the tops of which circular lengths of railings are fixed working in guides. By the simultaneous working of the rams a large silver grill which surrounds the ring fences rises, enclosing the arena. There are three entrances to the arena, one opposite the stage and the other two at the sides of the proscenium, the latter being arranged so that the water flows through them, and thus boats can be rowed in and naval displays of all character can be carried out.

The stage, with a length of 48ft. and width of nearly 30ft., is constructed of specially designed steel girders, and is capable of being raised and lowered some 6ft. or 7ft. by two hydraulic rams. The centre ram, being very powerful, is used for lifting the stage, and the other ram for the purpose of tilting it to the proper angle. The circular dome is crowned by a large sliding glass and iron roof, filled with rich hand-painted glass. It is worked from below the arena. A large electric light at the top illuminates this at night.

The auditorium and stage are illuminated in the most dazzling and lavish manner by electricity. The heating and ventilating apparatus has been specially designed, so that at all times the atmosphere of the Hippodrome will be fresh and sweet. The air is drawn from above the roof, and is passed through a patent revolving air screen, which absolutely purifies it. It is forced into an air chamber or tunnel, measuring about 10ft. square, from which it is passed through the ceiling of the auditorium by means of a powerful blowing fan actuated or driven by a steam engine. The plant is isolated in a special fireproof compartment, and in addition to the engine and fan, includes a large battery of heating pipes mounted on anti-friction rollers. Upon this battery devolves the heating of the building in the colder months. It is fed with exhaust steam from the engine. By the pressure of the blowing fan, the fresh air circulates through the auditorium, gradually descending from the ceiling to the circle levels, and to the pit floor. The spent air is forced through the ceilings of the galleries and through gratings connected with foul air flues in the other parts of the building. In those cases where foul air flues are not conveyed directly to the roof, connection is formed with two main outlet shafts, at the summits of which are fitted two electric motor fans, which create suction. Some millions of cubic feet of air, washed, filtered and humidified, are delivered into the building every hour. In the decoration Mr Matcham has shown his usual artistic ability, and the whole of this work, including the richly-decorated ceiling, the boxes and gallery fronts, and domed entrances to the ring, have been ably carried out by Messrs De Jong. The entire building of the Hippodrome, shops, &c., has been done by Messrs Holliday and Greenwood.

THE LONDON HIPPODROME.

MANAGING-DIRECTOR, MR. H. E. MOSS; ARCHITECT, MR FRANK MATCHAM.

MR SYD GODFREY produced his pantomime of *Aladdin* at the Workmen's Hall, Baenavon, on Boxing Night to a crowded house. The music was arranged by Mr Fred Eplett. Miss Rosie Carlo was a good Aladdin, and Miss Flo Carlo made herself a favourite as the Princess Balroubaur. Mr Chas. Crashon was very funny as Wishee Washee, and as Widow Twankey Chas. Buxton scored a success. The Electra of Miss Ethel Fairfax was agreeable and graceful, and special mention must be made of her singing of several songs, notably "Molly M'Gee." Mr George Thomas combined stage-management with the performance of the part of the Vizier, and must be complimented on his success in both cases. The Abanazar of Syd Godfrey proved intensely amusing. He created roars of laughter, and his songs gained undeniable encores. In the Palace scene several good specialities were introduced by the Bros. Carson, musical eccentrics, Miss Ethel Fairfax, and the Electric Trio of Dancers. In this scene Miss Flossie Clinton recited "The Absent-Minded Beggar," which caused a great sensation, the audience rising to their feet and singing "Rule, Britannia." Miss Clinton made a collection, which realised a very nice sum. Mr Arthur Linton ably conducted, and the whole production was a success.

"THE ERA" can be obtained at any of Smith and Sons' bookstalls throughout the provinces.

## AMUSEMENTS IN SOUTH SHIELDS.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

THEATRE ROYAL.—Lessee and Manager, Mr L. M. Snowdon; Acting-Manager, Mr Fred Coulson.—At Boxing Night Mr and Mrs Snowdon presented their pantomime *Cinderella* before an audience that filled to overflowing every available space in the house. The pantomime went with exceptional smoothness and go for a first night, and great credit is due to Mr Hal Ford and the ladies and gentlemen engaged for such a successful result. The large audience proved in the best of humour from the beginning to the fall of the curtain. The book is written by J. Johns, and follows the traditional story, with, of course, the usual local and topical allusions. The scenery, painted by Mr T. E. Armstrong and assistants, is pretty and effective, and consists of ten scenes, the Village of Sunnydale (scene two), the Road to the Castle (scene six), and the Palace of Bumblebee (scene ten) were exceedingly pretty, the effect being greatly enhanced by the electric light, which has just been installed. The principal boy, Prince Charming is ably filled by Miss St. Ives, whose splendid stage presence and sweet voice soon made her first favourite. Miss Hetty King, in the rôle, Cinderella, gave a sympathetic rendering, her dancing being particulary well received. Miss Beatrice Lloyd as Dandini, the valet, forged ahead from the beginning, her piquancy and go being greatly admired. Miss Clarice Raynor as Dew-Drop, the fairy queen, possesses a remarkably fine baritone voice, which she uses with consummate taste and effect, several of her songs being enthusiastically applauded. Other ladies who deserve special mention are Miss Nita Imeson as Mignon, Miss Fanny Merton as Dick, Miss Kate Mordant as Maria, and Miss Violet Boughton as Harebell. The two sisters, Lily and Rose, are ably impersonated by Messrs Arthur St. George and Mr Edmund Despard. Mr Frank Lilliput, in the character of Buttons, is a host in himself, and bids fair to be very popular. Mr Harry Maynard as the Demon King plays the part to perfection, his rich voice and undoubted talent proclaiming him an artist of the first rank. Mr Hal Ford scores greatly in the part of Baron Bumblebee; an extremely pleasing feature is the Jordison troupe of dancers; and the Neros introduce a screamingly funny farce entitled *Antics in a Public Bar*. The dresses are the prettiest seen at this house, and reflect great credit on the wardrobe mistress, Mrs Dempsey. The music has been selected and arranged by the director, Mr J. Hopper, and quite keeps up his reputation as a capable musician of taste.

NEW EMPIRE PALACE.—Proprietor, Mr Richard Thornton; Resident Manager, Mr Wm. Barrow.—This house was packed from floor to ceiling on Monday night, and hundreds were unable to obtain admission. Downey's War Pictures were the leading attraction, and the various scenes from the front evoking loud and continuous applause. Arthur Lennard is here from last week, and his popularity seems to increase nightly. Ara, Zebra, and Vora, acrobats, were an exceedingly good turn. Parker's dogs elicited frequent applause. Other good turns were Miss Nellie Martell, comedienne and dancer; Miss Ida Heath, speciality dancer; the Allisons, duettists; and Miss F. Fletcher, comedienne.

ALGIE'S NEW GRAND CIRCUS.—This place of entertainment was opened on Saturday night, and was filled to overflowing by an appreciative audience, the principal items being the marvellous trick donkey Hoppit; Gilbey, the fireman, in his ladder balancing; Harry Dale, clown and entertainer; Mdlle. Ida, bareback rider; Little Tony, champion boy rider; troupe of performing dogs, and other excellent turns.

## AMUSEMENTS IN SUNDERLAND.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

AVENUE THEATRE AND OPERA HOUSE, LIMITED.—Managing Director, Mr C. E. Machin; Acting-Manager, Mr Percival Craig.—The pantomime of *Cinderella* was played twice on Boxing Day, under the direction of Mr John Tiller and Mr Charles E. Machin.

THEATRE ROYAL, LIMITED.—Managing Director, Mr C. E. Machin; Acting-Manager, Mr W. H. L. Perkins.—The military drama, *The Indian Mutiny*, although by no means a novelty, has attracted large audiences. Mr George Daventry and Miss Claire Howard, appear in their original parts, and are supported by a good company.

OLYMPIA.—Proprietors, Messrs Robertson, Limited.—The circus company are this week headed by the Dagmar Wonders, and a continuous round of amusement is provided from early morn till within an hour of midnight.

VICTORIA HALL.—Mr Charles W. Poole's pictorial entertainment is the attraction here. The war scenes are very popular. A capital variety company also give a performance, which is greatly appreciated.

## THEATRICAL PATENTS.

The following particulars are specially compiled for *The Era* by Messrs Hughes and Young, patent agents, 55 and 56, Chancery-lane, London, W.C., who will give advice and assistance free to our readers on all patent matters:—

24,539. George Augustus Oliver Conquest, Chancery-lane, London. Improvements in apparatus for theatrical purposes.

24,549. Charles De Vere and Carl Hertz, 13, Passage Saulnier, Paris. Optional device for changing costumes for theatrical purposes.

24,550. Charles De Vere and Carl Hertz, 13, Passage Saulnier, Paris. A new stage illusion.

24,551. Charles De Vere and Carl Hertz, 13, Passage Saulnier, Paris. An improvement in the arrangement of mirrors and transparent glass for theatrical effects.

## AMUSEMENTS IN NOTTINGHAM.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

THEATRE ROYAL.—Managing Director, Mr Robert Arthur; Acting-Manager, Mr F. T. Lingham.—A crowded and appreciative audience assembled on Tuesday night to greet Mr Arthur's third pantomime *Robinson Crusoe*. The "book" is by Mr Walter Summers, and Mr John Armstrong, musical director, is responsible for the score. A first-night performance is usually associated with a few defects, but when these are remedied, and judicious "cuts" are made, there is every probability of it being one of the best productions seen here. Mr Stafford Hall is to be congratulated on his magnificent scenery, especially the Palace set. Naturally an outlet must be found for patriotic sentiment, and this is cleverly done by means of songs, and a "war map" manipulated by Mr Albert Darnley. A very fine tableaux, the Shipwreck, and an elaborate ballet are effectively represented. We shall speak in detail next week on the various artistes' work, but the but the pantomime is perfectly safe in the hands of such capable exponents as Miss Daisy Mayer, Miss Lily Morris, Miss Nellie Sheffield; Messrs Albert and Herbert Darnley, Messrs John and George Mac, and Mr J. P. Dane. The stage-managership of Mr John Henderson deserves high commendation.

GRAND THEATRE.—Manager, Mr Charles P. Cooke.—Mr James Kiddie's company presented the pantomime, *Little Bo-Peep*, on Boxing Night, and received an enthusiastic greeting. It is an up-to-date production, and is replete with fine scenery and handsome dresses. Miss Lizzie Payne is an acceptable Little Bo-Peep, her singing being bright and effective. As Boy Blue Miss Melinda May proved a success. Miss Ivy Chandos is an agreeable Margery Daw, and the Fairy Moonbeam of Miss Florence Warner is a charming representation. Mr J. Clarence ably performs his part as Johnny Stout, and, in conjunction with Mr J. Bell as Jimmy Green and Mr J. Gar Kiddie as Tommy Long, keeps the fun going fast and furious. Graceful and pretty dances are contributed by the Hammersley Ballet Troupe, and some clever statuary business is introduced by the Salon Quartet. The Millstead Quartet are good in their comic song and dance. The transformation scene is especially worthy of mention.

EMPIRE THEATRE OF VARIETIES.—Managing-Director, Mr Oswald Stoll; Acting-Manager, Mr Hatton Wharton.—A strong bill is presented this week, headed by the Bio-Tableaux in some thrilling scenes, which evoke much enthusiasm. Mr Fred Brown is an American comedian, whose original method gained for him unstinted applause. The ventriloquism of Professor Dunning is marked by merit. Palles and Cussick are knockabouts whose smartness is relished. Lavater's orchestra of dogs is a peculiar combination, which scored. Vendome and Chase are decidedly clever dancers, and Marie Joy is an entertaining vocalist. As a comedian Mr Frank Coyne ranks high, and the mimicry of Mr Syd May is one of the pleasantest turns of the evening. Dunning and Miss Kahn succeed in thoroughly mystifying their audience. Skatinelli and Delilla are marvels of muscular development.

GAIETY.—Proprietor, Mr Arthur Cox; Manager, Mr James Morrella.—A company organised by Mr Frederick G. Brooke gives a capable representation of the sketch *A Deal in Diamonds*, and receives well-merited applause. George's American Minstrels are heard to advantage in their vocal and instrumental turn. Miss Daisy Meadows, burlesque actress, has made a good impression, and Miss Honor Bright wins general favour by her singing. Mr Godfrey West is an actor-vocalist, whose pleasant voice and style delight every one. The Sisters St. Albyn are operatic vocalists of undoubted talent, and Mons. Garto proves himself a clever manipulator of a number of instruments. A poem, written by the proprietor, Mr Cox, is ably recited by Mr F. G. Brooke, and a collection made for the Reservists' Fund.

CIRCUS.—Proprietor, Mr George Gilbert.—The Italian spectacle *Napoli* is, without doubt, one of the best things produced here, and succeeds in winning, unmistakably, the appreciation of the audience. There is a picturesqueness and realism about the tableaux that hold the interest from start to finish, and when, at the close, horses are made to dive into water, the excitement is intense. The dances and ballets introduced are exceedingly pretty, and the whole piece goes with a swing.

## AMUSEMENTS IN ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

THEATRE ROYAL.—Proprietor, Mr C. E. Revill; Acting-Manager and Treasurer, Mr J. Hague.—Mr Revill's Christmas and New Year's annual after a full week's rehearsal was produced on Saturday evening. Mr Will Sley has the entire management, and has supplied all necessaries for the pantomime. *Dick Whittington* is a favourite subject for Christmas extravaganza, and the story has been written up-to-date by Mr Stanley Rogers. Scenically the pantomime sticks to the familiar haunts which one has been accustomed to associate with the story, and the plot if for the most part the same. The story opens, of course, in the Belfry of Bow Church, where we meet with the evil genius and his imps plotting mischief. From thence we are taken to Old Cheapside, London, where there is introduced a pretty dance of flower girls, and by an ingenious mechanical change we find ourselves in the Interior of Alderman Fitzwarren's Shop. Here there is much rough-and-tumble fun with Idle Jack and other apprentices of the worthy Alderman. Dick Whittington appears on the scene, and Alice, the Alderman's pretty daughter and sweetheart of Dick. In this scene there is an amusing demon chase between the Cat and King Rat. On the Road to Highgate and Highgate Hill are two pretty sets, and in the latter a grand ballet is introduced of juvenile fairies. Wapping Old Stairs and the Deck of the Saucy Sally are attractive scenes, and then we have the grand mechanical change to the Wreck on the Desert Island. In the next scene we get a fine view of the Valley of Palms, a pretty sea coast scene. Later Dick and his confrères are all found promenading and otherwise enjoying themselves in the Grand Gardens of the Emperor's Palace. Finally the whole of the characters are transported back to the Grand Guildhall. Mr Sley has engaged a big company, amongst whom are some clever pantomimists and comedians, and a number of attractive girls. Dick Whittington is sustained with much sparkle by Miss Florence Wood, and Alice Fitzwarren has a vivacious exponent in Miss Emmie Milsted. As Melodia, the Spirit of the Bells, Miss Pauline Lingard acts and sings with much ability. Mr Tom Keleo makes himself decidedly obnoxious as King Rat, while Messrs Fred Acton as Fitzwarren, Harry Howe as Betsy the cook, Chas. Chard as Idle Jack, and the Freans as M'Flip and O'Flop make the pantomime "go." Misses Bert Newall, Rose Tilley, Annie Casey, Marie Fenton, Lily Fenton, Mr Bert Danson, and Miss Fanny Williams all contribute to the success in various important rôles. There is a full chorus of young girls, a troupe of lady dancers and high-kickers, and a juvenile troupe of terpsichoreans. Mr Ernest K. Irving is responsible for the music, and is the conductor of an efficient orchestra.

CROPPER'S PALACE OF VARIETIES.—Proprietor, Mr G. H. Cropper.—Mr Joe Adshead, comedian; Mr George Richards, tenor vocalist; Mr G. W. Kendall; Miss Georgina Heaton, male impersonator; and Miss Millie Harris form the company here.

AT the New Year's Ball at Covent-garden, on Monday next, Messrs Frank Rendle and Neil Forsyth announce that special prizes will be given for the best lady's costume, the best gentleman's costume, the best calico costume, the best costume in khaki material, and the most comic costume. A special prize will also be given for the most handsome domino.

BROWN'S BRONCHIAL TROCHES.—All suffering from irritation of the throat and hoarseness will be agreeably surprised at the almost immediate relief afforded by the use of Brown's Bronchial Troches. People troubled with a hacking cough, a slight cold, or bronchial affections cannot try them too soon, as similar troubles, if allowed to progress, result in serious pulmonary and asthmatic affections. See that the words "Brown's Bronchial Troches" are on the Government stamp around each box. Sold by chemists everywhere, 1s. 1½d per box.—[ADVT].

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