

10 YEARS IN ENTERTAINMENT



Ups and Downs Of Last Ten Years

Legitimate Stage Has Had Some Blows Since 1925

(By Our Theatre Critic.)

TO-DAY New Zealand is ringing with the name of Yehudi Menuhin. Ten years ago the name of another famous violinist was on everyone's lips—Fritz Kreisler. It is just a decade since Kreisler toured the Dominion which, at that time, was beset on all sides with musical and theatrical talent. Kreisler was drawing thousands to the Wellington Town Hall, Gladys Mon-

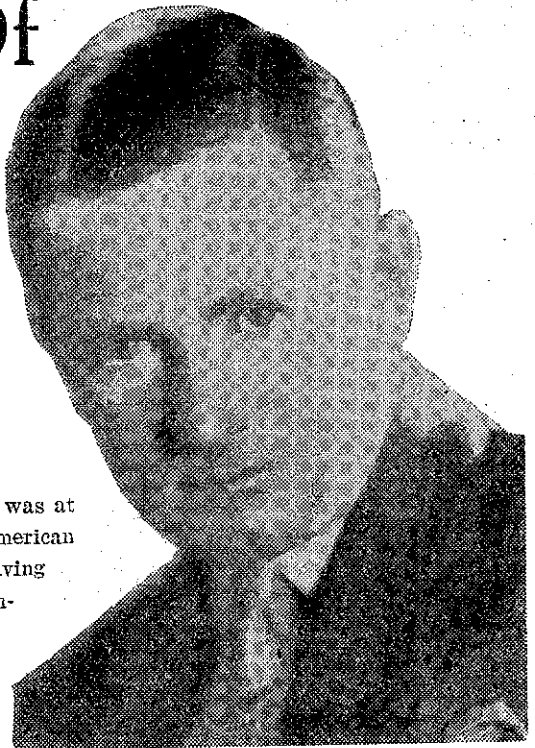
The New Zealand theatre was at its peak. English and American stars were continually arriving with shows that were comparatively fresh to London and New York audiences; famous musicians were making the journey half-way across the world to give a little of their art to Australians and New Zealanders; box offices

were being besieged by peo-

ple who had grown a little tired of the silent pictures. The spectre of the talkies was as yet unknown.

Marie Burke had been discovered by J. C. Williamsons playing in vaudeville in South Africa. It was decided to give her a chance in musical comedy. In Australia, and, in a very short time, she was the most popular light opera star in this part of the world. After two or three tours, during which time she played the leads in "Wildflower" (her greatest success), "Katja 'the Dancer,'" "The Cousin from Nowhere" and "Frasquita," she was offered an important part in "Show Boat," the spectacular musical play then about to be presented at Drury Lane Theatre, London. She was a great success in this play—her singing of "Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man" was written about in a hundred papers—and she has since appeared in several big shows in England and on the Continent. It is interesting to note that Miss Burke once appeared with Eddie Cantor in an American revue called "Make it Snappy."

On the 1925 tour Moscovitch's greatest success was the part of Anton Ragatzky, the man who entered a Chicago slaughterhouse the better to study anatomy, in "The Outsider." Three years later he came back with



REGINALD SHARLAND, star of "The Girl Friend," the successful musical comedy which was the Christmas attraction in New Zealand in 1928. Sharland is now well known to radio listeners as the "Honourable Archie" in the "Japanese Houseboy" broadcasts.

two Edgar Wallace "thrillers"—"The Ringer" and "The Terror." Moscovitch's son, Nat Madison, accompanied him on these tours. Madison, who married a member of the well-known Nathan family of Auckland, is now in America. He appeared last year as one of the brothers in Arliss's picture, "The House of Rothschild."

Musical comedies were coming along thick and fast at this time. One of the funniest—the sort of show that happens once in a lifetime—was "Kid

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MONA BARRIE, who, as Mona Barlee, toured New Zealand in the New Year of 1926 in the American musical comedy, "Leave it to Jane." Miss Barrie is a daughter of Phil Smith, well-known comedian, and she is at present under contract to Fox Films in Hollywood.

crieff—to appear this week at a charity concert in Wellington—was in the South Island with "The Southern Maid." Marie Burke was playing the lead in "Wildflower," Maurice Moscovitch was attracting half Auckland to His Majesty's Theatre, where he was presenting "The Outsider," Sir Harry Lauder was "doing the provincial towns," and Galli Curci was on her way across the Tasman.



SYBIL THORNDIKE, one of the greatest actresses in the world, who visited New Zealand in the summer of 1932-33 with a series of plays, including Shaw's "Saint Joan."