



SCENE FROM "OLIVER TWIST."

Fagin's Den, Showing Constance Collier as Nancy, Marie Doro as Oliver, Nat Goodwin as Fagin and Lyn Harding as Bill Sykes.

## Six New Plays in One Week

*An Interesting Group of Lenten Offerings, Including a Dickens Play*

By J. E. WEBBER

Our New York Correspondent

WITH the production of six new plays, the first week of the annual Lenten fast took on the proportions of a theatrical "gorge." That term at least describes the gastronomic sensations of those who were obliged to devour all six in as many days. The formidable list includes Mrs. Fiske, in "Lady Patricia," at the Empire; "Oliver Twist," in the stage version of J. Comyns Carr, at the New Amsterdam; a Pinero comedy, "Preserving Mr. Panmure," with Gertrude Elliott, at the Lyceum; Mme. Simone, in Louis N. Parker's "The Lady of Dreams," at the Hudson; "The Truth Wagon," a modern American comedy at Daly's; and a spacious melodrama, "The Greyhound," at the Astor.

Mrs. Fiske's new offering, "Lady Patricia," is by Rudolf Besier, the author of "Don." The story concerns a woman who has married a man presumably for his intellectual attractions. Although he supplies most of the cravings of her heart, there is still a romantic void which a breezy, slangy, practical youth seems to fill to her satisfaction. Solicitous for her husband's welfare, should the knowledge of his wife's innocent fondness for another come to him, Lady Patricia goes to great pains to conceal her secret. But it so happens that the husband is carrying on a little intrigue on his own account. When matters are likely to come to a serious point, the affairs of the two are taken in hand by the youth's mother, and the father of the flirtatious girl.

MESSRS. LIEBLER & CO., to whom we already owe "The Garden of Allah," "Disraeli" and Mme. Simone's visit, are responsible for the single stage contribution to the Dickens Centenary. The Comyns Carr version used for this occasion is the one prepared for Beerbohm Tree's London production and differs materially from the older dramatic versions of the novel. There are five acts and nine scenes in the present play, some of the scenes being reproduced with startling effectiveness. The company includes Nat Goodwin in the role of Fagin; Lyn Harding—who played the same part in the London production—as Bill Sykes; Constance Collier as Nancy and Marie Doro in the name part, Oliver Twist. From the standpoint of acting, scenic effects and literary interest, the piece will rank as one of the big events of the season.

In the title of his new comedy, "The Truth Wagon," Hayden Talbot has pressed a tolerably

familiar colloquialism into new service. The story has to do with one John Ross, Jr., who bears a national reputation as a prevaricator. To please his father, who has accepted a nomination for the Governorship, he agrees to go on the truth "wagon" for ninety days. At about the same time he falls in love with the daughter of a man who is holding on fast to a dying newspaper, noted for its honesty. He buys out the paper and proposes to make it live up to its reputation. The circulation of The Truth increases rapidly, but advertising falls off in about the same ratio. The young man's fortune is wiped out at the end of three months as a result, but the sacrifice has gained for him the respect of the community and the love of the girl.

"Preserving Mr. Panmure," which had an extended run at the Comedy Theatre, London, resolves itself into a puzzle of who kissed the governess. The offence is aggravated by the fact that the governess is very pretty and well worth kissing. It happened at the country home of Mr. Panmure, a weedy, fussy, dense gentleman, whose chief grievance is that his young wife has condemned him to preach a sermonette twice a week at family prayers. In gratitude to the governess for having given him a subject out of the Aristolic Encyclopaedia, he impulsively kisses her and she refuses to give him away. All of the other men in the house are suspected by their wives and it finally devolves upon Mr. Panmure to conduct a judicial inquiry. Matters become so strained finally that the private secretary of one of the visitors confesses to the deed. This establishes a dangerous moral precedent to be sure, but Pinero has taken good care not to give fussy moralists an innings. Besides, Miss Gertrude Elliott plays the part of the governess—a fact that in itself would exonerate Mr. Panmure or anyone else.

"THE Lady of Dreams," adapted by Louis N. Parker, from Rostand's "La Princesse Lointaine," places Mme. Simone, an intensely modern realistic actress, in a romantic role. The play is one of considerable beauty. It tells the story of the beautiful Princess Melissanda of Tripoli, about whom Prince Geoffrey Rudel dreams until his dream becomes so much a part of his life that he starts on a perilous voyage to Tripoli to meet the reality. Arriving at Tripoli, the Prince is sick nigh unto death, and Bertram volunteers to go ashore and bring the Princess to the ship. The way to the palace is beset with many difficulties, but Bertram finally reaches the Princess, who mistakes him for Geoffrey, and a mutual love springs up between them. How Bertram is faithful to his friend and how the Prince is rewarded for his pilgrimage is all told in the play.

Excepting the first act, which is laid in the poorer quarters of San Francisco, the action of "The Greyhound" takes place on board a transatlantic liner. Among the principal characters of the play are the members of a band of thieves and swindlers who are operating on the ship, but who are being watched by a well known detective agency. The love stories are provided, one between a detective and the wife of one of the crooks, the other between a rich girl and a poor young football player.



GERTRUDE ELLIOTT,  
in "Preserving Mr. Panmure."



MARGARET WYCHERLY,  
in "The Lady of Dreams."



MRS. FISKE,  
in "Lady Patricia."