

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE.

The new theatre, situated in Main Street, Gorbals, and of which Mr J. F. M'Fadyen is lessee, was opened to the public on Saturday evening. Whether it would not have been wiser, or at least in better taste, to have called the theatre by some less ambitious name than that of "Her Majesty's Theatre and Royal Opera House" is a question which it were needless seriously to discuss. A more appropriate title might surely have been found for a transpontine house; but, even if it were considered absolutely necessary to associate the new venture with Royalty, we should have thought "The Victoria," which is loyal yet not lumbering, might have satisfied the gaudiest mind. Wisely or unwisely, however, the loftier selection has been made, and it now becomes our duty to describe, with such detail as may be necessary, the circumstances under which "Her Majesty's Theatre and Royal Opera House" entered on Saturday evening upon its career.

In a former article we adverted to the mode of construction, and the leading architectural and other features of the building. Of the interior, we may now say that it more than confirms the favourable opinion we formed of it when in a comparatively incomplete state. The theatre is finely proportioned, constructed on excellent lines for seeing and hearing in all parts, and it is admirably lighted and ventilated. In point of decoration, the South-Side Theatre compares favourably with any other in the city. Soft tints, touched with gold, have been chiefly employed, and the good taste which conceived such a style of ornamentation having been seconded by more than the ordinary art of the decorator, the general effect is chaste, subdued, and harmonious. In short, Her Majesty's Theatre is one of the most elegant and comfortable in the city. This being the season of pantomime, a spectacle of this description, based on the well-known legend of "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves," was got up for the opening of the theatre. The lessee had really no choice in the matter, but the selection was nevertheless one which placed him at a great disadvantage, the difficulties incident to the opening of a new theatre with a company brought from all parts of the kingdom, and presumably strangers to each other, being increased in a measure which the non-

professional mind can hardly estimate by the elaborate mechanical arrangements necessary for scenic display. This consideration was not sufficiently borne in mind by the audience who crowded the theatre in all parts on Saturday evening, and followed the adventures of the famous Captain and his band in a boisterous rather than an indulgent mood. On the rising of the curtain the leading members of the company, wearing evening dress were disclosed, and the National Anthem was sung by Mrs M'Fadyen (better known to theatre-goers as Miss Carry Nelson) and others in a way which promised well for the entertainment to follow. Nor is it likely that this promise would have remained unfulfilled but for the difficulties at which we have hinted. The company did not work together with the precision which a few nights' performance will lend to their united efforts, and we are unable to bestow upon one or two of the leading members the commendation which their acting in such difficult circumstances deserves, for the reason that we were unable to procure a playbill or book of the pantomime. As regards the scenery, all of which is fresh from the hand of the painter, and much of it highly artistic in character, it was in a state of mechanical rebellion, and the hard-working staff whose duty it is to reduce it to subjection found their efforts more than once unavailing on Saturday evening. The production of the transformation scene caused a delay of half an hour or so, during which time the audience manifested a good deal of impatience, although Mrs M'Fadyen craved their indulgence in a sensible, business-like speech which might have had a kindlier response. On the whole, we think hopefully of "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves." The story is one which lends itself readily to pantomimic treatment, affording scope for the spectacular and other effects appropriate to this kind of entertainment. These have been largely taken advantage of, the pantomime introducing, besides the ordinary fairy ballet, a grand Amazonian march and a ball scene, with cymbal dance, &c. Then the music, vocal and instrumental, is well rendered and fresh, a number of catching airs and choruses from the later comic operas—such as the "Sorcerer" and "H.M.S. Pinafore"—being laid under contribution. The shortcomings of the pantomime on Saturday evening were chiefly mechanical, and when these have been remedied, as they will soon be, we shall be surprised if "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves" does not take a good place amongst the entertainments in the choice of pleasure-seekers during the festive season.