J. M. GALE & Co. Ltd.
General Drapers,
SOUTH NORWOOD
Hosiery of Quality:
"THREE KNOTS."
In Three Sizes, per 3/11 pair
BRITISH MANUFACTURE

Norwood News

General Advertiser for Selhurst, Woodside, Thornton Heath and the Borough of Croydon. Penge, Anerley and Sydenham News.

'Phone: Croydon 0713 (3 lines)
BATCHELARS
For HIGH-CLASS
Furniture and Carpets
House Furnishers,
NORTH END, CROYDON

No. 3268. (New Series). Telephone: Sydenham 2830. (Three Lines). AUGUST 31, 1928. Registered at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper. Established 1868. ONE PENNY.

MAGNIFICENT NEW THEATRE FOR STREATHAM

AMBITIOUS £100,000 PROJECT.

Part of a £300,000 Development Scheme.

WELL-KNOWN DIRECTORS.

A OTHER step forward in the great development scheme now in progress at Streatham Hill will be made on September 6, when foundation stone of Streatham Hill Playhouse, which is part of the line, will be laid by Miss Evelyn Laye, the famous musical comedy star.

£300,000 is the total cost of the project, which will bring about wonderful changes in Streatham Hill. Of this huge sum, over £100,000 is being spent on the theatre—a theatre which will equal in capacity, comfort and character of show, almost any in the West End.

What is probably most significant to South London people is the fact that this ambitious scheme is sponsored by local men, and backed by figures well-known in the theatrical and business world.

Sir Nigel Playfair, lessee and manager of the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, will be managing director, and Mr. F. Bertram Galer, M.A., representative for Streatham on the London County Council, will be one of the directors.

Mr. H. S. Kingdon, to whose initiative the Streatham Hill development is due, will also be a director.

The booking management will be in the hands of Moss Empires, Ltd., and this company will nominate a fourth director, whose practical experience will give additional strength to the Board.

Already ten shops, a restaurant, and a number of flats have been built and, in addition to the theatre, there are also to be built—**a super cinema under the Gaumont British Control, a £40,000 Palais de Danse, and another block of Flats, Shops and Showrooms.**

The scheme also includes the provision of a big garage and the widening of two new roads, which are now nearing completion.

Streatham Hill is obviously destined to become the amusement centre of South London, drawing on a population of more than two millions.

FINE TRANSPORT SERVICE.

Theatre's Wonderful Advantages of Size and Site.

For many years Streatham and the neighbourhood, with its teeming population, has felt the need of a first class place of amusement. Hitherto a visit to a theatre has always necessitated a journey outside the district.

With the building of the new theatre at the very centre of a circle from which a wonderful transport service radiates, a journey to the West-End will be obviated. No finer site could have been selected for a theatre than that chosen by the promoters.

Only a step from Streatham Hill (Southern Railway) Station, the theatre will be served by the electrified section of the railway, on the west from Balham (connecting with the Morden Tube), Wandsworth Common and Clapham Junction, and on the east from West Norwood, Gipsy Hill, Crystal Palace, Croydon and Sydenham, with a second easterly route connecting Tulse Hill, North Dulwich, East Dulwich and Peckham Rye. In March next the Southern Railway is also connecting up its Kent lines with Streatham Hill Station, giving direct services to Beckenham, Bromley and Orpington.

The theatre, situated as it will be on the main road from London to Croydon, is splendidly served from north and south by motor omnibus and London County Council tramway services.

It may be safely stated that within 24 miles of the new theatre there are more potential theatre-goers than in any similar area in Great Britain.

BIG CAPACITY.

Designed by the well-known theatre architects, Messrs. Sprague and Barton, the Haymarket, who have supervised the building of some of the most modern and palatial London theatres Streatham's theatre which is to be called "The Streatham-hill Playhouse" will have a capacity of more than 3,500—2,609 seating and 1,000 standing. The management claim that the money capacity of the house at prices ranging from 1s. 3d. for tip-up balcony seats to 7s. 6d. for stalls will enable them to profitably present all the West-End successes.

It is authoritatively stated that the policy of the Company will be to present West-End successes on the termination of their town runs with their full West-End companies, leading opera companies, a season of Gilbert and Sullivan operas and a Christmas season of pantomime. The Company does not intend to speculate in producing plays, and by presenting only proved successes it is hoped to eliminate the element of financial risk.

The soundness of the scheme is shown in the following words of the architects to the directors of the Company:—

"In designing the theatre we have had the benefit of a clear site of ample dimensions, and the result is reflected in the plans, which indicate that your property will afford quite exceptional facilities to both the public and performers, and that the large seating accommodation should enable your Company to derive the fullest possible benefit from the very favourable position the site occupies in relation to the population which it is designed to serve."

It will be readily seen that the following prophecy made a few months ago in "The Streatham News" is to be justified:—

"Streatham Hill will be entirely transformed. It is by far the biggest change in London will have witnessed since the war ended, and it will add immensely to the impressiveness of Streatham. All that is as far as appearance.

Coming to the practical side of the scheme, nobody can doubt that a theatre, shops and business buildings will add considerably to the comfort, enjoyment and welfare of the inhabitants of Streatham. It is an ambitious scheme and deserves success."

LATEST DESIGN.

As to the theatre itself, it will have two tiers above the pit, fitted with the latest tip-up seats.

A fine lounge is to be provided at the entrance to the theatre, measuring about 66ft. by 28ft.

Another feature of the theatre will be the big crush hall. This will have a height of 23ft., measuring some 60ft. by 28ft. The hall is planned to have wide open balustrading with two principal staircases running to the left and right.

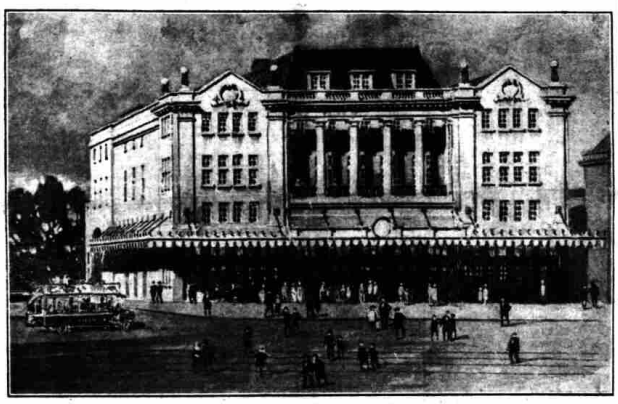
Special attention is being paid to the private boxes, of which there will be twelve, equipped in the latest style.

The whole of the building, which will have a main frontage of 90ft., is of fireproof construction. It is being built upon a steel framework, with brick walls and concrete floors.

The heating and ventilating systems of the theatre are on the well-known plenum system, while special flood lighting is being installed to the front of the house.

It is hoped to be able to open the theatre, which is being built by the Pitcher Construction Co., Ltd., of Ashburton Grove, N., on March 18 next.

STREATHAM HILL PLAYHOUSE



THE ARCHITECT'S SKETCH OF THE NEW THEATRE

SIR N. PLAYFAIR.

HIS WORK FOR THE ENGLISH STAGE.

A GREAT ARTIST.

Sir Nigel Playfair, who will be the managing director of the Streatham Hill Playhouse, has done wonderful work for British stage art, and it was only last June that, in recognition of his great services to the stage, the honour of knighthood was conferred on him.

Sir Nigel, educated at Harrow and Oxford, commenced his career as a barrister. His early dramatic experience was gained at Oxford, where he was an active member of the Oxford University Dramatic Society.

His first professional engagement was at the Garrick Theatre, in 1902. Subsequently he appeared under the management of Sir Frank Benson, Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree, Sir George Alexander, Mr. Arthur Bourchier, Mr. Granville Barker, and most of the leading London managers.

His management at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, which commenced in December, 1918, has

Photo] [Bassano

been a series of triumphs. He first produced there Mr. A. A. Milne's "Make Believe," then John Drinkwater's "Abraham Lincoln," which ran for twelve months, an extraordinary run for a play at a suburban theatre, which was afterwards eclipsed by the phenomenal success of "The Beggar's Opera," which

(Continued in Next Column).

A NEW CLUB.

£8,000 PROJECT INCLUDES BOWLS AND TENNIS.

An attractive feature of the developments now in progress at Streatham Hill will be the provision of a fine club-house, which will have as welcome adjuncts a full-sized bowling green and three hard tennis courts.

The club-house, which will cost about £8,000, will be equipped with every modern convenience and decorated in tasteful style and will contain a billiards room for four tables, card rooms, reading room and lounge, as well as the other usual amenities to club life.

It is understood that there is every possibility of the premises becoming the headquarters of the Streatham Constitutional Club, one of the best known clubs in South London.

MISS EVELYN LAYE

Photo] [Topical Press Agency

One of Britain's most brilliant musical comedy actresses.

(Continued from previous column).

was played for 1,463 consecutive performances.

His other productions at Hammersmith include "As You Like It," St. Ervine's "John Ferguson," "The Way of the World," "The Duenna," "Midsummer Madness," "Lionel and Clarissa," "Riverside Nights," "The Would-be Gentleman," "The Beaux Stratagem," "When Crummles Played," "Love in a Village," and his latest success, Oliver Goldsmith's "She Stoops to Conquer."

The last piece was described by the dramatic critic of the "Star" as the "finest production of old English comedy for generations. . . . It has restored a feeling of sanity."

"The Daily Telegraph" says: "Sir Nigel Playfair showed us how the part of Tony Lumpkin came to be famous, and has remained so to this day. In his every scene he caused roars of laughter. Looking extraordinarily juvenile, and giving just the right blend of boobyism and cunning, he made the part stand out with brilliant effect and carried off the acting honours of the evening."

MR. F. B. GALER.

PROMINENT STREATHAM MAN AS DIRECTOR

BUSINESS ABILITY.

One of Streatham's most prominent public men, Mr. F. Bertram Galer, M.A., F.I.A., J.P., of "Worcomer," Garrads-road, Streatham, has accepted a seat on the board of directors.

Mr. Galer has had a very successful business career, and held many important positions in the insurance world, such as assistant secretary to the Norwich Union Insurance Company and general manager of the Eagle Insurance Company.

He has been a member of the Institute of Actuaries since 1904, and is a valuer under the Friendly Societies' Act, an underwriter of Lloyds, and a director of Galer, Kroller and Co., Ltd., Lloyds' brokers.

Despite his busy life in the business world, Mr. Galer continues to find time for many public duties. He takes the keenest interest in municipal affairs and other local activities.

He has been a member of the London County Council since 1921, and serves on the Finance and Highways Committees. He represents the L.C.C. on the London and Home Counties Joint Electricity Authority.

It is natural to assume that a man with such wide business experience, and such a sound public record, would only associate himself with an enterprise which contained the elements of success.

CHARMING, TALENTED MISS EVELYN LAYE

Will Perform Foundation Stone Laying Ceremony

MISS EVELYN LAYE, one of the most charming and talented "stars" on the British musical comedy stage, will perform the foundation stone-laying ceremony of the Streatham Hill Playhouse on Thursday, September 6.

Interest is added to the event by the fact that Miss Laye is the wife of Mr. Sonnie Hale, the clever comedian, who is a member of a famous theatrical family which for many years regularly attended the Church of the English Martyrs, Streatham.

Their marriage, which was one of the events of 1926, was the sequel to a five years' secret engagement. Mr. Hale would not marry until he had won a name on the stage.

Evelyn Laye, who is at present appearing with immense success in "Blue Eyes" at Daly's, was born in London on July 10, 1900. She made her first appearance on the stage at the Theatre Royal, Brighton, in August, 1915, as Nang-Ping in "Mr. Wu," immediately after leaving school; in 1916 she played Pyrrha in "Oh, Cæsar," and toured for some time—for £2 a week.

At that time she was glad to get 10s. a day in "crowds."

Later she figured in pantomime, and first appeared in London at the London Pavilion in "Honi Soit." From that time Miss Laye went from success to success, and has since achieved a popularity probably hitherto unequalled on the British musical comedy stage.

Wonderfully versatile, as the following list shows, Miss Laye has made big hits in "The Beauty Spot," "Going Up," "The Kin Gall," "The Shop Girl," "Nightie Night," "Mary," "The League of Notions," "Fun of the Fayre," "Phi-Phi!" and "The Dollar Princess."

Miss Laye, however, established her reputation in the early twenties, when as "Sonia" in "The Merry Widow," in the title of "Madame Pompadour," in "The Dollar Princess," and in "Betty in Mayfair" she gained amazing encomiums of praise from the critics.

These shows by no means complete Miss Laye's list of engagements, and as further proof of her talent and versatility, it may be stated that she has done remarkably well on the shadow screen. Her first appearance as a cinema actress was in November last year in "The Luck of the Navy."

When Miss Laye made her brilliant success in "Madame Pompadour" she told a Press representative: "I am glad I made a success in the part, but it is only a small success compared to my great ambition. I want to be the greatest musical comedy actress in the world—not merely in England—but I shall take years to do it."

"I do not believe," she said, "that dancing is the only recreation possible to an actress. A few hours in the fresh air are all one requires to keep fit, and they are easily obtained."

Miss Laye confessed that she ran away from home at the age of fifteen to go on the stage. Although both her parents were in the theatrical profession, they disapproved of her ambition.

"My first salary," she said, "was twenty-five shillings a week. I have done everything, even to being hungry sometimes. I have walked on, been in the chorus, and appeared in a crowd on the cinema."

The character of Mme. de Pompadour revealed to her the romance of history.

"Until I knew I was to play the part," said Miss Laye, "the only date in history I could remember was 1066, but I went to Versailles, and ransacked the shops in Paris to find pictures and souvenirs of Mme. de Pompadour. I have saturated myself in her atmosphere."

A CRYING NEED.

WHY STREATHAM HILL STATION SHOULD BE RE-BUILT.

Streatham Hill (S.R.) Station, which is not ashamed to thrust its drabness many feet beyond the present building line, has its ugliness dragged further into the limelight by the scheme of developments on its own doorstep.

The station has long been an eyesore and the new developments give added weight to the agitation for its re-building and setting back.

It would appear that the Southern Railway would not be averse to rebuilding if they were given reasonable compensation for moving back to a building line some 20 feet behind their present entrance. This would bring the station into line with the fine shops on its either side.

The cost of rebuilding on a new building line would, of course, be greater than building on the present site, while under the new regulations a good deal of frontage would be lost through the regulation which enforces a 20 feet radius at each corner of the building, owing to the station being flanked by Sternhold-avenue and Drewstead-road.

Until Streatham Hill Station is rebuilt and the pavement set back, the proposal to set back the pavement on the west side of Streatham Hill between Sternhold-avenue and Telford-avenue and thus widen the roadway, is impracticable. To set back the pavement and still leave the pavement and entrance to the station jutting far out into the roadway would probably increase the danger arising out of the cross traffic to which attention has already been directed in Parliament.

In any case, the authorities will ultimately incur unnecessary expense which could be better applied to compensating the Southern Railway for setting back the station.

All the arguments appear to be in favour of bringing the station into line with the rest of the property adjoining. It would complete the fine appearance of the main road, it would remove disabilities at present suffered by traders north and south of the station, who are large ratepayers, and it would be conducive to public safety.

MORE HOUSES.

MUCH ACTIVITY AT STREATHAM HILL.

A big contribution towards satisfying the housing needs of Streatham is likely to be made within the next few months in the Streatham Hill district.

We understand that contracts have been entered into for several housing schemes in the neighbourhood.

One of these schemes is for the building of thirty houses on the land fronting the new roads now under construction, which form second links between Streatham Hill and Telford-avenue and Sternhold-avenue respectively. Work will commence almost immediately.

Another scheme is for the development of the area between Drewstead-road and Mount Ephraim-road. The new roads on this estate are nearing completion, and the builders will be there in a few weeks.

Two housing schemes in the Leigham Court-road district are almost completed and mean the addition of 200 dwellings for Streatham house-hunters.

BOWLS FOR WOMEN—AND A COSTUME.

Will bowls for women—humorously suggested in the "Streatham News" recently—become an accomplished fact as part of the development scheme at Streatham Hill?

It seems more than likely, for a serious proposal has been made that a green should be laid down for women on some available land at Streatham Hill.

In enterprising anticipation of the suggestion materialising, Madame Dugart, the well-known costumier and ladies' outfitter, has designed a costume for bowling ladies, and is now exhibiting it in her windows at Streatham Hill.

A VISION OF STREATHAM HILL IN 1929

Image © Reach plc. Image created courtesy of THE BRITISH LIBRARY BOARD.