

# The New Zealand Graphic

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## THE CHORAL AND FLORAL FESTIVAL AT NAPIER.

THE group reproduced on this page is of those who took part in the recent Choral and Floral Festival in Napier, the same whereof has gone from one end of the colony to the other. The thought which prompted the idea, the patience and perseverance which carried it through to successful termination, can hardly be over commended. Not only was the object served in assisting a deserving cause—a most excellent one, teaching children to think of others besides themselves—but the musical training imparted cannot fail to bear good and valuable fruit. From our amiable contemporary, the *Hawke's Bay Herald*, we extract the following graphic account of the performance:—

'The sight when the curtain rose was striking in the extreme, for there, packed tier upon tier right up to the ceiling, sat the loveliest group of little girls which a Napier audience has ever been privileged to gaze upon. And they were seen at their best, for abetting nature's charms were worn the most tasteful of white dresses, supplemented by the prettiest of sashes, blue on the one side, pink on the other, with both amalgamated in the centre; and when they rose, precise as soldiers, at a signal from the baton, and voiced the opening anthem, all the care and trouble and practice and drill for weeks and weeks past were rewarded. The last note was the signal for public testimony loud, prolonged, and hearty. As the programme proceeded, not a false note marred its performance, the children attacking even the most difficult passages with a confidence begotten of thorough and systematic practice; and when they added to accomplished vocalism a display of banners and flowers waved in rhythmical sympathy, the effect was indescribably happy. The assistance given by the "advanced choir" of adult voices, and by the soloists, Mrs J. W. Reid and Mr R. P. Mackay, contributed largely to the general success. The most successful items were the anthem "Oh Festive day so Bright" (with

banner and floral display); the "Christmas Echo Song"; "Children's Praise" (with bass and soprano solo and humming accompaniment); "Hail Lovely Spring," by choristers and advanced choir; and "Hear the Trumpet Loudly Calling," with banner display and cornet accompaniment. During an interval Dean Howell, on behalf of Mr Tiffen, the president of the Children's Home, who is on the sick list, thanked all those who had contributed in any way to the undoubted success of the festival.'

Thus the local press. It is matter for regret that space prevents our giving the report in *extenso*; but one thing must certainly be done, and that is to chronicle the fact that the success achieved was to a great extent due to the energetic efforts of Mrs J. W. Reid and Mr W. J. Bardsley, who were untiring in their efforts in training the children. Miss Townshend and Miss Hitchings also deserve great credit. On the 25th ult. the children taking part were entertained by the Ladies' Committee at a Christmas tree, etc.

### A TENDER HEART.

I MET an old and withered man,  
With beard as white as snow;  
Adown his cheeks the tear-drops ran,  
Feeble his step and slow.  
So thin his face, so starved his mien,  
I offered him a crust;  
Never such famine had I seen  
As made his cheeks like dust.

'I beg you eat a bit of this,'  
I said in pleading tones.  
'So small a piece I shall not miss,  
And you are naught but bones.'  
'I cannot taste,' he said, 'of bread  
That has been raised with leaven  
Since they cut off Queen Mary's head  
In Fifteen eighty-seven.'

'At least,' I urged, 'an oyster take,  
'Twill easily digest;  
Of this a frugal meal to make

Surely were for the best.'  
'To offer oysters is in vain;  
I cannot eat them more,  
Through grief that Caesar should be slain  
In B.C. Forty-four.'

'Old man,' I cried, 'at least be moved  
A cup of tea to taste.  
Often its virtues have been proved  
When strength has run to waste.'  
'No more I comfort take,' he saith,  
'In mild, inspiring tea,  
Since I was told Elizabeth  
Died Sixteen hundred three.'

I heaved a sigh, I wiped a tear,  
I took him by the hand.  
'You need some wine,' I urged, in fear  
That he was quite unmaned.  
'You do not know, alas!' moaned he,  
'I cannot taste of wine,  
For Catherine de' Medici  
Died Fifteen eighty-nine.'

Desperate I tried one viand else.  
'There is ice-cream,' I said;  
'It nourishes as well as melts,  
And cannot harm the dead.'  
'I cannot eat ice-cream,' he sighed,  
'For in my throat it sticks  
Since I have learnt Columbus died  
In Fifteen hundred six.'

'My heart so tender is,' he said,  
'It quivers through and through  
To think Mohammed should be dead  
Six hundred thirty-two.  
Then Shakespeare died Sixteen sixteen;  
Mæcenas Eight B.C.;  
And since these figures I have seen,  
What's eating now to me?'

I left him then and went my way,  
Weeping and moaning much,  
It really did no good to stay,  
Though he my heart did touch.  
But as I munch my buttered toast  
Or eat cold mutton stew,  
His image haunts me like a ghost  
Making his sad ado! ARLO BATES.



MR W. BARDSLKY. MRS REID. MISS TOWNSHEND. MR J. W. REID.

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