

MUSIC AND DRAMA.

HIS MAJESTY'S THEATRE.
Lessee, Mr. C. H. Bailey.
Solo Direction of MESSRS MACMAHON.
IMPORTANT AND INTERESTING
ANNOUNCEMENT.
MACMAHON'S

GREAT NEW DRAMATIC CO.
Another and Altogether New and Brilliant
Series of Spectacular Productions.
MONDAY, 20th MARCH.
AND FOLLOWING EVENINGS.
By Arrangement with
MR. J. C. WILLIAMSON.

Will be staged upon a scale of Scenic and Spectacular Magnitude Never Exceeded in the Southern Hemisphere, the Greatest Military Drama of the Century, the standard and enduring success of *Drury Lane*, by the famous authors, George R. Sims and Henry Pettitt.

HUMAN NATURE.

In addition to the
26 PRINCIPALS OF MACMAHON'S
POPULAR CO.

This Production involves the participation of a number of
100 PERFORMERS AND AUXILIARIES.
The Box Plan opens on Wednesday next.
People's Popular Prices - 3/-, 2/-, and 1/-.

At the weekly practice of the Devonport Presbyterian Church choir last Friday evening Mr. J. P. Bennett, the choir-master, was presented by the members of the choir with a silver-mounted baton as a small token of the goodwill existing between the choir and their principal.

R. G. Knowles, the English entertainer, who is now touring New Zealand after Australia, opened at Invercargill on the 15th. He is a monologue entertainer, who ekes out his performance with the aid of a cinematograph, and has some really good songs. He is due in Auckland early in May.

The well-known song, "Her Golden Hair Was Hanging Down Her Back," was composed for the late Mel. B. Spurr by Mr. Leslie Harris, who will shortly tour New Zealand under the management of Mr. Allan Hamilton.

The Miss Sarah Long who, according to the cables last week, has had a successful debut in London as a Wellington girl, with an exceptionally sweet mezzo-soprano voice, I heard her some time ago at a Parliamentary social, and was much struck with her voice, which, however, wanted a good deal of training. It has evidently had it, and the result is most gratifying to her many friends and admirers.

Mr. Stephen Phillips' tragedy, "Paolo and Francesca," is being translated into Japanese, and will be produced at Tokyo in the spring. The adaptation is being made by Mr. Shoyo, the leader of the new theatrical movement in Japan, where "Othello" and other Shakespearean plays have already been enthusiastically received.

"Sinbad the Sailor," the pantomime which had such a big run in Australia, is being brought to Auckland by Mr. Anderson. It will open at Dunedin on April 14, and then work North. Amongst the principals will be: Fred, Graham, Harry Quayle, Lennon, Hyman and Lennon, Morris and Wilson, Power Bros., George Dean, Walter Rivers, Fred, Wentworth, Marie Campbell, Maggie Thornton, Celia Mavis, Lizette Parks, and Ivy Scott. Besides the pantomime, the company will produce "Fiddle-de-dee" and "Hoity Toity."

An iniquitous "headhead" has recently been brought to book in Paris. He is the secretary of a theatre, and wrote for two free seats for the Opera Comique, a request which was immediately

granted. The recipient, however, sold the two stalls, worth 8/- apiece, for 12/- to a tobaccoist, who let a customer have them for 7/- each. The Opera Comique prosecuted and claimed £200 damages, but the Court ordered the defendants to pay £2 compensation jointly.

Strongfort, the latest specimen of Herculean man, has a name that suggests the contents cordiale, though it is said he is a German. He has been secured by Mr. Frank Glenister for the London Pavilion, the scene of Sandow's greatest triumphs. We are told by the "Era" that Nature has endowed him with the strength of Hercules and the beauty of Apollo, and that the Berlin Art Gallery possesses his marble statue, modelled and erected at the request of the German Government. He lifts a dumb-bell weighing 312lb with one hand above his head at arm's length—a great feat.

We regret to notice in the latest English papers the death of Mr. Herman Merivale, the well-known playwright, son of the late Herman Merivale, Under-Secretary of State for India and the Colonies, and nephew of the late Dean Merivale, of Ely Cathedral. Mr. Merivale passed a brilliant youth at Harrow and Oxford. Passing thence with a fine record in honours, he was called to the Bar; but a longing for literature and the stage seized him, and he devoted all his spare time thereto. Mr. Merivale, who formed deep friendships with the Keans, Irving, and Miss Terry, finally abandoned politics, and settled down entirely to literature. Among his best-known plays are "The White Pilgrim," "Ravenswood," produced by the late Sir Henry Irving at the Lyceum Theatre, "Fedora," produced at the Haymarket, "Forget-me-not," which has been played in every corner of the globe, and, in company with his talented wife, "The Butler and the Don," produced by Mr. Toole. In latter years, the loss of all his money, through a fraudulent solicitor, greatly broke Mr. Merivale's health, and he died a broken-hearted man.

Mrs. Beerbohm Tree is, one learns from the English Press, an earnest student of Tariff Reform, and at the recent general elections pleaded the unsuccessful cause of the Unionist candidate in Bournemouth, speaking at meetings and canvassing the constituency with indomitable energy. The experience which the charming actress met with has a ring of wholesome sentiment. The lady who was with her went into a shop in the Old Kent-road and said, "Here is Mrs. Beerbohm Tree come to ask if you will vote for Mr. Cust?" "No, I won't," the man replied; then suddenly he looked at Mrs. Tree and said: "What did you say your name was?" "Mrs. Tree," answered the actress. "And does Mr. Tree want us to vote for Mr. Cust?" he inquired. She assured him that Mr. Tree had sent her down to canvass for that reason. "Then I will vote for Mr. Cust," said the man. "I made the first pair of boots Mr. Tree wore in 'Captain Swift.' Those were my prosperous days, when I lived in the Haymarket; but though I have come down in the world, I shall always be ready to do what Mr. Tree asks of me."

Carl Hertz, perhaps the most popular conjurer who ever visited New Zealand, and who is coming out again shortly, has had many adventures of varying kinds during his long career as a magician, but never a more exciting stage experience than happened to him recently at the Scala Theatre, Copenhagen. During his conjuring performance, an inebriated occupant of the stalls kept on creating a disturbance, and though requested to desist several times, paid no attention. Later, in answer to Mr. Hertz's invitation to any member of the

audience to come upon the stage to assist him in one of his tricks, the inebriated one made an attempt to come up, but was so much under the influence of liquor that he fell, and rolled into the stalls. The audience took the incident in a jocular spirit, but the shouts of laughter so exasperated the man that he pulled out a loaded revolver, and levelled it point-blank at Mr. Hertz. Fortunately for that gentleman, a lady in the stalls, with great presence of mind, jumped up and secured the revolver, her prompt action evoking loud applause. The objectionable person was then forcibly removed from the theatre.

Mr. Gerald Coventry, the "latest and greatest" of Mr. J. C. Williamson's stage managers, has already given characteristic proof of his strenuousness and thoroughness. He took over the rehearsals of "Veronique" by the Gilbert and Sullivan Company at the Melbourne Princess, and for three weeks he bent his whole energy all day long to perfecting principals and chorus. Not content with this laying down a solid foundation of success, he travelled over to Tasmania with the company in order to put the finishing touches upon the production, which Mr. Williamson intends to make one of the chief attractions of the New Zealand tour. Mr. Coventry speaks in high praise of the work of the company in the opera, and is convinced that they will render up an excellent account of themselves in Messenger's dainty opera. He returns to Sydney to put the final polish on "The Little Michus," in which he has already coached the Royal Comic Opera Company, who will produce it when "The Shop Girl" has run its course.

Messrs. Chappell and Co., the well-known music publishers, who have suffered severely by the depredations of the music pirates, whom justice has at last to a certain extent overtaken, write as follows to the "Times": "Now that the defendants in the musical piracy case have been pronounced guilty of a criminal offence at the Old Bailey, it will be well to remember that but for Mr. James Caldwell's mistaken advocacy of their cause their ring-leaders would not at this moment have found themselves in prison. Any one of the reasonable copyright bills asked for by us, and persistently obstructed by Mr. Caldwell, would, by acting as a deterrent of crime, have at once knocked on the head this illicit traffic in other people's property, and would have made unnecessary the costly and laborious process by which their crime has been brought home to these misguided men. Small wonder that the men now convicted thought they could defy the law with impunity when they were so far encouraged by a Member of Parliament as to be afforded interviews by him in the lobby of the House of Commons, and when their head and chief, who was admittedly the worst offender, was honoured by an invitation to give evidence before the Royal Commission on Copyright, upon which Mr. Jas. Caldwell sat. An even more instructive fact is that, when the premises were recently raided of one of the defendants in this present case, copies of Mr. James Caldwell's attack upon music composers and the music trade were discovered there, and upon the premises of another of the defendants letters from Mr. Caldwell arranging the terms for the printing of his circulars and instructions as to how they should be distributed. Further comment is superfluous." Mr. Caldwell, it may be noted, retains his seat for Mid-Lanark with an added majority.

WELLINGTON'S GRAND NEW ORGAN.

A picture of the magnificent new organ in the Wellington Town Hall appears amongst our illustrations this week, and there can be no doubt the good people of the Empire City have good cause for being mighty proud of so splendid an instrument. A prominent Auckland citizen much interested in all matters musical who happened to attend the opening recital writes: "I was present on the opening occasion, and enjoyed the performance thoroughly. The Town Hall, which will seat 3000, was full—well, there must have been 2700 present, and it was a brilliant scene, as fully 1000 in

the gallery reserved seats were in evening dress. The organ cost £5000 in England; it will probably run into £6000 when all accounts are in for erection, etc. The receipts, I understand, from the letting of the Town Hall are £1300 for twelve months. I am now inclined to support the proposal to spend the £80,000 in erecting a similar building in Auckland, especially if we can get an organ similar to the one here. It is a grand instrument. I heard nothing like it in England, although I know they have one or two said to be better. Describing the organ, a Wellington contemporary observes: 'In a general way it is customary amongst musicians to speak of organs, in regard to their size and capabilities, by the number of "stops" that can be utilised—whether they be what are called "speaking" stops or simply mechanical accessories. If taken on this grosser scale of comparison, our new organ ranks about twelfth in the list of the great "kings of instruments" of the world. When the Sydney Town Hall organ was opened it stood supreme. It has 123 stops. Next in order came the organ at Riga Cathedral, with 124 stops, and following were: St. Sulpice (Paris), 118 stops; Albert Hall (London), 118 stops; Notre Dame (Paris), 110 stops. All of these splendid instruments could boast of 5 manual in addition to their pedal keyboards. In order following were the instruments at the Auditorium (Chicago), 100 stops; St. George's (Liverpool), 100 stops; Doncaster Parish Church, 94 stops; Town Hall (Leeds), 93 stops; Antwerp Cathedral (Belgium), 90 stops; and Alexandra Palace (London), 88 stops. And then comes the Wellington Town Hall organ—twelfth on the list—with 72 stops. This is, of course, only the view which one looking at the mass of the instrument rather than at its value as a means of producing something of that "high harmony from which this universal world began" would take. To the musician the size of the instrument and the volume of sound it can produce count for little. It is the quality, the chasteness, the purity of the tones producible that makes for music which cheers and comforts and gives "succour of sorrow" even in our darkest hours.

SPENCER PIANOS

JOHN SPENCER & CO.

By Special Appointment

Pianoforte Makers to H.R.H.

the Princess of Wales.

OVER 3000 SOLD

IN NEW ZEALAND.

New Models, just landed, from £40,

on

On the Hire System of Purchase, from

£1 4s. a month.

SOLE AGENTS—

London & Berlin Piano Co.

SHORTLAND STREET.