

MUSIC AND DRAMA.

HIS MAJESTY'S THEATRE.

THE BROUGH-FLEMMING
COMEDY COMPANY.
Under the Direction of Mr Herbert
Flemming.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24.
FIRST PRODUCTION IN NEW ZEALAND
OF

DR. WAKE'S PATIENT

A New Play in 4 Acts by W. Gayer Mackay
and Robert Old.

MR HERBERT FLEMMING as
ANDREW WAKE

MISS BEATRICE DAY as
LADY GERANIA

MRS BROUGH as
THE COUNTESS OF ST. OBYN

Box Plan at Wildman's.
Day Seats at His Majesty's Cafe.

PRICES AS USUAL.

CHORAL HALL.

FOUR CONCERTS—XMAS WEEK.
Commencing
BOXING NIGHT.

Frederic Shipman presents

MARIE NARELLE,

THE "QUEEN OF IRISH SONG."

Assisted by the Eminent Tenor,
CHESTER FENTRESS.
Accompanist, Constance Brandon-Usher.

PRICES—3/ 2/ 1/.

Box Plan at Wildman and Arey's.

FRANK TALBOT,
Representative for Mr Shipman.

CHORAL HALL.

Under the Patronage of His
Worship the Mayor, A. M. Myers, Esq.

FRIDAY NIGHT, DECEMBER 24.
SATURDAY NIGHT, DECEMBER 25.
SATURDAY NIGHT, DECEMBER 22.

NEW ZEALAND'S OWN SINGERS.

MADAME CECILIA STAUNTON,

IN IRISH AND SCOTCH BALLADS,
IN GERMAN, FRENCH, AND ENGLISH
CLASSICAL SONGS.

Box Plan at Wildman and Arey's.
PRICES—4/ 3/ 2/.

Concerts at 8.30.

Miss Rose Musgrove, one of the best and brightest operatic comedienues we have ever had in New Zealand (who is, of course, Australian) has an offer in England to play a good part in a provincial tour of "The Dairymaids."

Madame Melba advises singers to sleep with the windows open winter and summer; to take a hot bath, followed by a cold shower, in the morning, and then to use the dumb-bells; to walk with the head up and the chest out, and to breathe through the nostrils; to eat simple food, and never to coddle themselves; to put water in their wine; to take an afternoon siesta, and to retire early; to study language daily; and to give several hours in every day to vocal study.

After playing a successful season in Auckland, the Ward, Willoughby and Grace Palotta combination left for Sydney on Monday. Playgoers' opinions on the plays presented varied, but, though some pronounced the two farces as "awful rot you know," still they patronised them, and likewise laughed. Miss Palotta, as usual, made a host of friends, both in the theatre and in private social circles.

Signora Duse, who is now in Vienna, has just signed a contract with an in-

presario for a visit to South America. The tour is to begin next spring, and is to last three months, with Buenos Ayres, Monte Video, Rio de Janeiro, and Valparaiso as its four principal points. Signora Duse's guaranteed payment is to be £28,000. It is added that when this handsome sum has been safely housed with her bankers, Signora Duse will say good-bye to the stage for ever.

The work of the dramatic critic in Rome will be nonewith considerably simplified by the adoption of a theatrical voting machine, invented by Signor Boggiano. In the "Giro," a theatrical organ of the Italian capital, a full description is given of the working of this automatic contrivance, which in appearance resembles a penny-in-the-slot machine. Every person in the audience on buying a ticket receives with it a metal disc, which at the end of the play, or earlier, may be dropped into either of the slots marked "Success" or "Failure." The total number of voters is simultaneously recorded.

Miss Lily Sutherland, the leading dancer of the American Musical Comedy Company, which produced "Fiddle-dee-dee" at the Melbourne Opera House a couple of years ago, recently appeared at Los Angeles, California, and was subsequently waited on by the Mayor of the town, who stated that the "society people" from the east, who were holiday-making there, had complained that her skirts were too short. Miss Sutherland promptly resigned her engagement rather than lengthen her skirts, and left, stating that the costumes of the society ladies bathing on the beach were such that she could not suffer her husband to remain in the locality.

Miss Ada Ferrar, who was in New Zealand with the first "Sign of the Cross" Company, is, says the London "Era," a comedienne with a sense of humour "on and off." The eldest of the clever Ferrar sisters, she has been associated with many of the best managements of the day, and played all sorts of parts—from comedy to tragedy; from Shakespeare to Pinero. Her sister Beatrice is equally well-known as an actress; but Miss Jessie Ferrar—perhaps inspired by the sight of matinee hats from over the footlight—has left the stage and evolved into Mme. Auburn, of Bond-street. Perhaps Miss Ada Ferrar was most successful in sinking her own personality, being completely changed in voice, in look, in manner, in the part of the old blind nurse, in the original production of "Paolo and Francesca" at the St. James' Theatre.

Some of the most interesting pages in Mr. Bram Stoker's "Reminiscences of Henry Irving" are occupied with the famous appearances of Irving and Edwin Booth in "Othello"; and reading the other day Mr. Francis Wilson's lately published book on Joseph Jefferson we came upon a reference to the American tragedian which is worth quoting. Speaking of one Founders' Night at the Players' Club in New York (the building and content of which were the gift of Edwin Booth to his American fellow-players), Jefferson said: "Two years ago Edwin Booth and I walked on the sea beach together, and with a strange prophetic kind of poetry he likened the scene to his own falling health, the falling leaves, the withered seaweed, the dying grass upon the shore, and the ebbing tide that was fast receding from us. He told me that he felt prepared to go, that he had forgiven his enemies, and could ever rejoice in their happiness. Surely that was a grand condition in which to step from this world across the threshold to the next."

Madame Cecilia Staunton, who is touring New Zealand on a combined business and pleasure visit, has received a very warm welcome from her almost in-

numerable friends in Auckland, and her concerts in that city are sure to be well attended. The popular contralto is looking exceedingly well, and is as handsome as when the present writer first heard her sing "Alas, Those Chimes" in "Maritana." Madame Staunton looked the part of Lazarillo to perfection, and one can also quite understand that in the Old Country she scored an immense success as Carmen. The part is just one to suit her, and the tavern scene with Don Jose should be "her meat," as the Yankees put it. One is glad to note that the famous "Habvena" figures on her programmes. In Europe Madame Staunton studied under Marchesi, and as her Press notices are all greatly eulogistic those who go to hear her on her present visit should certainly have a treat. Her Auckland concerts are announced for Friday and Saturday next, December 21 and 22.

The innumerable friends of the Wirth Bros. will be glad to hear that the famous circus is still going remarkably strong. At latest advices the concern was simply paralysing the youth and intelligence of Launceston—where the pretty girls come from. The local critic was obviously much impressed, and wrote as follows:—"One frequently hears the assertion that 'to see one circus is to see the lot,' but those whose privilege it was to witness the performance in connection with Wirth Bros. circus last evening had that long-cherished delusion dispelled. The managers had unfolded a tent large enough to accommodate nearly half the population of Launceston, and the audience that greeted the performers was tremendous. That the show justly deserved such patronage will be echoed by everyone, for it is undeniably one of the largest and best circuses that has ever visited Tasmania. This is no mere platitude, but the honest opinion of almost every patron. The performance abounds with variety, and includes a degree of thrilling work which satisfies the most devout lover of the element of risk. In reviewing a programme consisting of nearly thirty items one must necessarily pass many worthy of a detailed notice, for it is impossible, to dispose of the 'leading lights' with a mere line. Without the slightest hesitation, the palm of merit may be awarded to Hugu Patrick Lloyd, whose acrobatic performance upon an elastic cord was nothing less than marvellous. It appeared as though he had long since eliminated the word 'impossible' from his vocabulary, for he bounded about, and danced, and turned somersaults with an ease and grace that drew forth deafening applause—not mere hand-clapping, but lusty cheers.

It is seldom we have the opportunity of hearing a vocalist of such high standing as Miss Marie Narelle, but ample opportunity of doing so will be given next week, as Mr. Shipman, her manager, announces that four concerts will be given in the Choral Hall, the opening one of the series being on Boxing Night. "The Queen of Irish Song," as she is termed, has now a world-wide reputation as a singer of Irish ballads, and her interpretation of them is said to be a revelation to those who have not yet heard her in those charming melodies. It is said the simplest ditty as rendered by Miss Narelle is elevated into the region of higher music, and given a dignified theme. She raises ballad music to its highest power. Mr. Fentress, the tenor, ably seconds Miss Narelle in making their concerts such artistic successes. He is reported to have a voice of beautiful quality, which blends most harmoniously with the soprano's in the several duets in their repertoires. Miss Constance Brandon-Usher, a graduate of the Leipzig Conservatorium, and is greatly praised by the critics for her finished solo work, and sympathetic accompaniments. Chester Fentress, the tenor of the Marie Narelle Company, was specially chosen in London for the Australasian tour, a choice that has been amply justified by the great success he has achieved. He is said to have in full measure the artistic temperament without which no singer can ever hope to gain any great distinction, while his voice is pronounced by the critics to be of the finest quality and highly cultivated. These qualifications, added to a fine platform appearance, have given him the high place he now holds in the musical world. His first appearance here with Miss Narelle will be awaited with great interest.

During the tour of New Zealand by the Brough-Flemming Company, no less than four new pieces will be produced, two of which have recently been secured by cable negotiation. The company terminated a most successful season at the Princess Theatre, Melbourne, on Saturday last, and left Sydney for Auckland on Wednesday. The company open at His Majesty's Theatre on Boxing Night, the piece chosen being "Dr. Wake's Patient," which has proved to be one of the most successful plays in the repertoire. The "Melbourne Age" says of "Dr. Wake's Patient":—"It is one of the few plays that improve on acquaintance. As a bright, powerful, healthy comedy, nothing like it has been seen here since Carton's "Lord and Lady Algy" was produced by the Broughs a few years ago. Its dialogue is a model to aspiring playwrights, being bright and clever without a suspicion of the straining after epigram which characterises so many modern plays. As a reflection of the times in which we live, "Dr. Wake's Patient" is a play that deserves a place in the history of drama. The piece set down for the second production in Auckland will be "Mrs. Goring's Necklace," a three-act comedy by Mr. Hubert Henry Davis, which was produced in London by Sir Charles Wyndham, and enjoyed a run of close on twelve months.

The Relation Came.

There was a great dinner being kept waiting. After a while the maid was called and the mistress said: "Serve the dinner; there is no one else to come except a relation of little importance."

Five minutes afterward the maid announced in a loud tone: "The relation of little importance!"

The engagement is announced of Mr. J. L. Yarrton, Nukualofa, Tonga, (local manager of Burns, Philps and Co., Ltd.), son of the late G. Swinerton Yarrton, of Westminster (who was one of the ablest solicitors in Sydney, N.S.W., during 1850-1870), to Miss Riechelmann, daughter of Mr. A. Riechelmann, Nukualofa Tonga.

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