

private citizen of whom no one takes the slightest notice. While when adorned in the splendour of his hirsute attainments he only need show himself to have a passer-by whisper: "There goes Mr Ivory Smasher. I think I will go and hear him at his next concert." Thus, you see, my dear Madam, the musician not alone attracts attention by means of his shaggy mane, but preserves it as a means of advertisement to be carried about with him upon all occasions, rain or shine.

P.O.: You have almost convinced me that a long haired musician, owing to practical reasons, is a necessity, but why this utter disregard for the conventionalities in matters of dress? I have just noticed you bowing to a musician whose general untidiness and slouchy appearance suggests the idea that he is as averse to bath tubs and regular ablutions as our own willom friend Svengali?

P.C.: I admit that my friend does not dress like a Beau Brummel. I also admit that with him soap and art should form a closer alliance. But why so severe on an individual whose art has often thrilled you? Remember artists are like children. Their thoughts are constantly occupied with fancies far removed from this terrestrial sphere. Music to them means stories of knights and ladies, the courtship of the nightingale and the rose, the battle cry of legions pressing on to victory, the—

P.O. (interrupting him): This is strange. I recently overheard a conversation between two musicians, and do not remember hearing anything of the sort. Mr Fiddler remarked that he had just bought a new house, while Mr Pounder said that if the Broken Treets dropped a few shillings he would buy a few hundred shares more. How is this?

P.C.: To be sure, this modern musician has given up some of his old ideas. While still clinging to long hair, he does not despise the good things of life. He has discarded some of the old traditions. Thus, while the pianoforte virtuoso in times gone by possessed more virtuosity than virtue and wrecked his life and chances in dissipation and riotous living, the modern pianist has become more practical and business like, and, in consequence, erects magnificent villas on the Hudson or Lake Como.

P.O.: You thus admit that he has abandoned some of his old methods. Why not then go a step farther and conform to the demands of modern society and exhibit a certain neatness of appearance, which is expected of every citizen?

This subject I hope to continue at some future time.

P.C. (bowing): Always at your service, Madam.

The New Plymouth Philharmonic Society gave its opening concert at the Theatre Royal on Tuesday evening of last week, to a large and appreciative audience. The Society is just three months old—a mere bantling, in fact—yet in that short period of its existence so much real hard work has been put in by its members under the able conductorship of Mr A. E. Fletcher, that the results obtained at its initial concert were, with some few exceptions, eminently satisfactory. The Society is to be congratulated on the part songs and choruses, which were crisply, although perhaps not faultlessly, rendered; while the soloists, Mrs Wrigley, Miss Daisy Taylor, Miss Jollie and Mr N. Miller, met with the hearty appreciation of a critical audience. There is considerable room for improvement in the Society's orchestra, which has been rather hurriedly got together; but the hope has been born and is growing apace that this will come in time. The Society is particularly fortunate in having secured the valuable services of Mrs J. Hempton as its pianist. This talented lady (then Miss Wildman) was for many years pianist to the old Tararaki Philharmonic Society, which had such a favourable run, under the conductorship of the late Mr Angelo Forrest. Mrs Pope (whose piano solo at the concert was, by the way, a brilliant performance, is deputy pianist.

At the school examination in the elements of music, held in Auckland last June, by the Associated Board of the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music, London, all of the nine pupils presented by Mr J. F. Bennett passed the examination successfully. The following are the names of the students and the num-

ber of marks awarded, of which the number required to pass is 60, and the maximum 99: Margaret Cardno, 99; V. S. Ducre, 98; Margaret Ducre, 97; Jeanie Maxfield, 94; Isabella Boloms, 94; Mildred Haselden, 94; Lydia Pegler, 93; Minnie Clark, 92; Estelle Davis, 85.

THE DRAMA.

Mr and Mrs Hamilton Hodges intend giving a series of high-class concerts in the Choral Hall, Auckland, at an early date.

Miss Renee Lees, the youthful pianist who accompanied the Ernest Toy Concert Company when on tour here, has made her appearance in London with much success.

At a recent meeting of the operatic section of the New Zealand Natives Association (Christchurch Branch) it was decided to produce an opera at an early date, and rehearsals of the chorus are to be arranged for at once. The comedy section will produce "Why Women Weep," "A Positive and Negative," and Tom Taylor's "Sheep in Wolf's Clothing" probably before the Carnival.

The Broughs closed their Melbourne season last Monday week, and the company left for Fremantle on the Tuesday. They intend to play in Perth, where they have never been before, and the adjoining goldfields, until the end of October, when they leave for India. They are due in Calcutta on December 3rd.

Miss Nance O'Neil closed her three months' season at Her Majesty's, Melbourne, and is now in Adelaide.

On Saturday last the Miss Ethir Craue Company opened at Her Majesty's, Melbourne, with "Tribly." Among other members of the company are Mr Tyrone Power, Mr Cecil Ward, Mr Cyril Keightly, Mr Oily Deering, Mr Harry Hill, and Miss Eloise Juno.

Mr Chas. Arnold, who opened in Sydney on last Saturday week, has been telling some of his New South African experiences to the Sydney "Morning Herald." He says:—"When I reached Johannesburg in July, 1899, the public talk was of war. Nevertheless our 'Jones' season of six weeks had to be extended to 11, and it was not until we went on to Pretoria that difficulties arose. The Volksraad was even then hotly debating the war question, and twice daily President Kruger, in his rusty frock coat and high hat, used to roll past our hotel in a gilded 'Lord Mayor's' chariot, with an armed Boer guard. Very soon the Boer inhabitants were commandered for Natal, and the citizens then crowded the shops buying 'biltong,' of which—continued Mr Arnold, as he drew from his pocket a hard substance resembling tobacco—"I have half a pound with me. This 'biltong' consists of dried deer, and is wonderfully nutritious, and has helped the Boers to fight our army more than anything else. This commanding half-emptied Pretoria, so the 'Jones' Company trekked for the coast, playing at various places until Pietermaritzburg was reached. This place is close to Colenso, where the British lost 1200 men, and I was on the platform when the trainloads of the wounded came in. Some of the poor fellows were horribly disfigured by fragments of shell, and died whilst being lifted from the train. In Capetown the Mayor gave me the gold badge, appointing me a member of the city committee to receive and speed away the various regiments with light refreshment. Capetown during this war has been a wonderful city, singularly full of life and colour, bands playing, flags flying, people cheering, and horses proudly marching. The flower of the English aristocracy and a cosmopolitan gathering from all parts of the world transformed that quiet city into a metropolis throbbing with excitement. On one occasion, at the request of the Mayor, I sang 'We Take Off Our Hats to the Queen,' by torchlight, from a platform on the public square before a crowd of 10,000 people. How they did cheer. This scene occurred at a demonstration upon the relief of Ladysmith. During our long season in Capetown I raised a fruit fund for the Australian troops, which reached £1036, and at Bendigo, Bullarat, and Albury I have already met some of our men returned from the front, who spoke to me of

the benefits derived from the scheme." It is anticipated that Mr J. C. Williamson will shortly take a trip to the Old Country to arrange about his new ventures. He will delay his departure until Mr Musgrove's arrival in Australia, in order to settle some matters relating to the old firm.

Mr Donald Macdonald, the war lecturer, opens in the Auckland Opera House to-morrow (Thursday) evening. If the same good fortune which has followed him through Australia has not forsaken him in New Zealand, we may anticipate a right royal welcome for him in the northern city, where he first makes acquaintance with this colony. There was a certain singularity (writes a Sydney scribe) about Mr Donald Macdonald's Sydney first-night audience. Before 8 o'clock the hall and galleries were packed, and quite 2,000 persons sat waiting in perfect silence. There was no buzz of chat, or impatient movements. This was the "singularity." I remarked upon it to a friend, and got the soothing reply, "Yes, but look round at the audience—the choicest to be got. Not a soul here that ever ate peanuts or drank 'lemonade.'" Then the tall khaki-clad war correspondent came slowly on to the platform, two seconds longer the silence endured whilst the audience took in the man, and then—well, there was no more silence for a full ten minutes. Again and again did the lecturer open his lips and give a half-smile of deprecation, but the crowd only split its gloves more, and abraded its palms and pined its walking-sticks and umbrella-points. Mr Macdonald smiled fully, and patiently contemplated his two shoes, until he got his innings. So far as I could see there were just two persons who did not applaud, and those two made me determine to change my seat for the next lecture. They were an elderly man and woman in front reserved seats. Before the lecturer had spoken a word they were weeping bitterly. One could tell that the velvet holds someone dear to them.

In New York the sale of intoxicants in any theatre, or in any part of the building accessible from a theatre without going outside, is forbidden in plain terms. A former time was rigidly enforced. Now it is relaxed so much as to permit open doors between lobbies and bar rooms. But the managers of the legitimate dramatic theatres cannot open a bar in the most secluded corners of their smoking rooms. At the same time those theatres which take out licenses as concert halls, including the New York, the Victoria, Koster and Bial's and Weber and Fields', do an unrestricted business in beverages. The law, in explicit words, restricts the entertainment in music halls to concerts and expressly forbids everything theatrical, yet in all the pieces named and many others plays are enacted as in avowed theatres.

A well-known journalist and author has just died in London in the person of Frederick Hawkins. Mr Hawkins had been a member of the staff of the "Times" since 1863, and acted for some time as the dramatic critic of that journal. Always deeply interested in theatrical matters, Mr Hawkins assisted in establishing the "Theatre," and edited it from 1877 to 1879, when it was sold to Clement Scott. Mr Hawkins was, however, best known as the historian of the French theatre, embodied in two works, "Annals of the French Stage From Its Origin to the Death of Racine," and "The French Stage in the Eighteenth Century." He was also author of a biography of Edmund Kean.

Wilson Barrett, in his version of "Quo Vadis," tries hard to make use of the arena episode. In lieu of a live bull he has introduced a stuffed one, showing a tableau in which Crassus grasps the make-believe animal's horns, while Lygia, safely rescued, lies on the sand. The dramatisation has not yet been introduced to London.

Winifred Arthur Jones, a daughter of the dramatist, Henry Arthur Jones, recently played Desdella Ives in "The Dancing Girl" in England so well that her father contemplates having her adopt the stage as a profession.

The rebuilding of the Theatre Francaise is proceeding so slowly that it can hardly be finished before next year. The original date set for its completion was July 14th, then it was put off until September 1st, and now January 15th, 1901.

Madame le Burgy, wife of the recently married Jeanne premier of the Comedie Francaise, has decided to go on the stage and to act with Madame

Sarah Bernhardt, for whom she has the deepest admiration. Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" will be specially put on the boards of the Bernhardt the first time. Madame le Burgy is to Madame Bernhardt will make arrangements for the production of the play on her return from her grand tour in America, and will act as Romeo for the first time. Madame le Burgy is to be Juliet, and these two new lovers of Verona are certain to attract all Paris, and the rest of the world as well, or at least that part of it which patronises French acting.

At one of the most fashionable concerts of the London season, the young Melbourne contralto who sang the air Ben Holt behind the scenes in the original production of "Tribly," appeared, and is thus referred to: "Mlle. Regina Nagel, a debutante, sang an air from Samson et Dalila, in which she displayed a full rich contralto voice, though evidently suffering from nervousness.

Here are two curious misprints in a "Sydney Morning Herald's" notice of "Tess":—"Mr Henry Bracy was the unprincipled Joan; Mrs Joseph Carne was not well suited as the truculent and energetic young squire, Alec D'Urbyville."

The Auckland Amateur Opera Club are to be congratulated on the dates secured for the production of "The Yeoman of the Guard." They have booked the November race week, which next to the Christmas week, is looked upon as the pick of dates.

The New York "Mirror" insists that:—"With the exception of a little band of writers, mostly located in London, the dramatic critics of England take a distinctly lower stand as original thinkers than do those of America. The criticism of the great provincial towns of the United Kingdom will not bear comparison with that of Boston and Chicago. The men rarely go outside the conventional rut. They write Journeyman notices, consisting for the most part of a resume of the plot, with a few lines of preparatory matter, and a tail piece of generalities about the acting."

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