

Music and Drama.

CHORAL HALL

THE CONCERTS OF THE SEASON. WEDNESDAY AND THURSDAY EVENING.

FRIDAY AFTERNOON. ALICE HOLLANDER CONCERT CO. ALICE HOLLANDER CONCERT CO. Under the Direction of Mr C. C. Bethune. MISS ALICE HOLLANDER.

"Her voice is a pure contralto of great compass. She aroused the audience to a pitch of enthusiasm." — Melbourne "Age," 13th October.

"Miss Hollander's voice is one of loveliness and altogether satisfying quality, powerful and sweet." — Melbourne "Argus," 13th October.

MR NEAL McCAY, Tenor.

(By arrangement with J. C. Williamson, Esq.)

"He is a polished vocalist, and took the audience by storm." — MELB., N.Y.

JERRY GERARD VOLLMAR, Violoncellist.

"He played with that power, delicacy, and wonderful execution, that has rendered him famous." — Melbourne "Argus."

MR ERNEST FARRELL, Solo Pianist and Accompanist.

Admission 3s. Reserved 2s. and 1s.

Box Office opens Wildman, Lyell, and Arey's TO-DAY.

JOSEPH GIBBS.

OPERA HOUSE

Under the Direction of MR ROBERT BROUGH.

Representatives, Mr Allan Hamilton BROUGH, GENERAL COMPANY.

FAREWELL APPEARANCES IN AUCKLAND

OF MR AND MRS BROUGH.

Prior to their Retirement from the Australian Stage.

TO-NIGHT (WEDNESDAY), 13th JAN. Revival, by Universal Request, of "THE LIARS."

A Comedy in Four Acts, By Henry Arthur Jones.

THURSDAY, 14th JANUARY 1904. "THE AMAZONS."

A Farcical Romance in Three Acts, By Arthur W. Pinero.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 17. Last Night of the Season.

"SOWING THE WIND."

A Play in Four Acts, By Sydney Grundy.

Box Plan at Wildman, Lyell, and Arey's

PRICES—Dress Circle and Orchestral

Stalls, 4s; Stalls 2/6; Pit 1/.

Day Tickets at Williamson's and Theatre doors.

Early Doors to Pit and Stalls open at 7. 6d extra; Doors open at 7.30; Curtain at 8; curagees at 10.35.

Children Under Six NOT ADMITTED.

The Broughs have no reason to complain of public indifference on this their last visit to Auckland. Large audiences fill the Opera House nightly, and on every side one hears the warmest praise of their productions. Haddon Chambers' clever comedy, "The Tyranny of Tears," which succeeded "Mrs. Dane's Defence" on Thursday, takes rank among the best things of the season. The idea of this delightful production is as old as the hills. The fearful wife who sways her husband to her wayward will by hydraulic force—has she not figured in hundreds of comedies and farces? One would have imagined the theme played out, threadbare. Yet here, under the most sparkling and suggestive of titles, we have the whole thing again worked up with a force and delicacy that quite surpasses any former treatment of the idea. When poets, playwrights and novelists are hunting after new motifs it requires originality for an author to boldly hark back on the old, and something like genius to present it in such a way that it will appeal to our jaded minds with as much freshness as ever. Such an author has this in his favour, that his appeal runs in a channel worn deep by the common comprehension of ages. He touches directly the well-springs of pathos, pity or humour, and though they have been tapped for centuries so that one would have thought them well nigh dried up by this time, they flow as freely to the rod of genius as of old. All the best jokes are ancient, or adaptations of the ancient. How much the success of this play is due to the acting we would not like to say. The play and the playing are so closely identified that one forgets whether it was the sentiment or the way the sentiment was expressed that pleased one most. The confession of this difficulty is a tribute to Mr. and Mrs. Brough, Miss Temple and those associated with them. It means that a

production that comes to us bearing the hall-mark of the highest English criticism, has in their hands sustained its high reputation. All the eulogium which "The Tyranny of Tears" elicited at Home can be safely repeated of it here. Nothing more delicately humorous has appeared from the stage. It is the crispest social caricature imaginable, and the most innocent.

Quite another kind of play is Captain Basil Hood's "Sweet and Twenty," which, coupled with "In Honour Bound," afforded entertainment to large audiences on Saturday and Monday. The title affords a key to the idyllic character of the piece, which belongs to a familiar category of dramatic productions. Beautiful and interesting, it tells a delightful story, if not a particularly new one. It gives ample scope for the talent of the company; indeed, without talent in the cast it must needs be a dull failure. Once more Miss Temple was a triumph of that singular naturalness which distinguishes her in so many diverse roles. She is a tower of strength in the company. Mr. Cecil Ward, as the theological student, again leaves us with the admirable impression that he could not possibly be any other character than the one he has just impersonated; and of course we know that we shall say the same when he appears in his next role. Mrs. Brough took a subordinate part, while Mr. Brough kept the torch of humour alight shedding a genial glow over the scene. Miss Susie Vaughan was capital. To-night (Tuesday) and on the following evening "The Liars," that particularly strong comedy, will be revived; on Thursday, that old favourite, "The Amazons," will be staged; and on Friday the season will be brought to a close with Sydney Grundy's play, "Sowing the Wind."

After leaving Auckland the Broughs will open in Napier on the 20th, playing three nights. Masterton will then enjoy two evenings of their society, and the Wellington season will open on the 27th. After the New Zealand tour, which includes Christchurch and Dunedin, in addition to the cities mentioned, Hobart will be visited, and the Broughs will then take their farewell tour through Australia.

This column is just going to press when Miss Alice Hollander's beautiful soprano voice is being heard in the Auckland Choral Hall. Criticism of the singer and the concert are therefore reserved for next week. Miss Hollander who, at the end of her New Zealand tour, will leave via America for Europe, has already gained for herself an enviable reputation both in Melbourne and Sydney, as well as in New Zealand. Her concerts last year at the Opera House here were, as it will be remembered, an immense success, and the music-lovers of Auckland, who are never backward in encouraging real talent, at once hailed the young singer as one of the coming artists of the world. Since then Miss Hollander has studied hard, and has made great improvement in her art, and the early prophecies of success concerning her are much nearer fulfilment. Mr. Neal McCay has a tenor voice of excellent quality, and the method he has acquired under Sbriglia of Paris is very refined and finished. He has already established himself a favourite in London and New York. Herr Gerard Vollmar's appearance is of very great interest at the present time, and amateurs will have an opportunity of contrasting his playing with that of Jean Gerardi. Herr Vollmar is well known at home, and is at present the leading cellist of Australia. Mr. Farrell is a young pianist of great promise, who displays a good deal of technical ability, and should have a successful career. The combination is a very strong one, and one of the best concert companies we have had in Auckland for a long time. As will be seen by the advertisement, in another column, an-

other concert will be given to-morrow (Wednesday) evening, and also on Thursday evening, while there will be a matinee on Friday afternoon.

It is probable that Mr Dix will organise a permanent touring company this season.

To-morrow (Wednesday) Mr Wilson Barrett and his company open in Christchurch.

As the result of the plebiscite just taken the Wellington Amateur Opera Society will play "The Yeoman of the Guard." Les Cloches de Corneville scored an equal number of votes, and the committee decided in favour of Gilbert and Sullivan.

The Hawtrey "Message from Mrs" Company did specially good business in Christchurch and have announced a return visit six months hence.

The Pollards are well satisfied with their Wellington season.

The concert season in Australia this year is likely to be a busy one, as even this early three important fixtures are arranged for. In this connection Mdlle. Antonia Dolores has received a cablegram informing her of the departure from London of Mr F. Vert. This entrepreneur, who has directed all the American tours of the French soprano, and who first introduced her at the Antipodes, will join her at the conclusion of her approaching visit to Tasmania, and will then manage her New Zealand season. During the winter Mr Vert will manage the Dolores song recitals throughout a brief farewell in the capitals of Australia. Miss Amy Castles' return will be another event of interest and importance, whilst in September Mme. Melba's reappearance will be the sensation of the hour.

Australians, who swear by Mr G. S. Titheradge, and who cannot account for his having comparative failures to his name, will be interested to know why this fine actor did fail. Mr Vincent, Australia's great stage manager, recently returned from the Old Country, declares that the reason of this is that Mr Titheradge, despite advice, had persisted in playing unsuitable characters—he instanced one in "Mariamne"—and the result has been to put him back twelve months. No one would dream of Mr Titheradge playing a young lover, but he did, and failed. Had he taken Mr Vincent's advice—and who knows his worth better?—he would never have had the vestige of a failure tacked to his name. His Aubrey Tanqueray has, however, put him on the pinnacle of fame which is his by right.

Mr Harry Rickards, who returned to Australia on the last trip of the Sierra, has made contracts with English, Continental and American artists up to 1903. He brought six turns with him, and "lent" two to Mr Dix here. Among his engagements are Sandow, the strongest man in the world, who will not be "lent," and Cinquevalli; in fact, he has secured the cream of the business.

Concerning the well-known song, "The Promise of Life," an interesting circumstance is related in an article on Dr. Cowen in the Glasgow "Musical Age." It appears that a well-known London firm of publishers, to whom the MS. had been sent, returned the song to the composer, suggesting certain alterations, and declaring that it was not saleable in the original condition. Dr. Cowen thereupon sent it to another firm, who promptly accepted it and sold 200,000 copies.

An organ for the Jesuits' Church, Shanghai, has been built by a Chinese convert, with all the pipes made of bamboo instead of metal. The tone is said to be incomparably sweet.

In spite of the well-known fact that Mr J. C. Williamson lost instead of made money by his Italian Opera venture, the indefatigable manager has not lost faith in grand opera, and will, it is said, give Australia yet another chance.

Among recent visitors to Christchurch was Miss Nellie Sykes, who won the gold medal for the best so-

praise at the Australian Natives' Association held in Melbourne lately.

Mr A. F. Hill, formerly of Wellington, and now one of the leading figures in the musical world of Sydney, has been spending a brief holiday in Wellington.

"San Toy," now being played at Her Majesty's, Melbourne, is in the opinion of one of the "critic" critics, "all glare and glitter and extremely little brains, not in it with 'The Geisha.'" We may concede, says this critic, "to 'San Toy' a pretty song or two and a clever dance or two, but the story is wretchedly thin, and the humour about as abundant as pigiron in hen eggs." Yet on the first night the excitement was intense. M. Leon Caron accepted twenty-seven encores, owing to which the performance was not over until 11.30 p.m.

Miss May Beatty is now in Sydney, where she intends to take a rest for six months, devoting her leisure to singing lessons under the best masters. Maud, her sister, who is going to England shortly, leaves a good reputation behind her here. One enthusiastic dramatic scribe predicts that we shall hear of her as principal boy in some London Pantomime next season.

The following statistics recently published in Germany concerning the relative popularity of famous operas throughout the past year are interesting:—"Lohengrin" occupied the first place, with 294 performances; "Tannhauser," in former years second on the list, must give place to "Friedrich" with 278, and "Carmon," with 277 performances. After "Tannhauser," with 272 came "Cavalliera," 269; "Trovatore," 235; "Mignon," 214; "Faust," 199; "Undine," 192; "Meistersinger," only 171; "Walkure," 131; "Tristan and Isolde," 72.

There is a report that Sousa's famous band is coming to Australia under engagement to Mr George Musgrove. The band consists of sixty players—three Englishmen, twelve Germans, two Frenchmen, two Danes, and forty-one Americans.

The most important concert item from Melbourne is that Mdlle. Antonia Dolores gave an exquisite rendering of the soprano music in a recital of "The Messiah."

Where will Mr Bland Holt halt in his passion for realism? He is now going to introduce a Westralian camel for "The Span of Life," and a team of working bullocks from Queensland. An up-to-date driver for the latter is surely a sine qua non.

Dramatic authors' fees or royalties form an important item in the theatrical manager's expenses. Take, for example, a Pinero success. In London Mr Pinero receives 10 per cent. of the gross receipts throughout the run of the play, whilst in Australia he receives 5 per cent. This comparatively low rate is probably due to the fact that, with such rare exceptions as "The Amazons" and "Dandy Dick," a Pinero piece seldom runs more than three or four weeks in Australia. On the other hand, in the case of such plays as "Charley's Aunt" and "What Happened to Jones," which made a more general appeal to the play-going public, the authors demand a heavy royalty, for the reason that these farcical comedies draw enormous audiences for eight or ten weeks in cities like Sydney and Melbourne. Mr Charles Arnold paid the author of "Charley's Aunt" £3600 in royalties during his Australian tour of 1893. In the same way the author of "What Happened to Jones" has received over £4000 during Mr Arnold's present tour. Mr Arnold was more fortunate, however, in his arrangement for "Hans the Boatman," with which he was so struck when he first read it that he offered the author a price for all rights, taking the risk of success or failure. This was fourteen years ago, and Mr Arnold has played it ever since. It is because the actor-manager has now no author's fees or royalties to pay in connection with "Hans" that he is enabled to announce his popular piece.