

# Music and Drama.

## CHORAL HALL.

WEDNESDAY and THURSDAY.  
WEDNESDAY and THURSDAY.  
AGUST 28 and AUGUST 29th.  
The World Famed Society Entertainer.  
MR CLIFFORD WALKER  
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MR CLIFFORD WALKER  
In a Popular Programme of  
HUMOROUS SONG, SKETCH, & STORY.  
HUMOROUS SONG, SKETCH, & STORY.  
HUMOROUS MUSICAL SKETCHES—  
"After Dinner"  
"Our Village Concert"  
DRAMATIC SKETCHES—  
"One More"  
HUMOROUS RECITALS—  
"Pat-a-Cake"  
"The Ladies' Penny Paper"  
"Babies"  
HUMOROUS SONGS—  
"The Ballymoney Conversation"  
"The Little Crossing Sweeper"  
MUSICAL MONOLOGUES—  
"The Game of Life"  
etc., etc., etc.  
Box Plan at Willison, Lyell, and Arey's.  
PRICES—Reserved Seats 3/; Body of Hall 2/.

Mr A. Hahn, the well-known basso, leaves for 'Frisco by the mail boat on Friday. He was the recipient of a handsome presentation from the Orphans Club, Auckland, in the shape of a purse of sovereigns on Saturday evening last.

Reginald de Koven's romantic opera, "Robin Hood," was announced for production for the first time in Melbourne at Her Majesty's last week. Mr George Lyding, the American tenor, will take the part of Robin Hood.

This opera was under consideration by two amateur opera clubs of the colony some years ago, but was abandoned owing to the difficulty of obtaining any book of words or a properly marked prompt.

Wellington Opera House is the next after Auckland to re-open, with Mr J. C. Williamson's Company. This is on October 2, and the Princess, Dunedin, follows it hard on October 25, when "The Wrong Mr Wright" will be produced for the first time in New Zealand. Christchurch returns to the legitimate last, the Theatre Royal opening for carnival week with Chas. MacMahon's Company, a strong organisation he is now busy forming.

On dit that a company organised by Miss Ada Willoughby is to tour New Zealand with a play entitled "The Wrong Mrs Wright." The public must beware not to confuse this with the famous "Wrong Mr Wright." It is nothing to do with that king of laughter makers, and is merely an impudent rebash of the old farce "Jane."

Referring to the statement made in these columns and elsewhere in the Press that Miss Sadie Bellarelli, under engagement to Wirth Bros., is the first lady clown to appear in New Zealand, "Prospero," of the "Weekly Press," observes: "This is a mistake, as Miss Georgie Smithson went in the ring during a season of Chairin's Circus, in Christchurch, and, I believe, several other towns in New Zealand, and crowned for her husband, Jim Holloway, who was ill at the time.

Mr Clifford Walker opens his Auckland season this evening, and there is every indication that he will repeat the triumphs he has scored elsewhere. Mr Walker is an unquestioned artist, and the keenest pleasure is derivable from all he does. During his stay in Auckland Mr Walker was unfortunately laid up for a day or so, but at the time of writing was completely recovered, and looking as bright and cheery as ever. Those Aucklanders who have not already made their minds up to attend his entertainment are counselled to do so. No more interesting or refined and enjoyable recitals have ever been given in the colony.

Gillette's dramatisation of Dr. A. Conan Doyle's "Sherlock Holmes" is being played in the Theatre Royal, Perth (W.A.), by Mr Williamson's Dramatic Company. The members of this combination include many well-known actors and actresses familiar to N.Z., including Mr Harry Plummer, Mr Lumsden Hare, Mr J. B. Atholwood, Miss Mabel Lane, Miss May Chevalier, Miss Nina Herbert, Miss Minnie Terry, and Miss Julia Merton.

M. Jean de Reszke, the famous tenor singer, suddenly terminated his engagement at Covent Garden—in the middle of the operatic season—and betook himself to the Paris Opera House, to which it is said he intends to devote all his time in future. He is alleged to have declared that he will never sing in London again, but what his grievance may be remains a secret for the present. Londoners regret his loss, for, like Melba, he is incomparable in certain parts, but his threat that he will never come back to Covent Garden is not taken seriously. It is regarded as merely an ebullition of the artistic temperament.

Latest news, it is said, of Mr Wilson Barrett states that "his triumphal march across the Antipodes has continued uninterrupted in South Africa." At Durban, whence his latest letter is dated, he found advance booking of £3000 on his arrival. Similar gratifying results await him at Johannesburg, Kimberley, Port Elizabeth, and Capetown. All this, too, has been accomplished with stock plays, such as "Hamlet," "Virginia," and "Othello." The small amount of accommodation permitted by the railway authorities forbade the production of "Quo Vadis?" and Mr Barrett's play on Alfred the Great—"The Christian King."

Maggie Moore seems to have picked up some fairly good comedies in America this last trip (says a "Bulletin" writer). "The Widow from Japan," for instance, is a wildly improbable name-part calculated to suit Maggie very well. She descends upon the household of her son-in-law as a giddy actress from Japan, and when he has palmed her off as somebody else, and gone mad after the manner of all young husbands who descend to deceit in farcical comedies, the calamitous visitor turns out to be his disgraced mother-in-law. This must be the first case on stage record of a plump lady pretending to be the actress who used to tickle her daughter's husband before he lapsed into respectable married life. And a new brand of mother-in-law deserves encouragement, anyhow.

The splendid send-off accorded Mr Alf Hill, the talented New Zealand composer, prior to his departure from Sydney, demonstrates the estimation, in which this clever and brilliant musical author was held in the New South Wales capital. The Governor presided, and there was not a musical society in Sydney unrepresented, while such a gathering of musical celebrities has never before been seen at any concert of the sort in the capital. Mr Hill is to be accorded a fitting welcome on his arrival in Wellington. The composer's "Hinemoa," which was the main attraction at this farewell concert in N.S.W., is now in rehearsal by the Auckland Liedertafel, assisted by the Auckland Amateur Opera Club, and the two concerts which are to be given on September 10th and 11th should be eminently successful as the Auckland Liedertafel are famous for the excellence of their chorus work, and the most eminent and popular soloists of the Opera Club are taking the chief parts. A section of the Opera Club also assist

the Liedertafel in the chorus, and since the concert is for their benefit it is hoped members who have hitherto idled and absented themselves will for very shame's sake come forward and practise diligently.

Concerning Onquevalli's unique feat of catching a heavy cannon ball upon his neck from a dizzy height, he told an interviewer how he learned the trick:—"I began learning with a wooden ball, weighing about one pound. Even then it often knocked me unconscious. But I kept on practising, and gradually increased the weight of the ball. Yes, I catch it on the back of my neck. Of course, if I made the least mistake there would be a bad accident. Afterwards I throw the ball into the air and catch it on the edge of a plate. I can do the same feat with an egg. I practised the trick for nine years before I performed it in public."

Every large theatre in the colony is now closed save only those occupied by the variety companies of Mr Dix and Mr Harry Richards. The first to re-open will be the Auckland Opera House, which has to be finished by September 22nd, when the famous Musgrove Comedy Company, with that prime favourite Nellie Stewart in the lead, is booked to appear. The contractors are working night and day, and are confident of being able to conclude the work in time, but, as will be seen from a photo taken last week, and produced in another part of this issue, there is a stupendous amount yet to be done, and it will be a truly splendid "tour de force" if the house is thrown open on the promised night. The decision of the Arbitration Court as to the payment of the night shifts must be an exceedingly heavy blow to Messrs. Hutchinson and Son, and means large financial loss. It is already evident by the way that the new dress circle will be an immense improvement on the old, from a spectator's point of view, but one is sorry to see the beautiful iron scroll work has been removed. It was a distinct and graceful feature of the Opera House, and was frequently the subject of admiring remark by visitors. It now graces the outside balcony, or broad portiere, over the dress circle entrance. This portiere will be an immense improvement to the Opera House, not merely as a convenience on wet nights, but as a lounge in summer. It also makes an additional escape in case of fire.

Wilhelmj, the great violinist, who has settled in London as a teacher, has purchased the famous Joseph Guarnerius violin for £2000. The instrument belonged to the late Mr George Hart, the well-known violin expert, and was considered a sacred possession of the family. On the death of Mr Hart all the violin connoisseurs of the world offered to buy the treasure, but Mr George Hart, jun., refused to part with it, even to Wilhelmj, who had coveted the instrument for many years. A couple of weeks ago the great violinist called on Mr Hart, possibly with some hope that the Guarnerius might change

hands. He played Bach's "Chaconne" on it, and so fascinated Mr Hart, that he exclaimed: "You are the only person to whom I would part with that fiddle." "Then it is mine," replied the professor, and carried it off. The fittings of the violin are sumptuous. The initials of Guarnerius, and the date, 1737, are worked in diamonds on the tailpiece, and the pegs and button are set with diamonds and rubies. The case is said to be worth £200. It is of solid silver, decorated with arabesques and other ornamentations.

'Now that Melba has started on her voyage to these parts we may in earnest begin to save our pennies and prepare for the much-boomed treat. How many smart people are going to stand the high prices is a conundrum (writes "Ina" in an Australian paper). Three members from one family mean three pounds. Three pounds signify the value of many precious luxuries beyond the means of the smart and fairly well to do section of the community. This is not the class who can content itself with a back seat. Then what is to be done? Many are in a quandary. But I fancy all will make a gigantic and unprecedented effort to flash forth in the sovereign seats on the grand occasion of Melba's coming. "We can't be out of it." "We must be extravagant for once." "We shall have our pound for Melba's voice or die in the attempt!" is what one hears on all sides. And that's just what one might expect from Australians when it is one of their own in question.

The "Worst Woman in London," as depicted in Walter Melville's melodrama at Melbourne Royal, proves to be no worse in action than the adventuress in the average melodrama (says the "Critic"). She is a woman with a very vivid past, and it is said to have been the cheerful occupation of her luminous youth to drag wealthy young gentlemen down to ruin, and on an average she has dragged one a month apparently, which shows how a woman can be a drag on a man when she makes up her mind to it. Francis Vere, the biggest bad lot in the modern Babylon, worms herself into the happy home of Mr Stirling White, a wealthy mercantile person with disgusting side whiskers calculated to destroy all sympathy, and make the most respectable persons with the Wickedest Woman the best of luck in doing him brown. The consequences in the shape of murders, and misery, and fires, and sensations of the kind are quite usual, and the miraculous escape of the heroine from the burning building is very like a similar miracle staged by Holloway. Anderson's hero escapes by telephone; Holloway's escaped by telegraph; that is the only difference.

"Wet Paint" we often see about, And wisely keep our distance; Advice like that is good, no doubt, And valuable assistance. But there's one thing more precious still, Of that you can make sure, By driving off your cough or chill With WOODS' GREAT PEPPERMINT CURE.

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