

Brief, but Terrible.

The final act is brief and terrible. Pedro, still beside himself, had wandered into the inner room of the mill, when Sebastiano suddenly enters and finds Martha alone. At once he begins to make overtures to her, though she tries hard to repulse him. While he is thus engaged, Pedro, unseen by Sebastiano, peers into the room, his face livid, his eyes blazing. Early in the play he has described to the villagers how, single-handed and unarmed, he recently strangled in the forest an enormous wolf which had sprung upon him. Sebastiano now has Martha by the wrists. He is struggling with and attempting to embrace her. With a bound, Pedro leaps upon him from behind; his muscular grip closes upon his tyrant's throat; slowly, in full sight of the horror-stricken girl, Pedro squeezes the life out of Sebastiano, and flings him from him in a heap upon the floor. Then, terrified at his act, and dreading the retribution that he knows must speedily overtake him if the crime be discovered before he escapes, he picks Martha up in his arms, lifts her on to his shoulder, and when last we see him he is in the distance fleeing away with her to the mountain fastnesses that he knows so well and where none will succeed in finding him.

Wanganui's Big Win.

The success of the Wanganui Garrison Band, under Conductor Wade, at the Ballarat competitions, bring the Australasian championship to New Zealand. Nobody or no place will be better pleased or conspicuous in their appreciation of the fact than the good folk of Wanganui. It was a splendid achievement. In the test piece itself Wanganui ended up as many as 34 points behind Prahan, the crack Melbourne band, who were in the lead. The test, it must be added, was played by Wanganui late at night, in a bitter cold wind, making it necessary for the players to run about in overcoats to keep the blood in circulation. Under such conditions, it can be imagined that it was difficult to get the instruments warmed up to their work, which suggests a practicable cause of their comparatively poor display. The judge's remarks considered that Wanganui's test was close to a well-rendered selection, skill and artistic temperament being shown in the interpretation of it. In their own selection, "The Valkyrie," the band took the judge by storm. He declared it an extraordinary performance, and a treat to listen to. The New Zealanders' success was greeted with great cheering, they having gained 222 points, whilst Prahan made only 180—a difference of 42 in favour of Wanganui.

Mr. Short, King's Trumpeter, and adjudicator at the competitions, stated that he would like to have the Wanganui Band engaged for 12 months to illustrate the kind of musical material available in Australasia. The remark opens up the possibility of Conductor Wade's men making a tour at home, but it is well to remember that whatever success may have been achieved in Australia, the probabilities of a successful tour in Britain would require a lot of careful weighing.

An Unbeaten Record of Eight Years.

The most valuable tribute to the success of the band came from the Lord Mayor of Melbourne, who gave them an official reception at the Town Hall. On behalf of the citizens of Melbourne, he extended them a cordial welcome, and congratulated them on the great honour they had achieved in winning the Australasian championship. He was delighted to think that a small town in the sister Dominion had displayed such pluck and enterprise in sending the band so long a distance, and at such expense. They might well feel proud of the honour they had won. The New Zealand band had an unbeaten record for eight years, and had now added fresh and greater laurels not only in music but in marching. Their performance was most creditable to New Zealand, and to Wanganui in particular. The visit of the New Zealanders was another evidence of the fine spirit which had prompted the Dominion to take a prominent part in the past important Imperial questions.

The result of the contest was a personal triumph for Conductor Wade, and on his return to New Zealand he, together with the members of the band, are sure of a popular ovation. The man who, in days to come, dares to stray into Wanganui and let it be known he had

never heard of "the" band will have few chances of emerging again on to the face of this, our mortal and very human planet.

"The Brixton Burglary."

As the paper went to press, Fred Graham's company of comedians made their first appearance in Auckland at His Majesty's in "The Brixton Burglary." The night was a deluge, but the popularity of the actor-manager drew a well-filled house notwithstanding. "The Brixton Burglary" is a farago of soney, farce and phantasy. The story is a flimsy mesh on which is woven the usual farcical incidents. There is the man who has had a night out during his wife's absence, the morning after, the usual friend with an eye-glass, the reprobate old father-in-law, the shrill-voiced maid, the same old tangle of falsehoods and explanations that wouldn't even deceive a cow, and so on through three acts, to the inevitable "happy" ending. It is not the piece that really counts in such circumstances. You get all the bubbles of irresistible comedy effervescing through the night in Mr. Fred Graham's inimitable Reginald Pontifex, in Mr. Kay Souper's "Richard Diggle"—a truly languid dandy of those attenuated proportions and spidery gyrations that would make even a screech crow laugh with laughter. Miss Florence Gretton (who, like Mr. Kay Souper, was a member of the Asche-Brayton Company) makes a typically fragile and simple wife, who exists only in the imagination of the maker of the farcical comedy. Numerous songs and character sketches bob up during intervals whenever it suits the author to interrupt the action, and they really afford a delightful and amusing relief from the general agony of complications. The piece is well staged, it runs along at pace and all said and done it provides all that one can expect from the lighter side of things. I hope to return to the subject next week. The piece is preceded by a somewhat mediocre curtain-raiser entitled "The Power of the Idol."

Stray Notes.

In New York twenty thousand pounds is spent annually on open-air music and municipal concerts. In London the amount is under twelve thousand pounds. Wellington is the first city in New Zealand to support a municipal orchestra, but to save our blushes, we cannot mention the amount the city is prepared to spend, magnificent as it may appear in contrast to the—ahem!—of other centres.

The new leading lady for "Our Miss Gibbs," the latest Williamson effervescence in Australia, Miss Blanche Brown, has already established herself high in popular favour with Sydney folk. Says an exchange: "Her admirers are numbered not only among the masculine members of the community, but the women also are charmed with her dainty personality. Society has received her into its ranks, and her stay in Australia seems destined to be most prosperous and happy."

Mr. George F. Boyle, the Sydney pianist and composer, has had his cantata, "The Pied Piper of Hamelin," on Robert Browning's poem, accepted by Chappell and Co. for publication. As Mr. Boyle has left England for America to take up his duties as a professor at the "Peabody Conservatory," at Baltimore, he will not be present at the first production of his latest work, which will be performed early next year under Henry Wood, with the Queen's Hall Choral Society and orchestra, and the best available artists in the solo parts. Mr. Boyle has had another cantata, "Don Ramiro," accepted for publication, and, as there is a demand for this class of composition, he has been requested to send more of his works to the publishers.

The first provincial tour of Maeterlinck's fairy play, "The Blue Bird," began at the Grand Theatre, Leeds, on September 5. It is subsequently to visit the Court Theatre, Liverpool, and the other towns included in its flight are Newcastle, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Sheffield, Manchester, Nottingham, Southport and Birmingham—ten towns in all—and the tour is to run for three months. Some idea of the gigantic undertaking of sending a play like "The Blue Bird" on tour may be gathered when it is known that the company travels 120 strong, and carries with it many more tons of scenery and properties than any company that has left London for the past 30 years.

In speaking of Strauss' "Tod und Ver-

Our Illustrations.

BRAVERY REWARDED.

AT the last meeting of the Royal Humane Society in New Zealand, application was made on behalf of T. R. McPherson (37 years) for rescuing Edward Crouch (38 years) from fire at Auckland on August 15th, 1909. The facts of the case were particularly meritorious. On the evening in question McPherson was passing the Strand Arcade, Auckland, when he heard a crash of glass and saw a man and flames issuing from the third shop on the side. McPherson ran into the Thistle Hotel and rang up the fire brigade. On gaining the street he saw a handbag fall from one of the windows, and on looking up he saw a man on the window sill, at the third storey. The man was calling for help. McPherson took his hat and coat off and scaled the fire escape; which only went half-way up the building, and he finished the ascent by placing his hands and feet in the nicks in the wall. After that he had a 12-inch cornice to mount and a 4-foot palisade, at the end of which was a turret. He mounted that, and was able to reach the man, who was badly burned and in great pain. Had the rescued man struggled there was nothing but certain death for both rescuer and rescued. The greatest bravery had been displayed, and it was decided that the highest award, the Stead gold medal, be granted. This is only the second occasion on which the Stead gold medal has been awarded, the former recipient being Staff Sergeant-Major Redmond, drill instructor, of Nelson.

Mr McPherson is also the holder of a silver medal from the Liverpool Shipwreck and Humane Society for having jumped into a deep part of the canal at Seaforth (Lancashire) and rescued a boy and a girl from drowning on 6th October, 1894. The boy, the younger of the two, fell into the canal, and his sister (aged 9) had plunged to the rescue and was in

danger herself of being drowned. Mr McPherson was some distance away when the accident occurred, and accomplished the rescue with great difficulty, owing to the waters of the canal being heavily charged with chemical refuse at the time.

FOR THE CAUSE OF CHARITY.**COMMERCIAL TRAVELLERS AND WHANGAREI.**

A record gathering of commercial travellers, who generously gave their services in the cause of charity, by organising and successfully carrying out the second annual concert in the Theatre Royal Whangarei, on the 18th inst. The programme presented on that occasion is regarded as one of the best ever witnessed in Whangarei. Instituted last year by the Commercial Travellers, last year's concert resulted in a benefit to the Whangarei Hospital of over £60, which amount it is considered will be equalled if not surpassed, this year. The various gentlemen in the picture foregrounded with the full acquiescence of their respective firms, to assist in this praiseworthy object, their action being greatly appreciated by the Whangarei residents.

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larung," a critic of "The Times" recently declared "one may point to many crude passages and feel that the orchestration is often needlessly violent with the violence of Tchaikovsky." It is really astonishing how respectable journals invariably become the vehicle for bigotry of this sort. One would think Strauss and Tchaikovsky were students at the Royal Academy.

Mr. Laurence Irving, like his elder brother Harry, has long been a serious student of his Shakespeare, and he proposes shortly essaying that role of Hamlet in which, it is said, no actor has ever been known completely to fail. It will be very interesting to compare Mr. Irving's reading, sure to be a thoughtful one, with those of his family predecessors in this many-sided role.

Miss Dolly Castles has been engaged by Mr. Arthur Collins as principal girl at Drury Lane at Christmas in the pantomime "Jack and the Beanstalk." The three leading comedians will be Mr. George Graves, Mr. George Barrett, and Mr. Harry Randall, and to them may be added Mr. Randy Lupino, the nimble dancer, and Mr. Arthur Conquest, a firmly-established favourite at Drury Lane. The question of who will play the part of the principal boy is not yet definitely settled. A new discovery of Mr. Collins is Miss Hilda Playfair, said to be a charming singer, for whom he confidently predicts a hearty welcome. Mr. Johnnie Danvers, the well-known comedian, will also appear.

The death is announced of Mr. H. W. Hopkins, who, as "Paul Rodney," wrote a number of popular songs, including "Calvary," "Alone on the Raft," "Ferryman John," "Love's Dreamland," "The Bells of St. Mary's," "Forging the Anchor," "In a Garden of Roses," "Sion," and "Resurrection Morning."

Some interesting compositions of Paganini will shortly be published for the first time. It has long been known that the famous violinist wrote some quartets for violin, viola, guitar, and cello, six of which have been for some time in the possession of Mr. Alfred Burnett, the MSS. being apparently in Paganini's own handwriting. Six movements from these quartets have now been arranged for violin and piano by Mr. Henry Tollhurst, and are now being published for the first time by Messrs. Ascherberg, Hopwood and Crew.