

Music and Drama.

By BAYREUTH

BOOKINGS.

(Dates subject to alterations.)

HIS MAJESTY'S THEATRE.

May 13 to May 23.—Von Arx Company.
May 27.—Wykeham-Noble Co.
June 10 to June 22.—Fortus and Talbot's Minstrels.
June 24 to July 6.—Pantomime.
July 22 to August 3.—"The Blue Bird."
September 30 to October 12.—Oscar Asche, Lily Brayton.

WELLINGTON OPERA HOUSE.

July 17 to 30.—J. C. Williamson, Ltd., Pantomime Co.
August 14 to 27.—"The Blue Bird," Co.
September 23 to October 2.—Plummer Deniston Company.
October 19 to November 2.—Oscar Asche, Lily Brayton Co.
November 5.—"Ben Hur" Co.

Futurist School of Music.

FOLLOWING the lead of poetry and painting, music now boasts of a Futurist School or doctrine.

This was announced recently by a leader of the movement to the Paris correspondent of the New York "Times." This leader thinks it will be safer for the present to remain anonymous. Present, and all past music, he declares, will be no longer subtle enough for modern ears, and he styles it "ancestral." "We no longer respond to the productions of the musicians of past centuries," he continues, "and must create a new art, corresponding with the highly-evolved sensitiveness of the present, as well as that of the future." All traditional forms and scales of the past are, therefore, to be cast aside, and the Futurists are composing in scales subdivided into ninths of a tone, and having seventy-two notes to the octave. This scale, it is explained, is only provisional, and will soon be made still more complicated to suit the refinements of the Futurist taste. For the new notation, which is called "comantic," special instruments are being made, and an exhibition will shortly be given of pianos, violins, and other stringed instruments, adjusted to the requirements of the first Futurist concert, which will be given in a few weeks' time, and is confidently expected to startle Paris. The leader of the Futurist musicians has no illusions as to the permanence of his system. "When the public begins to appreciate it," he says, "there will be no excuse even for the romantic school, which must give place to what may be called schismatic music, which will have twice as many notes and will eventually be succeeded by a scale of which each note will be one vibration more than that below it."

London Symphony Travel in Royal Style.

The tour of the London Symphony Orchestra of one hundred musicians under the foremost European conductor, Herr Arthur Nikisch, assumes grand opera proportions when the matter of counting the cost comes up for consideration. The minimum cost of each of the thirty-one concerts to be given in the United States and Canada is about £1000. Manager Howard Pew, of New York, has not only contracted for the most palatial special train the Pullman Company can furnish, but has also agreed to pay the steamship fares to and from Europe and all their hotel and other expenses while on tour. The United States Customs department has already started an investigation relative to the number of instruments the British orchestra will bring with them. To each member a blank has been forwarded which asks, among other questions, the name and number of each instrument, the name of the maker and the value. The strings owned by the members of the London Symphony are said to be the most valuable of any organisation in the world.

"The Seagull."

It is difficult to say what particular object Tchekhof had in view in writing "The Seagull," says a London writer in referring to this Russian play, which was produced at the Little Theatre last month. The story is distinctly subordinate to the characters; it is in the personages of the drama that both Tchekhof and ourselves find most interest. He paints for us "the literary

man" in Trigorin—the man in whose veins flows not blood, but printers' ink, who is everything and always looking for "copy," who treats all the incidents of life which he comes across, not as dramatic episodes with an innate power, to excite or please or wound us, but as materials for short or long stories. Masha attracts him not for herself, but as a curious type—"takes snuff and drinks vodka; always dressed in black." Even Nina, a girl who is thoroughly sympathetic to him, and with whom he fancies himself in love, is primarily the heroine of a sketch suggested by the seagull, which, shot by Constantine, he finds lying at her side. "A girl loving the lake like a seagull. A man comes along, sees her, and ruins her, like this seagull, just to amuse himself—a subject for a short story." Then there is Arcadina, the actress—a typical actress, who sees everything from the point of view of the footlights, growing old and yet pretending to herself that no one can play young parts as well as she can, in love with Trigorin, and frantically jealous of Nina, fond of her son. Constantine, and yet thoroughly out of touch with him and his ideals. Nina is the passionate, emotional, ambitious amateur, who wonders what fame and glory are like, and sacrifices herself and Constantine in order to appear on the Moscow stage and be near Trigorin. And once more there is Constantine Trepleff, a difficult, sensitive, proud young man, who belongs to the generation which is "knocking at our doors," who represents a form of decadence and perhaps symbolism, but who is both clever and able for all that; and who might assuredly have "arrived," if he had not lost all joy in life, in losing his beloved Nina. These are the main characters, but there are others equally typical.

"Judge Not."

Tchekhof does not allow himself to pass judgments on any of them. He tries to put them before us as he sees them; but whether they are good or bad, noble or mean, right or wrong, he will not or can not tell us. Trigorin, who is false to Arcadina, ruins Nina and drives Constantine to suicide, is evidently a man of charm, an amiable, good-tempered man who likes fishing better almost than writing, and certainly has no bad intentions towards anybody. Is Constantine Trepleff to be condemned for his decadent tastes and for his youthful aptitude in running after false gods? Oh, dear no! Tchekhof himself was too "new" for some of his Russian contemporaries and critics, and he does not laugh at Constantine, who is his younger self. Besides, he allows him to succeed in literature towards the end of the play. All he puts before us is that a young man of this complex and difficult temperament is likely to make a mess of life, and in all probability is foredoomed to suicide. Arcadina, the actress, wants to be a good mother to her son. She cannot help having an actress's vanity, combined, as that form of selfishness usually is, with a certain cruelty. Nor is Nina judged by her creator. She is simply analysed—the amateur who thought she had enough stuff in her to become a true professional, and who failed. Indeed, Nina is very tenderly drawn, as though Tchekhof was fully aware of her virginal charm. All the characters are treated in this objective, impersonal spirit. They represent phases of life and manners: slices, cut out of humanity. And equally, of course, there is no moral to the play. It works out uncomfortable, but then that is precisely what life does, in our usual experience. Life has no arranged "situations" or "curtains" or even any special "denouements." There is not much "action" in the piece. Such action as it has is mainly psychological—an illustration of character brought into relation with one another side so contrasted. If there is any general subject, it would seem to be, as Mr. G. Calderon says in his introduction to the play, the universal frustration of desire. Medvedenko is in love with Masha, Masha is in love with Constantine, Constantine is in love with Nina, Nina is in love with Trigorin, Pauline is in love with Dorn, and Dorn is in love with himself. No one gets what he or she may want.

"Advice to Young Organists."

Be patient.
Be persevering.
Remember the swell pedal is not the village pump handle, and don't use it as such. Discretion is a valuable commodity, and an organist (perhaps of all men) requires plenty of it.
Empty tin cans may make a great noise. Don't let your emptiness be known unto all men.
Should you be so unfortunate as to find that you are losing your "enthusiasm," resign your post at once! No man has any right to retain his office under such circumstances.
If your choir should have a tendency to sing somewhat out of tune, adding power (or reeds) to your accompaniment will not usually improve matters.
Giving the note to the boys is not "good form"; and probably indicates insufficient training.
"Blessed are they who expect nothing." If you are careful in your expectations, you may not be disappointed! —J. T. Field.

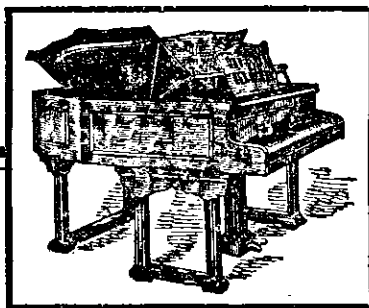
A New Venture.

Monopolism in anything, in any part of the world, as England's famous Chancellor of the Exchequer has asserted time after time, will ever prove disastrous to the general public. While there are a number of people who do not take a great deal of notice of any statement attributed to Lloyd George, there can be few who will dispute the fact that the keener competition among those who are catering for the wants of the general public, the better in every way will the general public be served. This fact is peculiarly apt at the present moment so far as theatrical affairs in Australasia are concerned. Although some may resent the use of the phrase "wants of the general public" in connection with the theatre, it is deliberately employed here on the hypothesis that yesterday's luxuries are to-day's necessities. However, the proof that the play-going public of New Zealand is fully conscious of the benefits they derive from competition amongst those catering for them, is forthcoming by the hearty welcome which they are ever ready to accord a new and enterprising theatrical firm.

Especially is this the case when the head, or heads, of that firm are known to them by the excellence of their work under older managements.
Messrs. Reginald Wykeham and Edward Nable, who have recently joined forces, will commence this venture in New Zealand with a season starting on Saturday next, 25th May, at His Majesty's Theatre, Auckland, their repertoire comprising several of America's musical farcical comedy successes. Neither of these two enterprising entrepreneurs will need any introduction to theatregoers. Reginald Wykeham's long association with Hugh J. Ward, both as producer and comedian, marks him as the very man to be at the head of a company whose primary object is to make the people laugh. Everyone will remember his performance of Colonel Tandy in the famous "Girl from Rector's," and his delightfully droll sketch of the Duke in "Mr. Hopkinson." Another factor which should go a long way towards Mr. Wykeham's welcome is the memory of how unsparingly he worked with Mr. Ward in his hospital campaign, being responsible for the programmes that netted such a great sum for the hospitals.
Edward Nable, who first appeared before New Zealanders under the famous Pollard direction, is another great favourite here. Though it is difficult to single out particular performances from the number of characters he has essayed, his Ichabod Bronson in "The Belle of New York," and Mr. Hoggensheimer in "The Girl from Kay's" are probably his two most popular portrayals. With two such capable actors as managers the new firm starts out under excellent auspices, and certainly with the heartiest good wishes of the play-going public throughout the Dominion.

The Auckland Competitions.

So much depends on the selection of adjudicators for competition festivals that the executive of the Auckland Competitions Society made exhaustive inquiries regarding the many applicants for these positions, and finally decided to engage Mr. W. Arundel Orchard, of Sydney, as the musical adjudicator, and Mr. W. L. Paine, of Melbourne, as adjudicator in the elocution section. Both of



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