

slone, who could be depended upon to give every satisfaction to competitors and to the public. (Applause.)

Royal Albert Hall.

The week's pictures at the Royal Albert Hall have been well up to the high standard which the public has come to expect at this popular place of amusement. The management continues to have a truly wonderful selection at each of the frequent changes of programme, the varied tastes of the audience are fully studied. A big attraction this week is a fine film entitled: "In Deadly Peril—Twist War and the Girl." This is an exceptionally thrilling and effectively staged drama, based on the Franco-Prussian war. It is well worth seeing.

Complimentary Concert.

A grand complimentary concert is to be tendered to the Misses Lizzie and Madeline Knight in the Town Hall, Auckland, on September 6th. Both these ladies are exceptionally well-known in local musical circles, and the concert will be given prior to their departure from Auckland to pursue their studies in the south. All the best local talent will figure in the programme, particulars of which will be published later.

Choral Society's Concert.

There was a large audience at the Town Hall last week, the occasion being the Choral Society's third concert of the 1911-12 season. The work presented was the oratorio "Abraham," written by the famous violinist and composer Bernhard Molique, whose principal publications consist of violin concertos, duos, quartets for stringed instruments, a symphony, two masses, and the work under notice. The composer was born October 7, 1803, at Nuremberg, and won a great name for himself by his virtuosity as a violinist during his concert tours through Germany. He was a pupil of Spohr, and led the Royal Band at Stuttgart for several years. In 1849 he went to England, and the same year appeared at the Philharmonic concert in his A minor concerto, and in 1860 his oratorio "Abraham" was performed at the Norwich Festival. Though this fine composition reveals the work of a master hand, sound musicianship, clear outline, and effective instrumentation, it loses interest by being unduly prolonged and overburdened with old style of writing and many intricate parts. There are no less than 34 recitatives, which become wearisome before the work terminates. The 14 concerted pieces are admirably written, and some are reminiscent of Spohr and Mendelssohn, while many of the solos are interesting and pleasing to interpret. Though the composition is written in a serious style and held in high esteem by musicians and critics, it is questionable whether the society acted wisely in including it in its programme for the season. To the public the work did not prove very interesting, which can be accounted for by reason of the technical character of the composition and the old style of form. So far as the choral writing is concerned, hardly anything could be better to test the skill of the choir and to make the singers proficient in taking leads, sing accurately, independently, and sustain long intervals. A praiseworthy interpretation was secured of the oratorio, the choruses as a rule were admirably delivered, and the solos were in capable hands. To Miss Gertrude Hunt the soprano music was allotted, and but for a little nervousness occasionally at the commencement of her solos, she acquitted herself with distinction. She sang very nicely in the recitatives, while in the solos the singer sang freely and with pleasing vocal quality, and displayed a nice legato, good feeling for rhythm, and suitable phrasing.

Miss Clara Bernhard was entrusted with the contralto numbers, and in them displayed her pleasing contralto voice to good advantage. She gave a clearly expressed performance of "And the Lord," sang in flexible style the effectively-written aria, "They Kept Not the Law," gave with emphasis "Fear Not, for God Hath Heard Thy Voice," and notwithstanding the orchestral interference performance of some of the bars of her recitative, "Thus Said the Lord," the singer sang most acceptably. Most of the work for the tenor, Mr. John Fuller, consisted of 14 recitatives, which he declaimed in a praiseworthy manner. The baritone, Mr. H. B. Coney, gave studied and acceptable deliveries of his ten recitatives; he sang with taste the aria "Lead Me, O Lord," but was a little strained in the high intervals of "Praise the Lord"; he gave with suitable expression the flowing solo, "Let There Be No Strife," and threw much spirit and

animation into his delivery of "Aria, Arise"; The concerted number, "Go In Peace," received an adequate performance by selected singers from the chorus, and the trio, "Let All Those Rejoice," was effectively rendered by Mrs. Sutherland, Messrs. Walter and Astley.

There was a fine representation of the choir, and the singers gave every evidence that a good amount of work had been devoted to the preparation of the choruses. With few exceptions the leads were firmly given, the release of notes good, while enunciation, phrasing, intonation and time received careful attention. A capital rendering was secured of "Lord, Bless Thy People," Very Mendelssohnian in style is the chorus "O How Great," which received a very satisfactory performance. The sustained intervals were admirably prolonged by the sopranos and basses, and the middle voices moved with delightful freedom. This was one of the nicest sung numbers of the evening. In the male chorus, "Arise, Let Us Go By Night," the singers got beyond their depth, and gave anything but a satisfactory reading of this intricate setting. Generally the orchestra acquitted itself creditably, which was led by Miss Whitelaw. Dr. W. E. Thomas conducted ably, and the subscribers' wants were looked after by Mr. Scott Colville, the secretary.

At the next concert Mascagni's "Cavalleria Rusticana" and Gade's "Ed King's Daughter" will be the works performed.

"The Dandies."

"The Dandies," after a few nights at His Majesty's, returned to the concert chamber of the Town Hall on Monday night, where they will appear until further notice. Their return to their old haunts was signified by a complete change of programme, and it proved to be one of the best entertainments; this clever company has yet produced during their long and successful season in Auckland. The fun was irresistible, and the audience was plainly delighted. The more serious solos, duet, and concerted numbers were excellent of their kind, and the singers were repeatedly recalled.

"The Dandies" will continue to amuse large audiences at the Town Hall, each night throughout the week.

Lyric Theatre.

The current programme at the Lyric is another evidence of the up-to-date service which the management of this theatre have secured. Each week sees a large and varied programme of the films, which are projected clearly and steadily on the screen by the very latest and most modern moving-picture machinery. The accommodation in the Lyric is comfortable, and the pictures are beyond question, and the music furnished by the Symphony Orchestra completes the list of attractions which draw big audiences each night in the week.

Pianola and Orchestra.

Last month an unusual concert was given at Queen's Hall, London. The London Symphony Orchestra played and Herr Nikisch conducted the Fifth Symphony of Tchaikovsky. So far it was not unusual; but in addition Grieg's Piano Concerto was played, and the soloist was a pianola. It was a full-scale themodist pianola attacked to a Weber grand piano, and at the pianola sat Mr Easthope Martin, who was several times recalled at the close.

Strictly speaking, poetic justice would have required that the machine should have been brought to the front to shake hands with the conductor. It is certainly wonderful, and possibly to hear a concerto played like this is better than to hear it played by an inferior pianist. It can reproduce the most subtle variations of force and the most delicate modifications of pace, says a London critic. What it can not do is to give the human element of variety of tone, colour, or emphasis an inner part. It is strange how temperamental the most unemotional playing by ten male or female fingers is in comparison. To listen to it teaches us how great in the part played by tone colour. It was wonderful, but it was not the highest form of musical art.

"Sinbad the Sailor."

The following tour has been fixed by J. C. Williamson, Ltd., for the pantomime "Sinbad the Sailor":—Auckland, August 31st to September 14th; Gisborne, September 16th and 17th; Napier, September 18th and 20th; Dannevirke, September 21st; Masterton, September 23rd; Wanganui, September 24th and 25th; New Plymouth, September 26th and 27th; Stratford, September 28th; Eltham,

September 30th; Palmerston North, September 31, October 1st and 2nd; Christchurch, October 3th to 10th; Timaru, October 21st; Dunedin, October 22nd to 31st; Invercargill, November 1st and 2nd.

Stray Notes.

Michael Morton, the Canadian, who resides in London permanently, and gives the world a very good play each little while, is about to have his latest work, "Behind the Curtain," produced. It is written in four acts, having scenes both in and out of England.

For the Oscar Asche productions in Australia the stalls and circle prices were raised from 6/ to 7/6, and the latter price will probably be the tariff for the Dominion.

Amusements.

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