

gentlemen who sang on that occasion. Mr. Shawcross sang in excellent taste, and possessed the best cultivated tenor voice I

Salvation Army barracks) was too small, besides being a bad room for sound, and the musical people had to put up with a large auction mart, belonging to Mr. Wm. Courtney, which was, however, an atrociously bad room for sound. The Philharmonic Society performed MacFarren's "Lady of the Lake" in that room, but I cannot remember that they ever attempted to give another performance there. In those "dark days" they were reduced to performing a Christmas concert (the "Creation") in the Wesleyan Church. I suppose a period of nearly two years must have elapsed between the destruction of the Oddfellows' Hall and the opening of the Alexander Theatre. During that period both chorus and orchestra were several times on the point of going to pieces, but were kept in existence by the energy and characteristic obstinacy of Mr. Drew, who insisted that however dark the aspect of affairs might be, there were good



Wrigglesworth and Binns, Photo., Wellington.

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have heard in New Zealand. When I last heard of them, Mr. T. Wildman was at Whangarei, Mr. Beale at the Thames, Mr. Lyell in Nelson, Mr. Drew in Palmerston North; Mr. Bennett and Dr. Murray Gibbes went away to Australia years ago; the Trimble brothers have wandered away Heaven knows where; only a small proportion of the original orchestral society remains rooted to the soil of Taranaki.

A sensational incident occurred on the night of that concert, which had a most unfortunate effect on musical affairs in New Plymouth for some time afterwards. The concert was played to a large audience, and went off excellently, and about two hours after it was over the theatre, in which it had taken place (the Oddfellows' Hall), was destroyed by fire. There was now no room in New Plymouth suitable for concerts, for the Freemasons' Hall (afterwards the



Burton Bros., Photo.,

Dunedin.

MISS WILDMAN.

times coming, when they would have a really good theatre to perform in.

The good times came, with the advent of