



[BY ORPHEUS.]

"Orpheus" will be glad to hear from those managers of theatrical companies touring New Zealand who desire that the public shall know the movements of the companies. Any information as to dates, etc., will be acknowledged in these columns, as well as any other items of interest to the theatrical world. All letters should be addressed—"Orpheus," SPORTING AND DRAMATIC REVIEW, Vulcan Lane, Auckland.

SIGFRIED WAGNER's opera "Der Barenhauser," successfully produced at Munich, was repeated a week later at Leipzig and well received, the composer being called again and again before the curtain. The son is congratulated by an eminent critic upon having steered clear of his father's later manner, and written an opera, not a music drama, adding, however, that this will make strict Wagnerians shudder (perhorrescere)! Still, the great man himself was wont to advise young composers to begin with a singspiel (musical comedy) before trying their hands on a full-fledged music drama, and the son may, perhaps, be obeying the paternal precept.

AMALIE JOACHIM, a celebrated singer of German songs, died in February last at the age of 60. She was not related to the superb violinist of the same name, who is happily still living and playing with unabated vigor and skill. It is many years since Amalie Joachim last sang in London, but her voice was still in wonderful preservation when she last sang in Berlin some five or six years ago. Her historical recitals, in which she traced the development of German song from the folk tunes of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries down to our own times, were musical feats of a unique character. How popular they were in Germany is amply proved by the fact that the songs of her repertoire were published in four volumes, arranged in chronological order and edited by Dr. Reimann under the name of "Das Deutsche Lied."

It has not often happened in recent years that a composer has sung the principal part in one of his own operas. This feat was accomplished the other day by Herr Adolf Wallnofer, who took the hero's part in his opera, "Eddystone," on the occasion of its production at Breslau. In old days, when operas were not such serious matters as they are now, it was not unusual for a singer to write an opera round his own personality. Garcia, the father of Malibran and Pauline Viardot, sang in many operas of his own composition. Balfe began life as a baritone singer, but did not often take part in his own works. Soon after "The Siege of Rochelle," which laid the foundation of his English reputation, he gave up singing for composition, but he sang in "Catherine Grey" (produced at Drury Lane in 1837) and in "Joan of Arc" (produced in 1838), while, in "Diadeste," he proved his versatility by taking, at a moment's notice, the part of Henry Phillips, the greatest baritone of his day.

MUSICIANS generally admit that Mascagni's opera, "Iris," is not merely the finest piece of work that he has yet done, but an opera of remarkable power and originality, the beauties of which are by no means fully to be appreciated at a first hearing. The libretto of "Iris" deals with the development of ideas rather than the statement of facts, and therefore imposes a far severer test upon the composer than the dramas of incident which he has hitherto been in the habit of setting. It is characteristic of Italian taste that Mascagni's latest work should have been received with comparative coldness, while the melodramatic extravagances of his earlier operas were lauded to the skies. However, in musical matters, the Italians have always been monotheists, and, at the present moment, the god of their idolatry is Lorenzo Perosi. Perhaps this statement should be discounted by the fact that each master has his faction. The Vatican backs up Perosi; the Quirinal sticks to Mascagni.

A NEW FRENCH PLAY.—At the Odeon, Paris, in February, "Antibel" (written by Messrs Emile Pouvillon and Armand Artois) was produced with brilliant success. It is a dramatic version of one of those strong and subtle studies of peasant life, for which M. Pouvillon is famous. The story is simple, but intensely dramatic. Antibel (a widower) lives alone on his farm with his aged mother. His only son is serving in the army at Tonkin. Antibel resolves to marry his servant Jane, who is as hard-working and honest as she is pretty and gay. His mother opposes and his son leaves his letters unanswered. He, nevertheless, marries and is happy with his wife, who proves a faithful and devoted help-mate. The son (Jan) returns from Tonkin, curses his stepmother, and would fly the farm, but is prostrated by fever. He is tenderly nursed by Jane and her sister (Mette), and falls madly in love with his stepmother. The grandmother, discovering this, seeks to keep peace by persuading Antibel that Jan is in love with Mette. One day Jan declares his passion to Jane, and seeks to take her in his arms. At the indignant cries of the insulted wife, Antibel flies to her rescue and finds his son making love to his wife. With scythe uplifted he is about to slay the unnatural son when, at the joint supplications of the grandmother and his wife, he consents to spare Jan, but banishes him for ever. This is the entire plot of the play, which, however, yields abundant opportunity for subtle studies of character. The ferocious hatred and irrepressible jealousy of the grandmother, the transition of Jan from a passion of dislike to a passion of love, the homeliness and simplicity of Farmer Antibel, and the insouciance of his young

wife, are all admirably portrayed. Madame Tessandier as the stern old grandmother, Madame Saurel as the light hearted but virtuous Jane, M. Chelles as Antibel (the kindly farmer driven to fury by his worthless son), and M. Darivol as the unscrupulous Jan, all acted splendidly.

MR W. H. WEBBE'S PIANO AND ORGAN SCHOOL.—On Thursday, May 11, the 88th open evening for visitors was thoroughly enjoyed by the crowded audience which one always meets in Mr Webbe's handsome and tastefully equipped music-room. Piano quartettes nicely rendered were: (A) Nicolai's "Merry Wives of Windsor," by the clever juveniles (Misses E. and G. Spooner, M. Webbe, and M. Scott), and (B) Mendelssohn's "Midsummer Night's Dream," by Misses Garlick, Lambourne, Spooner, and Mr Walton. Piano duos: Wach's "Capricante," by Misses McMaster and Edwards; Alberti's "Le Nord," by Misses Squire and Teasdale. Piano solos: "Andante and Rondo Capriccioso" (Mendelssohn), brilliantly played by Miss Flossie Garlick, and Chopin's "Polonaise in A," well rendered by Mr A. Walton. In an organ solo (A) "Ave Maria" (Graham) and (B) "Gloria" (Bonheur), Miss A. Stone acquitted herself well. Mr C. Macfarlane's banjo and mandolin solos gave great pleasure and proved him an expert performer on these instruments. Armstrong's "Courier Fantasia," Ascher's "Alice, Where Art Thou," and Hensen's "Cradle Song" were neatly executed and well received. The Rev. S. A. Goldstein played a 'cello solo, "Nocturne" (by Burgmuller). Miss F. Maxwell sang "For Sweet Love's Sake" (Cobb) and Bernard's "I Trust You Still." Mr A. L. Edwards scored as usual with Faure's "Les Rameaux" and E. Newton's "Ailsa Mine." Mr W. Manning chose two of his best songs, viz., Emmanuel's "The Desert" and Rockel's "The Storm Fiend." I notice that I have omitted Miss G. Spooner's admirable piano solos (A), Paderewski's "Chant du Voyageur"

"Atlas" has passed this story (from Melbourne Punch) on to me—"Sydney has one M.P. who is the father of two dozen children (not out). He is credited with the intention of raising a constituency for himself." Perhaps "Atlas" has handed on the yarn because he wants to give Charley Fanning a "friendly lead," and he knows the artist will find it here.

Writing from Rangoon, Burmah, Frank Hatter (the popular American performer) says that the Flying Jordans have had a very successful Eastern tour under the able management of Edward Geach. The Jordans' tent holds 4000 people, and at Calcutta, on an occasion when Lord and Lady Curzon visited the show, over 8000 people had to go away without seeing the performance.

Our Napier correspondent writes—On Thursday night last, the Moore-Roberts Dramatic Company commenced a short season at the Theatre Royal, "The Prodigal Father" introducing them to Napier theatregoers. The efforts of the company met with hearty recognition from a full house, despite the fact that the night was a most unpleasant one. "Struck Oil" followed on Friday to another good audience, and on Saturday night, when "Forty-Nine" was billed as the attraction, large numbers rolled up only to meet with disappointment, however, for the manager informed intending participants of the evening's performance that Miss Moore was, through illness, unable to fulfil her promises. The lady was anxious to appear, but her medical adviser considered it would be advisable for her to forgo her engagement for that evening. "David Garrick" and "The Chinese Question" are underlined for to-night (Monday, May 15), "Forty-Nine" and "Hans the Boatman" to follow on Tuesday and Wednesday nights.

On Tuesday, May 2, the Sydney Criterion was packed by the vast audience which attended the complimentary matinee tendered to Madame

A notice of the Auckland Mandolin, Banjo, and Guitar Concert has been unavoidably crowded out, but will appear next week.

Charles Arnold will be in Sydney next August when he will show "What Happened to Jones." Melbourne will be visited during Cup Carnival time.

"Woman and Wine" has proved such a great success at Melbourne Theatre Royal that the contemplated changes will not occur for some little time to come.

Paul Cinquerali is astonishing the natives of Melbourne with his wonderful juggling. Harry Rickards describes him as "the most finished performer in the English-speaking world."

On Wednesday in last week the Auckland public had the first opportunity of hearing the Toy Concert Company at the Opera House. At Dunedin, at Christchurch, and at Wellington musical people pronounced Mr Ernest Toy to be a remarkable young violinist, and said that Miss Renee Lees was a pianist very far above anybody that had played in New Zealand recently. With such high reputations to support them, it was naturally expected that the music-loving Aucklanders would flock to hear the two young musicians. But after all that had been said about the attraction good music had for our citizens, it was disappointing to find very indifferent houses on Wednesday and Thursday. On Friday there was a far better attendance, while on Monday last—when the prices were lowered—there was quite a respectable audience. I am sadly afraid we do not appreciate high-class music and singing, or surely we should have given the Toy Company a far handsomer reception. On Wednesday, Mr Ernest Toy delighted the small, though critical, band of listeners by his most skilful execution, accurate harmony, and very soulful expression. The young player at once confirmed all the good things that had been said of him, and throughout displayed a brilliance of style that is little less than marvellous in such a youth. Mr Toy played Gounod and Sarasate's "Faust Fantasia," Mendelssohn's "Allegro from E Minor Concerto," and a fantasia on "The Old Folks at Home." As encores the violinist played Paganini's "Serenade" (a charming thing), a sweetly pretty "Caprice" by Ganz, and Tolhurst's "Berceuse." For everything he received warm applause from those who appreciated his beautiful playing. On Thursday night Mr Toy was eminently successful with Bazzini's "Witches Danos," bowing with exquisite skill and charming everybody with the delightfully bewitching melody. In Wieniawski's "Souvenir de Moscow" the performer brilliantly executed all the difficult passages, certainly showing in this piece his complete mastery over the violin. On Friday Mr Toy gave a splendid rendering of Felicien David's "Andante and Scherzo Capriccioso," and, in response to a vigorous encore, played the ever-popular "Intermezzo" (from "Cavalleria Rusticana"). The intermezzo was a most artistic piece of work, and I must say the same of Mr Toy's playing of Vieuxtemps' "Reverie." He played with intense feeling, and on Friday seemed to have recovered from the depression of spirits which rather marked one or two pieces earlier in the week. Throughout Mr Toy was accompanied by Miss Renee Lees, the wonderfully-clever little pianist. These two young musicians are in perfect sympathy, and to this I attribute some of the success of the violinist. Miss Lees is a player with remarkable ability, admirable taste, and very great technical skill. Probably only Mr Toy himself can recognise to the full the assistance given him by the accompaniments of Miss Lees. The young artiste has a beautiful touch (firm, yet soft), an exceptionally graceful style, and a brilliancy and certainty of execution almost unexpected in one so young. On the opening night Miss Lees played Liszt's arrangement of Mendelssohn's "Wedding March," Moskowski's "Valse in E Major," and Liszt's "Rhapsodie, No. 8." On Thursday the pianist selected Schumann's "Faschingssohwauk," Raff's "Cachouca," and Ketten's "Caprice." Each of the numbers was played in perfect style, and, in response to an encore for the "Cachouca," Miss Lees gave a brilliant playing of Chopin's "Valse in D." For the delectation of the people on Friday evening the pianist chose "Faust" (Gounod—Liszt), Chopin's "Ballade in A Flat," and a Paganini—Liszt "Study." The young player was most cordially applauded every evening, and she most thoroughly deserved all the praise she received. The contralto of the company, Miss Maud Dalrymple, has a lovely voice. Her lower notes are very pure and true, while the higher notes are not in the least bit forced. During the week Miss Dalrymple sang Sainton-Dolby's "Out on the Rocks," Blumenthal's "Sunshine and Rain," Molloy's "Home, Dearie, Home," Behrend's "The Cry of the Little Ones," Sullivan's "The Lost Chord," Cowen's "Promise of Life," Lawrence Kellie's "Douglas Gordon," Behrend's "Crossing the Bar," "The Masquerade," "May or May Not," and the quaint Manx lullaby "Husheen." In all her songs Miss Dalrymple displayed very great artistic talent, and in every case charmed the audience by her tasteful singing. The soprano, Miss Alice Simmons, was also very successful in pleasing her hearers. On the first night, in Torry's "Queen of the Night" and Ganz's "Sing, Sweet Bird," she had ample scope to display her vocal powers, and, as an encore to the last-named song, gave "Comin' Thro' the Rye," with an archness that was irresistible. On Thursday Miss Simmons' songs were—Cowen's "The Children's Home," Parker's "Houpla Carina," and Millard's "Waiting," while on Friday she sang "Dear Bird of Winter" (Ganz) and "Poor Wandering One" (from "The Pirates of Penzance." She also sang "The Miller and the Maid" and "Annie Laurie" as encores. Mr Marcus, who has a very sweet and cultivated tenor voice, sang on Wednesday night only in the trio, "O, Memory." This old favorite was sung very nicely indeed by Misses Simmons, Dalrymple, and Mr Marcus, and it is a pity we have not had the advantage of hearing the tenor more often. Monday's concert I shall have to leave until next week. The company make their last appearance to-night (Thursday), and I hope to be able to record a bumper house.



Photo by Standish and Freese, Christchurch. MISS RENEE LEES, The young Pianist of the Ernest Toy Concert Company.

and (B) O'Neill's "Rondo Capriccio." Mr W. H. Webbe presented the Trinity College certificates won by his pupils at the last examination, as follows:—Senior division (with honors), Miss Flossie Garlick; pass, Mr Arthur Walton and Miss Winifred Lambourne. Intermediate division (pass): Misses Laura Grace Squire, Edith Annie Spooner, Ella Searchfield, Mabel E. L. Bold, and May Edwards. Primary division: May Louisa Barker. Mr Webbe may well feel proud of his list, which fully sustains the high reputation of his school.

GREENROOM GOSSIP.

[BY PAUL PRY.]

George Grossmith's burlesque, "Great Caesar," will not be produced at the London Opera Comique after all. It will be staged at the Avenue, with Miss Ada Reeves, Miss Decima Moore, and Willie Edouin in the chief parts.

I have received from Manager Callender, of the Heller Company, newspaper clippings announcing the splendid business done by the clever illusionists and the other members of the company. At the Victoria Theatre, Newcastle, N.S.W., big houses were the rule whenever the company performed.

"For She is the Belle of New York" is the popular air in Melbourne just now. Everybody either whistles, hums, or tries to sing it. Oh that we might have it in Auckland for a "short season," for the melody would, perhaps, give the small boys a rest from the Chard whistle. A change is good for us all, you know.

During one of Dante's performances at St. George's Hall, Melbourne, when "The Great" started incinerating Mdlle. Edmunda, a lady in the audience called out "Oh! The wretch," and as soon as the fair partner of Dante's wonderful feats appeared safe and sound at the wings the excited dame loudly cried "Goodness me! She has come together again."

Emily Soldene. A big programme was got through. It included the third scene of the second act of "The Merry Wives of Windsor," by George Rignold's Company; the first act of "Lord and Lady Algy" by the Brough Company. Then Harry Rickards sang his immensely popular song, "That is a Woman's Way." Harry Rickards was followed by a debutante, Miss Ida Chantrey, who gave a capital imitation of John Coleman singing "I 'Appened to be There" in "The French Maid"; Rodda Percy, who sang "Come Back to Me"; Philip Newbury and Julius Knight, the latter reciting Owen Meredith's "The Portrait" in splendid style. Madame Spada was suffering from a severe cold, so the scene from "Faust" had to be omitted. As a finale the first act of "Les Cloches de Corneville," with Madame Emily Soldene as Serpolette, was given. On making her appearance the beneficiary received a tremendous ovation, and it was some time before the people ceased applauding and allowed the piece to go on. "Just Look at This" was warmly encored, and at the finish of the act Madame Soldene gave "The Kissing Song" (from "Genevieve de Brabant"), which was also vociferously re-demanded. At the conclusion Madame Soldene appeared amidst a heap of beautiful floral tributes. She made a pretty and grateful little speech, and, after thanking those who had taken part in the performance, said that though she was going to London the best of it was that she would return to Sydney, where she had spent so many happy hours.

The Henry Dramatic Company open at the Opera House on Saturday night.

Lucifer has departed for Newcastle, N.S.W., where he joins Harmston's Circus for the tour through India, China, and Japan.

The Gaiety Company has been playing to good houses all through the past week, and as there is always something new and fresh for the audience, it is not surprising to find the City Hall well filled. Last night the first part of the programme was devoted to refined minstrelsy, which looks likely to catch on.