



[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.

HAYDN'S "Creation" seems doomed to suffer at the hands of typographers. Not long since "softly purring" was printed "softly pushing," and now *The Manawatu Times*, per an Auckland journal, says:—"Miss Lorrigan's reputation was fully sustained last evening, and the rendering of the portions of the work allotted to her left nothing to be desired. Undoubtedly her best effort was the delightful and popular solo, 'On Mighty Saul,' of which number the singer gave a most artistic rendering." Whether the "mighty pens" of the critics, or the mighty printers, are to blame for making Saul one of "The Creation" prophets does not appear, but that Miss Lorrigan's singing of "The Creation" music, and especially of "On Mighty Pens" is deserving of the highest praise no one who has heard her will deny.

THE MATINEE SOCIETY.—At St. Sepulchre's Parish Hall, on Wednesday in last week, the new enterprise was most successfully launched. The hall was crowded with an appreciative audience, and a well-selected programme faithfully and capably rendered. Miss Batger, to whom belongs the credit of promoting the matinee series, appropriately opened the concert with Chopin's "Fantasia Impromptu," in the execution of which she displayed high qualities of both technique and taste, deservedly meeting with an enthusiastic reception. Madame Chambers, in excellent voice, won great favor with Rubinstein's charming "Reveries" and Schubert's "The Inquirer" and "Faith in the Spring." Readers will doubtless remember Miss Evelyn Wyman's brilliant success at the Auckland Exhibition competitions, when she easily carried off the gold medal for piano-playing. Her contributions on this occasion were a selection from Beethoven's Sonata op. 2, No. 3, and two *morceaux* by Chopin, all of which were tastefully rendered and loudly applauded. A trio (by Lachner) for violin, piano, and viola was artistically played by Misses A. Stephenson, A. L. Colgrove, and Dr Cox. Miss Stephenson's violin solo, the *andante* from Beethoven's Sonata op. 2, No. 12, received artistic treatment and displayed an admirable technique. The society, after so brilliant an initial success, is assured of popularity and should do real service in cultivating public taste for high-class music. I should mention that encores are vetoed in order to keep the programme within bounds.

MISS AMY CASTLES.—Many of the world's greatest artists have striven and struggled for years ere they could measure their success with that of the young girl whose public musical career is but some three months old. A very capable Australian critic sums her up as follows:—"Of the young Victorian's voice as it is, only one opinion can be expressed—it is a great voice. Of its possibilities there may be many diverse opinions. Miss Castles was hailed in Melbourne as a dramatic soprano, for instance. Whatever the possibilities, she scarcely has the 'dramatic' quality as yet, so far as may be judged from the items selected by her for last night's performance. Her voice displays great power and delicious purity—every note is clear, full, and rich. She sings seemingly without the slightest effort, as a bird would. But these excellences do not constitute a dramatic soprano. She requires a temperament that embodies every note of human passion. Her voice must not merely soar with the lark or skim lightly over the *fin de siècle* sentimentalities that constitute the modern ballad. It must plunge into the maelstrom of passion—he whirled away in maddening eddies. One does not say that Miss Castles' voice is incapable of this, but, taking her chosen songs into consideration, it is hard to pronounce as to whether she is the true 'dramatic' soprano or not. Whatever European training may do there is the voice to commence with, and that is the great thing. Perhaps Miss Castles gave the most distinct hint of power in Tosti's 'Good-bye,' though the same evidence of surprising robustness was given in 'The First Love Song' (composed for her by G. S. de Chanest). Goring Thomas' ex-*visite* 'Wind in the Trees' and Cowen's 'Lovely Spring' gave ample illustration that her voice is delightfully flexible and under control. Hope Temple's 'When We Meet' confirmed that impression." In the same critique (*Bathurst National Advocate*, August 19) Miss Maud Hewson receives favorable notice: "The reception accorded to the contralto was a most gratifying one. She repeated Rindogger's 'Joyous Life' and, after that rippling little piece, gave a most artistic interpretation of Behrend's 'Daddy.' Miss Hewson selected for her second item Gluck's 'Ohe Faro,' and artistically met all the demands of that exacting aria. Her encore number was 'The Children's Home' (Cowen), sung with all the artistic effect with which Miss Hewson is able to treat ballad compositions." Mons. Henri Staell, the eminent violinist, assisted at the same concert and scored a signal success, so our New Zealand contralto is in good company and holding her own brilliantly.

THE HELLERS MAHATMA COMPANY has had a very successful tour in Queensland. After visiting Rockhampton, Mount Morgan, and Brisbane, the company leave for India and the East early next month.

GREENROOM GOSSIP.

[BY PAUL PRY.]

The Flying Jordans commenced a season at Sydney, on Saturday last, in the Benevolent Society grounds.

McAdoo's Georgia Minstrels, at the conclusion of their Melbourne season, make a tour of Western Australia.

Miss Elizabeth Watson goes to the Old Country at the conclusion of the "For England" season at the Melbourne Royal.

The Payne Family Bellringers are having very good times in South Africa, according to Capetown journals forwarded to me.

Seymour Hicks and F. G. Latham have given the title of "With Flying Colours" to their breezy, stirring drama, produced at the London Adelphi last month.

Miss Ada Crossley has been engaged for several of the Royal Choral Society's concerts next season. The Australian contralto will have a long holiday in Scotland this autumn.

"Secret Service" has been drawing big houses to Sydney Her Majesty's, and The Firm's new "juvenile lead" (Mr Thomas Kingdon) has, as Captain Thorne, made a most favorable impression.

The Steele-Payne Bellringers have been having a good time in the country districts. Next week they journey down the east coast, playing at Gisborne, and then on to Napier and the South.

According to London files, Mrs Patrick Campbell and Mr Forbes Robertson were to open their season at the Prince of Wales on Saturday next with Mr C. B. Fernald's romantic Japanese play, "The Moonlight Blossom."

At the London Palace of Varieties the biograph shows Dreyfus at Rennes. Very great difficulty was experienced by the cameraman in getting his snapshots, for the prison authorities were quite extra careful. Hundreds flocked to the Palace to get even a glimpse of the "martyr of the age."

Arthur Shirley and G. R. Sims' new play, "In London Town," is well spoken of by London critics. It is a melodrama in Dagonet's best style. The plot is woven on an Essex farm and is unravelled through Park Lane, the Serpentine, a workhouse yard, and thence to Soho. Miss Clara Jucks, Miss Ina Goldsmith, Mr Frank Fisher, and Mr Christopher Walker all have congenial parts to play.

G. R. Sims has collaborated with Leonard Merrick in the farcical comedy "His Second Youth," which has lately been produced with success at the London Vaudeville. In the cast are Misses Ellis Jeffreys, Juliette Neville, Millie Legarde, Florence Wood, and Messrs George Giddens, Fred. Eastman, Frank Atherley, and George Arlias. "G.R." has also written the book of musical novelty (the music composed by Clarence Corri), in which Dan Leno cuts high jinks as a private enquiry agent.

The Sydney *Morning Herald*, in its report of the Tivoli Theatre fire, says:—"When Mr Rickards purchased the Tivoli Hotel and Theatre from the Mutual Life Association, about six months ago, the insurances then existing were taken over and were current at the time of the fire. The total amount on the buildings and fittings of the theatre is £8000, which is spread over several companies. The scenery and wardrobes, however, were uninsured. Nearly £3000 worth of pantomime appointments were lost, including the properties of 'Jack, the Giant Killer,' fully twenty sets of ballet costumes (each set averaging sixteen to twenty dresses), and fully twenty-six 'first-part' dresses. The last lot of

lease of the Palace Theatre, pending instructions from Mr Rickards as to what he should do. The company opened at the Palace last night (12th September), and met with a sympathetic reception."

Mr A. H. Whitehouse has been experiencing splendid business at Opotiki with his kinematographic exhibition. On Saturday he shows at Te Puke, and on Monday he is due at Tauranga.

I hear Miss Gertie Champion has returned to Australia. This clever young artiste has been on the temporary-retired list for some past in Wellington, owing to an accident she met with while acting. I am sure Miss Champion's many admirers will join me in wishing her better luck.

"The Georgia Magnet" has been attracting good houses at every place she has visited. At Waihi, on Tuesday and last night, the people rolled up in goodly numbers. To-night (Thursday) and to-morrow (Friday) Miss Abbott shows at Hamilton, and on Saturday and Monday she is at Cambridge.

On Saturday night the City Hall was packed very closely. The occasion was the last appearance of the Keziab Sisters and of Mr Manuel Woodson ("the silver streak of perpetual motion"). The greeting the clever lady acrobats received was most cordial, and Mr Woodson's reception was not in any way less hearty. On Monday night there was another very big house to welcome the new artists engaged by Mr P. R. Dix—the Misses Rose and Mabel Leslie and Mr D. H. Caston. The Leslie Sisters sang some capital songs and exhibited very excellent humor in their sketches, while their dancing was exceptionally clever. Their popularity was at once established, and during their visit to Auckland the City Hall is sure to be well patronised. Mr D. H. Caston, the other new-comer, sang some very taking character songs, and met with a tremendous

WELL KNOWN PEOPLE HERE!

COMEDIAN D.H. CASTON AND DANCER

Photo by Barroni & Co., Melbourne.

An Australian artist—I won't mention his name—has been writing to a friend about the London music halls. He calls them poor shows, and thinks the drinking and smoking allowed in the auditorium most objectionable.

"Faust," at the Melbourne Alexandra, went very well after the first night. So well, indeed, that the management ran the opera for a second week, as it was found that, after all, grand opera was much appreciated by the public.

Miss Blanche Ferrar (sister of Miss Ada Ferrar of "The Sign of the Cross" Company) has been engaged for the autumn drama at Royal Drury Lane. Miss Blanche Ferrar was highly praised for her work in "The Manoeuvres of Jane."

The takings at the Sydney Theatre Royal during the first week of "The Gay Lord Quex" exceeded even the amount received during the first week of "The Second Mrs Tanqueray," when Robert Brough first produced Pinero's sensational drama.

"Peter Quince" in Melbourne *Punch*, speaking of Mdile. Trebelli, says—"Mdile. Trebelli comes to us in the fullness of her powers, and her song-recitals are not only a treat to old and young, but have a special educational value to all young aspirants for musical honors."

"El Capitan" is said to be a very amusing comic opera. It is by J. P. de Sousa, and kept the London Lyric well packed during the hot weather through July and in the beginning of August. "El Capitan" was to be followed by another musical play called "Wange," which met with a gratifying reception in America. When the lessee of the Lyric (Mr de Wolf-Hopper) gives up possession next month, a comic opera, entitled "Floradora," will be produced—the book is by Owen Hall and the music is composed by Leslie Stuart.

wardrobe used in 'Arcadia' was burnt; and the wardrobe mistress had in hand the whole of the silks and satins under preparation for the next 'first part.' A year of Mr Alfred Clint's work was destroyed, as well as the whole of Mr and Mrs Rickards' theatrical wardrobe. In fact, the entire stage furniture and plant have been lost, on which no insurance had been effected. The members of Mr Rickards' company were all more or less heavy losers. Mr and Mrs English, who only arrived in Sydney on Saturday, and had made their first appearance, lost everything with the exception of two cornets. Mrs English was doubly unfortunate. While playing in Melbourne she had her wardrobe burnt at the house she was staying. A new one was necessitated, and this was destroyed at the Tivoli. Messrs Spry and Austin lost their wardrobe, and scenery, and properties. Messrs G. W. Hunter and Paul Pelham were like sufferers, and lost a large amount of original music never published. This remark applies to all the company, as the music-room was destroyed. By a pure accident one ballet set was saved. Generally the ballet girls, on completing their business, take their wardrobe into the mistress's room, but, having a late turn in the programme the performance before the fire, they happened to leave their dresses in their own room, which luckily escaped fire. Mr G. C. Dean, Mr Charles Cogill, and little Alma Gray also lost their wardrobes and music. Mr Leete (Mr Rickards' manager), when questioned as to the occurrence, said that he was the last to leave the theatre with the exception of ex-Constable Murphy, who was then laying out the hose, as was customary every night in case of fire. When he arrived on the scene the whole of the back of the theatre was enveloped in flames. Yesterday he reported the matter by cable to Mr Rickards, and arranged with Mr F. Skinner for a temporary

reception. For "She's Gone" and "Why Did I Leave My Little Back-room" he was encored again and again, while his dancing gave the audience pleasurable enjoyment. Mr Caston is a decided humorist, and his clever work was appreciated immensely by the multitude of approving listeners. The Leslie Brothers, of course, scored as usual with "Beethoven Strung Up," while Messrs Karl Browne, Johnny Collins, Miss Miriam Lewis, Mr Shepherd, and Mr Fred Leslie, jun., helped to keep the entertainment up to its high standard of perfection. There is not a dull moment during the evening at the City Hall.

Our Christchurch dramatic correspondent writes:—"The Sydenham Working Men's Club Operatic Society put on 'Les Cloches de Corneville' at the Royal this week for four nights, and did good biz. Serpolette (Miss E. Haggie), Gaspard (Mr W. M. Watton), and Gobo (Master T. Sparks) were all good, especially the latter, who seems to be a born artist. The other members of the cast were only 'fair to medium.' I have to thank Mr Sparks, sen., for sending me (as the Christchurch dramatic correspondent of the REVIEW) a couple of complimentaries. By-the-way, I mustn't forget to mention that the choruses were surprisingly good. * * * To-night (Saturday) the Pollards open at the Royal in 'The Belle of New York,' in which, by-the-way, saucy May Beatty plays leading biz. Alf Stephens is also in the cast, so his 'rest' is not to prove such a long one as I was given to understand last week. * * * Ben Fuller has struck oil with his Waxworks and Variety Show at the Oddfellows' Hall. He gives 'em a wonderful sixpence-worth. The hall has been crammed nightly since the season started—a week ago. As Ben's Dunedin show is running at the same time, and also doing splendid biz, he ought to be making his pile fast."