

# Music & Drama.

*Spectatum admissi risum teneatis amici?*

SEVEN plays produced in as many nights by Messrs Dobson and Kennedy must indicate unceasing labour, conscientious study, and extraordinary energy. From Friday to Friday inclusive we had staged, "The Shaughraun," "Little Lord Fauntleroy," "Colleen Bawn," "Lost in London," "Pygmalion and Galatea," "Neck or Nothing," "The Benicia Boy," and "O'Callaghan on His Last Legs." All have been capitally mounted and admirably played. If the amateur will put on his considering cap, he will realise that the actor's occupation is not by any means a sinecure. However versatile an artist may be, it is no easy task to assume seven different rôles in a week—and it is impossible that every character should be congenial and suited to the performer's special line. That the Dobson-Kennedy combination should have so brilliantly passed through an ordeal so trying proves beyond a doubt that we have in our midst a company of really good all-round actors under splendid discipline and management. The houses have not been nearly equal to the quality of the entertainment offered, but have invariably atoned for their deficiencies in that respect by a warmth and enthusiasm which made every piece an artistic success, and must have gratified and encouraged the performers. Aucklanders are often slow in discovering that real merit is on the boards unless some star of the first magnitude—often most indifferently supported—draws a large attendance by the mere magic of a name. But I have frequently noticed that the last nights of a good company, endowed with real staying powers, are much better patronised by the public, who begin to realise that they have been missing a good thing.

Watts-Phillips' touching and powerful drama, "Lost in London," gave Mr. Collet Dobson his first opportunity to show us his real strength. His Job Armroyd was full of nobility and pathos. The simple, manly, honest, and unselfish Lancashire pitman was portrayed with a fidelity and force which commanded all the sympathies of an enthusiastic audience. As Nelly Armroyd, Miss Idrene Thornton was almost equally successful, although the character is not altogether a pleasant one. Her emotional pleadings, and the striving of a weak nature against sore temptation, as well as the pathetic death scene, were finely conceived and rendered with high finish and delicacy of touch. Miss Lily Hill made a capital Tiddy Draggleshorp—the warm-hearted, plain-spoken, and self-reliant Lancashire lass, whose bark is much worse than her bite. Her north-country burr was perfectly assumed, but here and there in a passionate speech she inadvertently dropped it for the moment. All the humorous points were crisply brought out, and the love-making scenes with Blinker (Mr. R. D. Cambell, who avowed himself with glory in his part) caused inextinguishable laughter. As Gilbert Featherstone, Mr. Frank Norton had a difficult and uninviting character to play, but he again proved himself the conscientious and capable actor he is, and acquitted himself admirably. The other characters were efficiently performed, and "Lost in London" was a decided artistic success. Great credit is due to the scenic artist and mechanist, Messrs. Ingleson and R. D. Cambell, for the capital scenery and stage effects in this play, and indeed in every one of the pieces produced. The scene in the coal mine was especially effective.

That screaming farce, "The Benicia Boy," afforded Mr. J. J. Kennedy another opportunity of displaying his wonderful command of facial play and humorous gestures. As Bob Rattles (the Chicken) he is immense, and one hardly knows when to stop laughing. He is so seriously in earnest, and yet so irresistibly comic. Benjamin Bobbin (Mr. Ingleson), Squire Greenfield (Mr. W. E. Jermyn), Joe (Mr. R. D. Cambell), Mrs. Puncheon (Mrs. Jermyn), and Dorothy (Miss May Vernon) acted with dash and go, and made the fun fast and furious.

In my opinion the loftiest attempt of the season—"Pygmalion and Galatea"—has also

been the most brilliant and artistic success. To begin with, the studio in Athens was magnificently mounted, Messrs Steel and Watkins kindly lending their splendid casts from antique marbles. Miss Idrene Thornton's conception and rendering of Galatea, the animated statue, stamp her as an actress gifted with the very highest faculties of her art. Some critics, while noticing her performance kindly and favourably, think that she revealed too great a readiness in mundane affairs for a woman born only yesterday. I do not agree with them, and will give my reasons. To begin with I may say that I saw Pygmalion and Galatea produced at the Haymarket Theatre by the Kendalls and Buckstone many years ago, and in the main lines Miss Thornton's conception of the part is quite consistent with that of Madge Robertson and other fine actresses. The gods certainly perform a miracle in changing marble into flesh and blood, but Gilbert in his lines gives abundant evidence to show that the gods went further, and endowed the living statue with all the *naïve* and *rustic* instincts of a lovely woman. Take for example the looking glass business. Galatea expresses a wish to see herself. It is gratified, and she behaves immediately like a thorough woman. Gilbert's intention is undoubtedly this. All the instincts of a true woman are latent in Galatea, only touch the right key, and *presto!* the instinct is aroused. Throughout, Miss Thornton realised that reading of the part. Mr. Collet Dobson made up splendidly as Pygmalion, and acted naturally and impressively. I do not quite see how Pygmalion can be convicted of caddishness. He does his best to be faithful to his wife under most trying temptations—and it must not be forgotten that when blind he is deceived by Galatea assuming the voice and character of Cynisca. If his actions make him a cad, where is the man who could go through such an ordeal and remain a gentleman? Miss Lily Hill as Cynisca looked very charming, and made the most of a part which it is not easy to make an attractive one. Mr. J. J. Kennedy as Chrysos, the opulent and ignorant art patron, amused everybody with his antics, and in many places reminded me of the comic characters in the Latin plays of Terence and Plautus, which are annually performed at Westminster School. Leucippe (Mr. Frank Norton) looked and acted the fierce Greek warrior to perfection. The minor parts were fairly well sustained, and the only thing wanted was a crowded house. In the play, however, as in all the others, the applause all through was hearty and the principals were recalled frequently. In noticing "O'Callaghan on His Last Legs," I am compelled to be brief. It is perhaps sufficient to say that Mr. Kennedy has appeared in the title rôle more than a thousand times, and no audience has yet shown symptoms of weariness. "Neck or Nothing," a military melodrama, was played on Saturday and Monday evenings, and was well received. "Little Lord Fauntleroy" was repeated as successfully as ever on Tuesday evening, Miss Ruby Kennedy confirming the good impression she had already made. I should like the management, if possible, to repeat "Pygmalion and Galatea" before the season closes, and believe that a good house would reward the venture. Tonight (Thursday) "Current Cash" is underlined.

The City Hall was again well patronised on Saturday night, when Miss Amy Vaughan and her company repeated "Good Luck" and the excellent programme of varieties and novelties which we are accustomed to expect.

## ORPHEUS.

Tom Sullivan has challenged Stanbury for £200 and the championship of the world, and wants the match to take place about November next.

Sara Bernhardt's season in Melbourne is said to have realised for twenty-seven performances the sum of fifteen thousand pounds. £815 was taken at night, and the amount is said to be estimated receipts.

The B... performing in Christchurch... of their opening... house, hundreds of... Charlie, and Miss V... received, and Tom M...

## AUCKLAND RACING CLUB ANNUAL REPORT AND BALANCE SHEET.

To the Members Auckland Racing Club—  
Gentlemen,

In submitting the Annual Statement of Accounts to you, your Committee must congratulate you upon the continued prosperity of your Club, notwithstanding the severe weather we experienced, both at our Summer and Winter Meetings.

During the year we have held four meetings, giving in added money the sum of £7,305, against £6,940 at the corresponding meetings last year; your Committee have under consideration the advisability of holding an early Spring Meeting in addition to the usual date, and of also making the Winter gathering a two day's fixture. During the season the amount of money put through the Machine has been £50,568, as against £48,098, which shows an increase of £2,470.

An alteration in the Railway fares and tariff is under consideration, but at the present moment nothing has been finally agreed upon.

A conference of delegates has been held in Wellington, when it was resolved to form a New Zealand Jockey Club; the Dunedin Jockey Club strongly objecting. As the proposed Rules have only just been received, your Committee have not yet considered them, but another meeting is to be held in Christchurch during their November fixture, and the first meeting of the Club will be held in Auckland, on 2nd January, if all things are finally completed.

You will have to elect six Committee men in the place of Messrs. McLaughlin, Kirkwood, Lanigan, Marks, Buckland and Nathan, who retire in terms of Rules, but being eligible, offer themselves for re-election.

Mr. Richard Duder has also given the necessary notice that he intends to stand for election as a Member of Committee.

THOMAS MORRIN, Chairman.

### BALANCE SHEET FOR YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 1891.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
To Creditors ... ..				21	6	0
" Creditors Secured ... ..				11,575	10	0
" Distressed Jockey Fund ... ..				429	16	6
" Capital ... ..	15,036	10	0			
" Profit Winter Meeting, 1890 ... ..	2	19	0			
	15,039	9	0			
Less written off for depreciation ... ..	291	10	10			
				14,747	18	2
" Suspense Account ... ..					8	10
" Profit and Loss ... ..					727	11
				£27,502	11	2
By Debtors ... ..				601	9	0
" Unpaid Subscriptions ... ..				222	11	0
" Racecourse ... ..				17,000	0	0
" New Grand Stand ... ..				8,000	0	0
" Derby Stand ... ..				900	0	0
" Furniture ... ..				250	0	0
" Working Plant ... ..				800	0	0
" Fencing ... ..				20	10	6
" Mares' Produce Stakes ... ..				6	11	6
" Balance in Cash and in Bank ... ..				201	9	2
				£27,502	11	2

### PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT FOR YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 1891.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
To Wages, Salaries, etc. ... ..				769	15	6
" Office Rent ... ..				52	0	0
" Interest ... ..				841	14	3
" Tan Gallop ... ..				42	4	0
" Insurance ... ..				42	9	6
" Charges, viz.—						
Rates and Property Tax ... ..	51	5	3			
Caretaker's Cottage ... ..	28	0	0			
Telephone ... ..	12	0	0			
Sundry Charges ... ..	226	9	9			
				315	15	0
" Balance ... ..					727	11
				£27,791	9	6
By Members' Subscriptions ... ..				720	0	0
" Assumed Names ... ..				16	16	0
" Training Fees and Grazing ... ..				163	1	8
" Spring Meeting ... ..				321	12	2
" Summer Meeting ... ..				1,200	15	8
" Winter Meeting ... ..				50	19	5
" Autumn Meeting ... ..				83	5	1
" Spring Meeting, 1892 ... ..				51	0	0
" Summer Meeting, 1892-3 ... ..				144	11	0
" Autumn Meeting, 1892 ... ..				89	8	6
				£27,791	9	6

### CAPITAL ACCOUNT.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
To amount written off for depreciation ... ..				291	10	10
" Balance ... ..				15,475	9	5
				£15,767	0	8
By Balance 30th June, 1890 ... ..				15,039	9	0
" Profit for year ending 30th June, 1891 ... ..					727	11
				£15,767	0	8

"Freelance," in the Melbourne *Sportsman*, selected Cuttlefish and Crusoe to win the Grand National Hurdle Race; the latter was successful.