

style I always expect from him. Especially effective was his rendering of "Pure as thy heart," and the fine passage, "Such hast thou been to me," made a deep impression on the audience. The chorus did some excellent work, and the light and shade—especially the *diminuendos*—were well observed throughout. The benches were not so full as usual, but those present were the pick of the Society. I counted 13 tenors, 22 bases, 27 altos, and 49 sopranos. Among the best choral numbers were "Draw the thread," the trio and chorus, "Thus sing the fays," "Pure as thy heart," and "Sleep! Sleep!" Reissiger's overture, "Yebra," an interesting work full of dash and vigour, was well played by the band at the opening of part two. Altogether the concert was a greater success than the rehearsals promised, and Herr Carl Schmitt must be congratulated on creditably pulling the Society through a work in which amateurs can scarcely be heard at their best. Herr Tutschka led with care and precision, but one of the first violins at times played painfully sharp on a powerful instrument.

LONDON DAY BY DAY.

OVERFLOWING houses testify to the success of Mr. Bland Holt's second production—a spectacular melodrama of the kind which invariably hits the popular taste. The piece is remarkable for strong situations and magnificent scenery; but in the hands of less accomplished actors than Mr. Holt and his talented henchmen, portions of the play would undoubtedly be found tedious and fall flat. Good acting and crisp delivery made all the difference. Mr. A. Glover as General Granville makes a capital heavy father, blending the military martinet and the kind-hearted gentleman with admirable skill. Frank Granville, his son—a difficult and thankless rôle—is played with characteristic care and finish by Mr. Walter Howe, but it is manifestly a part not congenial to that gentleman. Mr. Albert Norman as Henri de Belleville, a French adventurer and a double-dyed villain, shows great brutality (in "Master and Man" he was the virtuous hero). Throughout he plays with power, tact, and intelligence, preserving the foreign accent with unflinching precision. The scene leading up to the murder of his wife (Miss Edith Blande) is a fine bit of work on the part of both. As Patrick O'Brien, Esq.—a vulgar but whole-souled Chicago Irishman—Mr. W. E. Baker turns from the polished scoundrel (Carlton in "Master and Man") to a character which is the exact antipodes, and makes a marked success. His make-up, brogue, action, and facial play are all excellent. Peter Marks, a broken-down attorney who is under the relentless thumb of Harry Ascalon, and has not only to do his dirty work but also to invent ingenious lies at a moment's notice, is very ably personated by Mr. E. B. Russell. His final assertion of independence and casting off the ignoble fetters is an impressive and skilful bit of acting. As Lord Kempton Mr. H. Plimmer has a minor walking gentleman's part, of which he makes what little is to be made. As a light farcical actor Mr. H. R. Roberts, who made such a hit as Crispin St Jones in "Master and Man" again shines brilliantly as an ex-prize-fighter turned into a hansom cabman. His love-making with Dolly Blossom; his fervid praise of his mare, seen through the window (which Dolly mistakes for enthusiastic admiration for a hated rival), culminating in the shocking apostrophe, "Look at her legs!" his altercations with Harry Ascalon, and the police court repartees, were extremely funny. Mr. Harry Norman made a very laughable club porter. Mr. W. Seagrave made up splendidly as a retired East Indian major, and was perfect in his small part. The other minor parts were easily filled to advantage from the resources of so powerful a company. Miss Mabel Russell again covered herself with glory as a street arab combination of crossing-sweeper and newspaper-runner. Mr. Bland Holt, as Harry Ascalon, plays one of the modern Shylock parts which he has made such a study of; and no one can help laughing at his drolleries. Turning to the ladies, Mrs. Bland Holt has a strong but trying rôle, in which she acts with a natural grace and truth, which win the sympathies of the entire audience. As Violet Chester, the sweet but persecuted heroine, that talented lady shows her versatility with emphatic success; besides looking very charming in some exquisitely designed dresses. Miss

Edith Blande scores another big success as Maud Willoughby, the professional singer. Some very dramatic passages are delivered with extraordinary force and effect. Her frocks are also extremely tasteful and perfect in fit, colour, and design. Miss Virginia Vivienne as Dolly Blossom is a sparkling soubrette of the higher class, and proved herself a charming little actress, lightness of touch being quite a feature in her excellent work. Miss Flora Anstead as Dolly's mother; Mrs. May Buckley, the coffee stall keeper; Miss Alice Rouse, the laundress; and Miss Carr, the maid, were all completely satisfactory. The strength of "London Day by Day" lies especially in the scenery, which is something superb. The transformation in the first act from a street scene to a lovely garden, backed up by an Elizabethan hall, is effected by an old but ingenious expedient. The garden unrolls itself, and seems to fall upon the stage from above; reminding me of a similar effect which I saw at the Variétés at Paris years ago. The interior of the Bohemian Club with its grand pale-blue chandelier, Leicester Square, and the lovely "Pool of the Thames," are all rare examples of the scenic art. The incidental music arranged by Herr H. Sprake, is admirably chosen and capably played by Mr. Eady's excellent orchestra. Last night "The Bells of Haselmer" was produced, too late for a notice in this issue. An excellent judge of the drama, who saw the play in Dunedin, pronounces it to be the most charming piece he has seen for years.

At the Choral Hall, on Friday evening, Miss Freda Marsden will play a "Scène de Ballet," by De Beriot, and a new singer, Miss Murray, will make her *début*.

ORPHEUS.

RANDOM RACING REMARKS.

[BY PEGASUS.]

It is generally a wise thing to let "sleeping dogs lie," and perhaps some readers may think it advisable to do this as applied to the recent Hilda-cum-reversal of form—cum-Phæton-cum-Splitwink discussion that has been going on in the papers lately. Up to this, however, I have refrained from any "remark" thereon, and I thought perhaps I might be allowed a "small say" without being accused of disturbing the "said dog" or of trying to again stir up the now somewhat settled dirt. Looking certainly at the matter, and uninfluenced by any bias in favour of any particular fancy, I am constrained to allow that "Splitwink" has "hit the nail on the head" in his recent letter, and has sounded a note of warning to all of us turf scribes not to be carried away by any "exuberance of obsequiousness," and thereby giving the public any but fair criticisms on current events. If we are to make "fish of one and flesh of the other," I rather think readers' faith in turf scribes generally will be much shaken. Knowing the liability to make mistakes when hurriedly penning sporting lines, still I think an *unbiased* mind should not be liable to committing an error which would afterwards cause what has been styled "virulent discussion." Personally, I should say that Orakei's owner would be the one to lay blame of "virulence" when his horse's doings were being discussed. I sympathise with my *confère* in his dilemma, and shall conclude by expressing the hope that the matter is now at rest, and that no such similar episode will occur in this district throughout the season by reason of any "reversal of form" of any horses at our different gatherings.

The Auckland Trotting Club is to be congratulated on its splendid list of nominations, and I only hope the differences existing between it and the Metropolitan Race Club will very soon be at an end. In fact, it seems to me, there is no very "desperate" differences to settle.

Next week I shall also have an opportunity of looking into the chances of the horses entered for the Summer Cup, Carrington Stakes, and Tattersalls' Cup. The first-named race is run at Randwick on Boxing Day next over a $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile course. The entry list of 81 contains the following New Zealanders:—Tirailleur 9st, Scots Grey 8st 2lbs, Impulse 7st 9lbs, Gatling 7st 2lbs, Tirailleur 7st, and Satyr 6st 4lbs. The Carrington Stakes, $\frac{3}{4}$ mile, has a lengthy list of 111, and is run on New Year's Day, 1892. On the next day Tattersalls' Cup is run over a two mile course.

Some of the racing public think some "reversal of form" was displayed at the recent Takapuna meeting. Perhaps so. It was managed very artistically, however.

Many "sports" think that Leorina ought to have won both her races over there. Just so. But she didn't. There was no Ingorina in the second race to beat her, so she won with a good div. By my "remarks" on the Onehunga Spring Meeting it will be seen she should "repeat the dose" there if necessary.

The weights for the Onehunga Spring Meeting appeared sharp to time on Monday morning. The compilation is about the best we have had this season so far; and yet Mr. Halstead has allowed a few mistakes to creep in. For example, Leorina, 9st 2lb, wins the Takapuna Spring Handicap, 6 furlongs; Warrior, 7st, only getting third; and Bon Voyage, 7st 2lb, runs unplaced. In the Onehunga Flying Stakes, *six furlongs again*, Leorina is raised only 2lb, whereas Warrior and Bon Voyage are raised 4lb and 1lb respectively. If the former race were a true run race what earthly show have these two at the Onehunga meeting? Then in the Steeples Relation, who has repeatedly proved that he can "get" the steeplechase course, again meets Chance, Neck or Nothing and Pawa on the same terms as before, although he placed himself at Takapuna, and the others could not. I do not wish to be too critical, and shall content myself by pointing these few out as the most glaring errors to be found. There will be some difficulty in unearthing the winner.

Since the above was written the acceptances are to hand, and the acceptance list must be very flattering to Mr. H., and proves the handicaps to be a very fair adjustment.

The following is the Onehunga programme and my fancies for each, which are as follows:—Maiden Plate.—Resentment or Maid of Erin. Steeples.—Bit o' Blue, Hopeful Kate, Neck or Nothing.

Pony Race.—Silkworm or Coquette.

Hurdles.—Colonel or Tawhana.

Flying Stakes.—Priscilla or Papakura.

Welter Handicap.—Ma Boughal or Deception.

Spring Handicap.—Leorina, 1; Ingorina, 2; Belmont, 3.

These may require sorting up as the day's racing proceeds.

OUR CHRISTCHURCH LETTER.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

[BY WIRE.]

CHRISTCHURCH, Dec. 1.

ONE of the dullest weeks we have had at Riccarton for a long time was last week. Of a morning the course has been comparatively deserted in consequence of trainers, jockeys, and horses having gone to Dunedin. Some of the Riccarton horses have performed very fairly at Dunedin, but some trainers and owners will have to come home minus expenses, nevertheless. Mr. Webb, for instance, took down Ruby and May, and no doubt he thought he would win a race or two, yet neither Ruby or May won a race, and were I in Mr. Webb's position I should have better cattle. Blood will always tell, unless it be unduly interfered with or messed about by incompetence.

At Dunedin Florrie maintained her reputation, and by her victories established her position as a first-class three-year-old, and should Mr. O'Brien take her to Australia in the Autumn she will make some of them travel on the other side. The success of Florrie for the Otago Cup was certainly considered a moral at Riccarton, and though she did not finish by too much I fancy her win was an easy one.

Capt. Abram, who won the Hurdles on the first day, was sold by Billy Brown, for the reason that he (Capt. Abram) had disappointed his connections so often. That is not very uncommon either. I have frequently seen horses go from one to another stable for racing purposes, and change their form very quickly; and I begin to think that in many cases change has as much to do with improvement or deterioration as rapid difference of treatment.

Mr. O'Brien took Freedom to Dunedin, but he did not run him, and no doubt he has discovered that Florrie is faster at weight for age than Freedom; but Freedom would have given some of the front division pepper had he been