

ADVERTISEMENTS

OPERA HOUSE.
THE DAMPIERS

AND THEIR
FAMOUS DRAMATIC COMPANY,
In a
SERIES OF POPULAR PLAYS,
TO-NIGHT AND EVERY EVENING.

THIS WEEK'S PROGRAMME:—

TO-NIGHT (THURSDAY), 26th—"ROMEO AND JULIET."

FRIDAY, 27th—"AS YOU LIKE IT."

SATURDAY, 28th—Rolfe Boldwood's "ROBBERY UNDER ARMS," for Four Nights.

IN PREPARATION,
"FOR THE TERM OF HIS NATURAL LIFE."

Admission—4s, 2s 6d, and 1s. Box Plan at Wildman's.
Day sale at Tobacconists.

LIEUT. M. ROSE, Business Manager.
GEORGE BULLER, Acting Manager.

Music, Drama.

(BY ORPHEUS.)

Spectatum admissi risum teneatis amici?

THE DAMPIER SEASON.

SINCE my last notice this clever combination has been playing to much better houses. On Wednesday and Thursday evenings Henry Pettitt's and George Conquest's strong drama 'The Green Lanes of England' won high appreciation. The piece is less melodramatic and more natural than the ordinary transportine productions. The interest is sustained from start to finish, every act containing good writing and strong situations. Miss Lily Dampier made her *debut* before an Auckland audience as Margaret Wheatstone, a rôle affording opportunities for power, passion, pathos and grace, which the talented young actress seized with unflinching tact and ability. Miss Lily Dampier, besides a charming stage presence, is gifted with a good voice, a natural and easy style, and no ordinary intelligence. She is still in her first youth, and with more experience will reach a high standard. Mr Alfred Dampier as 'Gentleman George' had one of those characteristic parts which he plays to perfection. While he is on the stage no play could possibly drag. His 'gags' and ready wit sparkling through imperturbable good humour are bound to make things 'hum,' and yet there are unmistakable signs of talent of a much higher order, which require the legitimate drama to shine in. Mr Edward Holloway played splendidly as Martin Wheatstone, the proud and honest old father of 'Meg,' who is torn by conflicting emotions of love for his erring daughter and passionate fury at the disgrace of his name. Miss Julia Merton played Mrs Selby with great discernment and discretion. Mr Rolfe's Captain Selby was a really fine conception and portrayal of a somewhat weak and unnatural rôle. With instinctive skill he glossed over the feeble traits and made the most of the stronger points of a character which Aristotle would certainly term 'akrates' if not 'akolastos.' Miss Carrie Bilton (Clara Selby) and Mr G. Buller (Gustavus Jones) made capital fun together and caused roars of genuine merriment. Both deserve unequalled praise. Mr A. Harford's 'Bill the Slogger' is another feather in the cap of that really good actor. Mr G. Rosier had another villain's part as Clement Flint, which he played well. Mr Newing (Dudgeon), Mr J. H. Ainslie (Splayfoot), and Mr C. Otway (Modgett) all played small parts very capably. Miss Katherine Russell as Martha Flint showed herself in a new light revealing power and passion, for which her previous light comedy parts had not prepared the regular playgoer. Little May Renno played the child-part of 'Nellie' very naturally and spoke with distinctness and correct emphasis. This reminds me of her father, the clever mechanist, whose stage effects are so neatly managed that I am tempted to 'pick a pocket' by declaring that the stock-stage machinery of the Opera House has been artistically Renno-vated. In the 'Black Flag,' of which I shall be able to give only a brief notice, the change of scene depicting a small dingy on a lumpy sea is quite a triumph. On Friday evening Mr Dampier's own dramatised version of Mrs Henry Wood's novel 'East Lynne,' proved itself in my opinion far and away the best stage rendering of the popular tale. The action moves rapidly, the situations are strong and well led up to, and the dialogue is enriched by many clever bits. The comic element is

lavishly introduced, and with excellent effect, relieving as it does the somewhat gruesome monotony of the ordinary versions. Mr A. Rolfe's Archibald Carlyle, Mr Dampier's Captain Levison, Mr Buller's Richard Hare, and Mr Holloway's Lord Mountsevern are all excellent impersonations. As Mr Justice Hare Mr Rosier was fitted with a congenial part, and made every point in capital style. Mr Harford's Lawyer Dill was immense, and the scene in which he and Cornelia Carlyle (most humorously acted by Miss Julia Merton) appear from their opposite bed-room doors in their *robes de nuit*, quite convulsed the house. Henri, by Mons. Tische; and Joyce, by Miss Carrie Bilton, added to the strength of an even performance. Miss Lily Dampier achieved a triumph in the dual rôle of Lady Isabel and Madame Vine, acting throughout with power and refinement.

On Saturday and Monday evenings 'The Black Flag,' previously performed in Auckland as 'The Coast Guard,' was excellently staged and acted.

Being accorded more space than usual I gladly add a few particulars of 'The Black Flag.' Mr Alfred Dampier's impersonation of Harry Glyndon is beyond all praise. The high-minded, witty, generous and rollicking 'vagabond,' who vicariously suffers for the sins of his polished scoundrel of a brother, is so natural a portrayal that one is almost convinced of Mr Dampier's possessing a disposition overflowing with the same genial and noble qualities. Mr Rolfe's 'John Glyndon' quite confirmed the good opinion I had formed of his powers. His gestures and facial expression were extremely natural, while no fault could be found with the tone and style in which his lines were spoken. Mr E. Holloway's 'Owen Glyndon' is a masterpiece. I cannot imagine a stronger or better rendering of the character. The scene in the third act between father and son outside Portland Gaol was a magnificent display of power alternating with pathos. Another inimitable likeness was 'Lazarus' in the hands of Mr A. Harford. Without the customary exaggeration of the typical stage Hebrew, an exact presentment of the shrewd, calculating, vulgar money-lending 'toff,' who has no objection to shady transactions so long as his own fingers are not burnt, strutted on the boards. His characteristic courting of Topsy Carroll (Miss Katherine Russell), his altercation with the stern Owen Glyndon over the forged p.n., and his antics when working as a convict in sack-cloth and broad arrow deservedly won tremendous applause. The aper-per-plectical fit was immense—so was the entire business with the Warder (Mr Patterson). Lazarus will not soon be forgotten by those—would that they had been thousands—few hundreds who enjoyed his clever acting. All the ladies in the cast scored well. Miss Lily Dampier made a charming Naomi Blandford, infusing genuine pathos into a part which is eminently suited to her genius. I think she might with advantage throw a rather more forcible passion into the scenes with John Glyndon and his father Owen. Miss Katherine Russell's 'Topsy Carroll,' the attractive widow and landlady of 'The Red Lion,' was in every respect admirable. Miss Julia Merton played 'Ruth Glyndon' with true power and effect. In conclusion a few words of warm praise are due to Miss Carrie Bilton for her affecting picture of the poor sailor boy 'Ned,' whose heart Harry wins by kindness, and who gladly sacrifices his life to save that of the protecting hero. Occasionally Miss Bilton spoke rather too low for the back part of the theatre.

MR. LACHLAN MCGOWAN'S BENEFIT.

ONLY a sparse attendance patronised the City Hall on Wednesday evening, when an excellent entertainment of a mixed character was given for the about laudable object. It was a pity that so deserving an artistic effort did not prove a greater financial success.

"'Tis not in mortals to command success,
But we'll do more, Sempronius—we'll do
without it!"

The ingenious and brightly-written trifle 'A Capital Match' was well played by Miss Georgie Leighford (Mrs. Singleton), Mrs. Cooper (Rosamund), Mr. Lachlan McGowan (Mr. Sunnyside), Mr. Seaton (Captain Tempest), and Mr. Bonfield (John). Mr. Harry Hill, who possesses a rich baritone voice, sang Stephen Adams' charming song 'The Garonne.' Miss Bronton followed with the soprano setting of Cowan's 'The Old and the Young Marie.' Although I think this fine song better suited to a contralto voice, Miss Bronton displayed a pure voice and cultured taste in her rendering.

Mr. George Reid, in perfect voice and with a selection 'Here upon my Vessel's Deck,' which suited the singer admirably, made a tremendous hit, and substituted 'My Love is like the red, red rose,' which almost won another encore. Mrs. Cooper chose the humorous Scottish, 'Get up and bar the door,' which she rendered with great dramatic emphasis. As an encore she again delighted the Scottish element with 'Annie Laurie.' Mr. R. Greville in a sweet and nicely-modulated baritone sang 'Loch Ahoj' with great taste and effect. Miss Rosie Andrews instead of the song assigned to her on the programme gave 'Annie Rooney,' winning an encore. An octette of little Scottish boys and lassies, beautifully arrayed in the Gaelic garb, danced two reels, and deservedly won an encore. Their talented trainer, Mr. Duncan Simpson's 'Sword Dance' was one of the features of a capital variety interlude. The entertainment concluded with the screaming old farce 'My Turn Next.' Mr. Clitherow's Taraxacum Twitters would have made a cat laugh. Mr. Foster (Tim Bolus), Mr. Harry Hill (Tom Trap), and Farmer Wheatear (Mr. Field) ably supported the little chemist, while the ladies—including Miss Eldon, who made a capital Mrs. Twitters; Miss Rose Andrew, who looked sweet and acted nicely as Cicely; and last, but not least, Miss Georgie Leighford's terrible get up and comical entries as Peggy—were quite as good as the gentlemen. The farce alone certainly deserved a full house.

MADAME BAHNSON'S SECOND CONCERT.

The City Hall was well filled on Tuesday evening by an appreciative audience, who listened with manifest pleasure to every item of a really splendid programme. Messrs T. M. Jackson and G. M. Reid began with Gabussi's favourite duo 'The Fisherman,' and again proved how perfectly their voices blend. Miss Katherine Hardy, whose return to the concert platform to which she is as great an ornament as she has proved herself upon the dramatic stage was hailed with enthusiasm, next sang Kyjruhl's 'Last Night.' The singer infused delicacy and tenderness into the sustained and plaintive melody, and her enunciation, expression and intonation were all of the highest order, but there was a slight tendency to overdo the use of the *portamento*. Still the number proved a splendid success, winning an enthusiastic encore, in response to which Miss Hardy sang Hope Temple's lovely song 'When we Meet' in perfect style and taste. An instrumental trio for flute, clarinet and oboe, by Saint-Saens, was next given by Messrs Innes and the brothers Jackson, with Miss Harding at the piano. The work, a caprice on Russian and Danish airs, is a quaint and characteristic study yet severely classical in form, partaking largely of the fugal character. It is full of scholarly writing for all the instruments, the distribution of answering passages being impartial. The performers individually and collectively played with excellent taste and almost faultless technique. Madame Steinhauer-Bahnsong then sang Weber's glorious 'Softly Sighs' in German with a steady and true phrasing, refined taste and facility of execution which could scarcely be bettered. True the volume of voice was not that of Tietjens or Rudersdorf, who in their day had almost a 'mortgage' on the great Der Freischutz aria, but in every other respect the rendering was eminently satisfactory. In response to an ovation Madame Bahnsong sang the simple negro melody 'Nellie Gray,' in which the tremolo was perhaps a trifle prominent, but the contrast of the selection with Weber's masterpiece was artistic, and delighted every listener. Mr T. M. Jackson next sang Schubert's immortal Serenade with delicacy, taste, and finish, but a slight deficiency in power was noticeable in the lower register. Being vociferously encored the singer gave 'Tell her I love her so,' marking the contrasts of light and shade deliciously. The second part opened with a charming duo sung in German by Madame Bahnsong and Miss Hardy. The music is sustained and plaintive in character, and the *ensemble* was admirable. A well-merited encore brought the ladies back with Mendelssohn's lovely duet 'Greeting,' exquisitely rendered. Mr T. M. Jackson made an excellent selection in Birch's 'I am waiting,' which suits the singer's style and voice *à merveille*, and scored another success, being encored, and singing Wallace's 'There is a flower that bloometh,' with smoothness and taste. Madame Bahnsong next sang two songs by Mr Frederick Clutsam, which won high praise on a previous occasion. I need only say 'ditto' to my criticisms

of both singer and composer in these columns some eighteen months ago. Mr S. Jackson's clarinet solo, Scena Dramatica, by H. Panofka, proved a delicious *morceau*, rendered with all that sensibility, purity of tone, and accuracy of technique which everyone now expects from the gifted soloist. Miss Katherine Hardy's singing of Tosti's 'Good-bye' would have won the heart of the genial old composer. While displaying refined taste in making every contrast, the attack was crisp, and remote intervals were hit with unflinching intonation. The use of the *portamento* was judicious, and the entire rendering combined sympathetic singing with thrilling passion. Packer's sweet little ditty 'Listening,' proved a happy encore choice. Madame Bahnsong's splendid singing of Macfarren's 'Pack clouds away,' I have before praised in these columns. Her rendering was again a perfect triumph of vocalisation, and Mr S. Jackson's sclarinet obbligato merited and received a full share of the honours. Other encore songs graciously given during the evening by the gifted *diva* were Benedict's 'Carnival' and 'La Veritable Manola,' with their wonted success. Both ladies received numerous lovely bouquets. Miss Harding again played all the accompaniments in almost faultless style. I must also congratulate Madame Bahnsong on the excellent form displayed by her pupils Miss Katherine Hardy and Mr T. M. Jackson, both of whom reflect infinite credit upon their accomplished teacher.

MISS ALICE SYDNEY BURVETT, a pianist who comes with quite a European reputation, having performed in England and on the continent with brilliant *clat*, is now in Auckland, and will shortly give a series of recitals. Miss Burvett spent many years of study in Paris under the ægis of the Paris Conservatorium. She is a friend of and has played many duets with that great pianist Henri Kowalski.

MR GEORGE DARRELL, who has recently been touring in South Africa, has arrived in Melbourne from Hobart, having travelled to the latter port from Capetown by the Tongariro. Mr Darrell was accompanied by his son and mother-in-law, Mrs Peachey. His company did very big business throughout the Cape Colonies, and the tour would have been most pleasant throughout had it not been for the untimely death of Mrs Darrell at Johannesburg. Mrs Darrell died from acute dysentery, the end coming within five days from the outbreak of the malady. A pathetic incident marked the deathbed scene of Mrs Darrell, as shortly before she died she sang two verses of "The Cuckoo Song," which she had sung so often in the production of her husband's drama, "Hue and Cry." Mr Darrell has, it is stated, purchased the rights for the colonies of two new English dramas, and it is possible he may bring a company to New Zealand this year.

MR J. J. KENNEDY'S Dramatic Company are in the Otago goldfields districts. The *Cromwell Argus* in recording their five nights' season there, says that it was both an agreeable one to the public and a financial success for Mr Kennedy. At the beginning of the week Miss Lily Hill was too ill to appear, and Mrs Foley had to take her part on short notice. Little Ruby Kennedy made fast friends with the Cromwell little folks, who mustered in force to see her as the little lord on Friday night. The company comprises Messrs Kennedy, Saville, Norton, Foley, Joe Kennedy, Sedger, Mrs and Miss Hill, Mrs Foley, Miss Sheridan, little Ruby Kennedy, and the scenic artist, Mr Barry Knowles.

MANY old Australians and New Zealanders will remember Mr. Clarence Holt, and all Australians and New Zealanders, young or old, know his talented son, Mr Bland Holt. Regret will therefore be felt for the burning of the Lincoln Theatre, by which Mr Holt, sen., is a heavy loser. The fire occurred while Mr Clarence Holt and his company were playing "Lost to the World." Only the contents of the dressing rooms, which were divided from the main building by an iron door, were saved, everything in the place being entirely destroyed, including Mr Holt's properties, over £400 worth of scenery belonging to the lessee, Mr Rass Challis, and the properties of a new play just ready to start on tour. The damage amounts to between £2000 and £3000, and only the building is insured.

It is reported in Melbourne that Malolo has changed hands but will remain in Foulsham's stable.