

THE CHARLES SAUNDERS CONCERTS.

Aucklanders will have an opportunity given them to-morrow of hearing the famous tenor, Mr Charles Saunders, in Handel's great work "Samson" which is to be given by the Auckland Choral Society at the Choral Hall. Miss Clara Robson, the Scottish contralto, will be one of the soloists. Concerning the concerts, in dealing with similar entertainments given in Dunedin, the Dunedin "Star" says:—"It was not a song cycle such as Mr Watkins Mills gave us, but a selection of familiar songs of a good type, linked by pleasant little speeches from Mr Saunders, who in each instant said something to the point as to how the song came to be written and as to its motive. In this cycle the audience were favoured by Mr Saunders with 'The Irish Emigrant,' 'My Pretty Jane,' and 'The Death of Nelson,' also as an encore song with 'Let me Like a Soldier Fall,' given in a most energetic and generous style. Very few tenors possess such a surplus of power as to be able to put in the 'Maritana' songs incidentally, but Mr Saunders did it without an effort. Miss Clara Robson's contributions to the cycle were 'Darby and Joan,' with 'Killarney' as an encore, 'Caller Herrin,' with 'Jock o' Hazeldean' as an encore, and Tosti's 'Good-bye.' This was a very fine collection. Mr Saunders then electrified the audience with his bold and accomplished delivery of 'Sound an Alarm.' In view of the fact that he had previously done two men's share of singing, and that he was right up to the pitch, it was perfectly amazing to hear how he got those four unaccompanied up-going notes and how he hung on the top A, and his facility in respect to the runs was a revelation. Towards the end there was just a suspicion of flattening on the top notes, but the voice continued quite clear, and to the very end the singer never made the least attempt to dodge a difficulty or find an evading bypath.

He is a conscientious singer and a great one, and the audience were delighted with him. As for Miss Clara Robson, she also sings well, making intelligent use of a thoroughly trained contralto voice of good quality. Her best contributions were 'Caller Herrin' and 'Darby and Joan.'" The Choral Hall should be crowded to hear these two artists.

MISS IRENE AINSLEY'S CONCERT.

There were two very good attendance last Thursday and Friday at the Choral Hall when Miss Irene Ainsley, who has just returned from the Old Country, gave Auckland music lovers an opportunity of judging what improvement the contralto had made in her vocation during her absence. At both concerts the programmes were well arranged, there being a pleasing absence of ultra-classical music, which music is as caviare to the general public. Instead of a medley of Italian, French, and German pieces, of which the majority of Aucklanders, who do not understand them, are apt to quickly tire, Miss Ainsley sang many of the dainty ballads of our own land, and those who heard were not slow to mark their appreciation. It was speedily evident that a very great improvement had been effected in the contralto's voice. The lower notes were particularly good, a weakness, however, being noticeable in the upper register in which a lack of purity of tone was apparent. There was also a want of power, this being somewhat conspicuous in such songs as "Life's Recompense" and "The Lost Chord." Still, although perhaps she may never be a great singer, Miss Ainsley is certainly a very pleasing one, and her items are sure to be enjoyed. At the two concerts she was assisted by Mr Hamilton Hodges, Mr G. E. Poore (flautist), and Mrs Ernest Queree (accompanist).

COMING ATTRACTIONS.

Clyde Meynell, of "The Big Four," has secured "Cinderella," the most successful of England's pantomimes last Christmas, for his firm's first production in that line. In a letter received the other day he states he has seen the sketches and dresses, which are magnificent, and will cost about £2500. He has, in addition got the latest dramatic success, "The Prince and the Beggar Maid," in which the Harcourt Beatty-Madge McIntosh Company will appear. Miss Norah Kerin, out here with the Musgrove Shakesperian venture, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," played Princess Monica of Illyria, who masquerades as the barefooted beggar maid.

The new play is by Mr Walter Howard.

THE LONDON SEASON.

A carefully compiled and very interesting statistical article on the West End theatrical season 1907-8, from the pen of Mr James Waters, appeared in the "Daily Mail." Mr Waters speaks of the season—which may be reckoned as from August of last year to the present July—as a successful one, and he expresses the opinion that it has made far more money for the successful managers than was lost by those who failed. Mr Waters makes a list as follows:—Plays of two or more acts, 63; musical plays, 6; one-act plays, 35; pantomimes, 3; revues, 1; ballets, 4; revivals of plays of two or more acts, 27; revivals of musical plays, 3. Excluding one-act pieces, pieces produced for special performances, revues, and ballets, the new pieces numbered sixty-three. Deduct ten for the French, five American, and one German, and ten for dramatised novels, there is left a total of thirty-seven plays as the output of our dramatic authors for the season. That is not much more than one piece per theatre for the working year.

THE KILTIES BAND.

The scene both inside and outside the Sydney Town Hall on August 15 was one of intense enthusiasm, for the rush of the public to hear the first concert of the Scottish-Canadian Regimental Band was unprecedented (says the "Town and Country Journal"). Those who arrived at the

ation, taken as band, choir, and dancing troupe, is a very clever one, and, judging from the first performance, it will suit the popular fancy, and continue its success.

NAPIER NOTES.

My Napier correspondent writes that Napier has been well supplied with amusement during the past week. The first assault was by the Taylor-Carrington Pictures, which attracted a good house. There is not much, during the present period, in not having up-to-date pictures, and the T.C. were well supplied with a number of excellent films of all descriptions from gay to grave, and patrons gave vent to their satisfaction in a demonstrative style.

Anderson and Sheridan's combinations held the boards at the Theatre Royal for two nights—Wednesday and Thursday, the productions being "The Earl and the Girl" and "Fun on the Bristol." Standing room only was the order of the night upon both occasions, and the genial John F. looked as pleased as if he had backed several winners; anyhow, he got home a good double with "The Earl and the Girl" and "The Widow."

On Friday and Saturday the Merry-makers held the fort and held it well too, two large audiences greeting them. They deserved it too, for they beat the pack for a clean, sunny, bright chic show. They are all triers, good at their turns, and what is more their songs and yarns have not got whiskers upon them. They made good in the first five minutes and kept the game up to the end in a refreshing

ly Searle and heaps of others flourishing, all of whom in my days, I have come into contact with.

Mr Albert Clark, touring manager for the Thornton Company left for Sydney by the Victoria on Monday last.

Mr R. B. Young is hard at work in connection with the Charles Saunders Concert Company's season in Auckland.

Mr Muir, of Wanganui, is in town arranging matters in connection with the Charles Saunders Concert Company's season.

Mr Matheson, ahead of the Merry-makers, arrived in Auckland to make arrangements for the Merry-makers' season which commences next week.

The Bland Holt season will commence at His Majesty's after the Merry-makers have vacated that theatre. This is good news for lovers of melodrama of the best kind.

Mr Bert Gilbert is still in a private hospital in Auckland. The accident to his eye, which he met with on the stage, is a serious one, and it is not improbable he may lose the use of his eye. Everyone will hope that this will not prove the case.

On returning to America, Miss Margaret Anglin will be starred under the management of Mr Louis Nethersole, who is her manager for the Australia tour. She will make her reappearance in New York in "The Awakening of Helen Ritchie," a play that has not yet been seen along the Broadway, and one which gives her scope to display her great emotional powers. Miss Anglin has received a flattering offer to go to London at the conclusion of the next American tour. She returns to America via England, but according to present arrangements she will not appear on the London stage for another two years.

Miss May Gates, another of the pretty young ladies who figured in the "Gay Gordons" and other productions of Mr Seymour Hicks, has made a brilliant match by wedding the Baron von Ditten, nephew of Thor von Ditten, the Norwegian Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at the Court of Berlin. Miss Gates had been on the stage about three years. Prior to that she was a showroom girl at Jay's in Regent-street. With good looks and fine figure, and a wealth of glorious hair, she was persuaded to leave shop-life for the stage. She was at once a distinct success. While she was abroad she met Baron von Ditten, and after a short engagement, the girl from Jay's became a baroness on June 16.

The Scarlet Troubadours, a company under the management of Mr Branscombe, here with the Westminster Glee Party, will make their debut in the Dominion at His Majesty's, Dunedin, on September 5th.

Mischa Elman, the great boy violinist, is to tour Australia next year under the auspices of Mr George Musgrove.

Mr Gil. Hoskins, who has severed his connection with the Fuller Proprietary in order to join the Royal Picture Syndicate, arrived in Christchurch on Thursday (says the Weekly Press). On Tuesday night, at Wellington, at the Theatre Royal, he was entertained by the management, orchestra, and staff of the theatre, and presented on their behalf by Mr John Fuller, jun., with a handsome souvenir. Subsequently a number of personal friends entertained Mr and Mrs Hoskins, and presented them with farewell marks of esteem.

The theatre was just out, it was a very cold night, and the last car was full inside, when the guard asked: "Will any gentleman ride up on the top to oblige a lady?" There was no response, so the inquiry was repeated, but again there was no reply. At last one male passenger remarked: "Are you sure she is a lady, and not a poor woman?"—"Oh, yes, she is a lady," said the guard, without hesitation. "A well-dressed lady?" again asked the passenger. "Yes, a thorough, well-dressed, fashionable lady," said the guard. "Then I should think she can afford to take a cab home," said the passenger.



ALBERTO, the clever conjurer, now appearing at the Opera House.

steps of the Town Hall at 8 o'clock wondered what was the matter, for people stood from the footpath to the door, and the management estimate that over 1000 were disappointed. The two stalwart drum-majors were most emphatic in their assurance that there was not even standing room in the hall. This was the case, every part of the large building, including the choir seats on the organ gallery, being crowded. The Kilties looked a fine body of men in their uniform of the Gordon Highlanders, with red coats and dark green kilts and plaids. In front of the organ were their banners. The audience was most enthusiastic, and encored everything, especially the patriotic airs, which appealed to them very strongly. The features of the programme from a musical standpoint, however, were the second of the Liszt "Hungarian Rhapsodies," the Prelude of the third act of "Lohengrin," an arrangement of well-known melodies by Tobani, and Godfrey's setting of Scottish airs. There are 30 performers in the band, and the instrumentation is as follows:—One flute and piccolo, 1 oboe, 1 E flat clarinet, 8 B flat clarinets, 2 saxophones, 1 bassoon, 3 French horns, 5 cornets, 2 euphoniums, 3 trombones, 3 basses, and 2 drums. The combin-

style; they are novel and new like the latest baby, and theatregoers in your city can look forward to a pleasant period when they unfurl their flag there.

It is not often that three advance agents gather in this town, but such was the case last week, when Messrs Price, Matheson and Armitage, representing Anderson-Sheridan, The Merry-makers, and Taylor-Carrington Pictures respectively, unloaded themselves and their baggage. Good fellows all of them too, all out for scalps and anxious to get the good things on the wing with the first barrel. I put in a pleasant hour with them, and while the Sherbert was being consumed, the air was redolent with happenings that occurred to the trio in their wanderings on this mundane sphere. I got in a few turns with reminiscences of old times, when the old school of actors were out side of the earth, and the trio were up against it when I got going about the early time when M. Hoskins, J. P. Ryder, Florence Colville, J. B. Steele, H. N. Douglas, Walter Hill, Robert Keller, Professor Hasel Mayer, Sir William and Lady Don, Robert Heir, Fanny Cathcart, Morton Tavares, Miss Sinteas, Louie Beaudet, Herr Bandmann, Lizzie Watson, Pol-