

## CHRISTCHURCH NOTES.

My Christchurch dramatic correspondent writes: "Humpty-Dumpty" is just now the attraction at the Theatre Royal, and so far as gorgeous mounting, splendid dresses, startling effects go, is without a doubt, the most remarkable pantomime this city has ever known. As to the "plot" it is simply non-existent. Its place is supplied by music-hall turns, dances, songs, and jokes, and so fast does one "feature" follow another that the fun never flags for a moment. But of course you Aucklanders have seen the production, and so hardly require to be told any more about it.

The Taylor-Carrington "Humanised" Pictures at the Colosseum are filling that immense building nightly. The changes of bill are frequent, and the pictures are uniformly good—hence the crowd to see them.

The Wide World Pictures at the Opera House continue to be extremely popular, and this favourite place of amusement (large as it is) is hardly large enough to accommodate the public.

The "Scarlet Troubadours" are billed to open at His Majesty's this evening, Saturday, September 19th. Report speaks highly of the combination. The Prima Donna (Miss May Glenn) is from the London Lyric; Sydney Manning was, until lately, principal tenor of the Moody-Manners Opera Co. (with which our old friend Charles Carter, erstwhile of the Polards, is still associated), and Messrs Waltham and Cunningham were both members of the well-known London Meister Glee Singers, while Edgar Warnick is a society entertainer of repute. The Troubadours are touring under the direction of Mr Ed. Branscombe (once associated with the Westminster Glee Singers—a company of vocalists still well remembered in New Zealand.

## "THE TAMING OF THE SHREW."

Margaret Anglin's programme for the balance of her Melbourne season has now been practically settled, and a very important and attractive programme will result. On Saturday, September 13th, that powerful play "The Thief" gave place to "The Truth," a comedy by Clyde Pitch in which Margaret Anglin appears in a lighter role, but one no less captivating and compelling than Marise Voyain. This play, which was most successful both in London and New York, will in its turn give place on Saturday, September 26, to a very interesting production of "The Taming of the Shrew,"

with Margaret Anglin as Katherine—her first Australian appearance in a Shakespearian character. It is many years since "The Taming of the Shrew" was done in the colonies, and with a strong cast in support and an elaborate scheme in mounting and dressing, the occasion should be a momentous one to all playgoers. After "The Shrew" both "Zira" and "Camille"—two of Margaret Anglin's most famous parts, will finish the season.

## THE LETTER MANIA.

Every dramatic star, as is well known, receives shoals of letters from all sorts and conditions of men and women and many are the curious stories told about the line these letters sometimes take. Margaret Anglin is of course not exempt from this particular form of mania on the part of the general public, and she has quite a collection of quaint epistles received at one time or the other during her career. She added a local one to that collection the other day from a virtuously indignant gentleman who had evidently picked her out as one of the distinguished Americans at present in Australia. He began with a "protest against the action of President Roosevelt in treating so lightly the cadets who were guilty of ragging or hazing a junior to death," and added that it would be a good thing when national quarrels were settled by arbitration which would bring about the destruction of the military spirit. He did not mention the connection between hazing and the military spirit, probably because he was in a hurry to administer the jam after the physis, which jam consisted in congratulations on the wholesome character of the piece Margaret Anglin has been producing, and in commenting adversely on most of the other plays now being done in Australia by nearly every manager in the field—and all this on one single sheet of letter paper.

## LORING FERNIE.

There can be no doubt in the mind of anyone (writes Mr. Tallis) who has seen Mr. Loring Fernie's finished performance of Captain Hook in "Peter Pan" that he is an actor of wide experience and versatility. And a glance at his record confirms this. By a curious coincidence he began his histrionic career at the same time and in the same piece ("The Hunchback") as Mrs. Patrick Campbell. That was with the Herman Veyzin

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Company, with whom he remained some considerable time, getting a grounding in Shakespearian and English comedy. It must have been strenuous work, for he owns to having played Laertes, the First Player and the Ghost in "Hamlet," all in one night and of doubling the First Witch and Macduff in "Macbeth," Macduff, Mercutio and Iago are his favourite Shakespearian parts and Joseph Surface the only role he really cared for in the old comedies. His first London appearance was with Sir Charles Wyndham with whom he remained for nearly two years, understudying him in all the plays put on at that time. Following on that engagement and a five weeks' season with Lena Ashwell in "The Mayflower," Mr. Fernie was secured by "Dot" Boucicault for a long stay at the Court Theatre and then he went back to Sir Charles Wyndham for "Cyrano de Bergerac," understudying the name part. His next move was to join Julia Neilson and Fred Terry for "Sweet Nell" in which he created the part of Rollins, and subsequently played that of Judge Jeffreys for three years. He left them for a provincial tour as Francois Villon in "If I Were King" and on his return to London was engaged by Boucicault to take up the work in "Peter Pan" of Gerald du Maurier, whose voice had given way under the strain of commanding Captain Hook's ferocious band. He played the Pirate Chief also in Manchester, Liverpool, Newcastle, Glasgow and again in London before transferring his energies to Denis O'Hara in "Sweet Kitty Bellairs," a part he was playing when engaged by J. C. Williamson for Australia.

Mr. Charles Frohman is to try the interesting experiment of staging "Brewster's Millions" in Paris in the course of the next few weeks. One feels curious to know how that essentially American play, which by the way completes its long successful Australian career at the end of this month, will appeal to the French mind.

The Royal Welsh Male Choir have narrowly escaped a dark

and smister attempt to way-lay them on the part of a Victorian mining centre (humorously writes a correspondent). Among all the letters received by Messrs J. and N. Tait from towns asking to be included in the projected tour of Australasia were several from this particular place, and the anxiety displayed by the residents was commented on. But no one suspected until a treacherous man gave the show away, that the reason for it was a scheme to entertain them in the lowest level of the deepest mine in the district, and then hold them down there until they had sung every item in their repertoire to an audience consisting of the whole underground staff.

From the sheaf of anecdotes which Mark Hambourg is ever ready to entertain his friends with, the following is well worth repeating. He was once playing in a small back country town in South Africa where most of the buildings—including the concert hall—were of galvanised iron, just one thickness of that with naked studs showing inside. The acoustic properties of such a place were naturally excellent, especially for those who remained outside, and consequently most of the township gathered round the hall when the concert commenced. At the end of the first item there was a tremendous knocking on the walls. The manager rushed out to remonstrate angrily with the wrongdoer, but was dumb-founded by being asked for a programme, as the people outside were anxious to know the names of the pieces being played inside.

The Julius Knight Company reached their 100th performance of "The Scarlet Pimpernel" in Adelaide the other day, and a holiday audience (it was Eight Hours Day) celebrated the century in a fitting fashion.

Brisbane has been rolling up in fine style for "The Merry Widow" ever since the Royal Comic Opera Company opened there. The season will be completed with a production of "The Dairymaids" and on the 26th instant a long visit to Sydney will be commenced at Her Majesty's Theatre.

"Just for the day I'll be away,"  
Remarked his wife last Saturday,  
"If every dog must have his day,  
Then why not every cat her day?  
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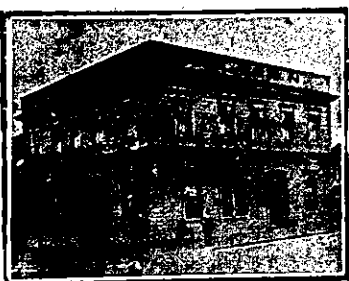
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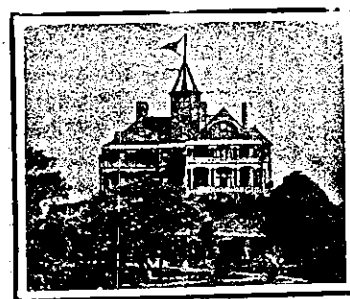
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