

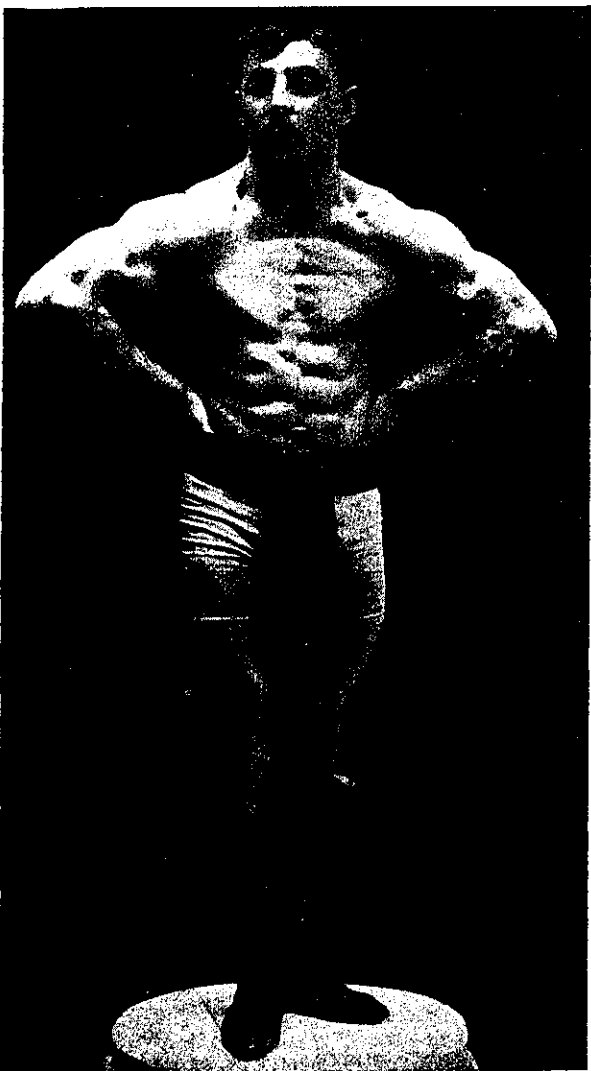
tic and musical comedians; Jicket and Jenny, equilibrists extraordinary, balancing on one hand on top of high ladder; Jicket holds his sister with his teeth. Brother Rodrigues, marvellous trapeze, horizontal and head-balancing artists; Otto and Emil, two eccentric comedians; reappearance of John Welby Cooke, champion jockey-act rider; Ozzapardi Trio, in their most sensational acrobatic act in a dog-cart. The whole of the late Fitzgerald Bros' menageries, purchased by Wirth Brothers in Sydney, is now combined with Bostock and Wombwell's menagerie. The Wirths now have the largest collection of wild animals in the world to show patrons. Maori champion jumping pony of New Zealand; Lady Morton, champion high-jumping horse, of the world's record, 7ft. 3/4in.; the great Polar bear from the Arctic regions, the only one in the world living in captivity without a tank of water. Also they have secured from Hamburg a live giraffe, that cost Wirth Bros' £1000. The first live giraffe to be seen in Australia.

When "Jim the Penman" was written by Sir Charles Young it was intended for private performances at his house in Chelsea. Lady Monckton frequently figured there as an amateur of talent, and ultimately this piece introduced the lady to the professional stage in 1886, at the Haymarket Theatre, London, where the late Arthur Dacre, and subsequently Mr. E. S. Williard appeared as Jim Railston. Mr. Beerbohm Tree was the Baron Hartfeldt, and Mr. Chas. Sugden was the Detective. Lady Monckton, wife of the Town Clerk of the City of London, made a hit as Mrs. Jim Railston, and only recently retired from the stage. Her son, Lionel Monckton, composed "The Cingalee" and "The Country Girl," and married Miss Gertie Miller. Lady Monckton's daughter, Mrs. Augustus Moore, became known as the successful novelist, "Martin Pritchard."

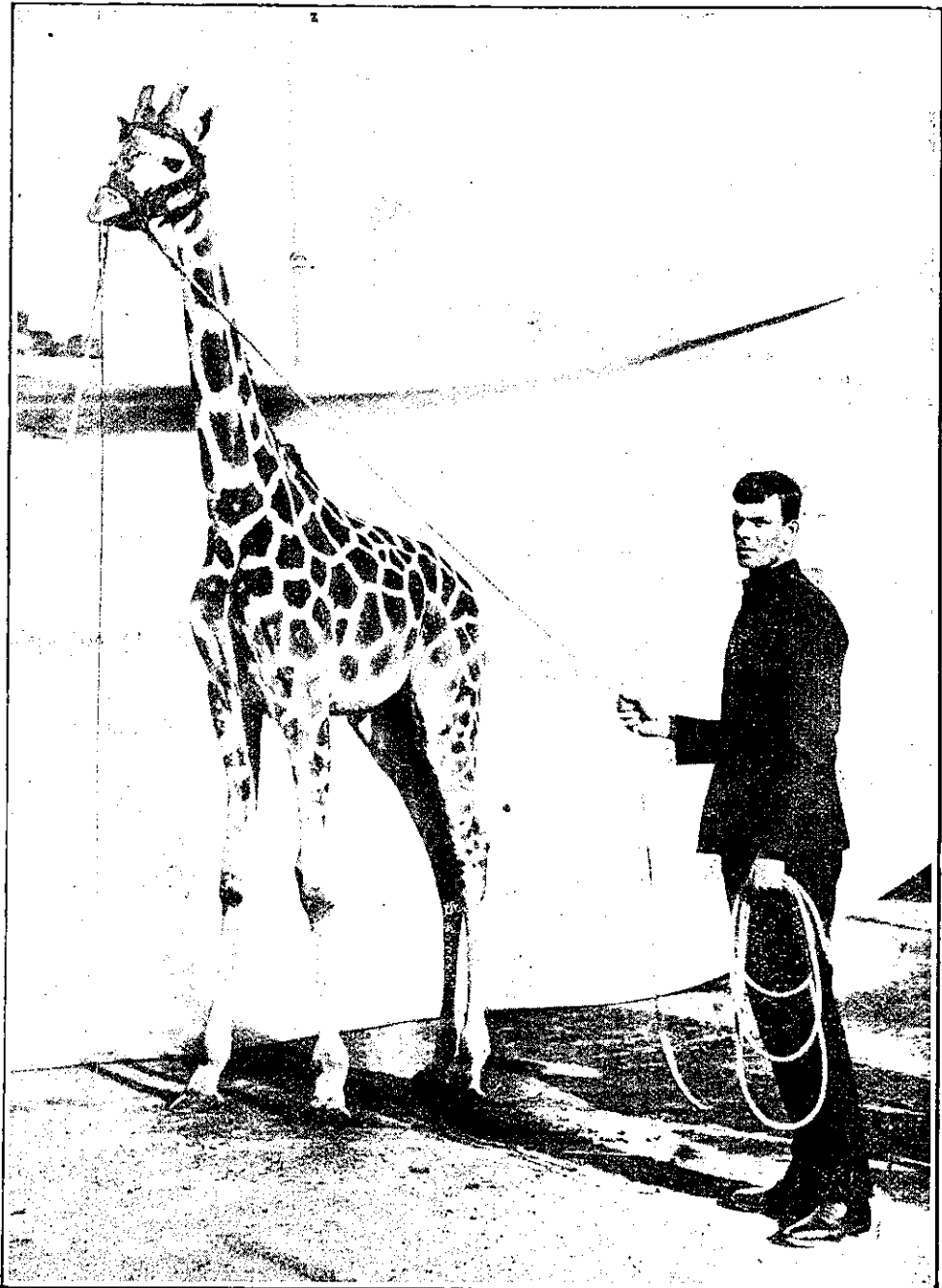
Mr. Frank Levy has been in Auckland during the week, fixing up preliminaries for the advent of the Meynell and Gunn Dramatic Company.

Rehearsals are in full swing for both "Sixes and Sevens" (by Maud Peacock) and "Manuella" (Humphreys Birch), and it is anticipated that each of these two pieces will score a success. They are to be well staged, while the cast will in each case be particularly good.

Mr. Alec. Verne, well known on this side, is the manager for the Meynell and Gunn Company. He will have many friends to give him a welcome when he arrives from Sydney on Monday.



EMIL CROTTON, A NOTED STRONG MAN WITH WIRTHS' CIRCUS.



THE FAMOUS £1000 GIRAFFE WITH WIRTHS' CIRCUS.

An American journal has been estimating the quantity of tears shed by women during the runs of pathetic melodramas, and quotes "East Lynne" as an instance. "We take 'East Lynne' for an example for the reason that it has been playing for about 50 years. During each of those years it has been played by five or six com-

panies. On an average each company will play to 2000 women in a week, making an aggregate of 10,000 for five companies. Forty weeks would make 400,000 women seeing the performance for each year, and for fifty years the total would be 20,000,000. At a conservative estimate each woman sheds ten tears, making 200,000,000 tears shed in fifty years. One thousand five hundred drops of water make a quart, and the 200,000,000 tears, counting a drop to a tear, would make 135,000 quarts, or 35,000 gallons."

The number of new films issued by the different manufacturing firms every week is enormous. For the week ending January 14 no fewer than 129 novelties were published by leading houses, in addition to many more by smaller concerns. Pathe Freres headed the list with 17, and next in order were the Warwick Co., 11; London Cinematograph Co., 9; Urban-Eclipse, 8; Gaumont, 8; Nordisk, 7; Vitagraph Co., 7; and Hepworth, Clarendon, Lux and Walturdaw Companies, 6 each. The remainder was made up of other firms' products from two to five each, including the Edison Co., with the latter number.

At the Bioscope Theatre in Dresden a novel departure is the abandonment of the white curtain on which the pictures are thrown, and in place of it the stage is fully furnished with black cloth, wings, etc., all of which are transparent. As a result, the audience is not rudely awakened from the illusion when the lights are turned up.

Mr. Clyde Meynell, of Sir Rupert Clarke, John Wren, Meynell and Gunn Syndicate, has returned by the Orontes. Mr. Meynell has secured many new pieces for the firm's companies, including "The Passing of the Third-Floor Back" (Jerome K. Jerome), "The Hypocrites" (Henry Arthur Jones), "Lucky Durham" (the late Wilson Barrett), "Pete," by Hall Caine; and the following musical plays: "The Gay Gordons," "The Belle of Brittany," "Sergeant Brue," "Tom Jones," and others.

Here are the dates for Wirths' Circus for the balance of the tour: Stratford, March 11; New Plymouth, Mar.

12; Hawera, Mar. 13; Taihape, Mar. 16; Taumararui, Mar. 17; Hamilton, Mar. 18 (special train from Cambridge); Rotorua, Mar. 19; Waihi, Mar. 20 (special train from Paeroa); Auckland, Mar. 22-27; sailing for Sydney on March 29.

Mr. Petersen, the well-known advance manager for Wirths' Circus, left for Sydney on Monday, after a very brief visit to Auckland. With but two days to arrange matters for the visit of the circus, the genial Pete had to "get a hustle on."

Another of William Anderson's dramatic organisations opened at the Adelaide Theatre Royal on Saturday last with Charles Darrell's sensational play, "When London Sleeps." The company has recently been touring New Zealand, and were specially augmented for the season. "The Squatter's Daughter," in all probability, will also be played.

It has been rumoured that Mr. Gaston Mervale is joining Miss Nellie Stewart's company. This is not correct, as Mr. Mervale is under a lengthy engagement to Meynell and Gunn, and will be a member of the new English dramatic company now being organised by the firm.

Miss Enid Sass, the daughter of the well-known actor, Edward Sass, has a voice that Madame Melba declares will create a sensation.

The Earl of Shaftesbury, who recently refused an offer of £1000 per performance to sing in America, appeared last month at a concert of the Northern Polytechnic Institute.

The Besses o' the Barn Band, now in Scotland, is arranging for another world's tour, commencing early next year, says Mr. John Tait.

In some reminiscences recently published, it is said "Struck Oil" with Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Williamson brought in £1000 per week of six performances in Melbourne, when produced in August, 1874, and that Mr. Williamson purchased the piece for £100, but subsequently settled £100 on the author for life.