

result of his manner in conducting his own work, "Hora Novissima," at an English festival. Brian Hooker is also a member of the Yale University faculty.

Mr. Fred Niblo and Miss Josephine Cohan intend returning to America in May.

Graham Moffat, play actor, was charmed with the motor trip from Mount Cook to Queenstown. "My! what a trip it is!" he said. "I am certain that it is going to be one of the greatest touring grounds in future, because the country embraces such an infinite variety of sights. In the South there is scenery among your mountains of grandeur not excelled in the world, and in the North there is a wonderful maze of boiling, burning earth."

SOUTHERN STAGE NOTES.

(By "Lorgnette.")

WELLINGTON, January 4.

I have to acknowledge with thanks the season's greetings from Mr. Richard Stawart, Mr. John Farrell, Mr. Bert Royle, Mr. Fred Duncan (Auckland), Mr. George L. Peterson (Wirth's Circus), Mr. Stanley Grant (Sydney), Mr. Albert Clarke (Launceston), Mr. Walter Fuller, Mr. George Buller, Mr. Nigel Brock ("The Green Dandies"), Mr. Alf. Linley, Mr. George Wirth, Mr. Thos. E. Foster, Mr. Harry Muller, Mr. Chas. McMahon, Mr. Philip Wirth, Mr. Alec Wilson, Mr. Harry Cohen, Mr. John Fuller, jun., Mr. William Douglas (Sydney), Mr. George Stephenson, Mr. Charles Knight, Mr. Ben J. Fuller (Sydney), Mr. William Anderson (Melbourne), Mr. Thos. Farrell, Mr. Charles Howard, Mr. William Russell ("Bunty Pulls the Strings" Co.), Mr. Humphreys ("Bunty Pulls the Strings" Co.), Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Buckler, Mr. William Noble, Mr. Maurice Ralph, and Mr. H. Hill-Kenny (London), all of which are heartily reciprocated.

The Wellington Royal Choral Society has decided on producing Mascagni's "Cavalleria Rusticana" at the first concert of the 1915 season.

The Julius Knight season at the Grand Opera House is proving very successful in every way. "A Royal Divorce" ran for seven nights to good business. This evening "The Scarlet Pimpernel" was staged in the presence of a very large audience. On Wednesday evening "The Sign of the Cross" will go up for two nights, and the last five nights of the season will be devoted to "The Silver King" (two nights) and "Monsieur Beaucaire" (three nights).

Wellington music lovers are already anxiously awaiting the coming of the Gilbert and Sullivan Repertoire Company, which is due to open at the Grand Opera House on the 27th inst. The season will extend until the 13th February, and it is safe to predict that the lovers of Gilbert and Sullivan's works will roll up in battalions to again hear these famous operas.

Variety, merit and refinement are the chief features of the entertainment at present being presented at His Majesty's Theatre. The performers appearing in the bill are all good and the business being done is excellent.

All the picture shows are doing big business just now. In fact, it is a hard job to get a seat in any of them at the evening sessions.

DUNEDIN.

(From our Dunedin Correspondent.)

There is more than the usual theatrical fare this festive season, and the temptations for dissipation are very real. Drama at His Majesty's, vaudeville at the Princess, music classical and popular at the Burns Hall, and pictures everywhere serve to remove depression and keep the multitude in a cheerful mood. All the houses of entertainment report good business and a bright outlook for the New Year.

At His Majesty's, Willoughby's Dramatic Company has given us "The Ever Open Door" and "Under Two Flags"—the latter billed as a great war drama on the strength of the hero having gone out to Algiers and joined the Chasseurs D'Afrique, which is a regiment now fighting Wilhelm II. somewhere in Belgium. It is wonderful what this war has been responsible for! The last night of the Willoughby season is announced, when "Camille," the weepful drama, will be staged.

Mr. Charles Knight, who was last in these parts with "The Rosary"

Company, is back again this time with Willoughby's Dramatic Company. Mr. Knight will go ahead of the show, and left this week for Christchurch, where the company is due to open a seven nights' season on Saturday, January 9th.

Mr. Victor Beck, the well-known touring manager, passed through Dunedin this week, after having organised the Southern tour of the Florence Young Comedy Company, which company, by the way, commences a Dunedin season at His Majesty's on January 4. The season is a brief one of three nights only. Don't be astonished when you hear the prices: 5s., 3s. and 1s. Sounds like a Williamson show, does it not?

A private wire from Auckland conveys the intelligence that the Gilbert and Sullivan Opera Company made a great hit with "The Gondoliers" on Boxing Night. But to say that it is the finest performance of the favourite opera ever given is too sweeping altogether. In any event we are looking forward to hearing the Gilbert and Sullivan Company in Dunedin, but whether that wish will be gratified I am at a loss to say. Dunedin is still being banned by J. C. Williamson. Perhaps it will be released in favour of the Opera Company.

A wire from the West Coast conveys the pleasing intelligence that Stephenson and Linley's Pantomime Company, which did only fair business in Dunedin, opened promisingly at Greymouth on Boxing Night.

Barton's Circus, which has been touring the Southland districts, passed

concert tour of America.

The proprietors of the leading hotels in San Francisco have had the wisdom of musical silence borne in upon them. Repeated clashes amongst the guests following the playing of this or that national air by the hotel orchestras have compelled the managers to forbid the melodic discursing of any old kind of patriotic music. Even the Hungarian dance tunes, the most cherished possession in the repertoire of restaurant orchestras, have had to be banned and barred. The 'Frisco police have also closed a picture theatre and arrested the proprietor on a charge of inciting to riot by screening pictures purporting to represent the Franco-Prussian war. The Peace Sunday, proclaimed by President Wilson on October 4th, brought forth a weird musical fantasy, each organist in his particular church playing the anthem of the country for which he had most sympathy. Therefore the "Marseillaise" in one church contended with "The Watch on the Rhine" played in another church over the way. But from the reports of the proceedings it appears that the British National Anthem, the melodies of the Allies, and "The Star-spangled Banner" were in most request. In one instance the entire congregation stood while variations extending into nearly twenty minutes were discoursed on "The Star-spangled Banner."

In a graphic account of his early struggles, published in a recent issue of "T.P.'s Weekly," Caruso says:—"My good father was employed in Naples as a working mechanic, and

and my fellow students laughed at my hopes of an operatic career. Undisturbed, I worked on until my studies were curtailed by my military duty. The time came for me to serve my King and country, so away I went to be soldato, registering a private vow that Naples should eventually acclaim me as 'El Tenore Caruso!' Later, Sonzogno, manager of the Teatro Lirico, Milan, asked me if I would study the role of Marcello in 'La Boheme,' but after a few days I decided that it did not suit me and returned it, with many regrets. A little later I visited Milan, and there Sonzogno came to me with a request that I would change my mind, as he was certain that it would suit me, and that I should make a success of it! Spurred on by his belief in me I learned the role, and on Tuesday, November 8th, 1898, appeared as Marcello at the Teatro Lirico, Milan, and made, if I may say so in all humility, my first success."

PLAZA PICTURES

—AND—

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through the city on Wednesday, en route for North Otago. This compact little show has been doing good business.

MUSIC NOTES.

(By "G" String.)

Miss Amy Castles arrived in Melbourne a few days ago where she intends enjoying a three months holiday before entering upon an extended



GEORGE HALL, the breezy American entertainer who is delighting Auckland Opera House audiences.

I fear I was a sad trial to my parents as a child, for I was very, very noisy and lively; my juvenile and piercing voice was heard all day, and often all night. Indeed, at home I was not what they call popular. No; my father chastised me as I deserved, and desired to make me a sober, industrious mechanic, like himself. In this desire I did not join him. I longed to be a sailor, and haunted the docks for hours, rebelling strongly against my parent's laudable wish that I should learn a trade. At the age of eleven I developed a great love for singing, and possessed, I believe, a fine, clear contralto voice! One day the old organist of the Church of St. Anna, Naples, heard me singing some popular melody, and my youthful efforts delighted him so much that he engaged me to sing in his choir. And I received for my labours each Sunday the large sum of 20 cents weekly, the first money I ever earned. At fifteen I announced my intention of devoting myself to art and music, and left my father's house following his furious ultimatum that 'I could be a mechanic or starve!' So I became a wanderer, with no weapons to help me in the fight for success but a remarkable physique and tremendous optimism, which, thank heaven, has never failed me. Somehow I managed to pick up a poor livelihood by singing at church festivals and private houses. I was often hungry, but never unhappy, and thus I went on until, at the age of 18, I was faced by this fearful problem, "Was I a tenor or a baritone?" My voice at that time was so thin that it resembled the 'wind' whistling through a gaping window,

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