

sixteen, he was twenty-four. How they met is not recorded, but he had been living in Melbourne and was a talented amateur violinist. It is probable that he had known the Simonsens for some time, and that the wedding was planned well in advance rather than the result of a whirlwind courtship. The service was a considerable social event, which was reported at length in the *Lyttelton Times* the following day. The bride and bridegroom emerged from the Jewish Synagogue to the cheers of a large crowd and the strains of Mendelssohn's 'Wedding March' played by the Opera Company orchestra stationed outside. While Leonora began her new life as the wife of a Christchurch businessman, her parents continued with their operatic journey through New Zealand.<sup>25</sup>

The Simonsen Company's 1876 tour came to an end with a short and pleasantly successful season in Invercargill. On the penultimate night there was a gala performance of *Faust*, under the patronage of the Southland military. All the officers and volunteers appeared in uniform and in Act IV, following a time-honoured tradition, the Band of the Artillery appeared on stage to assist in performing the 'Soldier's Chorus'. On the last night, a double bill of *La Sonnambula* and the first act of *The Grand Duchess of Gerolstein* was presented. The following morning, Thursday 16 November, the members of the Simonsen Royal English, Italian and Opéra-Bouffe Company were farewelled by a bevy of local admirers as they boarded the Invercargill to Bluff train, en route for the steamer *Alhambra* which would take them home to Melbourne.

They had been in New Zealand a total of 256 days, 202 of which had been spent performing. Of the remaining fifty-four, five had been occupied with rehearsals at the beginning of the tour, thirty-six Sundays provided the artists with their only regular opportunity for relaxation, and just thirteen (plus three of the Sundays) had been spent entirely in travelling. In economic terms, these were wasted days. The inadvisability of too much unproductive time was a lesson the Simonsens took to heart. Sunday 'Sacred Concerts' were to become a feature of their subsequent New Zealand visits.

Frequent changes of location, difficult travelling conditions, and constantly altering programmes were the arduous realities of performing life. All touring companies, whatever their genre, prized works that would 'run'—that is, would be sufficiently popular to draw good houses when played for many nights in succession. A 'run' meant the chance of staying an extended time in one place, thus saving travel costs. It also meant that the performers could relax during the day, instead of spending their time striking and setting up scenery and endlessly rehearsing. New Zealand's population militated against such a luxury. Although the Simonsens' repertoire contained a number of popular works, their longest run was a succession of six performances of *La*