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Anything AND Everything

MUSINGS IN MAORI-LAND.

MR. THOMAS BRACKEN has published an *édition de luxe* of his poems, with a preface by Sir George Grey and an introduction by Sir Robert Stout. The volume and its contents are a credit to local industry, and should lie on the drawing-room table of every patriotic New Zealander. Besides being a poet, Mr. Bracken is a humourist of the first water, "Paddy Murphy's" witty verses having won and deserved a reputation in and beyond the Australian Colonies. One poem in the volume under notice contains some delicate and playful touches which we really must quote. It is entitled "Waiaronui," and tells the love-story of Te Raupa and Kareora. Mr. Bracken might perhaps have added as a sub-title, "or the Two Grand-pas!" as the old gentlemen seem to have acted most cruelly, never having read Victor Hugo's tender poem, "The Art of being a Grandfather," for two excellent reasons. First, because the old gentlemen died before the poem was written, and next, because no one has thought fit to translate into Maori any of Victor Hugo's delightful poetry. That one of the two old gentlemen had some provocation can scarcely be denied, when we read that Te Raupa, not content with abducting Kareora, actually *scaled* her grandfather, who, we must suppose, was a *Taniwha*. Of Te Raupa, the text says:

He feared not danger, knew not fear,
And to secure a prize so dear
He scaled her father's Pa!

"Father's Pa!" for grandfather, is truly poetic. Further on comes this passage, in a passionate burst from Te Raupa's lips, when Kareora, feeling a little homesick, insinuates that she "wants to go home to her Pa!"

Thy father's love is cold compared
To that within my breast—I've dared
The terrors of his Pa for thee!

Truly, having faced and scaled a Taniwha, Te Raupa here makes no empty boast. So far the allusions point only to the young lady's elderly relative, but presently Te Raupa, doubtless much incensed by the slight appreciation bestowed upon his valourous deeds by Kareora, fiendishly threatens her:

From thence 'tis but a little pace
Unto the dwellings of my race;
Within my father's Pa, my sweet,
There thou shalt find a safe retreat!

Poor girl! had she then bravely and unselfishly abandoned father, grandfather, kith and kin, only to be devoured by a greedy old cannibal in the shape of her grandfather-in-law! Poetic justice, however, appears to have triumphed in the end, for with the vague and mystic diction which marks the true poet, vengeance, like a sleuth-hound, tracks the ravisher and murderer in this concluding passage:

Give up thy secret—say what strange Romance
Hangs over thee, Waiaronui. Ah!
Methinks I see fierce braves with spears advance
Unto thy peaceful shores from distant Pa!
Revenge! revenge! and "blood"—these are their cries!

"Distant Pa," having had his father scaled and his daughter abducted by a bold, bad Lothario,

was naturally annoyed; but when the poor girl was devoured by her grandpa-in-law and called "sweet," *utu*, swift, sure, and ample, became an imperative necessity.

TOUCHING the Auckland College and Grammar School Sports, held in the Domain on Friday last, "Old Boy," in the *New Zealand Herald*, writes a letter which is both sensible and opportune. If the sports are to become popular and the success they should be, some control must be exercised over the spectators. "Old Boy" suggests the roping in of the course and the appointment of stewards to maintain order. In the case of large crowds, such as are seen at the Amateur Athletic meetings, it is absolutely necessary to have the ground securely roped, but we think that for school meetings a row of flags and an adequate number of stewards would suffice. The management might absolutely forbid any race to start until the spectators were ranged behind the flags, and the stewards, by a little moral persuasion, could surely prevent so respectable a crowd from encroaching on the arena during the progress of any event.

A PLEASING incident of the New Zealand tour of the Juvenile Opera Company was the presentation by a Wellington friend of five handsome volumes to be awarded to the best-behaved girl in the company. The children themselves decided the question by ballot, and Miss Flo Russell headed the poll by two votes. She may well be proud of the result, as the children, taken all round, are a remarkably modest, respectful, polite, and docile set. Miss Lily Stephens, who came in a splendid second, should feel almost equally flattered at so convincing a proof of the high opinion she has won from her "chums." It is extremely gratifying to note the entire absence of jealousy among the Juveniles, who seem just as delighted with the success scored by any member as if bouquets or applause had fallen to their own lot. In fact *esprit de corps* pervades the company, and contributes largely to its efficiency.

A LARGELY-ATTENDED meeting of the Auckland Polo Club was held in the Auckland Racing Club's rooms on Monday evening. Amongst those present were:—Messrs. Lockhart, Francis, Gilmour, Wansborough, Colegrove, O'Rorke, and Stewart. Dr. Purchas was voted to the chair, and the following officers were elected for the ensuing season:—Captain, Mr. O'Rorke; Hon. Treasurer, Mr. Lockhart; Committee, Messrs. Wynyard, Stewart, Colegrove, and the Secretary and Treasurer; Hon. Secretary (*pro tem*), Mr. O'Rorke. It was resolved that Mr. Thomas Morrin be requested to accept the position of President of the Club. A letter was read from the New Zealand Polo Association requesting the Auckland Polo Club to nominate a representative for the ensuing year, and Mr. O'Rorke was re-elected to that position. The Secretary was instructed to cable to Sydney for a fresh supply of polo sticks and to get everything ready for an early start. Thirteen new members were elected, and as twenty-two gentlemen have intimated their intention of playing this season, there is every prospect of it being a very prosperous one. A vote of thanks to the Chairman, and a similar one to the Auckland Racing Club for the use of their rooms, ended the proceedings.

Music & Drama.

Spectatum admissi risum teneatis amici?

MESSRS. WILLIAMSON, GARNER & Co., it is said, have at length finally decided to prohibit the performance by amateurs of any of their copyright operas. If opera clubs, then, are debarred from representing the best of Gilbert and Sullivan's pieces, as well as those by other famous composers of comic opera, they must perforce either shut up shop or seek fresh pastures. In Auckland we have had almost a surfeit of comic opera, and a change in the shape of one of the less ambitious works of a higher standard would, I feel sure, not only be welcome, but certain to score a brilliant success. Why should not our Opera Club try Flotow's pretty little opera "Marta?" It would be found well within their resources. It is not too "leggy," a piece for amateurs, and the cast could readily be filled with competent performers. I will suggest a provisional cast. Lady Henrietta (soprano), Mrs. Archdale Tayler or Mrs. Cooper; Nancy (contralto), Miss Reeve or Mrs. Coates; Lionel (tenor), Mr. T. Jackson or Mr. A. L. Edwards; Plunket, Mr. G. Reid or Mr. Archdale Tayler; Sir Tristram, Mr. Percy Dufaur; Sheriff, Mr. Worrall. The few subordinate parts could easily be filled, and the chorus would admirably suit the excellent staff of singers enrolled in the Club. While giving scope for taste and originality, scenery, mounting and costumes would not be either difficult or costly. There is nothing in the business which need daunt our amateurs, with so competent a stage manager as Mr. Archdale Tayler to guide them. So far it has been the fashion to copy almost exactly the traditional business and mounting of pieces performed by professional companies. But a new departure in the direction of originality would, I feel convinced, be crowned with success in every way. Of course an English version would be given, and I will mention in that language a few of the gems which stud the graceful little work. In the first act the exquisite duet sung by Lionel and Plunket, and their tuneful solos; a couple of fine choruses, and a splendid quartette. In the second act the famous "Spinning" quartette, the "Last Rose of Summer," and a very taking *Terzetto*. In the third act a grand hunting chorus, "Hark! the Huntsman's horn," the magnificent tenor aria, "M'Appari" (Fair as the Rose), and a lovely quintette and finale, "Ah! naught more." The fourth act is short and sweet, working up to a most effective conclusion. I trust that the Auckland Amateur Club will consider my suggestion, and I venture to predict that, if they see their way to adopt it, they will not only cover themselves with glory by successfully attempting a higher flight, but also gladden the heart of the treasurer with overflowing coffers.

ON Saturday, at the opening of the Mount Eden Lawn Tennis Club, which by the way was a most enjoyable and brilliant success, the management provided some capital music, ren-