

than the first. The Company then proceeded to Lyttelton, where a popular concert in the Colonists' Hall was enthusiastically reported as 'undoubtedly the greatest musical treat ever given to the people of Lyttelton'.²³

The programme is worth giving in full, since it is typical of those presented during the tour. The first section began with an orchestral overture (Rossini's *Otello*, continued with a selection of popular ballads sung by the leading soloists, and concluded with the finale from the third act of *Martha*. An arrangement for brass quintet of the 'Fra oco' from *Lucia di Lammermoor* began the second part. A further selection of ballads, and a piano solo by the Company's chorus master, C. B. Foster, then followed. The section concluded with a trio from *Lucrezia Borgia*, sung by Fanny Simonsen, Carmini Morley and John Barrington. The final part of the programme brought yet more ballads, before the *pièce de résistance*—violin solos by Martin Simonsen. His clever fantasias upon melodies dear to the hearts of an immigrant audience were always greeted with immense applause. The concert concluded with the 'Goodnight Quartet' from *Martha*.

By 10 October the Simonsens were re-established in Christchurch, at the Oddfellows' Hall. Their programmes included a number of operas which they had not previously performed in the town—amongst them *Faust*, *Masaniello*, and *Carlo Broschi*, which received its Christchurch première on 16 October. The newspapers were more in accord during this season, with the *Press* being particularly generous in its praise. No doubt the performances did show greater cohesion and professional polish than earlier in the tour. However, despite lower prices, attendances were patchy. Benefit nights and new operas received good houses, but for repeat performances the audience was often sparse. It was the same story when the Company moved to Dunedin on 23 October. 'We think Mr Simonsen has much reason to complain of the miserable patronage extended to him during the season just ended', commented the *Otago Daily Times*. 'The majority of operas produced were very creditably performed, and deserved far larger audiences.'²⁴ Since Dunedin had just experienced a return visit from *Ilma di Murska*, and had Mr Dampier, billed as 'the young and popular Tragedian' in residence at the Princess Theatre, while Mr Clifford's *Mirror of the World* (an illustrated travelogue) vied for attention at the Temperance Hall, it is more probable that there was simply not a big enough potential audience to sustain the number of attractions on offer.

Throughout the tour, Fanny and Martin had been accompanied by their oldest daughter, Leonora. Although not listed as appearing on stage, she could have helped out in many other ways. The children of theatrical families were usually trained to follow their parents' profession. In Christchurch, on 18 October 1876, Leonora married David Davis, son of Hyam Davis, a wealthy local merchant. She was