

# Mrs. Armstrong.

(THE AUSTRALIAN PRIMA DONNA.)

(See Portrait on page 16.)

OUR first portrait of the New Series is that of Mrs. Armstrong, the young Australian *prima donna*. It is from a photograph lately taken by Tuttle, of Sydney. Mrs. Armstrong, who is the talented daughter of Mr. David Mitchell, of Richmond, is a native of that city. She has been before the public as a concert singer for the last two years. She was educated at the Presbyterian Ladies' College, and received there her earliest vocal training from the renowned contralto, Miss Christian. To this succeeded six years' hard work under Signor Cecchi, and she first appeared as his pupil at the Elsasser Benefit Concert two years ago. At her first concert she at once took her audience captive, and she has steadily advanced in ability and artistic excellence until she is now described by the *Argus* critic as "the chief soprano singer in Australia." The best of critics have always been unanimous in her praise. The *Australasian*, at her *debut*, said that "she sang like one picked out of ten thousand." The *Federal Australian* described her voice as "one of the purest and richest of soprano voices, capable of all the effects which make the voices of great singers of such immense value." The *Sydney Morning Herald* says, "Mrs. Armstrong appears to sing better at every concert; nothing better has been heard in Sydney for many years." And finally, of her performance at the Herz Testimonial Concert, the *Argus* remarks, "we have but few words to say concerning this lady, and these we weigh well before uttering them; such beautiful natural gifts as she possesses mark her for a place amongst soprano vocalists on a level with that occupied by Ilma de Murska."

It would be wrong were such talent as this lost to the world, and we are pleased to note that Mrs. Armstrong will leave by the mail on the 11th instant, to undergo three or four years higher musical and vocal training in Europe. She is to bid "Farewell" to Melbourne at her benefit concert at the Town Hall next Saturday evening, at which His Excellency the Governor and Lady Loch, who have always much admired her singing, will be present. Victoria has already set in store some bright jewels for an Australian musical crown—Kruse, Rees, Hutcheson—none will glitter with brighter lustre than the latest—Nellie Armstrong. Nor are her talents one-sided, she is a brilliant pianist, an accomplished organist, and a tasteful amateur painter. We bid her *bon voyage*, and a hearty "farewell." Gratitude for the ungrudging help she has always given to public charities and un-numbered "benefits," apart from her own talents, will insure her a crowded house on Saturday night. Equally certain is it that the distinction of her future career will reflect honour on the colony of her birth.



MRS. ARMSTRONG, the Australian Prima Donna.