

HANCKE'S HALL, BARCALDINE.

At the invitation of Mr. Oscar Bancke, a number of gentlemen met at the town hall, Barcaldine, yesterday at noon, to drink success to the new building. A table had been placed on the ample stage, and on this was spread a bountiful supply of iced champagne and soda. Mr. Bancke, in asking the company to drink success to the hall, said he was aware the undertaking he had entered into was a great one, but he believed in the end it would prove remunerative, as knowing there was a building in Barcaldine suitable large companies playing in Rockhampton would be induced to pay this important town a visit. The old hall was good enough in its day, but with a largely increasing population, he could see a more extensive building was required. Mr. Hyland proposed Mr. Bancke's health in a felicitous speech. He said the hall Mr. Bancke had now erected was a credit to the central district; the stage was large enough for three sets of scenery, and the floor of the hall he reckoned could not be excelled outside Brisbane for dancing purposes. There were other conveniences which would make the building unequalled for balls. Mr. Bancke had gone to considerable expense, but he had kept abreast with the times, and he felt the speculation would be as remunerative to the owner as it would be advantageous to the town. Mr. Bancke said he need say little as he had already expressed his sentiments. Mr. Hyland's opinion he valued highly; that gentleman was a man who had had a considerable experience among amateur theatricals, and had given him a number of hints which he had gladly availed himself of. Mr. Bancke then proposed the health of Messrs. Meacham & Leyland, the contractors. That firm had given him the greatest satisfaction in the manner in which they had done their work. The firm mentioned had only a rough outline to go upon, but they had carried out his ideas as well as if elaborate plans had been drawn up. Indeed, a hard and fast plan would have been impossible, as numerous improvements suggested themselves as the work of alteration proceeded. Messrs. Meacham & Leyland modestly responded. They always endeavored to give satisfaction in all work they undertook, and with regard to Mr. Bancke's hall they had studied efficiency with economy. Mr. Bancke then proposed what he styled the "Three in One," Mr. Hyland, manager of the local Thespians, Mr. Chandler, the pianist and scenic artist, and Mr. Morgan, caretaker. The toast was drunk with musical honors, and responded to by the gentlemen toasted. The "Press" was then proposed, and responded to by Mr. James. The party then separated.—Mr. Bancke's hall has now a total depth of 100 feet, of which 20 feet is occupied by shops in front and 24 feet stage depth, leaving the auditorium 56 feet. The building is 24 feet wide. The stage is nearly as large as the hall itself, being 54 x 24, the dressing rooms being large, well-lighted and comfortable, the floor, of Maryborough pine, having a fall of four inches. A feature of the main hall is the excellent floor, which is of Maryborough three-inch boards secretly nailed. Terpsichoreans will have a chance to try it at Mr. Chandler's benefit on Thursday night. Ventilation is amply provided for, there being a louvred ventilator, 25 x 8 feet, and in addition two skylights, which can be opened so as to admit of further supplies of fresh air when required. On the western side a door opens into a supper room 40 by 15 feet; a wall of seven feet iron hides the interior from the outside gaze, while ample ventilation is provided between the top of the wall and the roof. The building will be

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lighted throughout with sun lights provided by Messrs. Meacham & Leyland. Near the double entrance doors a ticket box has been erected, which will be found very convenient. A new piano is, at time of writing, waiting at the goods shed for carters; it is a first-class Hapsburg, and has been chosen specially by Mr. Chandler. Mr. Bancke is to be congratulated for at last providing a building for public purposes that is a credit to the town; he has taken *carpe diem* for his motto, and we do not think he will regret having done so.