

The Stage

"CARTER THE GREAT."

At His Majesty's Theatre on Wednesday evening (December 1), J. C. Williamson will present the renowned magician and illusionist, Carter the Great, who is reputed to be the finest exponent of magic appearing before the public to-day, and the success achieved throughout Australia warrants expectations of something quite out of the ordinary. Of his opening performance at the Princess Theatre, Melbourne, the "Herald" says: "On Saturday evening Carter the Great unpacked his whole bag of tricks at the Princess Theatre to a huge audience, who went away mystified, convinced by the evidence of their own eyes that there is not such a word as impossible. We have seen many magicians in Melbourne, but the illusions of Carter the Great surpass them all, inasmuch as they more nearly approached black magic." According to those who have seen the performance, "The Lion's Bride" takes pride of place. This Oriental romance is done in pantomime, not one word being spoken, yet the audience never miss a point. Just as a young damsel is flung to a caged lion, a "mystic Prince" appears and saves her life, causing the lion to disappear while he appears in its place, and as Carter steps from the cage bearing the damsel in his arms the lion is again seen behind the bars of the cage. It is said to be most thrilling, and the effect is heightened by the savagery of the lion, which is a magnificent specimen and was purchased by Carter from the ex-King Manuel, of Portugal, when that unfortunate monarch was deposed. The demonstrations conducted by Carter, assisted by Evelyn Maxwell, who is said to possess considerable psychic powers, are said to be of great interest to the student of the occult and study of thought transference and mental telepathy. The company includes a specially selected orchestra under the musical direction of Miss Nellie Black. The box plans for the first six nights of the season will be opened at Lewis Eady's on next Monday morning.

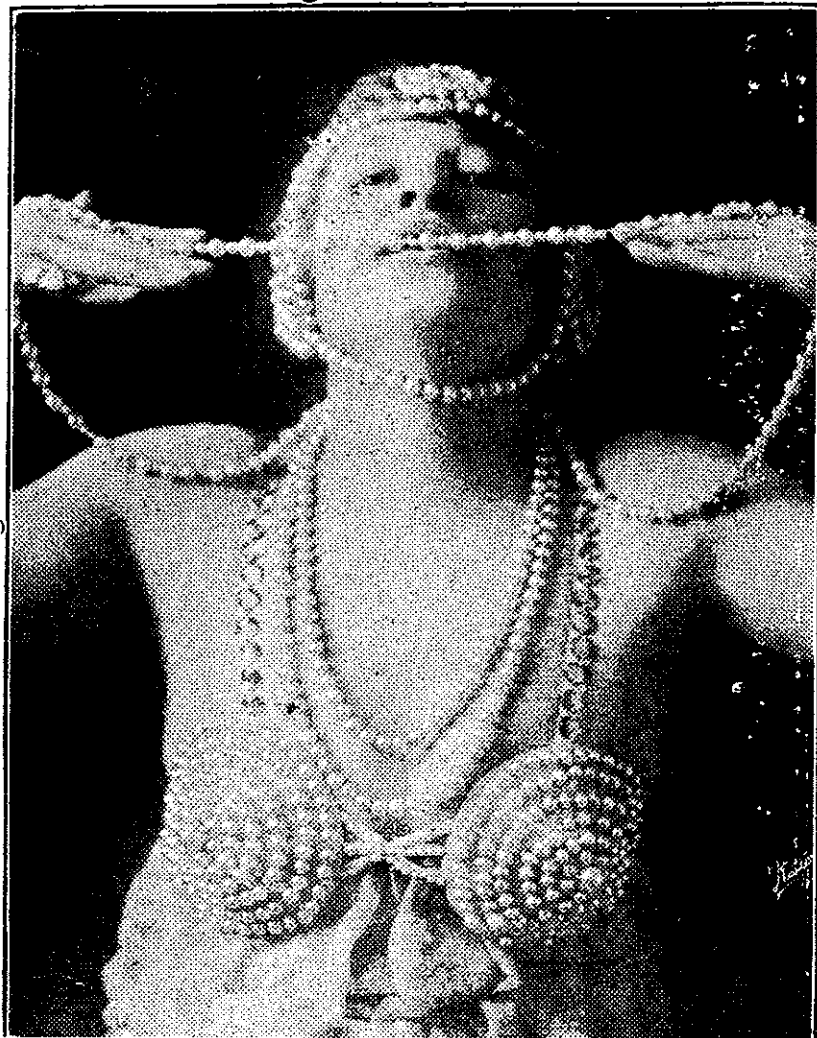
OPERA HOUSE.

The usual change of programme took place at the Opera House on Monday evening, and a large audience greeted the new acts, and gave a welcome to old favourites. The magical Alberto, a gay and amusing deceiver in more ways than one, made his first appearance after a starring tour of the world. As a conjuror his work was neat and quick, and various handkerchiefs, balls and other articles vanished into space in a manner that utterly mystified the onlookers, while other material things such as watches and bunches of flowers appeared at the word of command. Not the least interesting part of the performance were the amusing asides of the magician, whose speech was as clever as his actions. Another new act was given by De Wilfred, a performer on the xylophone, an unwieldy instrument in a beautiful stage setting, from which the performer produced some charming music, variations of well-known airs. The comical pair, Ward and Sherman, in another humorous conversation, were rewarded with roars of laughter as they mimicked the efforts of an American bowery native to learn the manners of a higher circle. Hall and Menzies, English sketch artists, presented a comedy study of a scene in a cheap luncheon room and the different characters that pass through, in which the female impersonator reached a high level of broad comedy work. Le Brun and his French partner gave a further display of their powers, and were well applauded, while Louis London in his character songs, both gay and grave, had his usual warm reception. A very fine juggling exhibition was given by Tara Ysuda, and other items by Curly Sherwood, Billy Elliott, and Yank and Jean closed a good programme.

Miss Frances Ross, who for 15 years played "lead" in all sorts of dramas with Mr. Bland Holt, has recently opened a studio in Sydney for the instruction of pupils in elocution and dramatic art generally.

Sessue Hayakawa's next release will be "The Beggar Prince," a serio-comedy.

Miss Adelaide Van Staveren achieved a brilliant success at her recitals at His Majesty's last Thursday and Saturday, the gifted Wellington singer with her London and Continental fame dominating large audiences with the opulence of her voice and her alluringly dramatic style. Her success in majestic and fervid handling was emphasised in Beethoven's "Creation's Hymn" and Verdi's "Stride la Vampa" and "O Don Fatale," amongst other outstanding operatic numbers of thrilling intensity, and while one recognised that here was her real metier, it was no less enjoyable to hear Miss Staveren expound the art of the melodic ballad and accentuate it with her own particular reading. She possesses a magnetic personality, and with her colourful treatment and artistic employment of a singularly powerful voice, she sang her way into immediate favour, and encores were insistently demanded. Hullah's "Three Fishers" was pictured with tragic fidelity, and there was true emotional feeling in her treatment of the sentimental Irish air "Danny Boy." Miss Van Staveren's versatility enables her to give pleasure to all, and there is no doubt that she has made an enduring impression on audiences here. The singer was assisted by Mr. Matthew Dixon, who as accompanist and solo pianist was artistic.



MISS EVELYN MAXWELL, the psychic marvel, who gives a remarkable exhibition of telepathy with Carter the Great, commencing in Auckland next Wednesday.

Miss Van Staveren will give an additional recital at the Town Hall to-night (Wednesday), two of her items being "Ave Maria" (Gounod-Bach) and "Land of Hope and Glory" (Elgar). Mr. Cyril Towsey will be the accompanist.

Wm. A. Brady and Samuel Goldwyn have recently paid a visit to Europe in quest of new stars. Brady's catch is the daring Alice Delysia, well-known to Diggers on leave in the Big Smoke, while Goldwyn's protegee is a French girl of nineteen, whom he discovered acting before the camera in Paris. Her name is at present withheld as she will probably be rechristened in order "to make her seem less foreign to American audiences."

A paragraph in a Sydney paper states that Mr. William Arnott, solicitor, of Dalton House, Pitt Street, Sydney, has issued out of the Supreme Court of New South Wales a writ for \$5000 damages, on behalf of Mr. Philip Newbury, the well-known tenor singer, in respect of alleged libel, against the "Triad Magazine," Ltd., of Australasia. The libel alleged appeared in the issue of the "Triad" of September 10 last.

"Snowy" Baker's stunts in "The Shadow of Lightning Ridge," to be shown throughout New Zealand by E. J. Carroll, are said to stand alone as the most daring example of actual personal risk ever taken for the purposes of picture production. There are no fakes and no precautions for safety, every feat being done in full view of the audience.

Mr. Bert Royle, representative in New Zealand for J. C. Williamson and J. and N. Tait, has received word that the Auckland attraction for Christmas will be the musical comedy "Irene," which has registered such a strong success in Sydney. It will probably open on December 22. Wellington will see Marie Tempest in a repertoire of her most brilliant plays, and the holiday bill for Christchurch will be "The Man From Toronto."

Miss Marie Lohr is producing "Birds of a Feather" at the Globe Theatre, London.

Carter the Great, magician and illusionist, who is touring the Dominion under the direction of J. C. Williamson, is the author of a very popular book on Magic, and during his visit to Australia he was approached by a publishing firm to write another, but as the rights of the first book are not yet free and many booksellers throughout Australia stock them, he decided to postpone writing another till the conclusion of his present world's tour. In his spare moments he is writing a book on his travels, and recently completed the scenario for picturisation by a leading firm in America. The plot is founded on his big illusion "The Lion's Bride," and will be a costly

"On Our Selection," the Australian play that Bert Bailey took to London, is thus referred to by the "London Mail" in its criticisms "Before and Behind the Curtains":—"Three or four years ago, when the Strand was khaki-colour with Australian soldiers, and hefty lads from the Antipodes were adding to the general liveliness of things in dull and dark old London, "On Our Selection," the queer Australian play which has produced something of the effect in Shaftesbury Avenue an Esquimaux might produce, in the Marlborough Club, would probably have enjoyed a fair measure of prosperity. I trust that such a happy fate is even now in store for a very honest entertainment. But "I kinder feel," as they would say in the play itself, that for a normal London audience, this is scarcely the stuff. It is no more crude in its melodramatic moments than the Lyceum dramas; it is probably rather less sentimental than the American "human" plays, it is far funnier than many a British farce. Yet it is beyond us—above us, or beneath us, what you will—but certainly it is beyond us. If "On Our Selection" makes us think a bit more about the little island the Prince of Wales has just visited, so much the better; it will have achieved something in lieu of an all-conquering triumph. To so many of us Australia is just a vague place, whither Uncle Something-or-other (who was supposed to have been a bit of a nuisance) went many years ago, and "is, we believe, doing very well." We look on it, I'm afraid, as a place of kangaroos and wallabies, of medicinal burgundies, with an emu on the bottle, of boomerangs and gallant but wild soldiers. We are apt to miss the steadiness, the perseverance and the genuine humour of the men and women who "selected" some remote spot two hundred miles from a railway station and fought with Nature there until they went under or won out. "On Our Selection" is an aboriginal rather than an original play. But it shows us the backwoodsman, who is the backbone of a great country, as he really is. The backwoods of America, whose inhabitants wear six-shooters and hearthrugs pinned round their trouser-legs, are familiar to us through the films. It has been left for Bert Bailey to bring to London the counterpart of this in Australian life. . . . Bert Bailey himself is all that matters in the acting line; and as a new comedian, with a new personality, he matters a great deal.

Major Kenneth Maclaine, the chief of Lochbuie, during his Fuller engagement in Wellington was the guest of honour at the "Gathering of the Clans" held by the Caledonian Society. Chief Clark gave the visitor a hearty welcome, and in reply Major Maclaine gave a resume of the causes that necessitated the last of the Chiefs of Lochbuie taking to the vaudeville stage. At this juncture the arrival of Miss Amy Evans and Mr. Fraser Gange, the famous singers, was the cause for another outburst of Scottish appreciation. In thanking his fellow-members of the society for their reception to him and his wife, Mr. Gange referred to the brilliant part Major Maclaine had taken in the late war. He was seven times mentioned in despatches, being one of the Contemptibles, and served also near the Australasians on Gallipoli. These facts should further consolidate the feeling of the Caledonians towards the Maclaines. Major Maclaine was elected a member of the society and appointed Hon. Chief, which position he said he proudly accepted. Several items, interspersed with dances, helped to make a very enjoyable evening.

Mr. Harry Gordon, who was ahead of the Dandies of 1920, is acting as touring representative for the remainder of Carter the Great's season.



MISS LOLA LE BRUN, the fascinating French artist appearing at the Opera House.

Theatregoers in the Dominion who have admired Miss Edith Drayson in "The Bing Boys on Broadway" and "The Passing Show," slight though her part has been, will look forward with pleasure to renewing acquaintance with this lovable young artist when the next Williamson pantomime comes along. Miss Drayson will play principal girl in "Humpty Dumpty," which goes up in Melbourne on Boxing Night. She has had some enviable engagements in London and the provinces, and has done important pantomime and musical comedy work.

Mr. Tom Pollard is in Wellington at present directing rehearsals for the Amateur Operatic Society's production of "The Country Girl." This will be the eighth piece the veteran actor-producer has guided for that society. It is some live organisation beyond a doubt, and a peep into their fine big room and an inspection of the wardrobe creates in one's mind the impression that "amateur" will not be applied to their forthcoming efforts.