



"THE LIFE GUARDSMAN."

Mr. Alfred Paumier, the popular actor, and his talented company, are paying Johannesburg a short return visit of three weeks' duration, and the capital attendance which prevails nightly testifies to the popularity of this company. They opened on Monday night last with Walter Howard's latest success "The Lifeguardsman," which the author calls "a romantic play." It is difficult to find a proper name for this author's pieces, to know exactly into which class they belong, as they all hold the middle course between drama and comedy, pathos and humour, containing a little of each. Whilst we will own that the name "romantic play" suits Howard's pieces very well, we assert, on the other hand that it would be very difficult to find a more appropriate appellation, and, as a matter of fact, that is what the author calls all his works. The same tendency runs through all his pieces, which are as similar to each other as twins or as the proverbial one egg is to the other; Mr. Howard could therefore hardly deny his parentage, even if he wanted to, and this strong resemblance is in his works almost more evident than in any other author's. Whether it is "The Midnight Wedding," "The Beggar Maid," or "The Lifeguardsman," we invariably find the lady who *must* marry (generally for reasons of State); who must marry on or at a certain fixed hour (generally at midnight); upon whom her council or ministry wish to force a husband (or they give her two to



MR. ALFRED PAUMIER,

the Romantic Actor who is at present delighting Standard Theatre goers in "The Lifeguardsman."

choose from, with their preference for the one), and finally the lady invariably chooses "the other one," that is the one she loves, and who is, of course, not the one her advisers decide on. This is, in a very condensed form, the plot of "The Lifeguardsman," and it might also almost refer to the other two plays by the same author. Mr. Walter Howard is, it must be stated to his credit, however, master in the art of play-writing, for he knows how to construct them, how to happily balance the two predominant elements of plays, *i.e.*, the dramatic and the humorous and, lastly, he knows his public and how to please and satisfy them. In the piece under review these two characteristics are well blended, and, if anything, the comic element predominates over the tragic, so much so that even in the most dramatic scenes the audience has really no time to "settle down" to becoming serious, as they are followed in too quick succession by "the lighter vein of life." In one point "The Lifeguardsman" compares unfavourably with Howard's other plays, namely in the contrast between the hero and the villain, who, in this case, is a Prince, and a reigning one at that. In fact, the way that the latter's character is delineated, it has been made very easy for the Princess, the heroine in the play, to choose the hero as her Consort; it would have been unnatural had it been otherwise. Prince Hugo of Sax Steinberg, the rejected one, is drawn as a coarse, ugly, debauched piece of humanity, and a drunkard besides, with

manners at which the average man of education would blush, and which are scarcely likely to be found in a man of such high rank.

THE ACTING.

Mr. Winnington-Barnes represented this character in its full coarseness, as a matter of fact he rather overdid it at times, but he seemed to revel in the part, or else we might have felt sorry for him. As a set-off against this, there is Prince Max of Calvaria, a noble, gallant, handsome man, in short a prince *par excellence*, the hero of the piece, and when we state that this rôle lay in the hands of Mr. Alfred Paumier, we have said enough. This actor makes an ideal hero at all times, but in this case his work was made light for him by the author himself, being quite in keeping with his exalted rank from a social and moral point of view. The heroine was Miss Lilian Hallows, as Princess Dovine, who made her part thoroughly convincing by the dignified, noble manner in which she acted it. Mr. Paumier and Miss Hallows are great favourites with patrons of the Standard, and added, by their respective parts, fresh laurels to their already large wreath. A pathetic part was that of Philip, the "mad Prince," which difficult rôle was acted very conscientiously and sympathetically by Miss Ruhamah Cotton. There are three more parts in the play which required careful handling, namely that of General Roseberg (Mr. John Nesbitt), Baron Stralzer (Mr. Hodgson Taylor) and Captain Salburg (Mr. Gerald Fitzgerald), and we have no hesitation in stating that all three actors did the fullest justice to their respective rôles.

THE HUMOROUS PORTION.

of the play was taken care of by the three aides-de-camp, Messrs. Norman B. Canon, Herbert Maule and Carry C. Payne, who are too well-known to patrons of the Standard to require special praise on this occasion, suffice it to say that they kept up their reputation which they have gained, their best reward being the laughter in which they kept the audience right through the piece. They were ably supported by Miss Florence Williams and Miss Belle Donaldson, as the maid of honour and waiting maid of the Princess respectively, who contributed their full share towards the success of the production. The piece itself, like all Howard's plays, is full of changes of scenes, and, in consequence, of scenery. In the present case it consists of four acts, divided into twelve scenes, and we feel in duty bound to pay a well-earned compliment to Mr. Hedley Churchward, the painter, for the masterly manner in which he has acquitted himself, and handled his task. Also the stage manager should come in for his quota of praise, especially in scene 4 of act 3, when the scenery moves rapidly, so as to cause the impression of a motor car speeding along the road at top-speed. Altogether the production was another of the successes of the Alfred Paumier Company, and the "Lifeguardsman" is well worth seeing. The orchestra was, as usual, under the able conductorship of Mr. Max Weinbrenn.

A DESERVING OBJECT.

We would draw our readers attention to the grand sacred performance which is to take place on Sunday next at His Majesty's Theatre in aid of the Benevolent Fund of the Wilkomir Sick Benefit and Benevolent Society. An excellent programme has been arranged, for in addition to Miss Rebecca Reuben, the well-known Jewish vocalist, and Mr. Chosack, the xylophone expert, the string band of the Transvaal Police will be in attendance. Nor is this all, since Mr. John Lawson has kindly arranged for the whole of his company to assist him in a special production of the *Mogen David* or, as it is known amongst the general public, the "Shield of David." This society does an immense amount of good, and like many another similar formation is composed of *landsleute* or ladies and gentlemen coming from one particular town. The present officials of the society are: Hon. President, Mr. H. Graumann; chairman, Mr. P. W. Cronson; joint hon. treasurers, Messrs. S. Williams and S. Sarembok; joint hon. secretaries, Messrs. R. Kaplan and H. Malk, and the names of these gentlemen are in themselves a guarantee of the excellent work done amongst the members, who number nearly two hundred. The prices for Sunday evening's occurrence have been wisely fixed at moderate rates, and consequently there should be a crowded house to swell the funds of this purely charitable and social organisation.

THE GRAND.

The programme at the Grand is as excellent as usual. Apart from the latest photo plays which consist of The Sponge Industry, educational; The Gentleman Ranker, drama; The Seventh Son, drama; Egypt the Mysterious, historical; Our Neighbour's Wife, comedy; and Bessie's Dream, comedy, there are three very good turns. In the first place there are Terry and Lambert, who are described as America's premier comedy duo, and certainly deserve their title. They give a very good show, and are as bright as we are accustomed to expect from American artistes with a reputation. Eddie Lawler is admittedly not great as a singer, but as an eccentric dancer we have seldom

seen him excelled, while Miss Frances Kapstowne is an entertainer of rare merit. Her recitals to music are distinctly clever, and the manner in which she shows a little girl attempting to sing her first song shows a knowledge of childish habits which never fails to amuse. She is not great as a vocalist, and if we might offer a suggestion to Miss Kapstowne—a suggestion based on our interest in the lady, since we are informed she is a South African—it would be to refrain from commencing her turn with a song. By and by when she has ingratiated herself with the audience by her clever character delineations she might try it on them, but she runs a great risk in presenting her vocalism at the outset. Altogether the programme is of an high order, and crowded houses should throng the Grand while this one is accorded.

HORACE GOLDIN ARRIVES.

Everyone is looking forward to this great illusionist at the Empire next Monday, when he opens with a performance that is expected to astound the most incredulous. Conjurers and illusionists have been seen in this country from time to time, but nothing that can in any way be compared to Goldin, who is the acknowledged King of them all, and he is the inventor and originator of every illusion he performs. A unique feature of Goldin's entertainment is that he does not speak a word the whole of the time he is on the stage. Most conjurers rely on a certain amount of patter to detract their audience's attention from what they are doing, but Goldin does not need this. His tricks are performed with a rapidity that is positively astounding, and one has to watch him most intently the whole time, otherwise some of his best tricks are missed entirely. Time after time Goldin has been approached and complimented on "the new trick you did this evening," but it has been in the show all the time, but not noticed through the rapidity with which Goldin passes on to the next. Goldin has divided his show into three parts. The first will be his revue of conjuring tricks and conjurers of the past five centuries. The second, Goldin's famous modern illusions, and the third "The Tiger God," the magical play with which Goldin has recently astonished London.

AT PRESENT.

Until Goldin opens, however, the present excellent company are still delighting the audience, and many of our readers will learn with regret that the last two nights of Miss Jennie Hartley are already announced. We have referred so frequently to the extraordinary feats of the Three Willie Bros. that we do not purpose to dilate at length upon them, nor is it necessary, after the complimentary notices which have already appeared in these columns, to say much about the following galaxy of stars comprising as it does Miss Florence Esdaile, Harry May Hemsley, Victor and Louis. Edis and Lupino, Reg Bolton, Miss Dorothy Belmore, and Bellman and Poluski.

A TALENTED CO-RELIGIONIST.

This week we are fortunate in being able to publish an excellent reproduction of Miss Lucille Sidney, the charming actress who occupies the position of leading lady in the John Lawson Company. It is interesting to note that, despite her present position, Miss Sidney has only been on the boards some four or five years, and she owed her present eminence entirely to hard work and not to that meretricious influence which is not infrequently brought to bear upon pupils who have attended one or other of the dramatic academies which abound in the English metropolis. Miss Sidney has, of course, had lessons, and obviously profited by them, but she is not the pupil of any particular theatrical

institution. Born in Maida Vale, our talented co-religionist was educated for some four years at the well-known Jewish School in Dover, and finished her education at Brussels, where she had as schoolfellows several local Jewish young ladies, who have been delighted to renew the acquaintance then made with their erstwhile schoolmate. Miss Sidney



MISS LUCILLE SIDNEY,
the charming leading lady of the John Lawson Company.

has shown to advantage in all the rôles which she has played in Mr. Lawson's productions, but perhaps her best representation has been that of the old lady in the "Monkey's Paw," while she herself makes no secret of the fact that her favourite part is that of the divorced typist in "The Knighthood of Posner." In this latter she has an opportunity of giving full play to her distinct charms and vivacity, and the fact that young as she is she has already "arrived," may be taken as a proof of future attainment of even greater success in the theatrical world. Miss Sidney is shortly leaving to tour Rhodesia, and on the company's return will then decide her future movements and local theatregoers will regretfully learn that the much-to-be-hoped-for retention of Mr. Lawson in our midst, carries with it the necessary alloy of the possibility of Miss Sidney's return to Europe.

REGISTRATION OF BUSINESSES ACT, 1909.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, in terms of Section 4, Sub-section (1) of the Registration of Businesses Act, 1909, that I have taken into Partnership P. IRACLIDES, in the business known as the Arcadian Tea Rooms, situate at 92, Pritchard Street, Johannesburg, as from this date.

(Signed) N. G. NICHOLAS.

Johannesburg, June 26th, 1912.

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