

THE OTHER NEW "TURNS."

Walter Stanley, a real comedian, is too funny for words, especially in his female impersonation, and Rob, Ivy, and Lyn are vocal and instrumental entertainers of a high order, the only fault one could find being that the piano accompaniment is a little too loud. Miss Dora Sephton is a vocalist of pleasing voice and appearance.

THE OLD 'UNS.

Of the old turns, *La Estrellita* is *Jacile princeps*; her singing is very good, whether in Spanish or in English, and her dancing a revelation. Barely have we seen a dancer who could carry the audience away as she does, and the culmination is reached in her dancing the *Cachuca* together with Senor Garcia, a dancer worthy of his partner. The Sisters Casselli, Dave Carter, Doris Hunter, and Ray and Calden ably assist in making the programme one of the best ever presented in Johannesburg, and that the public fully appreciate it is proven by the crowded houses nightly.

THE NEW STANDARD.

No other Johannesburg theatre has undergone so many improvements and changes to its structure as has the Standard, the latest of which is the addition of some 700 seats to the dress circle and gallery, new seating accommodation, a brilliant lighting scheme for the whole place, and an enlargement of the stage. Everyone eagerly looked forward to the opening performance on Boxing Day, when the renovated building was re-opened by the Leonard Rayne-Paumier London company; and indeed the place was crowded to overflowing, every box was full, and there was not even standing room. The new company opened their season with Walter Howard's sensational romantic play called "The Prince and the Beggar Maid." The author is also the writer of "A Midnight Wedding" and "Her Love Against the World," but even without knowing this fact the same parentage could have easily been detected, for there is a certain amount of similarity, at any rate between the "Midnight Wedding" and the piece under review. Both are military plays, in both a princess is the heroine to be married, and in both the hour of midnight is chosen for the ceremony to take place, and, lastly, the intended marriage forced upon the lady is not "coming off," but she gets the man of her choice and of her love.

THE PLOT.

The outlines of the action in "The Prince and the Beggar Maid" are somewhat as follows:—Prince Hildred of Sylvania is bent on marrying Princess Monica of Illyria, but as she loves his youngest brother Olaf, she refuses, and Hildred forces war upon her. He is having the better of the fight, when the Princess decided to venture into his camp, clad as a beggar maid. She is recognised, and again resists Hildred's stormy wooing. She is taken prisoner in her own castle, Olaf being set guard over her. She is next visited by her lover and enemy, but swears that she will rather marry any other man than him, when Hildred forces his other brother, Michael, a deformed creature, upon her. The latter also loves Monica, and although entreated by her to renounce her, he refuses to do so, for although he loves his younger brother Olaf, he loves Monica better. Olaf is trying his utmost to prevent this marriage, but gets locked up with Michael in the Red Schloss. There Hildred forces his way into their presence a few hours before the intended ceremony, making Olaf his prisoner, taking Michael away with him. The former gets rescued just in the nick of time by Captain Hector, Princess Monica's faithful soldier, who enters through a secret door, having been led by the real beggar maid, who is in love with him. Olaf is present in the cathedral at the time for which the marriage is set down, but in front of the altar Michael, to everyone's surprise—including the audience,—answers the Bishop's questions with a loud and distinct "No," thus freeing the Princess from her oath. Hildred is beside himself with rage, subjecting his poor hunchbacked brother Michael to a degrading horsewhipping, when he is seized by the throat by the latter's faithful dumb servant and thrown over the wall into the river, where both lose their lives by drowning. Michael is proclaimed reigning Prince, and Olaf marries Monica. Interwoven with the main plot there is another love story, representing the lighter vein, between Lieut. Stormberg and Viola, Captain Hector's sister, which runs more or less smoothly, but also ends successfully.

THE ACTING.

Mr. Alfred Paumier gave an excellent portrayal of Prince Olaf, and fully sustained the splendid impression which he made on his previous visit; he makes a capital hero, possessing in an ample degree those qualities appertaining thereto. He received a most hearty welcome, and was repeatedly loudly applauded. This also fully applies to Miss Lillian Hallows, who played the heroine, Princess Monica, her acting leaving nothing to be desired. She played with all the restraint required for such a difficult part, and rose to a great height in the scene where she beseeches Prince Michael to set her free. The role of

Prince Hildred lay in the able hands of Mr. Winington Barnes, who played in a most convincing manner, and, although the villain in the piece, earned appreciative applause. Mr. Hodgson Taylor took the part of Captain Hector, of Princess Monica's Bodyguard, in a manly and sympathetic manner; whilst the role of Prince Michael lay in the able hands of Mr. Norman B. Cannon. Miss Florence Williams acted capitally as Viola, Hector's sister, and was ably supported by Mr. Herbert Maule, the Lieutenant, these two representing the comic portion of the piece, which they played amidst much merriment and genuine applause. We had also much pleasure in welcoming back our old friend Mr. Harry C. Pain, who took a prominent part in the play, being that of Colonel Wellenberg, acquitting himself in his usual masterly style. Another principal part was that of Cameola, the "real" beggar maid, which was portrayed by charming Miss Ruhainah Catton, also an old member of the original company, who delighted the audience with both her acting and singing. Other parts were Colonel Schwartz (Mr. Forbes Harrison), Bishop of Illyria (Mr. John Nesbitt), Captain Kersbury (Mr. Chs. Saunders), Lieutenant Hepsburg (Mr. Hugh Saunders), and the dumb servant (Mr. Gerald Fitzgerald). The *ensemble* is excellent, and the staging left nothing to be desired. Suitable music was supplied by the Standard Theatre orchestra, under the baton of Mr. Max Weinbrenn.

THE GRAND.

The best programme—even for the holiday season—that can be seen at the local bioscope theatres is certainly that now being presented at the Grand Theatre. The "show" has proven so attractive and popular that even the hot weather we have been experiencing has not kept the crowded audiences away from this theatre. And the entertainment provided by the ever-enterprising management certainly deserves the enthusiastic appreciation it receives from the public. First and foremost there is Zomah, the mysterious telepathist, whose "turn" is truly marvellous. The tests he is put to by the mystified audience are very numerous, but he emerges victorious from all. One cannot help wondering how the thing is done. No one should miss seeing Zomah at the Grand. Herbert Clifton contributes some very good vocal items to the programme, and Tom Hood, the "scarecrow comedian," gives a very entertaining comedy performance that is very well received by the audience. The picture programme is a very good one, thoroughly maintaining the excellent reputation achieved by the Grand's bioscope.

THE AMALGAMATION OF "TALMUD TORAHS."

(Communicated.)

The adjourned meeting of the Committees of the Johannesburg *Talmud Torahs* was held last Wednesday, Fordsburg, Jeppestown, and the Hebrew High School being represented.

A lengthy discussion took place in connection with the adoption of the curriculum, as it was argued that whilst being desirous of working on the syllabus laid before the meeting it could not be carried out immediately owing to inadequate accommodation and the absence of school-desks. This, it was pointed out, would be improved when the amalgamation of the schools has been accomplished.

A resolution was minuted that the curriculum be adopted subject to such slight modifications as may be found necessary, and to be submitted to a meeting of the Hebrew High School Curriculum Committee, to which must be invited the teachers of the other *Talmud Torahs*, with two delegates from each institution.

The amalgamation of all *Talmud Torahs* was next discussed, and it was unanimously resolved that it be a recommendation from this combined committee to the general meeting of members of the respective *Talmud Torahs* that amalgamation is most essential in the interests of the children and teachers; also that it will relieve the tension of overlapping; that those contributing their annual subscription or donation will only be called upon once, and by such persons who will be justified in enrolling members and collecting subscriptions.

A full statement will be brought forward at the annual meeting of the Hebrew High School on January 28th, 1912, setting forth fully how the amalgamated scheme is to be worked.