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NZU26

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Dept. L, 182 Wakefield St., Wellington.

# JULIUS CAESAR ANSWERED THE ADVERTISEMENT!

(Written for "The Listener" by HENRY J. HAYWARD)

THE art of advertising is as old as civilisation, although it has reached its apex. Indeed, advertising to-day is a science.

Even in the Bible one gets occasional glimpses of it. "Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon"

On the walls of buried Pompeii and Herculaneum are publicity announcements concerning the games and entertainment, and there is even a barber's advertisement telling the Pompeians where to get a good shave (and, no doubt, the best "tips" on the winning gladiator and which lion would get the most Christians).

The old Troubadours were more than wandering minstrels and story tellers. On their way as they wandered from castle to castle and to the village greens they were both "publicity men and salesmen, too," for in addition to retailing the news of the Court, the latest battle, tournaments and scandals to induce more generous largess, they brought toilet secrets for the lady of the manor and her maids, as well as love philtres, unguents, and salves for the villagers.

### Essential Points

In my long theatrical life, I have had considerable experience of the subtle art of advertising, and in my later years we spent about £30,000 yearly in publicity. And I know that the essential points in advertising are: (1) first to arrest the attention of the reader as he runs; (2) to retain his attention, and intrigue and interest him; and (3) but above all, to give him good value in what you sell to him, whether it be a "tip-up seat" or merchandise.

Despite all the immense amount spent on advertisements in newspapers, on hoardings, and by post circulation, "word of mouth" from people to people is still the most effective publicity once you get people talking. But just as yeast is useful to make more yeast, so one has to use the general channels of advertising to get some people to start

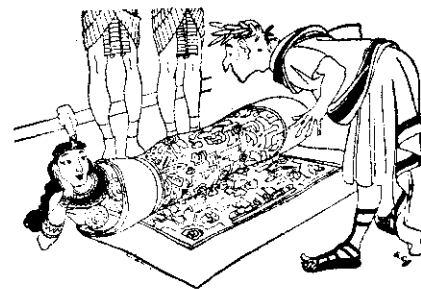
the "word of mouth." To test the value of different forms of publicity, I once issued a questionnaire at a popular theatre:

What was it that induced you to come to this theatre?

Over 11,000 patrons answered, and this is how the replies ran (in percentages):	
Saw the advertisement in the morning paper	6.1
Read the advertisement in the evening paper	4.8
Attracted by the posters on the walls	3.2
Front of house display	4.5
Recommended by a friend	69.3

### The Supreme Factor

There were other lesser reasons, but it is my opinion that "word of mouth" is the supreme factor in the theatrical business, and probably in all trading. Of



course, there are diverse lines of other publicity, some of which appeal to the fears and hopes of people, as patent medicines do, and some which use a kind of sly personal blackmail. But the basic fact remains that in the main it is the intrinsic value of the goods sold that is the abiding advertisement.

But I am forgetting my title, which was to arrest your attention, gentle reader!

When the beautiful Cleopatra was unrolled from her carpet, before the eyes of the Imperial Caesar, she was but advertising her charms! Julius Caesar answered the advertisement!

## It Happened In Egypt

THIS is the story of a New Zealand soldier whose zeal for art was not appreciated. Perhaps he had better tell it in his own words:

"One of my good friends is very musical, and used to be somewhat of a conductor in New Zealand. He had been toying with the idea for some time of forming a male voice choir, and approached some of the fellows in the Maadi tent about it. The result was favourable, and there were soon thirty names on a list left in the tent. Music was procured and the first practice set down for Monday. My friend asked me to join, and I had little hesitation in doing so, thinking that the thing would be along the lines of the Mills Brothers or the Six Swingers, and practised my boop-boop-boops assiduously during the preceding days. On the fateful Monday night I went to Maadi rather early to collect my washing. The arrangement was to meet at the Maadi tent at 6.30 p.m. and repair to the schoolroom for the practice. I was not at the tent till a quarter to seven and had to find my own way, finally arriving at the classroom at approximately 7.30 p.m.

"I knocked peremptorily at the door and entered, carelessly whistling an excellent rendition of 'Sweet Sue,' but was met with stony glances by a dozen or so very learned looking soldiers clustered round a piano. By the end of the evening I had discovered to my dismay that this choir was to sing high-class music, and that all its members abhorred swing. My rendering of 'Sweet Sue' came to a very tame finish and I was introduced to the choristers in a rather strained atmosphere. I apologised for my lateness, but they gave me the impression that so far as they were concerned, the later the better.

"I was seated with the 2nd basses and had some words and music placed before me. The words conveyed the fact that we were to render King Arthur. The

music conveyed nothing. Well, away we went, and informed a disinterested world that King Arthur had three sons at least fifty times. He must have lived on monkey glands and tiger's milk.

"There was only one other artist who could not read music. He was put in the second basses too, and was seated next to me, and was really a bit of a character. We kept the conductor very busy.

"Would the second basses mind singing an octave lower!"

"Would the second basses please enunciate their words!"

"Would the second basses please hold that last note!"

"Would the second basses please look at the conductor!"

"Would the second basses please sing second bass!"

"Would the second basses?????"

"Poor old W.! How my heart bled for him.

"Finally, old King Arthur reached his years of discretion, or perhaps his limits of endurance, and ceased having sons, and the rest of the evening was spent in 'Oh, no! John!' After it was all over the pianist played one or two magnificent symphonies or something, which the second basses did not blemish, except by making the wrong comments at the end, and off to the Maadi tent we went for supper, the second basses, it was to be noticed, walking in dual splendour behind.

"Everybody said 'Oh, do come again, won't you,' as if the future of the whole choir depended on it. And, to a large extent, it did. Rest assured! The second basses have not been again, and the future of the choir is assured. And they should have a very good future, for there are some magnificent trained voices there, and an outstanding pianist. I wouldn't mind having my voice trained, but it would be impossible—they could never catch it to train it in the first place. So my little effort to dethrone the noble Caruso sinks into the dark abyss of oblivion."

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