

Doing the Impossible is Child's Play to Dante ... MAGICIAN IN NEW ZEALAND

DANTE—from every hoarding! Dante—from every shop-window! Dante—everywhere! And now let us introduce the man who has made Wellington Dante-conscious—Mr. Charles H. Knight, who has been in Wellington for the last two weeks preparing the way for the famous magician's New Zealand season, which opened in Wellington on Wednesday evening last, September 6, in the presence of the Governor-General and Lady Bledisloe, the Danish consul, and a host of the capital city's well-known citizens.

But, while Dante's magic wand has amazed audiences in every country of the world, there's no magic wand about the preparing of the advance publicity. It's sheer hard work from beginning to end, and Mr. Knight's working day has been ending round about 3 a.m. since he landed in the Dominion. But he has done his job thoroughly, and there's certainly no one in Wellington at the present moment who does not know who Dante is. (And the healthy state of the bookings, too, would indicate that "Sim-Sala-Bim" is going to send chills up and down the spines of thousands of theatre-goers before the season finishes!)

Dante has been scheduled to open his New Zealand season on numerous occasions during the past six months, but, so successful has his Australian tour been, that the day has been deferred again and again.

Since the earliest days of stage entertainment magicians have exercised an uncanny attraction for the theatre-going public. No other type of entertainment has endured throughout the ages with as little essential change as the art of the magician. And so, in the world to-day, there are still innumerable exponents of the magic art, but few indeed are worthy of the title "magician." A great magician, like any other great artist, is born with a personality and certain physical and mental gifts that determine his career; hard study and practice is necessary in any case, but only if the gifts are born in one can the greatest heights be reached.

Dante is a born magician, and as a conjurer he combines dignity with dexterity. Besides his technical ability, the great magician must be a versatile man—he must design costumes and arrange his own music, for each illusion is created with a definite

plot, just as is any dramatic entertainment, the only difference being that in a play the plot is revealed, whereas the plot of each illusion in a magic show remains an intriguing secret.

In one of Dante's most fascinating sketches he displays a one-inch board, thirty-six inches square, without drapery, and then immediately causes three enormous live geese to emerge from it. This is one of Dante's own secrets, one of his own unsolved mysteries.

During his thirty years of stage experience Dante has visited practically every capital of the world, and has had many exciting and interesting adventures. He has encountered epidemics in strange corners of the world where the natives died like flies; but Dante has survived, only to suffer many weeks' quarantine on his return to other countries. While in Canada he has been snowbound and caught in blizzards; he has been lost at sea, cut off by floods, been through cyclones, landslides, wars—but he has survived (for which, perhaps, theatre-goers should thank heaven!).

Dante treasures many special decorations and personal notes from kings and emperors in all parts of the world. Among the cuttings in his scrap-book one of which he is most proud is a portion of a speech made by Sinclair Lewis, the American Nobel Prize-winner. It reads: "Gentlemen, I thought I was America's greatest wit, but Dante tops me. Let us drink to his health."

So the greatest magician in the world continues his travels, increasing his repertoire and his prestige—a man with a vital personality. Modern Merlin!

Dante is to present a series of talks dealing with his adventurous travels from Station 2YA, commencing on Sunday, September 17.



FIRST N.Z. PHOTOGRAPH OF DANTE.—The famous magician, snapped by the "Radio Record's" special photographer as he left the Maunganui at Wellington on Monday morning. Dante's New Zealand season opened this week.