

progress on the site of an ex-racecourse at Kensington (suburb of Sydney), and amongst the plans was one for an auditorium intended for use as a science lecture theatre, University Great Hall and for similar functions, but not as a theatre.

The founding of NIDA meant that new demands would be made on this building, and modifications were made accordingly. At this stage, it was far too late to think of changing the shape of the auditorium or of the stage. The auditorium (Fig. 1) was planned to seat 995 people, 630 on the stalls level and the rest in the single balcony. The stage opening was 51 ft. and the depth from curtain line to back wall only 21 ft. There was no stage tower and no provision for stage lighting other than overhead auditorium lanterns in fixed wooden panels which formed a ceiling to the stage.

It was clear that the theatre could never be well suited to the presentation of naturalistic plays in box sets, and it was decided therefore to make a virtue of necessity and to make it as good as possible for the presentation of all other kinds of plays, particularly those whether classical or modern, which need an open stage and a fluid acting area.

Since no proper flying would in any case be possible, a large domed plaster cyclorama was built, 75 ft. wide and curving forward on each side and overhead for 10 ft. The radius of the top curve is 5 ft. (since the total height of the cyclorama was only 24 ft.), and the radius of the side curve is 10 ft. This presented a nice problem where

*Fig. 2. Catwalks and bridges above stage. Top of cyclorama on right.*

