

Wonderful Russian Dancers.

LONDON'S LATEST SENSATION.

LONDON, June 25.
 "Have you seen Pavlova?"
 The words have become almost a catch phrase. At the dinner tables or in the clubs, wherever two people meet together, the talk turns on Anna Pavlova and Michael Mordkin, the dancers from Russia, whose art is of a kind which has never before been seen in London.
 They have become a cult. People go to see them again and again. Their

dancing is so wonderful that it is not enough to see them once. Just as you could look for ever on a beautiful picture, or never tire of the Venus de Milo, or read and reread some masterpiece of literature, so the desire to see Anna Pavlova and Michael Mordkin is luring people of all classes to the Palace Theatre.

There have been world-famous entertainers at this house before; there have been sensations of a season, but never until to-day has there been a sensation of a century. That is why, every night at about ten o'clock, motor-cars and carriages arrive at the Palace and set down stately women in beautiful dresses who are content to stand at the back of the stalls, for there are no seats left, rather than forego the wonder and the fascination of the dancers.

Expectancy.

When the electric numbers on each side of the stage fall of Pavlova's appearance a wave of expectancy sweeps over the audience. Look along the rows of faces and it will be seen that every one is tense with anticipation, every chin uplifted, every body set forward to get the best view of the stage. The chatter in the promenade ceases. The lights die down, and the house is very still.

The orchestra begins very softly the music of Glinka's mazurka, and the curtain rises on a garden of roses and statues of dryads and nymphs brooding over a marble-balustraded lake, with the trees stretching away to the distant hills that meet the sky.

Then the stage is filled with Russian dancers, and the Russian Nights Entertainment begins. It is not yet the time of Pavlova; these are the dancers who come first to give the atmosphere, to attune the audience to the right key.

These dancers—the men in snow-white lussar uniforms, feathered hats of crimson velvet, and jingling gold-tasseled boots, the women with pearls in their hair and fur-trimmed dress—make the audience realise for the first time what a mazurka really means. They tell the temperament and the character of the Slav with their restless feet. There is the majesty of manhood, the recklessness of spirit, the gay bravado of life in every movement.

They are followed by Mlle. Eduardova, who dances a horripape as a Russian sailor—and then there is a pause. It is the turn of Pavlova.

Into the garden a Roman comes—a great broad-chested man of wide shoulders and limbs that are large with muscles. His handsome face is crowned with a jewelled circlet round his hair. His legs are brown and bare, and he stands like the statue of a Roman gladiator for a moment. He is the picture of triumphant virility.

Poem of Motion

And then from the other side of the stage, like a rose leaf blown on the wind, Pavlova dances towards him. Dancing does not describe the lightness of her movements. She floats. The tips of her feet tremble on the stage like the quivering, shimmering wings of a butterfly. She seems to be a thing of air—a ghost of lightness—gliding across the garden with trembling feet. The pas de deux is danced, and every pose, every change of expression, speaks its story to the looker-on. They personify the music. She, light, laughing and elusive, is the rippling stream wooed by the sun, the brown, strong Mordkin. It is a poem of motion.

Later, he comes alone, a Roman boy, dancing springtime, sending the arrows from his quiver into the woods. Every turn of his body is taken from some ancient vase. Those who have travelled to Rome and the cities of Italy to see the frescoes of a dead civilisation see them joyously living again in the modernity of London.

Once again Pavlova hits across the stage, visualising every note of the music. Her finger tips and the ripple of her white arms speak to us. She does not follow the musicians, but she leads them. She is the soul of the music itself, and as light as the sound.

Did Rubinstein's dream, when he wrote

Our Illustrations

LEADERS OF COMMERCE.

Some confusion was caused in our last issue by the publication of a photo. of Mr. C. B. Hoadley, of Napier, over the name of Mr. D. A. Baxter of the same town. It was the kind of mistake that might have led to considerable annoyance, but Mr. Hoadley has been kind enough to write us as follows:—"I do not think any harm has been done to either Mr. Baxter or myself, and can only express surprise that mistakes of the kind are not more frequent, so please do not allow this small matter to worry you. Mr. Baxter, I do not think, will complain, as I understand that among my friends I am considered the better looking man of the two. You are at liberty to treat this little conceit as a paragraph in your columns if you like to do so."

We can only add our apologies to both gentlemen for a circumstance that is likely to happen even to the best of journals.

the "Valse Caprice," that it would inspire such dancers as Pavlova and Mordkin. They are neither Russian nor Roman now. They are a Grecian boy and girl, and the eternal spirit of love is over the garden with its roses and its lake. The everyday things of life fade away—there are no motor-cars, there is no theatre! we seem to have lived before and to have danced in a garden of Hellas, just as this boy and girl are dancing, their heads garlanded with leaves.

Elusive Dancer.

Here is all the art of gesture. The "Valse Caprice" becomes a poem of love that eludes and escapes. Pavlova tantalising, pouting, coy, now escaping a kiss; Mordkin pleading, wifful, seeking to capture and imprison her in his arms. And through the drama, the glide and the flicker of feet that never seem to touch the stage, and yet each footstep has its note as clearly as if it were sung.

And lastly the "Danse Bacchante" with the boisterous music of Glazounov—the "Danse Bacchante" as it really must have been danced in the sunset of the woods in the dead centuries. They call up a vision of the revels of Rome, and the purple juice of grape as they rush on, Pavlova with parted lips and hair dishevelled and poses of magnificent abandon, Mordkin snatching the crimson veil of gauze from her shoulders, dancing, dancing, dancing to the Pipes of Pan until Pavlova sinks and swoons to the grass pressing the red roses to her lips.

Then it is that when the curtain falls on the Bacchanalian dance, and the lights go up, the people in the theatre look round at each other as if they had awakened from a splendid dream, and they realise that it was the spell of the dancers that led them back to the days of Greece and Rome.

To Pere Monsabre, the distinguished French preacher, there came one Sabbath, after mass, a lady who insisted that she must confess an affair of great importance. It was a matter of conscience, and she explained that she was most seriously disturbed. In fact, she was sadly given to vanity. That very morning she confessed, she had looked in the glass and had yielded to the temptation of thinking herself pretty. Pere Monsabre looked at her. "Is that all. Then go in peace, for to make a mistake is not a sin."

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Stray Notes.

"The Eldest Son" is the title of the new play by Mr John Galsworthy, which Mr Frohman destined for the London Repertory Theatre, where next spring he will also produce the "Iphigenia in Tauris" of Professor Gilbert Murray.

The picturesque and melodramatic production "The Whip" attained the proud position of establishing itself as the first production to attain a run of 200 performances at Drury Lane in London last month. Messrs Raleigh and Hamilton's piece has been seen by over half a million people since it was first presented last September. The piece is to be produced on this side of the world by Mr J. O. Williamson.

Since the failure of "Judge Not," Mr J. B. Irving has revived "The Lyons Mail"—a piece that in all probability will be included in his repertoire when he visits Australasia next year. The last time the actor played it was before the late King Edward at Windsor Castle. "The play," says a critic, "introduces some of his most subtle as well as his most effective work in his dual impersonation of the worthy Lesurques and the ruffianly Dubose. There is no need to discuss again the skill with which he commands such intense sympathy for the innocent man in his sufferings under the foul accusation apparently confirmed by irrefutable evidence. There is no need to appraise once more the well-observed detail, the accurate colour and tone of his elaborate study of a born criminal's ruthless crimes. Except as a vehicle for stagecraft, "The Lyons Mail" may not be a great play; but all that is best worth doing in it is done by Mr Irving with a sense of contrast and a picturesque intensity which could probably be rivalled by no other actor of his generation."

When Dr. Richter intimated to the committee his inability to continue as conductor of the Birmingham Festival, the feeling was universal that an Englishman should be appointed to succeed him. It is now announced that the committee has unanimously resolved to offer the position to Mr. Henry J. Wood, and that that gentleman has accepted the offer. This will make the third Festival under the direction of Mr. Wood, the others being Sheffield and Norwich. Though still but a young man he has more than won his spurs, and has attained a prominent position in Britain by sheer merit coupled with hard work. He has proved his capacity and thoroughness in many schools of composition, and there can be no doubt that he will be a worthy successor to Costa and Richter.

The unusual occurrence of honouring a still living composer with a memorial tablet took place in Munich recently, where, on June 11, the birthday of Richard Strauss, the tablet was unveiled at his birth-place, Altesimerck No. 2. The marble tablet which was founded by several friends through the initiative of lawyer Dr. Kulz and carried out by the sculptor Karl Keller, is a simple but very tasteful piece of work, and contains, between a boy holding a French horn and a singing-girl, the inscription: "Hier wurde Richard Strauss am 11 Juni, 1864, geboren" (Richard Strauss was born here on June 11, 1864). The unveiling was preceded by some remarks in which the speaker mentioned the motives of this rare honour to Richard Strauss as composer, and the reverence the people of Munich have for their gifted son and master.

Owing to a sudden attack of neuritis in the right arm and neck, M. Paderewski was obliged to cancel all his concert engagements in England. His projected recital last month at Queen's Hall did not, therefore, take place. This is the first time during his career that M. Paderewski has been unable to fulfil an engagement in Great Britain. He hopes to return to England in November to give a recital in London, and to visit the five provincial towns at which he was to have appeared shortly.

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