

NIJINSKI WRITING BOOK TO PERPETUATE HIS ART

Famous Russian Dancer Has Compiled System of Terpsichorean Instruction Designed as Text-book and Basis for Further Evolution of the Ballet—Invention of Means of Recording the Dance as Clearly as Music Is Recorded Regarded by Nijinski as His Real Life Work

THE actor deplores the transient nature of his craft, his inability to leave behind him some concrete evidence thereof. The art of the executive musician is similarly writ in water. Actuated by the desire to endure in a form more tangible than a gracious memory many an actor or musician has set himself to the performance of creative tasks of a sort calculated to endure. And by these they incline to set greater store than their eminence in the domain popularly recognized as their distinctive sphere. What wonder that the dancer should feel similarly moved? Warlav Nijinski, at this moment the reigning figure of his kind in public interest, bases his quest of immortality not upon the visualization of his skill, but in a literary disclosure of it, and this in an avowedly influential, not to say epoch-making form. Briefly, Mr. Nijinski has compiled a system of terpsichorean instruction for dancing aspirants of the future and is recording it in a volume designed to serve as a sort of indispensable text-book and a firmly systematized basis for the further evolution of the art.

"This book is to be my real life-work," related the dancer a few days after his arrival in New York, "and by detention abroad on account of the war gave me the chance I needed to begin writing it. But the project has been germinating in my mind for years. The idea is to write down the dance even as music is recorded through the medium of notation and literary ideas through the written word. I claim no priority in the conception of this sort of thing. For a century or more, projects tending to this end have claimed the attention of authorities. No end of labor has been expended, but thus far fruitlessly.

"The collapse of innumerable experiments has been due only to the persistent failure to discover a comprehensible system of communicating terpsichorean ideas. Too much complication and too little directness and explicitness defeated the professed aims. Well, I have overcome that obstacle.

System Simplicity Itself

"I cannot yet make public the details of the system I have devised. But I may



Photo by Bain News Service.

Warlav Nijinski, the Famous Russian Dancer, His Wife and Their Daughter, Kyra, as They Appeared on Their Arrival in New York Last Week. Mme. Nijinski Is Herself a Distinguished Dancer

conscientiously say that it is superlatively simple and lucid and analogous to musical notation. By this means it becomes possible to record any complete dance, just as readily as one can write out a symphony or chamber music, or a technical exercise for the student of instrumental or vocal music. And as one musically trained should be capable of hearing a symphony mentally by merely reading the score, so it should become possible for the mind's eye to behold and enjoy a ballet by perusing what I might likewise term its 'score,' as set forth in the symbols that I have devised. And as the layman may be able to make some practical use of a treatise on piano tech-

nique he should be similarly able—insofar as physical attributes permit—to acquire a certain terpsichorean facility of his own through such a book.

"I realize, of course, that I am doing only pioneer work, that others will build more imposingly on the foundations I shall have laid. But these foundations at all events, will be sound and logical. I shall have invented a language and in the knowledge of its practicality lies my recompense.

Conservatories for the Dance

"It is likewise my ambition to further in some respect the establishment of conservatories for the dance in all coun-

Establishment of Conservatories for the Dance in All Countries Another Project That Nijinski Hopes to Further—Modern Dancer, Says He, Must Be a Thorough Musician and Actor and Have a Knowledge of Painting and the Principles of Pictorial Art as Well

tries. At such institutions should be taught all those arts of which the dancer has need. We have advanced beyond the conventional dance. The modern ballet is a highly organized form dependent for its effect through the balance and co-ordination of musical, scenic, choreographic elements. And the modern dancer must be electrically sensitive to all of these. He must be a thorough musician and an actor; he should, if possible, have a knowledge of painting and the principles of pictorial art. I am confident that the future will see such establishments in every country. For the possibilities of the choreographic drama are only partially indicated in the work of even such an organization as the Ballet Russe.

"Every nation should sooner or later develop such an art for itself and colored by its own distinctive traits of individuality. And it should be built upon the dances of the people quite as the symphonic literature of a country grows out of its folksong. In the short time I have been here I have noted characteristics in the American people that should inspire and vitalize a national type of ballet."

H. F. P.

Hardships of War Prisoners

Nijinski arrived in New York, April 5, on the *Espagne*, accompanied by his wife and their nineteen-months-old daughter, Kyra.

"It was a day-to-day struggle to keep my baby alive," said Mme. Nijinski to the reporters on her arrival. "We were interned in Buda-Pesth as Russian citizens, and when the woman we had hired to nurse Kyra learned our nationality she left at once. There was no milk to be had, and I had to feed the baby on hot chocolate, gruel and canned foods."

The American Consul General at Buda-Pesth managed to keep the dancer and his family out of the prison camp by placing them in the home of one of the Embassy servants. For months the Austrian government forced them to live on a weekly allowance of twenty-five francs, and they were not allowed to receive additional money from outside. Ambassador Penfield at Vienna finally succeeded, through the influence of the Metropolitan Opera House directors, in getting the family a pass out of Austria.

PEOPLE'S SYMPHONY STARTS ENDOWMENT

Campaign for Fund of \$100,000 Begun at Concert—Ovation to Flonzaleys

Announcement of the start of a campaign for a People's Symphony Concerts endowment fund was made by Franz X. Arens, musical director, at the Auxiliary Club concert at the Washington Irving High School, New York, on April 8. The performers were the members of the Flonzaley Quartet, which aroused such enthusiasm as to necessitate the adding of supplemental offerings to the following program:

Haydn, Quartet in D Major, Op. 76, No. 5; Glère, Suit for Violin and Cello, Mr. Pochon and Mr. D'Archambeau; Schumann, Quartet in A Minor, Op. 41, No. 1.

In his brief talk Mr. Arens related that in order to extend the work that the People's Symphony Concerts are doing to bring good music to the people at minimum prices, the Board of Trustees had determined to raise a special endowment fund of \$100,000.

S. R. Guggenheim has already promised \$10,000 toward this sum, the money

to be deposited and the interest used for the purposes of the society, provided that the other \$90,000 be subscribed.

Several long standing members of the People's Symphony Auxiliary Club have suggested that \$10,000 of this amount might easily be raised by the club itself in the four years until 1920, which will mark the twentieth anniversary of this organization. By giving benefit recitals among musical friends, by solicitation and personal subscriptions, the trustees feel that it ought to be possible for the club to raise \$10,000 in four years. Those interested were asked to communicate with the manager, Egmont H. Arens, 32 Union Square, New York City.

ANNOUNCE CHAUTAUQUA MUSIC

Soloists and Compositions to Be Heard This Season

CHAUTAUQUA, N. Y., April 8.—The musical season at Chautauqua this year, the fifteenth year of Alfred Hallam as musical director, promises to be a very interesting and active one. In addition to the regular concerts and recitals, the Russian Symphony Orchestra, Modest Altschuler, conductor, has been re-engaged for Music Week, August 7 to 12. The Summer Music School will have

again the services of Ernest Hutcheson as head of the piano department. Mr. Hutcheson will have with him as assistants Eliza Woods, Arthur Wilson and Austin Conradi.

Horatio Connell of Philadelphia will succeed William Wade Hinshaw in the vocal department. The following soloists have been engaged for the season:

July: Soprano, Carolyn Ortmann; contralto, Beatrice MacCue; tenor, Lewis James; bass, Edwin Swain.

August: Soprano, Adelaide Fischer; contralto, Aug. 1-12, inclusive, Marie Morrissey; Aug. 13-27, inclusive, Virginia Shaffer; tenor, C. Judson House; bass, Vivian Gosnell.

The following works will be presented during the season: "The Ancient Mariner," J. F. Barnett; "Hiawatha," Coleridge-Taylor; "Elijah," Mendelssohn; "Floriana," Arthur Whiting; "In a Persian Garden," Liza Lehmann; children's operetta, "Hiawatha's Childhood," Bessie M. Whitley.

The Guido Chorus of Buffalo, Seth Clark, conductor, will give a concert on Wednesday afternoon, July 26. The Chautauqua season of this year extends from July 29 to Aug. 27.

Columbus (Ohio) Paper Pays Tribute to Ella May Smith

The work which Mrs. Ella May Smith has done in Columbus, Ohio, to promote interest in good music is reviewed in a recent article in the Columbus *Saturday Monitor*. The writer, Bertha Horst, taking Mrs. Smith's retirement from the

presidency of the Women's Music Club at the end of her thirteenth year of service as the keynote of her topic, touches on her work as chairman of the American Music Committee of the National Federation of Music Clubs and president of the Stillman-Kelley Publication Society, of which she was the organizer. Mrs. Smith was former dean of the Wallace Conservatory. She has written many poems and short stories and is the composer of several songs and piano pieces. She was music editor for many years of the *Ohio State Journal* and *Columbus Dispatch*, and is now the Columbus representative of MUSICAL AMERICA.

Carrie Hirschman, Pianist, Weds

Carrie Hirschman, pianist, was married on March 22 to Mac Victor Kohnstamm of New York and Chicago. While the pianist's home will be in Chicago in future she will be heard in recital in the East, and also contemplates a professional tour of the West during the coming season.

A Real Pleasure

To the Editor of MUSICAL AMERICA: Inclose a year's subscription. It is a real pleasure to receive your very interesting magazine.

Truly yours,

A. S. TOOKER.

Allston, Mass., March 28, 1916.