

## "SADKO" PREMIERE IN RUSSIAN BALLET'S OPENING WEEK

Diaghileff Troupe, Sans Nijinsky, Presents Fantasia on Rimsky-Korsakoff's Submarine Tone Poem Which Proves Pictorially Effective—Début of Pierre Monteux, the French Conductor

THE Diaghileff ballet began its deferred New York engagement at the Manhattan Opera House last Monday evening.

There was a large, applaudive audience and the committed upholders of the organization, whose admiration for whatever it may do knows no limits, were out in force. If disappointment was felt over the absence of Mr. Nijinsky (whose refractory ankle prohibited his appearance) and over the consequent postponement of his newly devised "Till Eulenspiegel," one noticed no evidences of it. By way of consolation, the American première of Adolf Bolm's fantasia on Rimsky-Korsakoff's submarine tone poem, "Sadko," was put forward one night. The only other element of novelty that the evening could offer was provided by the début in this country of Pierre Monteux, the French conductor, most intimately associated with the European triumphs of the company. Apart from that there were no new incidents, the program being one of those which the ballet offered in so many permutations and combinations last year. In other words, it supplied "Les Sylphides," "Le Spectre de la Rose" and "Scheherazade." Excepting that the first named had a different (and a very much better) setting than before, there was nothing in the presentation of any of the three works calling for close consideration at present. They were carried out as effectually as on other occasions, and Mmes. Lopokova, Revalles, Sokolova, Pflanz, Wasilewska, and Messrs. Bolm and Gavrilov earned their accustomed distinctions.

### "Sadko" Makes Pictorial Appeal

As for "Sadko," its merits proved to be chiefly pictorial. The dramatic mo-



The Sea Princess and Her Attendant Mermaids in "Sadko"

Photo by White Studios

tone poem and the opera are related only to the extent of a few themes, the opera being a much later outgrowth of Rimsky's preoccupation with the legend of the gusly player of Novgorod. Frederick Martens, whose erudition on all topics appertaining to ballet is the profoundest, recorded the legend and its ramifications and variants in *MUSICAL AMERICA* recently, so that further examination of the matter may be spared at this writing. The spectator is shown in this particular version only the descent of *Sadko*, the minstrel, to the depths, his performance upon the gusly which he has opportunely carried down from his ship, and the effect of that performance, which is to inspire the inevitable terpsichorean

orgy, at which the *Sea King* must needs dance himself to death so that the *Sea Princess*, his daughter, may unceremoniously elope with *Sadko* in an accommodatingly mobile conch shell.

### A Deep-Sea Garden

The Diaghileff people have shown few scenes more strikingly beautiful than Anisfeld's deep-sea garden, with its wealth of green subaqueous vegetation set off against dim distances of indigo blue, and alive with writhing crustaceans, devil-fish, seahorses, and other oceanic creatures. True, the crabs and lobsters did not sustain their characteristic movements very consistently throughout the ballet, but then license

must probably be allowed for the infrequency of such piscatorial bacchanals. Messrs. Bolm and Jazwinsky and Mlle. Doris enacted the three leading parts in this. But it was not their fault that these parts did not stand out in the ensemble.

As a sort of overture to "Sadko," two numbers from Rimsky-Korsakoff's opera, "Le Coq d'Or," were given. They proved fairly interesting, and not unsuggestive of Moussorgsky. Mr. Monteux's conducting throughout the evening showed him to be a musician of remarkable finesse and delicacy of feeling, and one who may be depended upon to obtain from a composition every detail of its inherent value.

H. F. P.

## NEW OPERA COMPANY FOR PHILADELPHIA

Several Novelties Promised—Enlarged Orchestra Begins Season Brilliantly

Bureau of Musical America,  
10 South Eighteenth St.,  
Philadelphia, Oct. 16, 1916.

A new company, to be known as the Philadelphia Grand Opera Company, will give a series of performances at the Academy of Music beginning Dec. 18, with four performances every week at popular prices. The artists engaged include Regina Vicarino, the coloratura soprano; Pilade Sinagra, Enrico Montefino, lyric tenors; Bartolommeo Dadone, dramatic baritone, and Giuseppe Soggi, bass. The general manager will be William Rosenbach, and Ettore Martini will be musical director. A chorus of sixty and an orchestra of fifty are promised. Among novelties promised is "Karma," a new three-act opera by Director Martini; "Ruy Blas," by Marchetti, and "La Cenerentola," by Rossini.

Before a large audience in the Academy of Music, the Philadelphia Orchestra, under Leopold Stokowski, gave its first concert of the season. A somewhat overbalanced program included a set of variations on a theme of Hiller by the late Max Reger. The work was brilliantly done but would have fared better as a principal number, with shorter works as a background. The salient feature of the artistically pleasing concert was, of course, Brahms' Third Symphony. Other numbers included Beethoven's "Coriolan" Overture, and the

Sibelius tone poem "Finlandia," effectively given. Several additions to the orchestra, which now numbers ninety-four, and a new stage setting and platform were noticeable improvements.

A series of eight symphony, oratorio and popular concerts under Clarence Reynolds, will be given at the Baptist Temple during the winter. The first will be

given on Oct. 26, with Mary Jordan, contralto.

A number of recitals in Witherspoon Hall have been arranged by Arthur Judson for the coming season. The first of the series will be given Nov. 1, when Elizabeth Dickson, mezzo soprano and lieder singer, will be presented.

M. B. SWAAB.

## FREMSTAD TO BE HEARD IN BOTH OPERA AND CONCERT

OLIVE FREMSTAD has become something of an art religion to a very great number of American music-lovers. She embodies to their mind as vital and as exalted an artistic principle as did Lilli Lehmann in an earlier day. She illustrates the deep and yet the all too unappreciated truth that an artist, to command the warm love of multitudes need not seek to encompass it through the debasement of her loftiest instincts or the appeal to meretriciousness and triviality. The great triumph of her career lies in the lasting domination she obtained over thousands who, for a long time, were only half conscious of her tremendous significance to them. However much they may have succumbed to the spell of her matchless Wagnerian impersonations in the opera house it was only the news of her withdrawal that awakened them to the extent of their reverence and affection. How completely she had engaged this love was revealed in a wondrous light that unforgettable evening two years ago

when she sang her final *Elsa* at the Metropolitan.

Since that time the claim that she has been forgotten or effectually superseded has very frequently been advanced. To no purpose, however. The opera-going public has set its seal on nobody as her legitimate successor or substitute. Nor could it, for souls so great are rare. Her passing from the local operatic sphere is, let it be hoped, temporary. But far from dispersing her following it has strengthened and united it in the bond of a fervent cult. To all such Olive Fremstad stands forth to-day as a far nobler power and more puissant inspiration than she did a decade past.

What remains to be said at present of her inapproachable *Brünnhilde*, *Isolde*, *Kundry*, *Venus* and *Sieglinde* that has not been said a thousand times? Or of her rare skill and charm on the concert stage that, in the past two seasons, has not been repeatedly signalized? She will again be heard extensively in recital and concert this year, and Chicago will enjoy the priceless privilege of seeing her in opera. Meanwhile it remains a source of enduring gratification to Americans that Lilli Lehmann's indisputable successor in the Wagnerian field is their compatriot.

H. F. P.



Photo by White Studios

Adolf Bolm as "Sadko"

tive is too tenuous to engage the interest or attention very seriously, and the early-written score of Rimsky-Korsakoff (which has been heard here in concert without any palpitations of excitement) is a sort of sea piece, alluring in orchestral color, and in atmospheric suggestion a background fully sufficient to the stage proceedings, but insignificant as regards deeper musical substance.

Mr. Bolm's fantasia must not, of course, be confused with the "Sadko" given in Paris, which was the ballet out of Rimsky-Korsakoff's opera of that name, seasoned with some vocal numbers from that work. Musically, the