



Mlle. CATRINA GELTZER.

IT is an article of faith among managers in the music-hall world that, unless an artist has a name which is known to his public, he or she will not draw. Never was a more fallacious doctrine put forward. Were proof of the fallacy needed, it is only necessary to look at the extraordinary vogue which individual Russian dancers enjoy in London at the moment. Every one of them came with a name unknown to the public. To-day their names are among those of the most attractive of all artists, and they are ruling the great houses of the West End. There is Mme. Kyrasht at the Empire; there are Mme. Pavlova and Mr. Mordkin at the Palace; there were, until Saturday, the Russian dancers at the Hippodrome; there are the Russian dancers who are coming to the Opera House; and last, but by no means least, there is Mlle. Geltzer at the Alhambra. In one night she established her pre-eminence as a Star Turn.

Like all the other famous Russian dancers, her training began in the early days of her childhood. She came to her chosen calling under the happiest auspices, for her father was the most celebrated mime of the Imperial Theatre in Moscow. It was he who taught Mr. Mordkin that difficult but expressive art, and he likewise taught his daughter. Indeed, Mlle. Geltzer and Mr. Mordkin entered the Imperial School at about the same time; they went through it together; they made their debut within a short time of each other; and they soon became partners and danced together the whole of the leading rôles in the repertoire of the Imperial Theatre.

Unlike most artists, Mlle. Geltzer was not content with the consummate teaching she got in Moscow, and became for a time the pupil of the celebrated Professor Joganoh, of St. Petersburg, to get some finishing lessons from him. While, possibly, the general public would fail to see the influence which that teacher exercised on her art, Mlle. Geltzer herself appreciates it highly, for it enables her to execute those delicate nuances of movement which are the delight of the artist who is a connoisseur of his art.

The title of *ballerina* which Mademoiselle Geltzer enjoys in its way, as a distinctive as a University degree. In Russia the dancer must prove her ability to reach a certain standard of excellence in classical dancing, in character dancing, and in miming before she can write that magic word after her name. If she obtains distinction in only one of these branches of her art, she may be a *première danseuse*, but a *ballerina*—never! On the programme of the Alhambra, Mlle. Geltzer queens it as *ballerina assoluta*, for she is the first of her class in the Imperial Theatre, Moscow, and as such can lay claim to all the leading rôles. This position is not unattended with drawbacks of its own, and occasionally leads to more than ordinarily hard work. Thus, on one occasion, the management determined to create a record by producing five ballets in one week. Although they were dancing

other ballets at night, Mlle. Geltzer and Mr. Mordkin, who was then her cavalier, studied "La Fille de Faron," "Bayaderes," "Raimonda," "Le Lac des Cygnes," and "Salambo," and danced them all to perfection within the allotted time. It was a record which created a great furore.

During her present engagement there will, unfortunately, be no opportunity for Mlle. Geltzer to be seen in any of these ballets at the Alhambra. Some idea, however, of what she did in one scene of "Salambo" may be gained by those who see her in "The Dance Dream," in the third scene of which she does, in the wonderfully vivid and vital wardrobe, a dance somewhat in the style of one of those in that celebrated production. It was this dance it will be remembered by readers of *The Sketch*, which was put on specially so that Mr. Mordkin might dance in it with Mlle. Geltzer. It will not be seen on the stage of the Imperial Theatre of Moscow until 1913, when these two devoted comrades in art will once again be seen together. Since Mr. Mordkin's departure from Moscow, Mlle. Geltzer's art has maintained the supremacy of the ballet, and she has been partnered by M. Tichomiroff, the accomplished dancer with the Apollo-like physique who is her cavalier at the Alhambra, and is also the *rigisseur* of the Imperial Theatre, Moscow.

The esteem in which Mlle. Geltzer is held in her own country may be judged by the fact that every year she receives a special invitation to dance on the stage of the Imperial Theatre of St. Petersburg. Although the performance of the ballet ordinarily begins in Moscow at eight o'clock, on the night on which she has to start for the capital the curtain rises half-an-hour earlier, that she may catch the night train; but the theatre is just as full as it is when the performance begins later, and is, if anything, more enthusiastic. In St. Petersburg Mlle. Geltzer danced with M. Tichomiroff before the Tsar, who has marked his appreciation of her art by the bestowal of many gifts. Paris, too, has acclaimed her, and only a short time ago she received a gold palm from the Academy of Dancing in that city; while Berlin (where she has appeared before the Kaiser), Brussels (where she appeared before the King of the Belgians), and Monte Carlo have offered no less equally conclusive tributes of admiration.

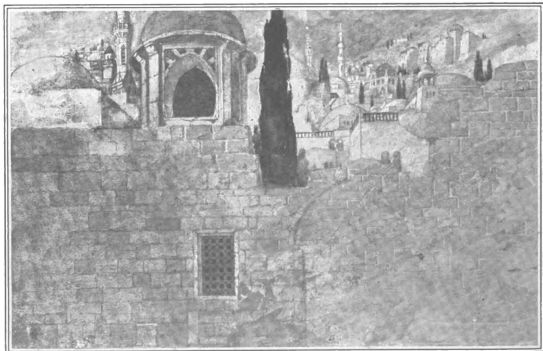
When great dancers appear, the utmost care is naturally exercised lest any accident should befall them. Once, however, Mlle. Geltzer was nearly the victim of a serious catastrophe. She was dancing a butterfly dance, and the stage was lighted with candles. She flattered too near one of them, and her gause wings caught fire. She was unaware for the moment of her danger until she saw the reflection of the flames in a mirror, which formed part of the furniture of the stage. The next moment several members of the ballet dashed forward and tore the burning chiffon from her back.



OF THOSE WHO TURN FRAGRANTIOUS NEGLECT-NEE TO STONE; ONE OF THE GODS OF THE MOUNTAIN.

When certain beggars of Kos-groo pose as the gods of the mountains of Harma, these gods come into the city to punish the impostors by turning them into stone, thus unwittingly giving them greater glory among the people.

From the Drawing by S. H. Sims.

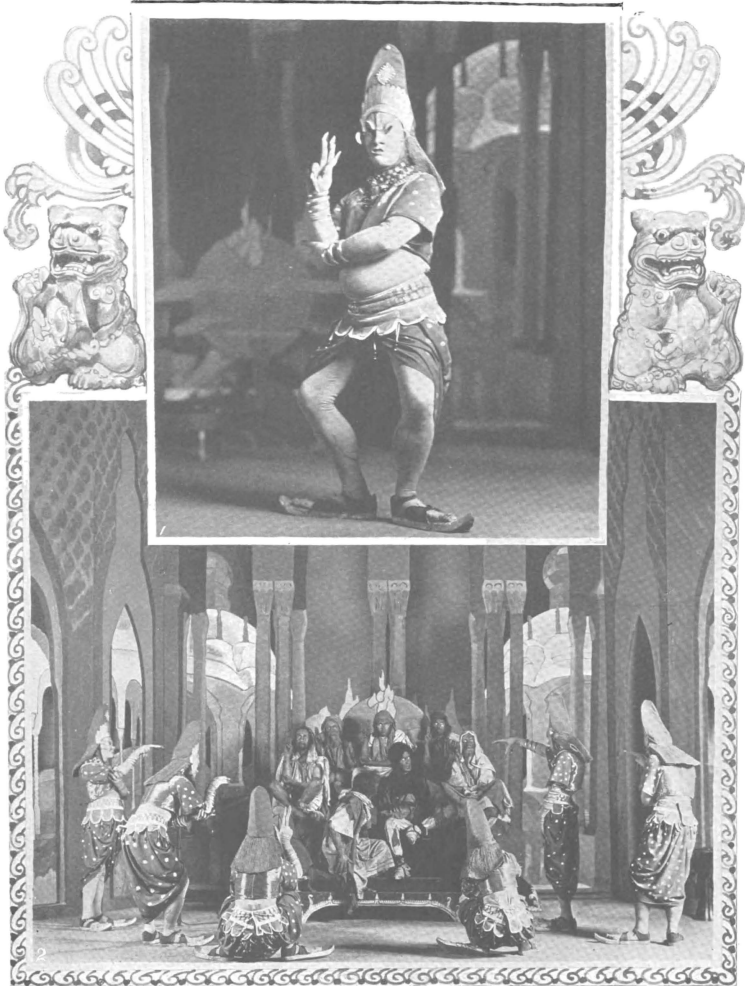


A SINEE SCENE FOR A DUNSNAY PLAY: "THE EAST, A CITY WALL" IN "THE GODS OF THE MOUNTAIN." The association of Lord Dunsany and Mr. S. H. Sims at the Haymarket should be particularly interesting to those of our readers who remember the work of the same two in "The Book of Wonder," published recently in "The Sketch."

From the Design by S. H. Sims.

DUNSANYISM: WHEN THE GREEN GODS CAME TO KONGROS.

"THE GODS OF THE MOUNTAIN," AT THE HAYMARKET.



1. ONE OF THE SEVEN GREEN JADE GODS OF THE MOUNTAIN OF MARMA (MR. E. LYALL SWETE).

2. THE TRUE GODS OF THE MOUNTAIN TURN THE USURPING BEGGARS INTO STONE—AND ENSURE THEIR IMMORTALITY AND WORSHIP.

Into the City of Kongros come a pair of cunning beggars. They have seen the seven green jade gods of the Mountain of Marma, and have noted the adoration they receive. Envy and desire for ease enter into them, and they determine to masquerade as the gods come down from the mountain. The people believe in them, but their joy is incomplete, for there is the fear that someone will climb the slopes and find the gods in their accustomed places. In point of fact, dromedary men do this. But the gods have vanished; as the masquerading beggars are held in higher reverence than before. It happens, however, that they are not as lucky as they think, for the gods are absent from the mountain because they are on their way to Kongros to punish the offending mortals. Entering the city, they turn the beggars into stone—so, by the irony of the worlds, the impostors' position as gods is assured for ever.