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from ROYAL OPERA, COVENT GARDEN

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Anatole OBOUKHOFF
Professeur de Danse

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Colonel W. de Basil

And the Great Tradition

By ARNOLD L. HASKELL

Author of "Balletomania," "Diaghileff," etc.

WHEN Diaghileff died in 1929, many lovers of ballet confidently buried it in Venice with him, while those who had been his associates even in a remote degree appointed themselves as his successors, eager for the prestige, but unaware of what the burden involved. They talked, they planned and they quarrelled, but the curtain never went up.

Colonel W. de Basil presenting the first evenings of Ballet in 1931 with his Season of Opera at the Lyceum. The result was welcome but very far from the perfection of two years later, and it certainly failed to satisfy its creator. It was an apprenticeship from which great things were to come.

Colonel de Basil believes in the further development not only of his own company, now the biggest that has ever been on tour, but of the art in general. He feels that the public must be limitless for the one art that truly speaks to the whole world.

He is doing much to safeguard and to shape the future. Nothing must be left to chance. In the ballerina's schools in Paris and elsewhere he has many small wards whose education he supervises and pays. They are the debutantes of 1940 and on. If two out of ten turn out to be premiere danseuses, he will feel himself well rewarded. I have seen many of these children at work. They promise great things.

His plans also include much that is new in music and painting, and for that purpose he is forming advisory committees of painters and musicians who will keep him in close touch with what is best and most progressive in their countries.

Artists

Tatiana RIABOUCHINSKA
Tamara GRIGORIEVA
Anna VOLKOVA
Genevieve MOULIN
Natasha SOBINOVA
Natasha MELNIKOVA
Nina GOLOVINA
Nadia SMIRNOVA

Tamara TOUMANOVA
Olga MOROSOVA
Sono OSATO
Tatiana LESKOVA
Vera NELIDOVA
Nina POPOVA
Sonia ORLOVA
Lydia COUPRINA

Nina VERCHININA
Alexandra DENISOVA
Marina SVETLOVA
Irina ZAROVA
Ludmila LVOVA
Tatiana BECHENOVA
Maria AZROVA
Helene LINEVA

Vera NEMTCHINOVA
Tatiana STEPANOVA
Anna LEONTIEVA
Lara OBIDENNA
Galina RAZOUKOVA
M. GONTCHAROVA
Kira BOUNINA
And others

Mme. Lubov TCHERNICHEVA will be the Guest Artist, and will perform the role she created in "FRANCESCA DA RIMINI."

David LICHINE
Michel PANALIEFF
Alberto ALONSO
Lorand ANDAHAZY
Serge UNGUER
Oleg TUPINE
Kiril VASSILKOVSKY

Roman JASINSKY
Dimitri ROSTOFF
Nicolas ORLOFF
Narcisse MATOUCHAK
Georges SKIBINE
Wassily NICOLAIEFF
And others

Paul PETROFF
Marian LADRE
Serge ISMAILOFF
Borislav RUNANINE
Vladimir IRMAN
Nicolas IVANGINE

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Stories of the Ballet

"PAGANINI"

The great violinist, Nicolo Paganini, "incomparable master of the divine art of sound," inspired not only enthusiasm and wonder in his contemporaries, but also a superstitious fear, and evoked not only admiration but also envy and hatred.

His extraordinary virtuosity, his demon-like appearance, the unearthly quality of his playing and his manner on the concert platform gave his enemies a pretext for spreading the most fantastic rumours about him. It was said that it was the Devil himself who taught him his remarkable art, and that on the concert platform the hand of Satan was helping him. When Paganini appeared before his audience envy was aroused and gossip travelled from row to row, and in the imagination of many it seemed that the goat-like face of Satan with numerous hands was actually standing at Paganini's back playing the violin instead of Paganini. They imagined that the sound of his violin evoked dark forces, that the dead rose from their graves, and that an inferno surrounded the magical musician.

All his life Paganini struggled against defamation and jealousies. His weapon was his violin. But the greater perfection he attained the more did his art seem supernatural and the more envy did it arouse. Paganini believed that his genius came from God and that it was the greatest gift which could be bestowed upon a human being, but this legend nevertheless grew upon him so that his outlook on life became warped.

In the Ballet three episodes are taken during the life of the artist: (a) Paganini on the concert platform; (b) Paganini amongst the people; and (c) Paganini in his solitude.

The first scene conveys the impression which the artist makes on his audience, and in the second scene he is amongst the people. Fear of him was so great that women made the sign of the cross when they met him, but when he took an instrument, sometimes a guitar, which in fact he played with as much virtuosity as the violin, he produced such music that the crowd became fascinated and hypnotised, with the result that they followed him spell-bound.

In the third scene the artist is alone in his suffering. He is fully aware that his enemies deny him his genius, but nevertheless they have created a number of imitators with the result that all these imitators of Paganini represent but ugly caricatures of the maestro.

Rivals, imitators, lies, jealousies, spiteful critics torment Paganini and it seems to him that his art is growing dim. He doubts the purity of his music and he can no longer compose or play. He is obsessed by nightmares, but in the end all these dark forces are conquered, and the dying artist clasps closely to his breast his violin into which he has poured his whole soul, and he departs into a world-beyond with the knowledge that he has fulfilled his duty by serving humanity though beauty.

"LES SYLPHIDES"

In a wooded glade under the gentle glow of silvery moonbeams, the dancers, attired as sylphs, dance to the romantic strains of Chopin's music, to the dreamy nocturnes, languorous waltzes and animated mazurkas, transporting their audience to another world.

This was first produced in St. Petersburg for a charity performance under the name "Chopiniana", and it was later taken into the Maryinsky repertoire, where it soon became a favourite of the great ballerinas. The magnificent poses of the corps de ballet were actually arranged by Fokine during the playing of the overture.

Re-christened, Diaghileff put it into his first programme in 1909. It remained as his favourite ballet throughout the twenty-five years. He said, "It was no corps de ballet, all are premieres danseuses."

Chopin's melodies which are used in "Les Sylphides" include: Nocturne, Op. 32, No. 2; Valse, Op. 70, No. 1; Mazurka, Op. 33, No. 3; Mazurka, Op. 67, No. 3; Prelude, Op. 28, No. 7; Valse, Op. 64, No. 2; Valse, Op. 18, No. 1.

The seventh prelude is played before the curtain rises, and then the Ballet ensembles begin the dance with the Nocturne and conclude with the Valse, Op. 18, No. 1.

"Les Sylphides" is by tradition always given as an opening ballet in the seasons at Covent Garden Opera House, and also in Continental theatres.

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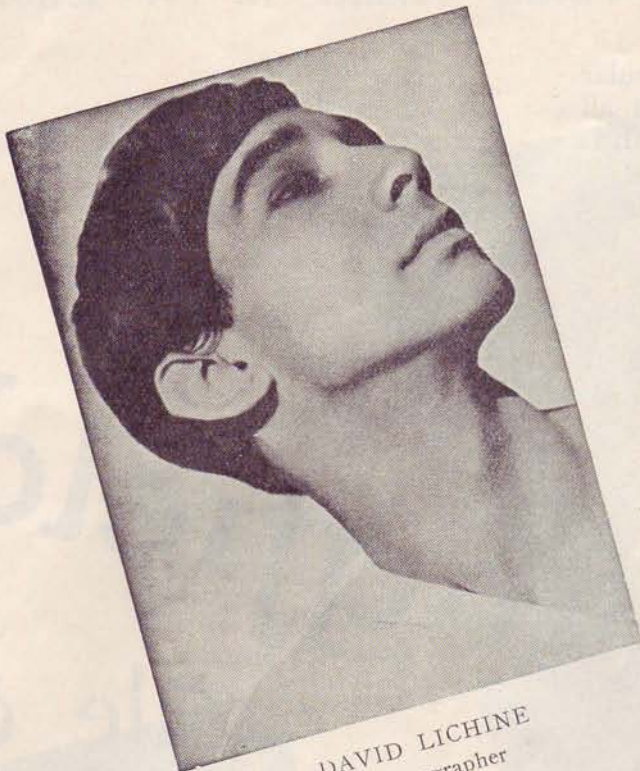
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DAVID LICHINE
Choreographer

The repertoire of Colonel W. de Basil's Company for Adelaide consists of 16 ballets. Over 80 famous painters, composers, writers and choreographers have collaborated in the production of this repertoire, and the Australian public will see the work of many years of a number of famous choreographers such as Pepita, Fokine, Massine, Balanchine, Nijinska, Nijinsky, Lifar, Romanoff, etc.

Amongst the choreographers of the present day, David Lichine is worthy of special attention because of his great talent. His wonderful productions have had a well-deserved success in Australia, especially his ballet, "Graduation Ball," which had its world premiere in this country.

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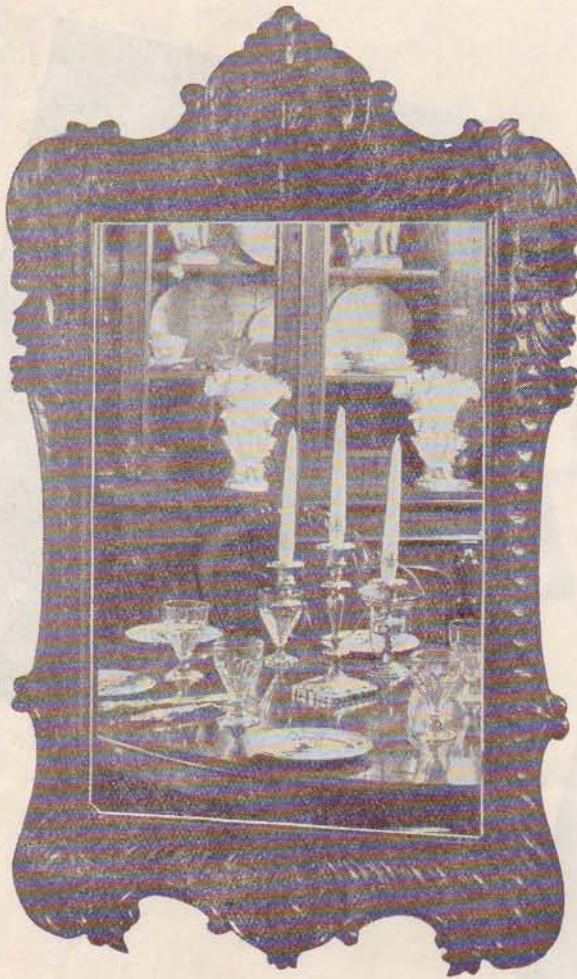
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"SWAN LAKE"

This is an abridged version of a four-act ballet composed by Tchaikovsky between August, 1868, and March, 1876, and produced at Moscow, February 20th, 1877. The story concerns a Princess and her Companions who have been changed into swans by the spells of a wicked sorcerer, but are permitted to resume human shape from midnight to dawn. A young Prince and his friends have planned a nocturnal hunt near a lake where, the night before, they had seen a flock of swans. But the Queen of the Swans reveals herself to the Prince, who orders the hunt to be abandoned. He falls in love with the Queen of the Swans, but at break of day she and her companions become swans once more and fly away. The Prince attempts to follow them, but the Sorcerer bars the way. Powerless against his spells, the Prince dies.

"FRANCESCA DA RIMINI"

The Lord of Ravenna, desirous of ending the long years of strife that have existed between his on signory and that of Rimini, proposes to establish peace by offering his daughter, Francesca, as wife to Gianciotto, son of the Lord of Rimini. Gianciotto, however, is so deformed that, fearing Francesca may refuse him, he sends his handsome brother, Paolo, to marry her by proxy and escort her to him. But the formal ceremony has become reality and Francesca and Paolo are in love with each other.

At the rise of the curtain, Gianciotto is seated on the dais, attended by a number of evil dwarfs. Seated below him are a number of courtiers with whom he debates what action shall be taken should Francesca refuse him. The discussion becomes so heated that blows are exchanged between the courtiers.

In the midst of the confusion news is brought of the arrival of Francesca, who is accompanied by her nurse, Chiara. Francesca enters and dutifully kneels in homage to Malatesta. But when he looks at her and Francesca is made aware of his deformity, she is overcome with horror.

Girolamo, Malatesta's spy, informs his master that Francesca is in love with Paolo. Malatesta is furious with rage, and threatens Francesca.

Chiara tries to protect her charge by extending a crucifix before her, but Girolamo pushes the nurse aside. Malatesta strikes the spy in reproof, then, gathering Francesca in his arms, carries her out of the room just as Paolo enters. When he tries to follow his brother, armed guards bar his way. Chiara, filled with anxiety for her mistress' happiness, loses her reason.

Francesca returns. Paolo attempts to escape with her, but is prevented by Girolamo.

Francesca and Paolo are seated together on the settee, reading from a folio the story of the love of Lancelot and Guinevere — conveyed by two dancers — a tale which so enralls them that Paolo kisses Francesca and they "read no more." So happy are they in the sweet ecstasy of their love that the room seems filled with angels.

Trumpets announce the approach of Malatesta. Francesca, terror-stricken, bids Paolo hide on the terrace. Hardly has he done so when the great door is flung back and the sinister Malatesta is seen framed in the doorway. He is preceded by his dwarfs who scamper about like rats, peering behind tapestry and furniture in quest of Paolo. While Malatesta rages with a drawn sword, the dwarfs search the terrace, where they discover their victim.

A terrible duel ensues between the two brothers; it is watched beyond the doorway by a group of lords and people, whose excited movements are expressive of the varying fortunes of the combat. At last Paolo is slain.

Francesca, frantic with grief, flings herself upon the sword that killed her lover.

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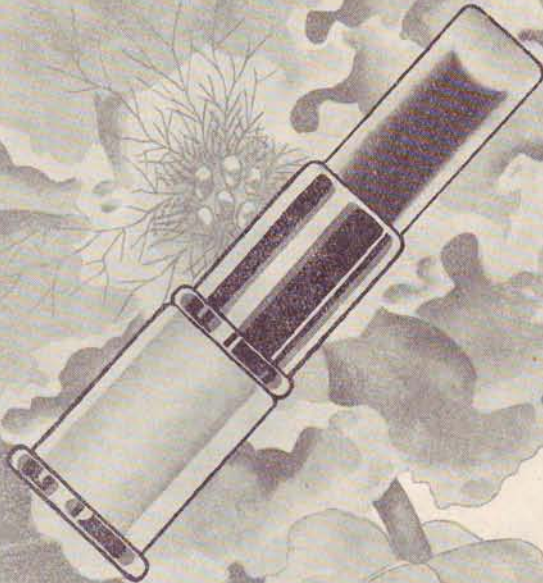
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"GRADUATION BALL"

The pupils of a fashionable girls' school in Vienna are giving their annual ball to the graduates of the Military Academy. In honour of these, the girls and the other cadets have devised a *divertissement*. The cadets are brought to the ball by the old General, who is head of the Academy. His immediate sympathy for the headmistress is reciprocated and a violent flirtation between them follows. From the moment the girls and cadets perceive it, they abandon the decorum of the ballroom and the ball is transformed into a gay revel. It ends on a wistful note when the headmistress disturbs the rendezvous between the cadet and the girl who have danced "Perpetuum Mobile."

"SPECTRE DE LA ROSE"

A young girl who has just returned from her first ball sits dreaming. The spirit of the rose she is wearing visits her, and they dance together. He leaps out of the casement, and then she awakens, saddened and disillusioned.

This small poem, first seen in 1911, popularised the classical dance in Paris, and turned the attention towards "Sylphides" and other ballets sur les pointes. Previously the French public had looked to the Russians purely for the exotic.

"PAVILLON"

At midnight the spirits of the garden surround the Pavilion where a poet awaits a young lady. The spirits bewitch the poet who, forgetting his tryst, comes out of the Pavilion and is enticed away.

The young lady appears, and finding the poet has not kept his word, is deeply grieved.

The poet is brought back by the spirits, and seeing the young lady, consoles her, protesting his devotion. Playfully, the spirits try to separate the lovers, but day approaches and they lose their power over the young couple, leaving them to their love.

"AURORA'S WEDDING"

This ballet, which shows the dances at the marriage feast of the Sleeping Beauty, has no developed story. Among the guests are the various fairies and nobles, the Blue Bird, Little Red Riding Hood, and other fairytale celebrities. Aurora herself dances with her Prince.

This one-act ballet was carved out of the Sleeping Princess, and first given in this form in the Paris Opera in 1922.

Stravinsky writes: "The convincing example of Tchaikovsky's great creative power is, beyond all doubt, the ballet of the Sleeping Princess."

Colonel W. de Basil's Ballet Company



ANNA VOLKOVA



ANNA LEONTIEVA

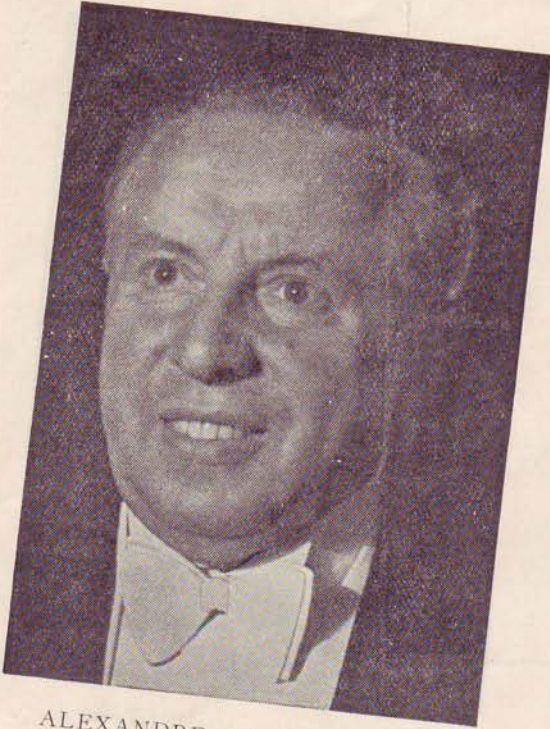


ALEXANDRA DENISOVA

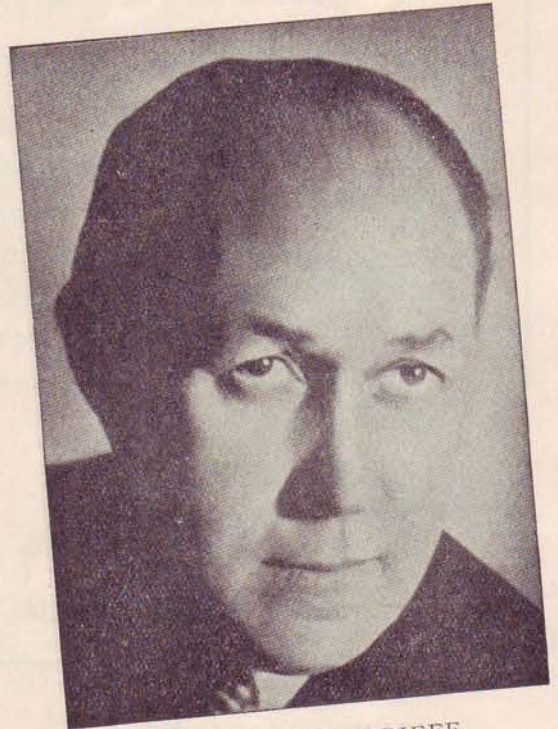


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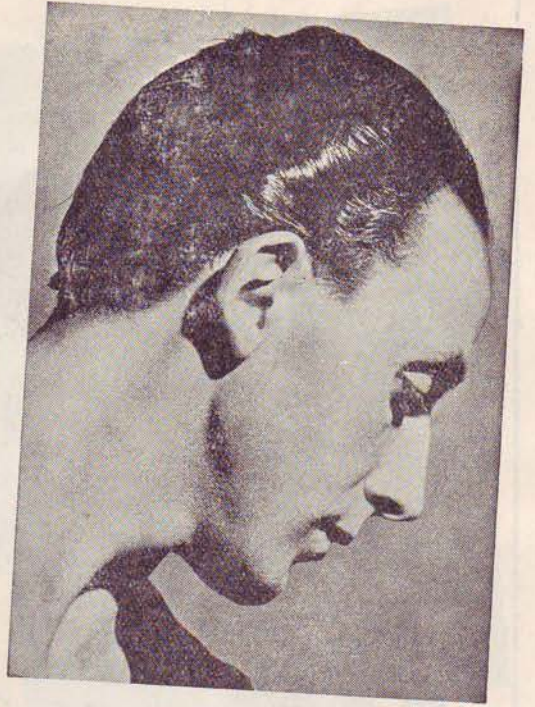
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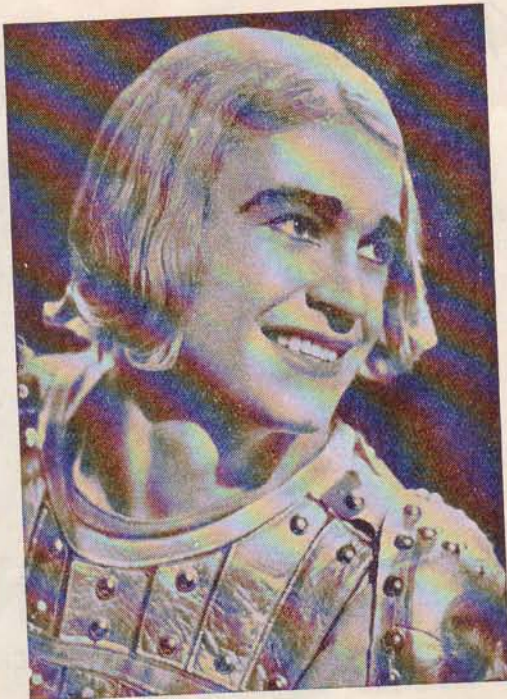
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The astrologer has caught a golden cockerel, and through magic has enchanted it, so that by its means he can carry out a cunning scheme—to get possession of the Daughter of the Air, the Queen of Shemakhan.

King Dodon has called his boyards together so that "all should know how heavy mighty Dodon's crown." He seeks their guidance. Prince Guidon, his son, advises a carefree life full of laughter and dance. Prince Aphron, his second son, recommends war, and once having crushed the enemy, a general rejoicing. The boyards differ on this question; they come from words to blows. The astrologer brings a gift to the King, the Golden Cockerel, who will watch over his kingdom faithfully by crowing loudly whenever an enemy is about to attack. Until this warning sounds, the King may snore in peace. The King, soothed, promises as a reward to fulfil the astrologer's first desire, whatever it may be, eats to repletion and falls into a heavy slumber. He dreams of a beautiful houri. But the Golden Cockerel awakens the King from his dream, and all his people draw his attention to the impending danger. The King sends his sons to war, whilst he himself settles down to sleep once again. Again the Golden Cockerel awakens him to signal a new danger, and the King himself prepares and leaves for war.

Arriving with his men on the battlefield the King finds his sons lying dead, having stabbed one another with their glaves. He weeps over them, but soon forgets about them at the sight of a fantastic tent that is arising from the ground. The Queen of Shemakhan comes out of this tent with her suite. She charms him and he takes her back to his kingdom.

When they reach his kingdom, King Dodon chances to meet the astrologer, who reminds him of the promised reward, and asks him for the young Queen. Dodon, enraged, beats him on the head and kills him. The Golden Cockerel flies down from the spire upon which he is perched, pursues the King and pecks his skull. Dodon falls dead and is mourned by his subjects. The Queen of Shemakhan laughs and vanishes. The astrologer reappears, he is undying, has he survived the King and his kingdom, menacingly shaking his finger in warning at anyone who may show himself as ungrateful and wanting in honesty as Dodon. And Pouchkine closes his tale with this moral: This fairy tale is an invention, but there is a hint in it and a warning to all good men.

"PROTEE"

Scene: A temple by the Sea. A group of maidens offer prayers for the appearance of the God Protee, Prophet of the Sea. Protee appears and dances. The maidens try to catch him to learn their destiny. But the God disappoints them by changing his movements and leaping back into the sea.

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"PETROUSHKA"

The scene is laid in Admiralty Square, St. Petersburg, about 1830. In the midst of the Carnival merry-making, there appears an old magician of Oriental aspect, who displays to the crowd his animated puppets, Petroushka, the Dancer, and the Moor, who perform a brisk dance.

By his enchantments, the magician has endowed them with human attributes and sentiments. Petroushka has the most humanity of the three, and, therefore, suffers most from the cruelty of the magician, who keeps him a prisoner, aloof from human life. He feels deeply his enslavement, his ugliness and his grotesque appearance. He seeks consolation in the love of the Dancer, and is on the point of believing his suit successful, when she is frightened by his uncouth manners.

The Moor is quite different. He is stupid and spiteful, but richly attired, and the Dancer is captivated by his sumptuous appearance. She succeeds in fascinating him, but, at the moment when they are ready to declare their love, Petroushka comes to interrupt them with a jealous scene. Furious, the Moor throws him out.

The carnival is at its height. A merchant, who is out for a frolic, escorted by a couple of gypsy girls, throws banknotes among the crowd, coachmen and nursemaids join in a dance; a dancing bear is led through the crowd by his attendant, and finally masked revellers break into a mad dance.

Suddenly cries are heard from the magician's booth; the rivalry of Petroushka and the Moor assures a tragic turn. The puppets escape from the booth, the Moor pursuing Petroushka, whom he fells to the ground with his scimitar. Petroushka dies in the snow in the midst of the crowd, and a policeman fetches the magician who reassures the bystanders by proving to them that Petroushka is only a puppet, with a wooden head and a body stuffed with sawdust. The crowd disperses, but left alone, the magician to his consternation sees Petroushka on the roof of his booth threatening him and deriding the people who have been deceived.

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("The Good Humoured Ladies")

At Carnival time, ladies of a small town near Venice resolve to amuse themselves at the expense of their friends. To test her sweetheart, the Count Rinaldo, the beautiful Constanza sends Mariuccia with a letter informing him that a lady who wears a pink bow loves him. Similar bows are worn by her young friends, Felicita, Dorotea and Pasquina, and her aunt, the old Marquise Silvestra. In succession the ladies appear before Rinaldo, and each time he thinks it is his beloved. Finally, the old Marquise accepts a glass of wine from him. Declaring his love Rinaldo perceives that his companion is far from young, and would gladly escape, but the old lady is not to be denied and drags him off to the Carnival.

In the absence of her mistress, little Mariuccia arranges a supper for Leonardo, her lover, who quickly arrives, followed by Battista, and the supper is for three. The old Marquis di Luca, who also

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has a weakness for Mariuccia, follows. They dance, and Mariuccia and Battista give a solo; then Leonardo intervenes, but the ensemble is interrupted by the appearance of Felicita and Dorotea.

Seeing his wife, Leonardo takes flight. Pasquina is flirting with the gallant Captain Faloppa. Mad with jealousy, Battista runs after her rival.

All is quiet for the moment and the town clock strikes four.

Constanza is troubled that her aunt has enticed Rinaldo away, when the Marquis returns, escorted by Rinaldo and Faloppa. Meanwhile Leonardo and Battista have donned feminine attire. They all determine to fool the old Marquis and Marquise. First the two pretended young ladies delight the old nobleman by inviting him to the Cafe. Meanwhile, the genuine ladies have prevailed upon Nicolo, the Cafe Waiter, to disguise himself as a Prince and offer his hand to the Marquise, and she, delighted, announces her marriage with the supposed Prince. The Waiter's mask is removed and triumphant youth is convulsed with merriment.

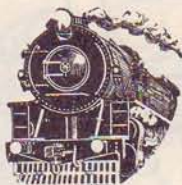
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(Destiny)

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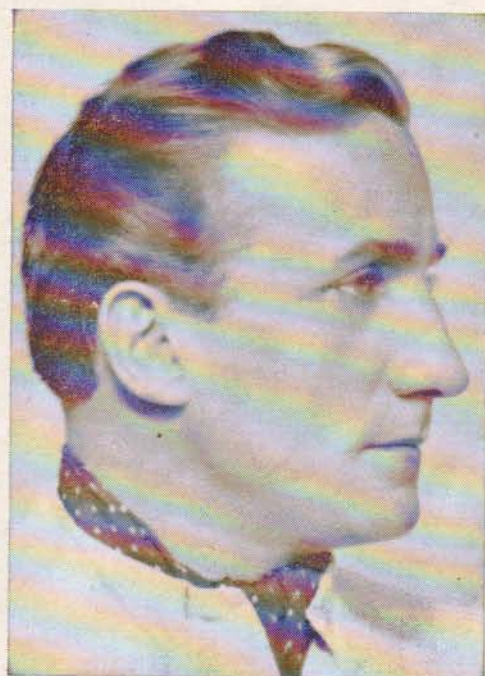
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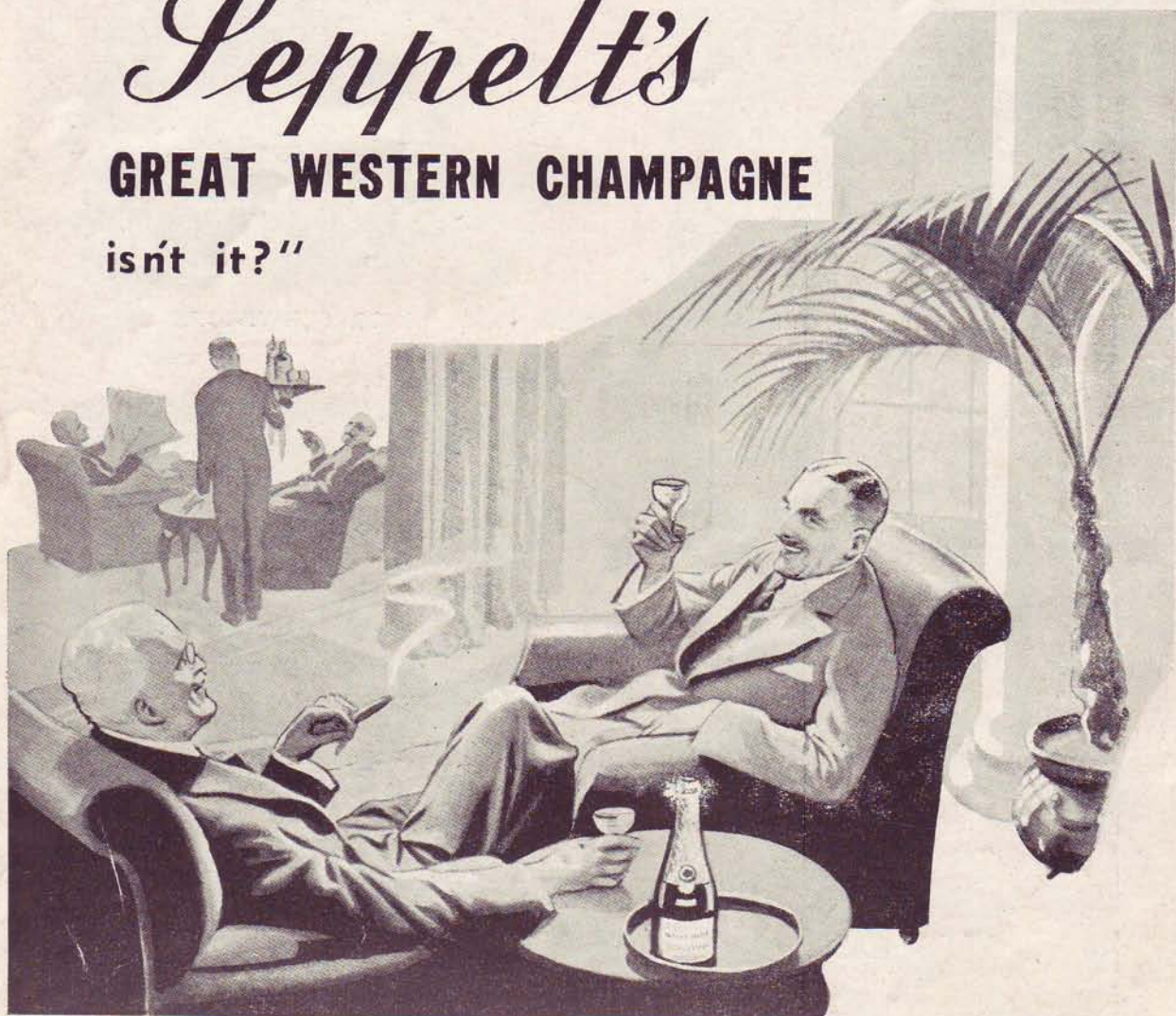


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