



The New Dianas of Out-door Dancing

"Interpretative" Exercise a Great Educator and Health Stimulant, Says Mrs. F. T. Towne, Wealthy Promoter of Dancing for the Young.



AN ECSTATIC MOMENT IN A SWIRLING WOOD DANCE.



INTERPRETING A POEM AT THE BRING OF A LAKE IN ONE OF THE CONNECTICUT SUMMER DANCING SCHOOLS.



A FAMOUS GROUP OF OUTDOOR DANCERS PHOTOGRAPHED IN THE SAN FRANCISCO FAIRGROUNDS.



PHASE OF A DANCE POEM PHOTOGRAPHED UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF MRS. F. T. TOWNE. BY BARBARA CRAYDON.



MRS. F. T. TOWNE, ENTHUSIAST IN OUTDOOR DANCING.



ANOTHER PHASE OF A DANCE POEM PHOTOGRAPHED UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF MRS. F. T. TOWNE.

DANCING seems destined to play a conspicuous part in our everyday affairs. Instead of an idle, even frivolous pastime, the dance is being urged for its serious educational value. Many of its friends see in dancing a solution of many social and industrial problems. After the horrors of war we may dance our way back to normal conditions of mind and body. In the third year of the war a systematic effort was made in England to relieve the tension, especially among soldiers, and a number of dancing instructors were brought from France for the purpose. Classes comprising some 15,000 were instructed with gratifying results.

An interesting experiment is being carried on near New York to interest large numbers of young girls, including many of those engaged in hard work, in the classic dances. The patroness of this movement, Mrs. F. T. Towne of Stamford, Conn., a woman of wealth, of social position, has already carried the work far beyond the experimental stage. Many of the girls are drawn from great industrial plants. In the winter months halls are found for the dancers, while in the summer the beautiful lawns of the Towne estate overlooking Long Island are often used for the purpose. An ancient Greek would doubtless feel very much at home in watching these graceful groups of dancers and the classic lines of their delicate Grecian draperies.

Mrs. Towne has planned the movement along practical lines. "I am trying to give these girls an equal opportunity with their more fortunate sisters," she explained the other day. "What else could I do for them, which would more quickly develop both the mind and body and awaken in them the joy of life? To explain my motive

let me tell you the experience which first suggested the work.

"I chanced to pass a fashionable dancing school one stormy winter's day when a beautifully appointed limousine with liveried chauffeur and footman drove up. A maid alighted and after her a little girl, very much overdressed, who was protesting violently. The maid was pleading with her that she wore the most expensive dress in town and the dancing class was therefore sure to prove a delight.

"Further down the street I chanced upon a group of working girls gazing rapturously in a window at some dancing frocks. I listened to them and each of the girls was telling of her longing to wear such gowns and to dance. I made up my mind that these working girls, with their limited opportunities, should have a chance to dance if I could bring it to them. There was much opposition, but a class of about a hundred was finally formed, meeting in a hall. The best instructors obtainable have been secured to teach them. It is in no sense a charity. The girls pay a nominal fee for each lesson.

"There is a very general misapprehension as to dancing. It has been happily described by James Dalarose as 'rhythmic gymnastics.' It is not merely a refinement of dancing such as we see in society, but is far broader in its influence, a principle affecting every part of life.

"The question is always before educators and physicians. What is the best kind of exercise to recommend to the great unexercised class? To walk, to swim, to play outdoor games, to hunt, all are good in their way, but they do not exercise the body equably and steady and train the nerves. Rhythmic, systemic exercise, going over the muscles each day, so all may do their part, with fresh air and pure water and peaceful sleep, gives the person

not only the needed physical exercise, but develops poise and personality as well, which result is not obtained from ordinary exercise.

"I want to emphasize a most important element of exercise, namely, the slow movements which develop balance and lead to absolutely still positions, which are to be held for from 5 to 15 minutes with the body in relaxed condition. To acquire rhythm in exercise is to gain bodily beauty and strengthen the mind. The circle is completed when the mind and body are brought into a complete co-ordination so that they work together, the muscles giving instantaneous obedience to the brain. Upon this basis of rhythm and co-ordination of mind and body are constructed all the arts.

"Plato says that the whole life of man is governed by rhythm. It is rhythm that has given to the world the joys of art and the harmony of friendship. Unsteady time in music, a staggering and twisting gait in walking, inability to draw a straight line, indecision as to color, difficulty in reading sufficiently far ahead of the word being pronounced to give accent to the sentence, a colorless, unsupported voice in singing, all show the untrained co-ordination.

"Rhythm creates a rapid and regular current of communication between brain and body. All plastic work helps to overcome intellectual stagnation. Rhythmic exercise, based upon a response to music, is the foundation of all interpretive dancing, in which the subconscious mind finds expression and produces original composition which will stand as real art.

"The dancer must possess good health, a developed mind, a sure sense of rhythm and a perfect co-ordination between brain and body; then we do not need lights and draperies, rouse or powder or expensive staging. These latter

only hinder art and cover incompleteness, but without the former we have not seen or known the art of the dancer.

"Personality and poise are probably more desired by the world at large than any other qualities, and these coveted possessions are attained by those persons who do not possess them naturally in one way only, and that is by hard work and constant watchfulness, by concentration of the forces and faculties. The perfecting of the cells of

which the body is composed goes far, however, toward the attainment of the desired result, and the more perfect the cellular structure of the physical organism the easier becomes the task of developing the mental faculties.

Thus Mrs. Towne expresses an enthusiasm that is illustrated in happy groups. The enthusiasm is typical of that to be found in many centers of tuition in interpretive dancing throughout the country—from Connecticut to California.

FRENCH SOLDIERS BEARING NO GRUDGE AGAINST HUN MUSES

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It may also be remembered that there was no necessity for "making translations" of "Parafiel," for there was no finer version of it ever given than the one toured through this country by Henry W. Savage, with Walter Henry Rothwell as conductor. It was upon this occasion that Mr. Rothwell established a reputation far and wide as a conductor of the first rank and when Mr. Savage decided to put a company on the road to sing Puccini's "Madame Butterfly," Rothwell was Puccini's choice.

Lessees of the Lexington theater disclose that they have rented the house from October 20 up to the date when Campanini and his Chicago operatic organization will take possession to George Blumenthal, who will present the Star opera company, with Otto Goritz as stage director. German operetta and probably grand opera will be given by a number of artists formerly of the Metropolitan opera company. The chorus also will consist of singers formerly with that organization.

The cause of America will be the note upon which the musical season 1919-20 will be ushered in. As usual the Worcester festival will be in the field early, although before this time-honored institution will have given its annual festival, the Americans—artists and composers, will have had something of a fling at Lockport, N. Y., which seems to be taken more seriously this year than usual. The programme for Worcester will be carried out exactly as it was planned for last season, when the festival had to be called off on account of the influenza. The only change in personnel will be that Edgar Schofield will sing instead of the lamented Hartridge Whipple, who was one of the victims of the dread disease. Strangely enough, Mr. Schofield was originally cast for the part which he will sing, and when he went into military service the part was given to Hartridge Whipple. Dr. Arthur Mees will as usual conduct the programmes, which he has been preparing now for two seasons.

Arnold Volpe has devoted himself with considerable enthusiasm to the American cause and he has made it possible not only to hear some fine works by American composers, but he has invited them to conduct their own compositions. It gave the public a chance to see that Samuel Gardner has the true conductor's talent and to hear Henry Hadley, the noted American composer and conductor, in his own works. Mr. Hadley again will be guest conductor this week, when the programme will include orchestral excerpts from operas and some of his compositions, including his waltz, which will be sung by Ines Barbour, in which she had very great success last week at the Stadium concert Wednesday night.

Mr. Volpe will introduce Dirk Foch on Wednesday night, which will mark the Holland conductor's first appearance in America. The soloist upon this occasion will be Madame Alma Clayburgh in operatic arias and Tschalkowsky songs.

Mr. Volpe will give Tschalkowsky's fifth symphony on Thursday evening, with Della Baker, soprano, as soloist. She is announced to sing the mad scene from "Lucia." On Friday night Marie Kryn, the Chicago pianist, will be heard, as will Betty Lane Shepherd, the soprano. Max Rosen will play on Saturday night, when he will have as co-star Greta Mason, soprano. Sunday night will be of exceptional interest, insofar as Helen Stanley will appear. Edgar Schofield, who has just returned from military service, also will sing upon this occasion.

Another series of summer concerts opened Thursday night at Ashbury Park, arranged by the board of commissioners, with Mayor Hetrick chairman. The first concert was given by Anna Filletu, with a chorus from the Metropolitan opera-house under direction of William Tyrrol. Next Thursday night Helen Stanley and Rafaela Diaz will appear jointly and later in the season the list will include Margaret Matzenauer, Marie Sidelius, Anna Case, Marie Rappold, May Peterson, Arthur Middleton, Jeanne Gordon and others. This has no connection with the series now taking place at Ocean Grove, where Madame Matzenauer sang Saturday and where John McCormack will be heard August 9. Mischa Elman is also announced in this course, in consequence of which it may be understood that there is no dearth of real music, even with the thermometer above 90 and "going up." Incidentally he it said that Jupiter Pluvius is "coming down," so things are evenly divided.