

Nazimova Model Ibsen Actress

By J. F. S.

Mysterious Russian Noblewoman Wonderful in Her Interpretation of Creations of Norwegian Writer's Fancy.

It was a very correct room in Portland's most correct apartment house, and I committed the indiscretion of remaining an hour and 15 minutes. It was cruel, but it was excusable. For I was to have talked "shop" to Miss Blanche Stoddard, one of that generally terrifying type, a leading woman. And instead down came Ellida Wangel, with her sea-green dress and blond Norse hair that would shine like green gold if it had the sea for a setting.

So absorbing was the idea that the first 15 minutes of the conversation—which was really only a monologue punctuated by syllables of assent—was lost upon me entirely. She was the Ellida of the last act of the play—not the neurotic, frightened, half-jealous girl of the first two acts, but the woman who has finally sent her sailor lover about his business and returns to the good doctor an infinitely stronger, happier woman, but one in whom the element of mysticism and the longing for the unfathomable will never be eliminated.

It wasn't until she went into raptures over Alla Nazimova that I could pay any definite attention to what she was saying, and then it was because she was doing some particularly fine acting, with myself and the Japanese elevator boy as the only witnesses.

In fact, "Nazimova" was the first word that stuck. It wasn't at all the Nazimova of our untutored pronunciation, the Nazimova with its long "o" and its accented penultimate. Instead it was an extremely easy and gliding word, with what accent there was on the short "zi," leaving the rest to die away easily and naturally. It takes practice, but it comes in time.

"I love her!" she declared. "She is the most wonderful creature imaginable, she creates her roles and makes of them things of supernatural life. Never was there anyone like her. I worship her as an actress and yet I cannot be with her. One season was enough. It is playing with celestial fire, and that isn't good for mortals."

And she might have added "nor for mermaids"—but she didn't. "I was in New York, out of work," she continued, "my new play having been a failure. I ran across my friend, Mrs. Schroeder, wife of Fred Schroeder, who grabbed me by the arm and without explaining at all rushed me over to Henry Miller's offices."

"Mme. Nazimova needs a blond leading woman, and here she is," said Mrs. Schroeder.

"Do you mean to say you'll take it?" gasped Miller in astonishment. "For heaven's sake hurry over and see her."

"I hurried, I simply rushed over there and sent my card up. I'll never forget my first sight of her. She wore a low cut black gown, without any particular shape or style. She was very dark and looked a trifle like a Jewess, and when she spoke it was with the most enchanting accent—the merest shade of an accent, that softened and lent color and beauty to her words."

"She thought I had been sent to interview her, and before I could interrupt her flow of language she exclaimed, 'My child, if I could but have you! Why, Oh why, weren't you an actress? What a Thea you would make for me!'"

This was too good to be true. Miss Stoddard hastened to assure Nazimova that she was an actress and wanted to play Thea—that was why she was there. It must have been a proud and happy moment, because the Russian genius took her on the spot, and the meeting resulted in an entire season spent with the woman who has set sensation-loving New York wild.

She has countless reminiscences of Mme. Nazimova, little anecdotes that are fascinating—so fascinating, indeed, that poor Miss Stoddard had to submit to a 75-minute interview while she recited them.

Nazimova is a Russian and a noblewoman, and like nearly all Russian noblewomen the mystery of her life is dark and impenetrable. Even the Americans who know her best have been able to learn nothing from her. She came to America with the company of famous Russian actors which visited New York two years ago. When they returned to Europe she stayed in New York and played a year under contract with the Shuberts for only \$100 a week.

"She had a terrible struggle," said Miss Stoddard, "and has told me that during the years she was studying in Russia and while she was trying to learn the English language she had to buy 40-cent shirtwaists. She is always poor, even now, when she commands enormous salaries—no one knows what becomes of her money, but it is believed that she gives most of it to the Russian revolutionary cause."

WILD AND WOOLLY.

"Bad Men" Depleted in Alleged Western Plays Are Surprise.

From Boston Transcript.

The "wild and woolly" depicted dramatically or melodramatically in four local theatres simultaneously, serves also as a theme for a most entertaining little essay on "The Magazine West." Its author, having lived extensively in the west, expresses mingled amazement and dejection over the "bad men," "bonanzas," and "tenderloin" of Everybody's and McClure's. It must be eight or nine years now since your clerk trod the gulches and cañons of the Rockies—time enough for

the wild and woolly to have quieted down to an even tamer placidity than when last he saw it. But even then it was not "as advertised." Cowboys I saw in plenty, yet never once a cowboy in the full regalia of his ilk. Had he "chaps" and a Mexican saddle? Then, certainly he would omit the "chaps," a sorry mongrel, sartorially, he recalled the fascinating incongruities of costume reported by missionaries when first they had impressed upon the heathen the spiritual potentialities of dry goods. In nine months of sweet expectancy I saw no recourse to gun play, encountered no rattlesnakes, and met but one coyote. Some fascinating hold-ups took place, I admit, though not so many as in Boston. And, mind you, I was in

the very heart of the Wild and Woolly all the while, and keeping a bright lookout for "copy." Meanwhile, they of the Wild and Woolly maintained a pretty shrewd surveillance over me. Many and loud were their complaints that I was introducing into the Rockies a species of slang that corrupted taste and horrified all persons of discernment. From what I hear, the town has been uncomfortably quiet and conventional ever since my return to the east. Still, I am a bit out of sympathy with the writer of "The Magazine West" in the Contributor's club. He seems to me a little touchy, indeed, rather unnecessarily ferocious in his denunciation of those neezy authors to whom "bad men," "bonanzas," and "tenderloin" spell several square meals a year. The Wild and Woolly does no great harm—

in the magazines. Real Westerners have long since denied themselves the anguish of reading Wild and Woolly fiction, save for the fun of jeering at it. But when it comes to staging the Wild and Woolly, that's different! Who knows but, almost any night, some touring ranchman, in evening clothes and a hopeful mood, may blunder into a theatre where the life of the ranch is so weirdly travestied. A horrible scene would ensue. Sobbing, moaning, and begging everybody's pardon, the poor fellow would dash out of the theatre and drown his woe in a thimbleful of Moxie.

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BLANCHE STODDARD



MME. ALLA NAZIMOVA

Blanche Stoddard Played With Actress Who Has Created Such Furore, and Follows Her Interpretation.

"One afternoon we were all gathered on the stage for a rehearsal of 'A Doll's House.' Mme. Nazimova was handed a telegram. She read it and fell to the floor in a faint. The rehearsal had to be given up and Nazimova was taken home. Afterwards I learned that it contained the news of the capture of a young boy whom she had helped educate and of whom she was very fond. He had been arrested for conspiracy against the government, and knowing that it would mean either Siberia or death, he had killed himself."

"Her moods were wonderful. In rehearsals she showed the most marvelous knowledge of how a play should be staged, of what should be done and when it would be most effective, that I have ever witnessed. Her resources are limitless. She has studied her parts until she knows what the author meant to write into every word. To some she frankly admits she can't do Shakespeare. She hates it and feels that she is dreadful at it."

"At rehearsals she always comes in a dress which she believes will fit the part of the woman she is to play. In Hedda she wears a black clinging dress with a long train—it makes her look taller than I, although in reality she scarcely comes to my shoulder. She wears a short skirt, common stockings and flat-soled, ugly shoes as Nora. In fact her make-up as Nora is particularly remarkable. She must of course make of her a common woman without any particular refinement of breeding. She puts her hair, which is very black, down over her forehead. She grimes her hands. She wears turquoises in her ears. She looks exactly like a dirty little east side Jewess, but she is perfect in the part."

"In Hedda I saw her using that remarkable neck of hers in the most effective way imaginable. I tried the same trick I was so enamored of it. She sprang at me."

"What are you doing!" she exclaimed, "I spent four years trying to learn that movement. I am short. I have to have it in order to overcome my lack of height. You have no right to it"—and I had to give up to her, of course."

"At a reception given by the Pulitzers on one occasion a guest said to her, 'Mme. Nazimova, I wish you would wear silk hose and pretty slippers as Nora. I hate you as you are.'"

"Yes, that's just like you Americans," said she. "All you want is for a woman to be pretty and to wear pretty clothes. You don't care anything about acting. You want us to be pretty!"

"But Mme. Nazimova isn't pretty and she is successful," I put in jubilantly, certain that it would prove a poser.

"Oh, the people follow the critics like sheep, you know," she said. I didn't know, but she continued: "Not one person in 20 appreciated Mme. Nazimova's acting. It was merely because the critics went wild over her that she became so much the fad that now on her matinee afternoons it is almost impossible to get near the theatre. You should see the other actresses at the matinee performances. I have watched Ethel Barrymore sitting resting her chin in her hands, sitting forward in her seat so—all the time illustrating her talk in the most interesting fashion—and scarcely moving through the entire afternoon, so intent was she upon catching every tiny gesture and change of facial expression."

"We all watched her and all of us wondered and marveled and I can assure you that if we put on the proposed Ibsen matinees here that I shall do my best to imitate many of Nazimova's interpretations. I feel that she knows more about Ibsen than any one else, so why shouldn't I accept her way of acting him?"

I told her that I hoped she would. Also that I was very anxious to see her in the Ibsen plays. And I am. She is the most intelligent actress, the most finished entertainer under the disadvantages of a perfectly correct drawing room in a perfectly correct apartment-house that I know of. She ought to be a delight on the stage."

But I had stayed so long, had so frightfully outworn my welcome, that I couldn't even stay to ask her, in her role as Ellida, how she ever happened to allow that remarkable step-child of hers, Hilda Wangel, to grow up into the young woman who charmed Master Builder Solness into climbing the steeple.

Pray, how on earth did you do it, Mrs. Wangel?

SOCIETY

(Continued from Page Two.)

social entertainment was held and delicious refreshments served. The next meeting will be held at the residence of Mrs. W. B. Hamilton, 419 Williams avenue, Friday March 14, at 2:30 p. m.

A surprise birthday party was given Miss Maud Malott on her thirteenth birthday at her home, 961 Williams avenue. Those present were: Hazel Ross, Edith Ryden, Vera Crandall, Mildred Eddy, Maud Malott, Gladys Lindley, Elise and Eran Keinath, Claude Crosby, Harry Grayson, Jefferson Crandall, Wilber Vinton, Edwin McCaalon, Floyd Stark, Roy Malott and Alvin Weston.

Mrs. F. M. Branch entertained the Fellowship circle last Saturday evening at her east side home. There was music and refreshments followed later. The circle was formed when Benjamin Fay Mills was here and is devoted to "soul culture." Once a month the members plan to give a social at the Strayer mission for the entertainment of the men of the north end.

Women of Woodcraft, Portland Thimble club, No. 3, met at the home of Mrs. Ada Worth March 4. Whist was played and Mrs. Susie Cook won the first prize, a burnt wood jewel case. Refreshments were served at 5 o'clock. The next meeting will be held at the residence of Mrs. Mary F. Hurley, 184 East Sixteenth street, Wednesday, at 2:30.

The Mizpah social club's dancing party given at Marguerite hall Friday evening, February 28, was enjoyed by 50 couples. Eighteen numbers were played by Galichio's orchestra. The hostesses were Mrs. Belding, Mrs. Greenwood, Mrs. Haynes Jr. and Mrs. A. Thompson.

The Misses Mary Ge Bott, Helen Standish, Frances Vandermeer and Jessie De Spain entertained about 100 of their friends with a leap year dance last Saturday evening, February 29, at the Artisan hall, Portsmouth avenue. The hall was decorated with green and yellow.

The Philothia club of the East Forty-fifth street Baptist church met in the class room Friday afternoon. A pleasant time was spent in mounting pictures of Christ.

WEDDINGS

A charming wedding took place Tuesday evening a week ago at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. R. C. Prince, when their daughter, Frances M. Prince, was married to Frederick S. Allyn, by Rev. John R. Welch, pastor of the Fourth Presbyterian church. The bride wore a handsome dress of white silk, and carried a bride's bouquet. The bridesmaid was Miss Vera Prince, and the bride's sister, Miss Dottie Wrenn, and the bride's mother, Mrs. M. A. Prince, were the flower girls, and they wore white and carried pink carnations. The bride was given away by her father, Miss Florence Howe played the wedding march from "Lohengrin."

After the ceremony the wedding supper was served by the Misses M. McLaughlin, Verne Clawson and Olga Locke. The house was prettily decorated with ivy and pussy willows. The ceremony was performed under a canopy of ivy and pussy willows. George A. B. Walker was best man.

Mr. and Mrs. Allyn left on their honeymoon the next day, and will be at home to their friends at 1144 East Yamhill street after March 15.

A pretty home wedding took place February 26 in the evening at the residence of Mrs. Mary S. Ferrier, when her daughter, Flossie S. Ferrier, was married to Russell S. Wright, a prominent young man of Newcastle, In-

diana. The ceremony was read by Rev. N. Shopp of Jefferson. The wedding march was played by Miss Mina Doyle, cousin of the bride. Miss Elsie Lewis attended the bride, and Albert Ferrier was best man. The bride wore white, with full-length veil, and carried a bouquet of white carnations. The house was tastefully decorated with Oregon grape, English ivy and potted plants, and the bridal party stood under a floral bell. After congratulations supper was served to 25 guests. Mr. and Mrs. Wright have left for their home in the east.

A simple wedding was celebrated last Monday morning at the 9:30 mass at St. Mary's church, when Rev. Father Daly united in matrimony Miss Katherine L. Chambers and Ferrance J. Conway. The sister of the bride, Miss Marie Chambers, was bridesmaid and Charles J. Sheridan acted as best man. Miss Elizabeth McMahon presided at the organ, and after the services at the church a wedding breakfast was served at the bride's home.

The current events department of the Portman Study club will meet at the home of Mrs. P. W. Stewart, 174 East Sixteenth street, Wednesday afternoon at 2 o'clock.

Mount Hood Circle, W. of W. guards, will give a St. Patrick's dance at the East Side Woodman hall, East Sixth and Alder streets, Tuesday evening, March 17, at 8:30.

J. J. Brain of Portland and Amanda Rose of Rainier were married in St. Helens Saturday, February 29, by Justice Watkins.

ENGAGEMENTS

Miss Irene Marguerite Kelly and H. P. Booser of Alaska will be married in this city May 27.

COMING EVENTS

The E. S. A. C. girls are planning to give their March dancing party in Ringler's hall Monday evening, March 16. The committee in charge consists of Juliet Johnson, Margaret Brown, Ella Streimer, Alice Agler, Mabel Brown, Gertrude Wetzel, Margaret Boyd, Mina Hoffman, Bessie Fitzgerald, Esther Edwards, Freda Pfander, Edith Edgington and Lenta Stahley. Stile's orchestra will furnish the music. The patronesses are Mrs. W. B. Lottman, Mrs. D. C. Agler and Mrs. M. M. Ringler.

Lincoln-Garfield Women's Relief Corps No. 19 will have a special meeting next Wednesday at the home of Mrs. G. A. Spooner, 574 Lexington avenue, Sellwood, for the purpose of sewing. All members are urged to be present at 10:30 a. m. Come prepared to spend the day.

The Veesper Stellas will give their March party at Murlark hall Thursday evening, March 12, 1908. Praps' orchestra to furnish the music. Patronesses are Mrs. J. Gilten, Mrs. J. P. Silver, Mrs. O. Couture and Mrs. A. Hanning.

The Mizpah Social club will give a pink social Thursday, March 19, at the home of Mrs. Thompson, 447 Benton street.

Learn to dance correctly from Prof. Ringler. Instruction daily. Phones.

PERSONAL

Mrs. Otto Kulper and Mrs. Hortense Rice spent Sunday with Mrs. W. B. Dillard of St. Helens.

Miss Florence George, one of the nurses at Good Samaritan hospital spent two days with her parents in St. Helens last week.

Mr. and Mrs. John H. Willington returned Thursday from a five-months' trip to England and are visiting relatives in St. Helens.

Mr. and Mrs. F. D. Kuetner of Elton Court have taken apartments at the New Nortonia, where they are at home to their friends.

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