

RENAISSANCE OF BALLET

English Dancers' Success In New York

(Special to "The Listener" through the American Legation, Wellington)

IN the last three years of the peace between the wars, New Zealand received two visits from Colonel de Basil's Monte Carlo Russian Ballet, and the art became the main topic of conversation for a large, excited group of people who had never seen the true Russian ballet before. Some of them soon permitted themselves to be known by the newly-found label of "balletomane," made sure of seeing each change of programme as many times as possible, got behind the scenes if they could, and acquired all the vocabulary of the ballet for use in coffee-houses, at parties, and anywhere else where the ballet was passionately discussed. That interest had survived among many followers even until this summer, when New Zealand is being toured by another ballet company, and the question, "Have you seen the ballet yet?" has again become a useful starting point for conversation.

There is a good deal of interest being shown in the ballet in general, and we have just received through the United States Office of War Information some news of the ballet in America, with particular reference to Anton Dolin, one of the leading dancers of the Colonel de Basil company, and Antony Tudor, an English choreographer now in New York, who is said to have a brother in New Zealand. We print some of it here with the photographs that accompanied it.

A TREMENDOUS ovation greeted an evening of ballet held at New York's out-door Lewisohn Stadium, which featured Alicia Markova and Anton Dolin, stars of the Ballet Theatre of New York City. The 22,000 persons who crowded the stadium for this performance and the 4000 who could not be accommodated, were ample proof, according to *The New York Times*, that "America is ballet-conscious in a wide-awake way."

"A renaissance of ballet is happening in the United States," said the *Times*. "Cultural levels are noticeably rising, and the plain hunger for beautiful things is stronger than ever."

The stars of the evening, Markova and Dolin, danced five numbers on the programme; they danced together the "Blue Bird" and the Grand Pas de Deux from Tchaikovsky's "Sleeping

Beauty" and the waltz from Chopin's "Les Sylphides." Miss Markova danced the "Dying Swan" solo which Michel Fokine composed for Pavlova.

The New York Philharmonic Orchestra was conducted by Antal Dorati, musical director of the Ballet Theatre in New York. Dorati conducted for the de Basil Company in New Zealand.

Ballet for the People

Dolin recently announced that he and Alicia Markova are leaving the Ballet Theatre for a time, to appear in a Broadway production in the autumn, as well as presenting some weeks of ballet in the summer at the Radio City Music Hall. Ballet can be brought to the people, he says, with no sacrifice of classical traditions.

Born Patrick Healey-Kay in Sussex, England, Dolin early showed a fascination with any form of movement. His mother, an Irishwoman, wanted him to be an



ANTON DOLIN and ALICIA MARKOVA in "Giselle."

actor, but when he lost his part in a new play because his voice was breaking, he took the opportunity to study dancing seriously. The review of his first public appearance with a student group described him as "light as a fawn, as graceful as a fawn, and wing-footed as Mercury."

One of Dolin's outstanding achievements is held to be his adaptation of acrobatic dancing to the discipline of the classic ballet. His love of athletics led to one of his greatest triumphs as Le Beau Gosse in "The Blue Train."

Dolin pays great tribute to Markova, speaking particularly of her remarkable acting as the betrayed peasant girl in "Giselle" as well as of her superlative dancing, which changes its form so markedly between the first and second acts. Like the ballerinas of old, Markova

wears the soft shoe which makes for such lightness and grace, in contrast to the heavier shoes used by many dancers to-day. Like Dolin, Markova is capable of a variety of interpretations, ranging from the classics to the extreme modernism of her Juliet in Antony Tudor's ballet "Romeo and Juliet." This English ballerina is also like Dolin in her capacity for a dramatic performance.

Dolin Has a Theory

Dolin, who likes to develop theories about the ballet, is convinced that ballet dancers of the future will all receive dramatic training. While some of them study pantomime to-day he believes that the use of the voice, the acting out of specific roles, will enrich their later interpretations in the dance.

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ANTONY TUDOR as Tybalt in his "Romeo and Juliet."



TUDOR and NORA KAYE in Tudor's "Pillar of Fire."



DOLIN and MARKOVA in "Princess - Dolin in his own characterisation of Aurora."



DOLIN in his own characterisation of "Bluebeard."