

FINDING USE FOR THE BALLET

Pretty Scenes at the N.Z. Centennial
Would Satisfy National Craving
For Applying The Arts

By

"EMILE"



(Photo by S. P. Andrew.)

EDWARD PARLETTE.

... "There must be a mind behind the technique."

BALLET is an unusual and somewhat strange creation to New Zealanders, in spite of the recent visit of the Ballet Russe.

New Zealand people still regard it with suspicion. Every time they see a big, well-built, strapping fellow moving lightly on the stage they have a deep, unconscious feeling that he would be doing a better service to humanity at the business end of a long-handled shovel.

It is, I suppose, our heritage from the pioneers. They were forced to spend their energies on productive work. They had to clear land of trees and stumps, and to build houses. And it wasn't much use dancing in the depths of the bush. . .

But, lately, in London there has been a revival of the ballet. The graceful figures of the dancers fill pages of fashionable illustrated papers. There are hot controversies over this dancer and that. And a new name has grown up for the cult. They call it balletomania.

BUT if New Zealand people still persist in asking, "What is the use of the ballet?" there is a good answer for them. It was discovered by Mr. Edward Parlette, Wellington, who with his wife, Dorothy Parlette, has just returned from a visit of fourteen months to Australia.

For ballet played a big part in the Sydney 150th anniversary celebrations. He sees no reason why it should not play just as big a part in the New Zealand Centennial celebrations of 1940.

THEY used it there for the striking display called "Pageant of the Nations," in which altogether 900 people took part. The pageant was Australia's acknowledgment to those nations of the world which sent it messages of congratulation and good will.

It was not difficult to find actors to represent the nations of the world. Sydney has its towns within a town.

It has its Czechs, Italians, Norwegians, Russians and Chinese.

For their part in the pageant the Chinese had their own orchestra, the Russians their own choir.

Most of the nationals who took part had their own costumes, stored away and shipped across from Europe to Australia years ago, and brought out again, gay and colourful, for the pageant.

Some of the nationals could hardly speak English, but they took their parts perfectly. The Chinese brought their costumes to the pageant in wonderful old carved chests.



IN ENGLAND THEY CAN
TAKE IT.

... But in New Zealand people prefer to see energy applied to a shovel.

THE pageant, held in the Town Hall, ran for a week to packed houses, and stopped only because there was no time left for it to run longer.

All through the pageant use was made of loud-speakers and microphones for rehearsing and for stage work. Even the producer in the centre of the huge building carried a small microphone.

THE pageant itself was given in two parts. The first dealt with the British Empire and the second with the Nations of the World. The New Zealand scene was produced by the members of the Polynesian Clubs of Sydney, under the direction of Mr. L. J. Moran, and was finely done. The Maoris did a mere dance that took the fancy of the huge audience.

In the Nations of the World part, the Italian ballet was designed by Dorothy Parlette, who danced as well.

WHILE they were in Sydney, Mr. and Mrs. Parlette both studied ballet hard. They spent some time under Guerard, premier male dancer of the Ballet Russe. Then they found a woman ballet dancer, Sholunoff, who was five years with Pavlova on a world tour, and in the ballet of the Metropolitan Opera House in New York under Rosina Galli. (Cont. on p. 63).