

# As they Stepped it in the

## GOOD OLD DAYS



Dance Melodies  
of far-gone days  
from 2YA Saturday, 24

ON such an occasion it would be interesting to make a flying visit to the homes of some of the listeners where the presentation of old-time dance music is almost certain to bring up the hardy perennial question as to whether modern times will bear favourable comparison with "the good old days."

Grandad, or grandma, will no doubt recall the days when dancing was dancing, when the melodies of Strauss, Waldteufel, Translateur and other pure melody-makers drifted dreamily through ballrooms where

"—brigh the lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men.

A thousand hearts beat happily; and when  
Music arose with its voluptuous swell  
Soft eyes looked love to eyes which spake again,  
And all went merry as a marriage bell."

And back on the farm Dad and Mum will tap their feet as the strains of the Barn Dance, Polka or Schottische come from their radio, recalling the times when they danced the night away in a woolshed or schoolroom to the strain of an accordion or violin.

"No sleep till morn, when Youth  
and Pleasure meet  
To chase the glowing Hours with  
flying feet."

The younger generation, on the other hand, will draw attention to the fact that when Grandad went to one of the balls he is so fond of talking about, he found it essential to take a supply of collars, as the terrific energy exerted in a set of Lancers, d'Alberts or Quadrilles reduced starched linen to a pulp.

In these enlightened days, the young folks will point out, one can dance all evening without any physical strain whatever.

And in the homes of music-lovers the argument will probably turn on the merits of old-time dance music as compared with modern jazz tunes.

It is not the purpose of this article to start a controversy among readers on the merits or demerits of old-time dances as contrasted with modern ones, nor as to the

Those who look back enviously to "the good old days"—consider modern dances "immodest," and jazz music as so much more cacophony—will find their tastes specially catered for by 2YA on Saturday evening next, September 24, when the 2YA Concert Orchestra, under Mr. Leon de Mauny, will present an evening of old-time dance music, interspersed with selected dance recordings, from 8 p.m. till 11.30 p.m.

merits of modern dance tunes as compared with the melodies of the classical composers.

Nor does space permit of reference to the various types of dances which were featured on the ballroom programmes of the Victorian era—those dainty programmes with

pencil attached, which were treasured for years by the maidens of those days.

Of all the dances of the past and present, however, it will probably be agreed by both young and old that the waltz stands pre-eminent in popular favour. Well over a century ago, Lord Byron said in a poem:

"**E**NDEARING Waltz!—to thy more melting tune,  
Bow Irish Jig and ancient rigadoon."

Later in the same poem he went even so far as to describe the dance as "seductive" and "voluptuous" as, indeed, it must have seemed to English dancers, when at the very end of the eighteenth century it was introduced into an English ballroom for the first time.

How it conquered all Europe, Great Britain, and America is now a matter of history, and its victorious march from its first home, Vienna, to the modern dance publishing centre of Tin Pan Alley, New York, is one of those fascinating romances which will not be found in the standard musical dictionaries, but depends for its elaboration upon students of the human interest side of music rather than the technical and theoretical experts.

Byron's poem invites us to picture a country gentleman of his day who is supposed to come to town with his wife and daughter, and in the fashionable assemblies of the time saw the waltz as a new dance of which he could not at first wholly approve. "Judge of my surprise," he says, "to see poor dear Mrs. Hornem with her arms half-round the loins of a huge hussar-looking gentleman I never set eyes on before; and his, to say truth, rather more than half-round her waist, and turning round and round to a see-saw, up-and-down sort of tune till it made me giddy wondering if they were not so." Like (Continued on page 2.)



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