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VARIETY OF TALENT IN STRAUSS WORK

By GRENA BENNETT.

A LARGE conclave of musicians, actors, mimes and dancers met at the beckoning of Richard Strauss to produce an original version of that composer's symphonic poem, "Ein Heldenleben," at the Manhattan Opera House last evening.

"Ein Heldenleben" (A Hero's Life) has done duty for many years as an attractive part of dignified orchestral programmes. To have changed its complexion to a stage conception of the hero battling with imaginary beings and mental phantoms was, in truth, like painting the lily.

Hubert Raidich was the heavily laden hero, and Martha Graham his heavily laden companion. In passing review one saw adversaries and ectoplasm, grotesque and futile battles between the armor-clad and ladylike "hosts," white-capparisoned and high-stepping.

A parade of characters in other Straus works made a picturesque ensemble, and the hero's release from despair and disappointment was accomplished by amazing concerted contortions of the assemblage.

Out of this curious melange one must select Mr. Raidick and Miss Graham for some remarkable effective and eloquent posturing and poses, and also Nikolai Sokoloff for his masterly reading of the score, in which the members of the Cleveland orchestra co-operated with fine musicianliness.

Griffes' "The White Peacock," with Misses Talmud Johansson, Sorel and Humphrey as the peacocks, and an animated presentation of Enesco's "Rumanian Rhapsody," with twenty actors concerned in its rural comedy and merry-making, were the concluding numbers on the programme.