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**EXHIBITION OF PAINTINGS
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The big flower-ball which Ambassador and Mrs. Tower gave last Friday in their palatial house, Königs Platz 4, to the Crown Prince and Princess, other members of the Royal family and Berlin court circles, was one of the most brilliant affairs the swell set of the German capital ever saw, and it will be remembered for a long while. The whole house was converted into a garden, and with its artificial sunlight, flowerbeds, palms, shrubbery, orange-trees &c. recalled the French Riviera.

At ten o'clock in the evening the guests began to pour in. The Crown Princess appeared as a Rose, wearing a gown decorated with roses and holding a large white wand in her hand also decorated with beautiful roses of all kinds. Princess Eitel Friedrich had selected the character of a Lily and held in her hand also a wand decorated with flowers of the same kind. Miss Thackara, daughter of Consul-General Thackara, as a Sunflower, looked more beautiful than ever. The gentlemen appeared in uniform or court-dress. We will publish more particulars in the next issue.

As the pressure of visitors to the Exhibition of Old English Masterworks has been increasing from day to day, the management has postponed the close of the exhibition until Tuesday, February 25th, at 8 o'clock in the evening. On all three remaining days, Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, the admission fee will be three marks and the exhibition will be kept open until eight instead of six o'clock in the evening. On Tuesday the exhibition has to be closed irrevocably as the rooms must be cleared for another one.

Preparations for the big balloon-race of this year are well under way. A few days ago a committee of organization and a sport committee were organized to take the matter in hand. The selecting of the other committees necessary will follow soon. Members of the organization committee are Herren Geheimrat Busley, Captain Hildebrandt, Dr. Braekelmann, First Lieutenant Sievers, Baron v. Wechmar and Dr. Fiedler. The sport committee who have charge of the technical arrangements and whose work is of the greatest importance for all balloonists competing for the Gordon Bennett Cup, consist of the following members: Captain v. Abercorn, Captain Hildebrandt, Lieutenant-Colonel Moedebeck, Professor Busley and Direktor Riedinger. All communications should be addressed to the *Deutscher Luftschiffer-Verband*, Berlin, Germany.

The German Shakespeare Society will hold their next annual meeting in Weimar on April 23rd. It is intended to give a gala performance of one of Shakespeare's plays on that day in the new Hof-theater in Weimar, which is equipped with special technical arrangements for Shakespearian plays. Professor Lorentz of Göttingen, one of the foremost Shakespeare scholars, will deliver the speech of the day.

A few days ago Mr. Braff, of the theatrical firm Sherek & Braff of London, arrived in Berlin to make arrangements for a visit of the famous Japanese actress Madame Hanako with her company to play here some national Japanese pieces. Mr. Braff succeeded in renting one of the smaller theatres of Berlin which is well adapted for the art of this little Japanese actress.

It will undoubtedly interest all former and future visitors to Berlin to hear that the fate of the Royal Opera House has just been decided. It is a well-known fact that the present theatre is much too small for its purposes and that it looks everything

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King Friedrich August attended a Soirée given in his Majesty's honour by the Kreishauptmann of Leipzig, Freiherr v. Welck, on Friday evening in the official building. A great crowd which had gathered in the Ross Platz cheered his Majesty heartily on his arrival. The King was received by Freiherr v. Welck and his two sons, and conducted to the rooms on the first floor, where some 80 gentlemen were assembled, among them: the Ministers of State Dr. Beck and Graf Hohenthal und Bergen, General v. Kirchbach, General d'Elsa, the President of the High Court Dr. v. Seekendorff, Oberbürgermeister Tröndlin, Bürgermeister Dr. Ditt- rich, the Rector of the University Professor Dr. Cohn. Towards 8.30 p.m. the Leipzig *Gau-Sängerbund*, a male choir about 1,000 strong, appeared in the Ross Platz, and gave his Majesty a Serenade, which was listened to by a vast audience in the square. His Majesty returned to Dresden last night.

His Majesty King Friedrich August has been pleased to bestow upon Fräulein Helene Stagemann the title of Königliche Kammer Sängerin.

This afternoon, at 5.30, at the American Church of St. John the eighth recital is to be given with the following programme.

- (1) Organ: "Prelude and Fugue on the name B-A-C-H" Liszt.
- (2) Aria for soprano: "Seufzer, Tränen" Bach.
- (3) Organ: "Cantabile" César Franck.
- (4) Aria from St. Paul: "Jerusalem" . . Mendelssohn.
- (5) Organ: "Grand choeur in D" (op. 18) Guilmant.
- (6) Organ: "Offertory in A b" Brosig.

The soloist will be Frau Trodler-Striegler, soprano

Herr v. Bary, of the Dresden Royal Opera, recently received an offer from Mr. Alexander Rippel, Mr. Conried's successor at the Metropolitan Opera House, to go over to New York, which offer, however, was declined.

The V. Symphony Concert (A series) brought as a novelty a talented work by Theodor Blumer jr., who by some chamber-music performed in one of the Tonkünstlerverein concerts last year had elicited a good deal of curiosity as to his ability in orchestration. Herr Blumer, who is 27 years old, understands instruments well; he knows their peculiarities and tonal properties, and blends striking and brilliant colours. These advantages, however, he shares with nearly all modern composers of the younger school. If only there had been, besides brilliant orchestration, a few more ideas in his "Karnevals-Episode." It begins with a fresh and bright theme certainly descriptive of the carnival—Berlioz has found similar expression—but the interest in it relaxes. All else the composer has to tell us no longer captivates us, for it is ever changing, yet ever the same. There is no depth in the piece, it strikes no chord in us, it is like a beautiful children's toy which, however, is soon laid aside. The public seemed delighted and did not spare applause, which was no doubt intended as much for the excellent rendering by the Royal orchestra under the baton of Herr Hagen, as for the composition and the composer.—The other numbers on the programme were old, but they will be still fresh and alive long after the novelty has found a resting place on the shelves in the archives. They were the wonderful Suite for orchestra in C

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