

"THERE can be nothing to please an aesthetic public in the suggestion of the pitiful head of a saint spotted with blood and dripping with gore as it comes from the executioner's blade.

"What glorifying can the children of light have in the triumph of darkness here represented; and can the posturing, however graceful, of a dancing girl, however beautiful, justify this ghastly sacrifice and hideous horror?"

In these forceful words the Rev. MacDonald Docker, of London, England, rebukes the London public generally, and Miss Maud Allan particularly—for Miss Allan, famed for her "Salome" dance, in which she makes use of a papier mache head of John the Baptist, is the beautiful dancer referred to.

But the London vogue of Maud Allan continues unabated. Her dancing in bare feet, and all but bare "altogether," continues to be the biggest stage sensation in the British metropolis. The London illustrated newspapers picture her without stint in her thily veiled, voluptuous poses, and visitors may purchase sets of postcards showing the whole gamut of Miss Allan's professional expression of herself.

One ecstatic critic writes of her performance:

"This most graceful dancer, whose sole covering is barbaric jewelry and a skirt of lightest silk gauze, weighted at the hem with gilt spangles and precious stones, is indeed the very poetry of motion.

"From the tips of her fingers to her shoulders she undulates in snake-like fashion, and wonderful are the poses and gestures and motions which constitute the dance and tell the story. For instance, in Mendelssohn's "Spring Song" she now suggests the gathering of apple blossoms from overhanging boughs, and anon the culling of sweet Spring flowers from a fragrant meadow, pressing them to her face and rapturously inhaling their perfume. Her joyous smile and movements are in keeping with the scene which one seems to see, though she uses no accessories.

"A very different and tragic story is portrayed in her next item, the famous 'Salome' dance. In this she appears in a corselet of jewelry, without even the conventional silk tights, so that when she bends backward during the dance one sees the wrinkles of flesh in her graceful back.

"One is not the least bit shocked, though the description may sound rather dreadful.

"There was a great flutter of excitement when she came out as Salome in the father dim light, then a stillness, then a perfect ball of sixpences dropped in the opera glass boxes.

"Out of a dark corner appears a gleaming face surrounded by a mass of hair—the head of John the Baptist, the tragic note now occurs. Salome is overwhelmed with horror, which later yields to fierce joy and exultation and later still to dull despair.

"Sometimes she kisses the face frantically, then flings it from her, then creeps toward it again with the weirdest expression of face until at the end the dance becomes more and more frantic. Finally she falls in a heap on the ground."

But not all of the London critics write in this vein. One who boldly signs himself "Christopher St. John," has this to say:

"Miss Allan is a very earnest young lady with a sincere conviction of her mission. She dances like a revivalist preacher, and makes as many converts. It would be stupid not to admire the character which has brought about so great a success. But it is just as stupid to mistake this character, this American 'grit' and 'bluff,' for beautiful art.



"There is very little art in Miss Allan's performance. She herself admits this when she says that she has never learned to dance. Perhaps this is one of the secrets of her success in England. The English people dearly love a lord. The English lord (and the class he represents) dearly loves the amateur."

Meanwhile Miss Allan is so popular that it is with great difficulty one secures a

seat at the Palace, yet at the present moment there is a great fuss caused by the Manchester "Watch Committee," which condemns her performance without seeing it and refuses to allow her to appear at a variety theatre in their city.

"How dreadfully unfair!" Maud Allan says, "to condemn a thing they have never seen. If it were worth while I might be inclined to say their opinion is an outrage and insulting, not only to me, but to those distinguished persons who have admired my performance and received me socially at their homes."

Lady Dudley had Miss Allan at her house to dance for the King and Queen, who were enchanted with her graceful movements and superb dancing. She has danced before King Edward twice, the Prince and Princess of Wales, Princess Victoria, Prince Francis of Teck and many members of the British aristocracy. Lady Constance Richardson and the Countess of Sutherland, as well as most of the smart American visitors now in London, have been to see her again and again.

Mr. Greenwood, chairman of the Theatres and Music Halls Committee of the London County Council, has said publicly that her dancing was exquisitely beautiful, and that he wished such performances could be seen more frequently. Archdeacon Slaclair also said her dancing was beautiful, so it is no wonder she feels so

justly indignant at the "Watch Committee" of Manchester.

In view of all the royal and noble, and clerical and critical, and London official encomiums heaped upon Miss Allan, was it not likely that eventually the dancer's management would go to Manchester and lock horns with the "Watch Committee?"

Perhaps this possibility is what stirred Mr. Peacock, Chief Constable of Manchester, to proceed to London and see for himself whether Miss Allan's dancing would likely be injurious to Manchester morals.

That official arrived a little while ago and asked the arranging director of the Palace Theatre to provide him with seats in order that he might witness Miss Allan's entertainment. Alas! Of course that was impossible. The seats were all booked ahead.

Then Mr. Peacock said he would like to go on the stage and make a closer inspection of Miss Allan's costume. The managing director raised his hands in shocked rebuke.

Miss Maud Allan was a lady, and although she might appear lightly garbed before an audience in an impersonal sense, she would most certainly not show herself to anyone in a personal sense, and would be insulted at the mere suggestion that she should do so.

Miss Allan has many engagements to appear at private houses in the afternoons or late evenings and receives a thousand dollars for each appearance.

She thinks that all these facts should discount the scatterling rebukes that have been leveled at her. She says:

"I am quite sure the Manchester people will not thank their watch committee for trying to deprive them of my performance. But, after I have concluded my engagement here at the Palace, I shall appear in Manchester, even if in a tent.

"Children can go to see the beautiful works of art, and all I am doing is to bring to life these statues and paintings of the masters. In Berlin my dancing was introduced to the public by the Society of Artists, and in Vienna I was warmly received in artistic circles."

"Many people pay fabulous sums for old masters and works of art in sculpture. Why, then, should any one object to a serious and reverent attempt on my part to give these subjects a living presentment?"

"My dancing is perfectly chaste, and I have never once heard the slightest sign that it was giving any displeasure from my audiences—on the contrary, it was always enthusiastically received."

A "Spring Song" and a "Salome" Pose.



**IS IT,  
OR  
ISNT IT—  
INDECENT?**

# All London Is Agog Over Maud Allan's Barefoot Dance, Which Queen Alexandra Saw and Approved, But the Town of Manchester Will Not Permit.

## "Where is the Line to Be Drawn?"

—The Watch Committee of Manchester, England.

**T**HE obligation upon our watchfulness is obvious. Where is the line to be drawn? If one dancer is permitted upon the stage in a state of relative nudity, it is hard to see how her imitators, who do not exceed her limits in this respect, can be disqualified because of more or less subtle differences of action and suggestion which can be felt, but can hardly be defined.

## "A Ghastly Sacrilege."

—The Rev. Macdonald Docker.

**T**HERE can be nothing to please an aesthetic public in the suggestion of the pitiful head of a saint spotted with blood and dripping with gore as it comes from the executioner's blade. What glorying can the children of light have in the triumph of darkness herein represented? And can the posturings, however graceful, of a dancing girl, however beautiful, justify this ghastly sacrilege and hideous horror?

## American "Grit" and "Bluff."

—Christopher St. John (English Critic)

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## "How Dreadfully Unfair!"

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TWO  
POSES OF  
MAUD ALLAN  
DURING  
HER  
"SALOME"  
DANCE  
AT THE  
SUPPOSED  
COMMAND  
OF KING  
HEROD  
ANTIPAS.



MAUD ALLAN  
AS THE  
PRINCESS OF  
JUDEA BEFORE  
SHE BEGINS  
HER DANCE  
WITH JOHN  
THE BAPTIST'S  
HEAD  
IN HER ACT  
CALLED  
"THE VISION  
OF SALOME."

Two Attitudes of Maud Allan Depicting Salome's Emotions at Sight of John the Baptist's Head.



"I have struck out an entirely new line for myself, and while on the stage I take my work very seriously. I am not Maud Allan, but Salome, or whatever characters I happen to be representing at the time.

"I have danced before Mr. Arthur Balfour and Mr. Asquith. I have also lunched with Mr. and Mrs. Asquith.

"I feel quite sure that the Manchester public will feel insulted that the judgment on my performance should have been taken out of their hands by a few persons who have never seen me. Perhaps they think it is on the same kind of lines as the living statuary. Well, if they do, every one who has seen me will know that they are quite wrong.

"People tell me that all this fuss is a good advertisement, but I don't like it. I prefer to be judged on the performance alone."

One feature of all this excitement must be quite disturbing to Maud Allan. She is being copied in her dances—especially the "Salome" dance—by a host of imitators. These are, in fact, so numerous, it is said, that the manufacture of John the Baptist papier mache heads has become an important industry.

Miss Allan's dancing has also been seized upon as useful burlesque material—particularly a certain ancient Egyptian bas-relief of her hands.

A laughable exaggeration of this feature of Miss Allan's performance has brought into prominence a very handsome young woman of the London music halls, who is billed as "La Belle Leonora." This dancer's costume is even more diaphanous than Miss Allan's—and the cruel title of her specialty is "Sal-Oh-Me."