

# GODOWSKY REFUSES TO PLAY FOR FRENCH

No. 9

**Austrian Pianist, on Program at  
Artists' Benefit at Metro-  
politan, Sends Regrets.**

**ADMIRES THEIR ART—BUT**

**It Is Impossible for Him to Partici-  
pate in a National Undertaking—  
Audience Sings "Marseillaise."**

The Metropolitan Opera House was the scene of another benefit entertainment last night, this time for a French charity. The Société Fraternelle des Artistes was the beneficiary, and the Théâtre Français, which will begin the most ambitious season it has yet undertaken next Monday night, was sponsor for the affair. The big auditorium was perhaps two-thirds filled, and from the sale of seats and programs several thousand dollars were realized.

An international tinge was given to the entertainment by the failure of Leopold Godowsky, the pianist, to appear. Mr. Godowsky, who is an Austrian, was on the program to play a group of numbers, but yesterday he sent R. E. Johnson, his concert manager, this letter:

My Dear Mr. Johnson: Upon my return to town tonight to fill the engagement which you booked for me tonight, I find the engagement in which I am announced to appear is given under the auspices of the French Government. While I am a great admirer of the French and of French art, it is absolutely impossible for me to participate actively in any national undertaking. Regretting to put you to so much trouble, and hoping that my non-participation will not inconvenience any one, I remain,  
LEOPOLD GODOWSKY.

It was rumored about the foyer that Mr. Godowsky had been notified by a representative of the Austrian Government that if he ever cared to return to Vienna it would be well for him not to take part in a benefit for the enemies of his fatherland.

Another disappointment was the absence of Martha Chenal of the Opéra Comique. At the beginning of the war Mme. Chenal created something of a furore by her singing of the "Marseillaise" in Paris. She was to have sung the national anthem last night, but the failure of the new French liner Lafayette to arrive deprived the audience of that treat.

Of course the "Marseillaise" was sung. Paul Capellani recited an original piece entitled "Le Chant Sacre," which told of Rouget de l'Isle composing the hymn. The recitation closed with the words of the poem and the audience, stirred by M. Capellani's superb declamation of it, burst into cheers, and when the orchestra struck up the air, into song. M. Capellani is an actor from the Comédie Française, who has come to New York to appear in leading rôles at the Théâtre Français. Even in this modest endeavor he showed the thoroughness of the training which the French school gives its actors.

Another new member of the French Theatre who made her first appearance in America was Lillian Greuze, a pupil of Sarah Bernhardt. Mlle. Greuze acted a merry little sketch, called "English School," with George Ranavant. So perfect was her enunciation and the modulation of her voice that every syllable could be heard distinctly in the rear of the auditorium.

David Bispham sang "Danny Deever," and there were songs sung by Leon Rothler, Andrée Bartlett, and Mlle. Berziat. In some gracefully executed Spanish dances Mlle. Rodriguez showed great virtuosity with the castanets.

One of the parterre boxes was draped with French and American flags. An occupant of this box was Georges Geyraud, the French Consul General. The tricolor was in evidence also on the women who sold programs.