

the spheres. Tchamouda, whose light feet continually tread rhythmically on Brahma's egg (the globe), charms the heavenly court by his performance, together with *thirty-five millions* of nymphs, specially gifted with all the talents which make good dancers. One of the rewards prophesied by the priests to the faithful worshippers in after life is this enchanting sight of armies of *bayadères* delighting their eyes and ears by dance and music, with Tchamouda as their leader.

Considering the importance given to the dance by the religion of the country, the number of dancers employed, the idea that the dance is born in heaven, we cannot wonder that in former times the Hindoos began each day with a special dance consecrated to the sun.

PERSIA

Mahometan views concerning music and dancing have greatly narrowed the circle of amusements in Persia. Dancing girls were numerous at Court until the reigning family ascended the throne of Persia; but at present the dance is given up to women of low condition and of slack morality, or to young boys dressed as women. Early Persian poets celebrate the beauty of the dancing girls and the charm of their voices, and at one time there must have been a great deal of dancing in the country and probably some ritual dances; but in Persia the student of the history of the dance meets with the same difficulties in his investigations as he does in Scotland—the religion of the country has endeavoured not only to suppress the pastime, but also to forbid any record of it. Yet in some remote provinces of Persia there is dancing performed by peasants at night, and at Teheran itself Georgian girls are employed as dancers; in Kurdistan and in Khorassan we also find traces of the art. Mr. E. G. Browne speaks with admiration of the dancing boys of Persia; he praises their 'elaborate posturing, which is usually more remarkable for acrobatic skill than for grace, at any rate according to our ideas.'

In Buzabatt, near Kashan, it is curious to notice that a

Dancing
By Lilly Grove
and
Other Writers
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Tarantella dance exists just as in Sicily. If anyone has been poisoned by the spider called *stellis*, he is advised to dance to the sound of music. (See 'Tarantella,' in chapter on the Dances of Italy.)

CHINA

Who can imagine a mandarin dancing a polka or a cotillon? Who can picture to himself a woman waltzing in the land of mutilated feet? But must dancing necessarily be performed according to our Western ideas? Why cannot the Chinaman have dances of his own? Must a Highlander dance the fandango, or a Frenchman dance a jig?

In all Asiatic dances agility and liveliness are seldom attempted: they would be looked upon as unbecoming and undignified. Dancing in its real form—e.g. symmetric movements and swayings to the accompaniment of drum and music—has existed in China from prehistoric times up to this very day. Some of the highest contemporary authorities deny the existence of dancing in China, excepting as performed in the theatre and as executed by professional women or boys for the pleasure of mandarins; but I have irrefragable evidence of ritie dancing from accounts of English ambassadors, of missionaries—both French and British—and from the Government report by Von Aalst. If little has been written about Chinese dancing, it may be for two reasons: one, that the ordinary traveller—the commercial or political resident in the East—usually does not know the language, has a fine contempt for the manners of the land, and is therefore hardly, if ever, admitted to the intimacy of the people; his judgment would thus merely be a sweeping one of things just around him. The other reason is that the true student—the man who knows the Chinese tongue and who has studied the habits of the Celestials—would probably consider the dance a frivolous amusement, too trifling to be put on record.

In countries where art is still in its infancy, music and dancing are inseparable, and more or less dependent on one