

Royal Variety



The Queen congratulates Gracie Fields after the Royal Variety Performance at the Palladium on Monday evening

Gracie takes her sewing

By MICHAEL WALE

GRACIE FIELDS took her sewing to the Royal Variety Show last night—to help her overcome the excitement.

The 66-year-old star explained: "It keeps my mind off the show. I'm taking all my skirts up one and a half inches."

As she waited to appear before the Queen at the London Palladium, Gracie said: "This is my eighth Royal Variety Show. But I'm always excited all day long."

Then Gracie went out in front of the footlights to one of the biggest receptions of the evening. Her songs 'Sally', 'Wish Me Luck' and 'Getting To Know You' brought back many memories.

Gracie steals the Royal show

By BARRY NORMAN

THE pattern of the last few years was repeated again at the Royal Variety Performance last night when Gracie Fields scored the great nostalgic hit of the show.

A year ago it was Marlene Dietrich, aged 61, who revived in a predominantly middle-aged audience emotional memories of its youth. The year before it was Sophie Tucker.

Last night at the London Palladium Gracie came back, aged 66, and appearing for the ninth time in 36 years in a royal show, enlivened the first half of the bill with the nostalgia bit.

She wore a simple, if glittering, blue dress and she sang the songs we expected her to sing.

Worthy

A couple of lines of *Sally* as she came on the stage; a snatch of *Wish Me Luck* as she went off. And in between *Glochamorra*, *September Song*, *Scarlet Ribbons*.

The audience gave her an ovation when she came on; an even bigger one when she went off.

Apart from her personal success, though, it all rather tended to be, as Eric Morricambe said, "like a rich *Workers' Playtime*."

It was a worthy show, but not a great one to set before the Queen.

But if the first half of the show belonged mainly to Gracie, the second half went to another veteran, 47-year-old Lena Horne.

Reaction

And it was these two who showed up the flaws in the bill.