

A Musician on German Music

Interviewed by the New York Sun, Albert Spalding, formerly well known on the concert platform and now a lieutenant in the United States Aviation Department, said:

"I do not believe in excluding all German music, but I believe that we should only listen to music of dead Germans. There are two reasons for this: First, because it is good music; and, second, the Germans who wrote it are dead and a dead German is better than a living German."

"Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, Schubert, Schumann and Brahms have nothing to do with the hellishness of the Hohenzollerns and Hapsburgs. Their utterances are heaven-storming proclamations of nature's beauties."

"We have more right to the heritage of their beauty than has war-mad Germany of today. We are more their followers in our ideals and aspirations than the Germans are, and why should we deny ourselves the privilege of listening to them simply because the unhappy land from which they came has since run amuck—temporarily we hope—from the poisons of Nietzsche and Bernhardi?"

"Modern Germany has produced many clever musicians, many efficient musicians, but in my opinion their lasting value is nil."

"A nation whose avowed purpose

is the triumph of materialism cannot produce spiritual results worthy of the name and the same ruthless hand that burned the library at Leysin and pointed the guns of destruction at Rheims, Paris and Venice, has for forty years been nailing all true artistic effort and impulse toward individual freedom of thought to a military cross of iron."

"A Germany that would repudiate her Hohenzollerns and Hapsburgs might some day in the future have something to say to us in art, but as they stand to-day Goethe, Beethoven and Kant would repudiate and disinherit them as followers."

THE HOMECOMING OF THE ARMY

This Should Mean a Big Increase in the Musical Instrument Trade.

The victorious Canadian army is now coming home in shiploads. These boys after listening to the music of the guns for years and months, are coming home to the music of playing bands and rousing cheers. On the streets there are crowds of cheering and singing children. The men are being welcomed by the welcome strains. Many of them are coming back home with a longing for music. Family reunions are taking place; new homes are being made where some of the men are bringing home with them brides from overseas, and where the boys are marrying on their return. This should all have a very lively effect upon the musical instrument trade.

Many of these men will purchase a piano for their homes, to celebrate the return to their families. They will want to give their children the opportunity of developing and cultivating their musical taste. The new homes will not be complete without either a piano, a victrola or phonograph. And these men will all want good instruments, for the best is none too good for them. These facts should all help to make for a busy time in the music trade. In every line of business the effect of the return of the soldiers from overseas will be felt, and many lines of the music industry will be helped. Into this class comes the musical instrument industry, and it should have a very busy time for the next few years.

THE NEW CHURCH.

Plan the Building to Accommodate an Organ.

A gentleman stood watching the organ builders at work installing a new pipe organ in a certain church, which building had already been up a few years. He learned that when the church itself had been completed the congregation had felt they could not afford the additional expense of an organ at once, so they deferred the installation of the organ for four or five years. Finally when the contract was let and the workmen commenced to build it in, they found the building had been put up with little or no provision made for the instrument. The gentleman referred to said that had the members of the church committee who neglected to allow for the future possible installation of an organ in their original building plans, been present and heard the resultant language of the workmen—some of the committee would have been entranced at the names they were called or else they would have stunk away thoroughly ashamed of themselves.

When the church is first built is the time to provide the proper places for the organ.

Musical Barber Shops.

Down in New England there is a departmental store which specializes in selling children's needs. One of the features is a children's barber shop. And to interest the kiddies during the ordeal of having their hair cut as well as to make it cheery for the adults accompanying them, the management of the store provides phonograph music. The idea is a novel one, yet why should it be? The principle is a sound one. Knowledge that it has been tried out will make men everywhere clamor for the same service. The pulling of a razor or a dab of lather which makes its way into a man's mouth while he is telling the barber he wouldn't vote for Brown for love or money, would not be half as upsetting were the air filled with the sweet strains from Aida, Traviata, Pagliacci and Il Trovatore.

The men who would profit most by the music in the barber shop are those who are always doomed to wait. How slowly the time creeps by. It seems as if every man in the chair is getting a haircut, shave, shampoo, massage, shave and all the other ninety-five modern frills. Could the poor waiting customers but have a few good waltz or two-step tunes the time would just dance by.

Probably the only man who would suffer would be the big fellow who always insists on smoking a cigar during the tonsorial operation. Should he forget himself in the rapture of a high soprano's singing the Swiss Echo Song he might come to find the soothing weed had gone by the regular route to his digestive organs, where, if still lighted, it might cause serious complications. But the great majority of barber shop frequenters should not have music withheld from them for the sake of the paltry minority.

MUSIC AMONGST CHILDREN.

Will Reduce Crime in Future Generations.

At a recent convention of the Canadian Bureau for the Advancement of Music, R. S. Gourlay, one of the prominent music men of Canada made a significant reference to the development of music amongst children. He said: "There are two ideas before the musical association. The first is that ninety-eight per cent. of all children in the world, in Canada and elsewhere, are born with a genius for music, whether it be greater or less, and if music, like any other talent, is not developed it becomes atrophied, and when these children become men and women they have lost the God-given talent which they had when they came into life. The second thought is that music is the only universal language. Music is the only language in the world that every race can talk and discourse in and understand; and to-day when we are forming a league of nations it is appropriate that this nation should see to it that the generation, through the children being taught now, should be able to talk and discourse in and understand it as they read it, and interpret it intelligently, through the instrumentality of throat and mouth, or fingers and hand and instrument. This universal language can be interpreted on an immense number of instruments, and it is for this reason that the Canada Bureau for the Advancement of Music to see that the generations to come shall use this universal language, music. It would cut down our prison population by forty to fifty per cent. if everybody could use that language. It is in the measure of hours that crime is committed, and if we could teach the public to use these leisure hours through this universal language we would greatly reduce crime, and add to our happiness. That is the task for our association."

Chords And Discords

Music washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life.

A great pianist said once: "Any fool can play a five finger exercise, but it takes a wise person to adapt what has been learned from playing that exercise to the uses of his interpretive work."

Chime hammers are an important part of the orchestra's equipment. For loud outdoor playing the rawhide hammer gives the best results. Where a finer tone is required for lighter work, a hardwood mallet padded with felt is used.

Having a good, light, well-balanced, springy bow goes very far in securing good violin tone. It is also necessary to have the bow re-haired at intervals because when the "teeth" of the bow-hair are worn the bone is interfered with.

Borrowing a violin to use for some special occasion is a bad custom. Use your own fiddle. If you do borrow one from a friend you should have it to practice on for at least a week or two before the event.

Dangers innumerable beset the enemy of an army of singing soldiers. The Allied armies sing while they march, sing while they rest and sing while going into battle. We at home, for the very same reason, should perform our tasks singing—

should keep up our courage by singing.

King Henry the Eighth of England, was intended for the church at one time and therefore his education included instruction in music. He attained some skill in composition writing two masses, several anthems and secular songs. His anthem "O Lord, the Maker of All Things" is still occasionally performed.

Edward Grieg, the Norwegian composer, as a boy, disliked school. Often he invented clever excuses for being late. Once he stood under a dripping roof until his clothes were soaking wet so that the teacher might be forced to send him home. A boy who could imitate such a plan in maturer years originate captivating melodies.

Artist Music Teachers Needed In Public Schools.

The place above all else where we should have artists for teachers is in the public schools. The public school is not a place for student musicians as teachers, as so many questions come up in public school work that demand an artist's view point, many more than in the private studio. We must have people with a broad outlook if we are going to teach musical appreciation in a broad way.

Since it is our object to educate the masses, we not only need the artist performer in the public school and must have him, but each community throughout the country should furnish funds for just such a propaganda. In the cities, the city council should take care of this fund; in cases of high schools the country should create the fund; eventually the federal government should control this whole movement.

Factory Musical Organizations

The list of companies who are encouraging music and musical organizations among their large forces of employees is growing. The big business heads see the advantage of music in keeping a satisfied, cheery, efficient group of men and women in their factories, and are putting this belief to a practical test. One large firm with four thousand employees has assisted in the organization of a male chorus of sixty-five voices and a women's chorus of ninety members.

The choruses meet for practice once a week at the close of work. Supper is furnished, the singers at the company's expense during the half-hour after the plant shuts down. Then the rehearsals commence, lasting for an hour and a half. In a little better than a year's time both these choruses have attained to a sufficient state of efficiency as to be able to take part in employees' concerts, and patriotic programmes.

In other factories a half hour's sing is held at noon two or three times a week. In some instances where the work people are provided with lunch and recreation rooms, the company supplies them with a player piano and a good library of rolls or a talking machine and some records.

Throughout Canada and the United States there are a number of firms maintaining an employees' band or orchestra which does much to promote a family spirit among the workmen and incidentally secures certain publicity for the firm itself. To come from the plant into the office, one case comes to mind where the head of a prominent firm believes in stimulating a desire for music among the staff. Frequently he buys a half dozen or ten admissions for a concert by some noted singer, violinist, chorus or orchestra and gives the tickets to different of the bookkeepers, stenographers and office help. The heads of all such practices in the recognition of the power of music to make a better type of employees.

Medicine and cheer ought to always go together.

Interesting Briefs

Even a revolution will not go without singing.

Tchaikowsky, the most distinguished representative of modern Russian musical compositions, was born on Christmas Day. That event was quite fitting as Christmas and music are inseparable.

Sir George Grove, editor-in-chief of the monumental "Dictionary of Music and Musicians," was by profession a civil engineer. He was knighted by Queen Victoria in 1853.

St. Saens began his piano studies at the age of two and a half years and yet some parents to-day think that at six, or seven or eight years is too young.

Describing how participation in music has affected whole communities, a gentleman describes one town where the music which drifts from the station will likely be singing Ediger's "Caracibus" to you the same evening.

Picking the hits in the popular song world is no sinecure. But they usually have a catchy title, a story that rings true and a catchy melody that is easily whistled, hummed and sung.

A typical instance of Hapsburg policy was when in 1784 the Czechs had their choral societies suppressed by Joseph II. These choral organizations not only kept alive the people's love of music but their very national life.

"It's a recognized fact," someone asserts, "that people in general sing a foreign language better than their own because, being a foreign language, they take more pains with it. It is hard to see how that can be construed to make an argument against the demand for more singing in English."

The No Encore Rule.

At a new series of ballad concerts recently inaugurated in England it was made quite plain that one of the innovations was the "no encore" rule. The announcement to this effect was loudly applauded, which shows that the public is coming more and more to favor no encores. Some programmes are too long as it is without allowing for any second appearances. While all assemblies would probably not assert it openly, deep down in their hearts most people know it is better to leave the concert hall feeling that they have not had enough than to go away overloaded. It is always an asset for a singer, a violinist, a pianist, an orchestra or a chorus to have people at the end of a programme say to friends, "I really would have liked another number." It may be a good rule to give the public what they want, but it is a poor one to give them all they want.

The practice of encoring is easily carried to the extreme. The first number on the programme is a particularly good one. So the artist is given a genuine encore. The second number is just an average one, but a kind-hearted audience is averse to showing any partiality, so artist number two gets an encore too. The third encore comes, and the rule is then established. Then there is encore after encore right through to the final number.

It is now considered in many quarters that every programme in length and arrangement of numbers should be prepared with the idea of announcing no encores and sticking to it. It is worth repeating that it may be a good idea to give the public what they want, but it is a poor one to give them all they want.

Why Many Students Fail.

One reason why so many pupils fail is that they study without thought, without concentration. With them, study is simply tone or exercise practice. The pupil should say to himself, "Why should I do a certain thing? What is the object? What will it lead to? How should I do it?" If the pupil does not understand all of these things he should ask questions of the teacher and the teacher must answer them intelligently or stultify himself. If the system is right the student should constantly remember that the way of doing as the start is a thousand times more important than the tone, for when the way is right the tone is sure to come right, sooner or later.

Sharps and Flats.

Before studying the music of a song one should read the words over carefully. This applies to amateurs as well as professionals.

Sound travels at the rate of 1,125 feet per second, and faster as the temperature rises.

The greatest opportunities for making Canada a musical country are in the public schools.

"If I were asked to name the most important element in music," said a great organist recently, "I would unhesitatingly say perfect rhythm."

The metronome should be placed behind the piano student or some place out of sight, as the majority will instinctively watch the pendulum instead of simply listening for the stroke.

A search of the biographies of the great composers, players, singers and teachers shows that the parents of the most of them were poor, the majority of great musicians, therefore, had to struggle against adverse conditions in their youth.

After school classes in instrumental music have been inaugurated in a western city, instruction is given in piano, violin, mandolin, guitar, banjo, ukulele, cornet, clarinet, trombone, etc. Grown-ups as well as the school children are now taking advantage of this exceptional opportunity.

Schubert died at the pitifully premature age of thirty-one because he did not have the twenty or thirty dollars it would have cost him to take a summer vacation. He remained in the city, moved to a cheaper room in a street where the drainage was bad, and succumbed to typhoid fever.

Buenos Aires is to have a municipal opera house, under the supervision of the Government. It is to be so commodious that provision can be made for the lavish issuance of passes, and every family, at some time during the season, will hear at least one opera free of charge.

Buy a good violin bow when you are at it. Many of the cheaper bows are much too limber, and the stick has to be tightened until it is straight before a full tone can be produced without the stick grating on the strings. Some people are so ignorant concerning the bow that they screw up the stick until it is not only straight, but "hump-backed," and leave it that way, so that it acquires an outward instead of an inward curve. It is needless to say that no good violin playing can be done with such a bow.

Spohr's Ill Luck. Of Spohr's solid services and masterly intonation in the field of compositions for the violin, and of his services to violin instruction, it is needless to speak. It is possible that Spohr's "Selbst Biographie," which no less an authority than Dr. Donald Toovey Reid pronounces to be an engaging and valuable work, or that his untimely portraits current, have somehow militated against his fame. We are inclined to wonder if the manifest ill luck which this industrious artist, endeared to art by not a few rare and solid services, experienced in his life time has followed him beyond the grave.

At the age of twenty Spohr was prevented from accepting an important and gratifying engagement in Paris by the loss of his magnificent "Guarnerius violin—one of those tragedies of history of which only a master violinist can gauge the desolation. Again when long after he had made his debut in London and Norwich, he was invited to present to the Norwich audience (in 1842) his new oratorio, "The Fall of Babylon," the composer was forbidden, in spite of a powerful petition from English enthusiasts and even from cabinet ministers, by his lordly "employer," the elector, the necessary leave of absence from Cassel. A greater mortification could hardly befall a composer, than being thus barred from conducting in person one of the greatest of his productions.



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