

MUSIC

"Great music is the art which lifts the soul above the storms of earth."

EDITED BY
MRS. JESSIE JOHNS SLEMMONS.

Music and Mythology.

The history of music has been the history of the human race; together they emerge from the dim twilight of mythology. Both claim divine origin. The morning stars sang their praises at the creation. What a mighty choir was that! What untold millions of voices! What an ensemble! How that wondrous melody shook and thrilled the great transept of heaven when on the evening of the fourth day they joined in their first great jubilate of praise to God for the life and light which he had just created. How that first great "Amen" must have shaken the very foundations of the newly-laid firmament.

According to the Greek and Roman mythology, music was presided over by the Nine Muses. They sang the festival songs at the repasts of the Gods, and Apollo, who led them in chorus on his lyre was the first chorus leader. At first the divine art of music was very zealously guarded from mortals and much jealousy was manifest even among the immortals as to the relative merits of various performers. Unfortunately this divine jealousy descended to mortals along with the art of music.

It is related by Homer that the Sirens, two winged goddesses of alluring song, engaged in a musical contest with the Muses and were vanquished, and the successful Muses tore the feathers from their wings and ever after wore them in their hair as trophies of their victory.

It is also related that once upon a time a presumptuous mortal boasted that he was a better musician than Apollo, who in revenge provided the man with a pair of asses' ears, and ever afterwards he wore his hair very long to hide his hideous deformity. Thus originated the fashion for male musicians to wear long hair.

Another pretty legend tells us how the flute came to be used among the mortals and why it never found favor among lady performers. Marsyas, a young shepherd, was lying in the cool grass by a stream in the heat of the day, when he heard the most entrancing music from the banks above him. It was Minerva, the Goddess of Wisdom, playing on a flute. Happening to see her own reflection in the clear water of the stream she was shocked to observe how the flute playing puffed out her cheeks and distorted her beautiful face. She immediately threw the offending flute into the stream and vowed she would never again take it up, exclaiming:

"Hence! Ye banes of beauty, hence! What? Shall I my charms disgrace By making such an odious face?"

Marsyas recovered the flute from the stream as it floated by and thus it came into the hands of mortals.

The ancient Greeks had a music all their own. Very little of its manuscript is extant. In 1893, however, in exploring the site of the ancient city of Delphi, a tablet was unearthed inscribed with the words and music of a hymn to Apollo, which was chanted in praise to that deity, about 300 years before Christ by the best female singers in Athens. This inscription shows that the musical notes to this hymn consisted of the letters of the Greek alphabet which were marked upright, inverted or inclined to the right or left to indicate the various notes. The voices and music were in unison. The laws of harmony were probably not at that period sufficiently understood to admit of separate parts, although they must have had an extremely acute and well-trained ear for they recognized 21 distinct notes in an octave instead of 12.

Thus was music born of the diviner nature of man, and ever since has played upon the human emotions, attuned to the highest and best aspirations of the individual or race to which they belong.

Church Music.

The subject of church music is one that has been much discussed and yet there is room for improvement in this part of the Sabbath service. Although the sermon or service is the main part of the worship, yet the music, if properly selected and carefully rendered, deserves a place. The ancient Jews believed themselves actually in the presence of Jehovah. If more of the singers to-day would realize that singing is an act of worship instead of display, there would be less opportunity for criticism and more good music. Church music that is not religious is not artistic. Why not begin to educate our congregations to a better class of music and better adaptation of the words? Personally I am a believer in congregational singing and although we may not have the facilities, a pipe organ and orchestra, or voices sufficient in number to render Gregorian chants as we would hear them at St. Peter's, Rome, or St. Paul's, London; yet much can be done toward raising the standard of even the hymn tunes. Some one has said "Men are not only religious animals but musical animals as well." Take, for instance, this burlesque on any rational conception of a future state, Beautiful heaven where all is light, Beautiful angels clothed all in white, etc."

Contrast with it "Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord," or "Love divine, all love excelling." The clergymen of North Yakima can do a great deal toward educating their congregations to a higher taste in hymn tunes—and when people are familiar with the dignified and really devout style of music, they will wonder how they ever endured the light, trashy jingle which once satisfied.

Classical Music.

The majority of Americans do not enjoy classical music. This fact is due to one of two reasons, either the performance is an imperfect one or the music is not understood. Who of us would enjoy listening to a conversation in a language we did not understand? Not until we gained some notion of the foreign tongue would it mean anything. Just so with a Wagner opera, Beethoven symphony or a Piano concerto. Mr. Robert Derthick is doing a great work in this very channel. In most of the larger cities and many smaller ones, societies have been organized known as the Derthick Musical-Literary Clubs. The object of the club is to study composers and compositions. For example, one member is called upon to give an evening with Chopin. A talk on Chopin and a synopsis of the composition sung or played is given before the performance of each number. Many of the papers are compiled by Mr. Derthick himself or through his efforts have been collected for this purpose. It is work that has been needed and is meeting with great favor and enthusiasm. Last season Mr. Walter Deunrosch gave talks and illustrated his subjects of grand opera on the afternoon of the day his company was to perform.

The Musical Training of Children

This part of a child's training is of the utmost importance. Give a child a dime novel to read and his thoughts will not be worth much more than ten cents. Just so with musical literature. If the child is allowed to play or sing what is termed "musical trash" his ideas will be perverted and he will never be able to take in and enjoy the tone pictures and real beauties in music.

Rusk in has said "Music of all arts is the most direct in power of discipline"—then how necessary that the proper kind of music be given the children. Suitable music for children's voices may be found in Brohm's Nursery Songs, Hallman's Kindergarten Songs, Stevenson's Song Book and Neidinger's songs for Children. Often we hear the little folks singing too high or too loud. Music for children should be melodious and simple and written for middle voice.

Kindergarten teachers say that the children who have advantage of being in a good musical atmosphere show it by their manners and refinement. Music is a power, when guided, for good. Much more has been written for little hands than for little voices. Jensen, Gurliitt, Kohler and Reinecke have written attractive music for the little ones, and W. S. B. Matthews' Studies and Schumann's Scenes from Childhood are excellent.

What Women Are Doing in Music Today.

One longs to speak of musicians of the past—of that fascinating character, Mahbran, daughter of a Spaniard, born in France, married in America, died in England, buried in Belgium; comedian at five years, married at seventeen, famous at twenty, dead at twenty-eight, forever more immortal; of Jenny Lind, great as singer, woman, benefactor; and of Nilsson, Parepa Rosa, Fusch Madi, Abbott, Albani and Lucca. We can only take a cursory glance of a few of those who have made a name for themselves in the musical world of today.

VOCALISTS.

The names of our sweet singers are many; we will name on y three:

Nordica is recognized as one of the greatest artists in the world today. She is grand daughter of the famous "Camp Meeting John Allen." When very young she studied singing in N. E. Conservatory of Music, Boston, under the careful instruction of John O'Neil. Her first appearance in oratorio was made in Grace church, her first public appearance in "The Messiah," given by the Handel and Haydn Society, Boston. Accompanied by her mother, she went abroad and studied with San Giovanni, Italy. After appearing in Italys e filled engagements in Russia, England and America. But it was while in Bayreuth in Wagnerian opera—the roles of Elsa in "Lohengrin" and Isolde in "Tristan and Isolde" that she struck the key note which has since brought her well-earned laurels.

Scalchi too is considered one of the greatest artists of the present day. Hers a rich deep contralto carrying chest tones to "3" above middle C with what I should term a traditional Italian method, but certainly there is no method quite like hers.

Adelina Patti—So much of praise has been said and written of her, little can I add. Although she has seen her best days those who have heard her lately claim her voice is sweet as ever. She has the sympathy of the world in her recent bereavement, the loss of her husband, Signor Nicolini who died January 11 of this year.

COMPOSERS.

Chaminade, the French woman, has made herself famous through her songs,

She does not confine her compositions to the voice, but she has produced real gems for the piano. Guy de Harbelot also French is writing good songs. She chaperoned and acted as interpreter for Calve while in America. Mrs. Beach of Boston is a composer of marked originality; aside from the songs she has given us, her latest venture is a symphony. Mme. Rive King has written brilliant compositions and rearranged a number of classics. Aus de Oho is turning her energy to composition. She has only just begun. "One Dainty Song" is dedicated to Emma Juch.

PIANISTS.

Carreno, by constant practice and natural ability, has attained the highest rank in her profession. She began to study the piano when a mere child, and to day is one of the greatest artists of the world. Last season the editor heard her play an etude by Paganini, arranged by Liszt. Such technique, such brilliancy and such accuracy amidst difficulties one seldom hears. Fannie Bloomfield Zeisler, "the dark-eyed little poetess of the piano," is another marvel. Some one has named her the "Bernhardt of the piano." No artist has enjoyed a more thorough and widespread appreciation or acquired and retained a more enduring reputation than Clara Schumann. Her greatest work lay in the fact that she interpreted her husband's compositions as no one else ever has or ever could. In every instance she brought his works into a popularity amounting to enthusiasm. She played with rare expression and accuracy. Miss Mary Wool Chase, of Chicago, is a pianist of whom we shall hear more.

VIOLINISTS, HARPISTS AND CELLISTS.

Camilla Ueso, one of the best known violinists, is a true artist. She is still playing, and has lost none of her power. Geraldine Morgan is a young violinist of great promise. Flavie Van den Heunde, a Belgian, who, it seems, is making America her home, plays the cello with a broad rich tone and much expression, two very essential elements in this particular instrument. The N. Y. ladies' trio, composed of herself, Miss Becker, violinist, Miss Phipps, piano, are playing with much artistic success. OTHER WOMEN IN THE MUSICAL WORLD OF TODAY.

Mrs. Jeanette Tauber is president and manager of the National Conservatory of Music of America, located in New York. A number of lady accompanists are making a good living to-day by "teaching" singers in their songs. Most of them have played for noted artists, and in that way, along with keen observation and natural talent, act as interpreters of the world of song. Miss Amelia Bauer is the successful preceptor of the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. The manager of Thomas' orchestra is a woman, Miss Fanny Miller. She is a great worker and a successful financier. The music critic of the New York Sun is Mrs. Francis Bowman. Toledo, Ohio possesses a woman of energy. Miss Hamilton has been engaging the best known artists for the music going people. Fanny Edgar Thomas, Paris correspondent to The Musical Courier, is a writer of much force and versatility. The Yersin sisters have formulated a method of studying French which is becoming rapidly known. It is termed the Yersin system, and is no "quack method by which you gain a thorough knowledge of the language in ten weeks." They are in New York City, and intend visiting the prominent cities of the United States before returning to France forming classes of instruction wherever they go. The Virgil Technique Clavier is an invention which is coming into popular use. It is a dumb piano, which insures more rapid and surer progress in piano playing than is possible in the ordinary way. Both Mr. and Mrs. Virgil instruct, and they claim for it not only superior technical development, but musical as well. Mrs. Clarence Eddy, wife of the organist, who has figured so prominently the last two seasons in Europe, is a woman of superior intellect. She is at present abroad, having under her especial care a young singer, Miss Rose Ettinger, who, when she went to Marchesi for further instruction, was told that her teacher had placed her voice and nothing which Mrs. Eddy had taught her was amiss. What higher compliment could she have paid Mrs. Eddy?

Music at Home.

North Yakima does not retain her musical element long enough to have a permanent organization. There is plenty of talent. Why can it not be focused? A musical department connected with the Woman's Club, admitting talent from outside, might be one means of interesting the musically inclined.

Some fifteen years ago we might have heard the rehearsals of the pianoforte, with Mrs. Holton as Josephine, or Queen Esther, with Mr. E. L. Whitson as Haaman and Mrs. Morri-on director. Later on Mr. C. S. Read, a cornetist of considerable fame, made Yakima his home. About four years ago a musical society under the efficient leadership of Mr. George Vance, and last winter a ladies' double quartet, under the direction of Mrs. J. M. Gilbert, all are now of the past. Even our home orchestra players are striking for the Klondike.

At a recent concert Rossini's Charity chorus from Stabat Mater was successfully rendered by twelve voices, accompanied by piano, organ and violins.

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