# The Baton

*Published by*

THE INSTITUTE OF MUSICAL ART

OF THE JUILLIARD SCHOOL OF MUSIC

FRANK DAMROSCH, DEAN

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*The Baton endeavors to recommend the operas, concerts and recitals of especial worth and interest to music students. Appearances of faculty members, alumni and pupils are featured FORTISSIMO in these columns.*

## BEFORE THE PUBLIC

*Harold Morris,* a member of the Piano Faculty of the Institute of Musical Art, was represented, in a concert given by the League of Composers at Steinway Hall on March 17th, as composer of a String Quartet.

*Bernard Ocko,* violinist, and Phyllis Kraeuter, 'cellist, both artist graduates of the Institute of Musical Art, assisted in a Dvorak program at the Park Avenue Baptist Church on March 24th.

*The Juilliard Graduate School Orchestra* played at Town Hall on March 27th. A very interesting program consisting of Albert Coates' "Suite from the Dramatic Music of Henry Purcell," a "Concerto Sacro" by Werner Josten; Vaughan-Williams' "Concerto Academico," and Ernest Bloch's "Concerto Grosso," was given with Julius Risman, Mary Lackland and Jerome Rappaport as soloists.

*Lonny Epstein,* a member of the Piano Faculty of the Institute of Musical Art, is to give a recital at the Institute of Musical Art on March 26th and at Town Hall on April 1st.

*Musical Art Quartet.* This excellent ensemble, consisting of Sascha Jacobsen, Louis Kaufman, Marie Roemaet-Rosanoff (all artist graduates of the Institute of Musical Art) and Paul Bernard will give a chamber music concert at the John Golden Theatre on April 7th.

*Angel del Busto,* an artist graduate of the Institute of Musical Art in bassoon, is to give a very unusual recital on this instrument at Steinway Hall on April 13th. Among the compositions to be played are bassoon concertos by Mozart and Pierné and numbers by Samuel Gardner and Karl Kraeuter, both of whom are members of the Faculty of the Institute of Musical Art. There will also be a performance of the rarely played Beethoven Trio for Bassoon, Flute and Piano with Henri Bové, an artist graduate, and Carroll Hollister, a graduate of the Institute of Musical Art, as assisting artists.

*Walter Gieseking.* One of our best pianists. Carnegie Hall, March 31st.

*Felix Salmond.* A fine 'cellist. Town Hall, March 31st.

*Mary Garden.* One of the most famous of American sopranos. Hotel Roosevelt, April 3rd.

*Sergei Rachmaninoff.* Always a superb artist. Carnegie Hall, April 6th.

*The Friends of Music* will present Händel's great oratorio, "Samson" at Town Hall on April 7th and 14th.

*John McCormack.* One of the most popular of our lyric tenors. Carnegie Hall, April 7th.

*The Oratorio Society of New York* is giving a performance of Händel's oratorio, "Judas Maccabaeus" at Carnegie Hall on April 9th.

*Roland Hayes.* His presentation of the negro spirituals is unforgetable. Carnegie Hall, April 21st.

*Arturo Toscanini* concludes his season with the Philharmonic-Symphony on April 1st and the early departure of this great conductor is due to an obligation to the La Scala Opera, and is much regretted by those who were looking forward to hearing him for the remainder of the season. Beginning with the concert of April 4th until the conclusion of this season the orchestra will be under the direction of Clemens Krauss who made a very successful debut here with the Philadelphia Orchestra.

—*Lloyd Mergentime.*

**The Baton**

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Vol. VIII March, 1929 No. 5

# Chamber and Orchestral Music at the Institute

*Discussed by Dr. Frank Damrosch, Samuel Gardner, Sascha Jacobsen and Willem Willeke*

COULD anything be more disturbing to concentration than the muffled strains of "Scheherazade" or a Brahms Quartet drifting down from the Rehearsal Hall to the room in which one is heroically striving to master the intricacies of a Bach Fugue? It takes a strong will to disconnect the ears from the brain, as it were, instead of lapsing into a delightful state of relaxation and letting the music play over one like the south wind rippling over a field of newly risen corn in early summer. In the days that used to be, a student had only to fortify himself against listening in on the orchestra when duty demanded his attention elsewhere; but recently this temptation has so extended its domain that one is obliged to steel himself against it nearly every day in the week. For now not only the orchestra fills many hours with enticing sound! No sooner have orchestral harmonies died away than the less expansive but equally entrancing melodies of chamber music are born, seeming to entice with deliberate intent. At this very moment, holiday though it be, the Institute echoes with the playing of a double quintet; and the writer, not yet completely adept at ignoring aural impressions, tries hard not to give the major portion of her divided attention to hearing, rather than writing about music. She recalls with unqualified agreement Mr. Charles Seeger's oft-repeated refrain that music, in the final analysis, should be heard, and not talked about!

In the days when the beloved Franz Kneisel devoted his tremendous energy of character and musicianship to guiding the students of the Institute of Musical Art toward the finest things in music, he organized ensemble classes for the purpose of studying chamber music. Even at the present time, although orchestral work is stressed in most music schools, chamber music is generally neglected. Mr. Kneisel's classes were mostly made up from his own pupils, as the work was not part of the required course. They were the result of his sincere desire to help all serious students develop their musical background and broaden their musical horizon. Quartets and quintets were studied under his supervision.

Now Samuel Gardner and Sascha Jacobsen carry on the Kneisel classes. Orchestra practice is required as part of the curriculum of those who are specializing in the playing of string and other orchestral instruments, but the ensemble classes are entirely voluntary, and are made up of students from all departments.

Mr. Jacobsen conducts the string ensembles. "I stress getting acquainted with a great deal of literature, instead of the details of playing," he said not long ago. "We go through two or three quartets every time we meet—Beethoven, Haydn, Mozart, some moderns. This work should really be compulsory—some students here for years are almost totally unfamiliar with chamber music literature, and after all it includes some of the finest music that has been written. The amount that has been produced is tremendous. It is a big field, and there is much to learn!"

*The late Franz Kneisel, pioneer in the field of chamber music in America.*

Students have shown a great deal of interest in the string ensembles. Last year Mr. Jacobsen intended to conduct the class by having one group play and the others listen, but his plan was not successful—everyone wanted to take part, and so double quartets and quintets were formed. Mr. Gardner, who leads the ensembles made up of strings and wind instruments and piano, has also resorted to this doubling, to give all the enthusiastic players a chance to take part. Mr. Gardner, in speaking about his work, said, "We play a great many compositions for different

combinations of instruments. I feel that it does the student body a great deal of good to become acquainted with them—it enlarges the musical intelligence, and makes it possible to hear new sounds." (Anyone who has had to orchestrate music, although he may have no idea what a good many of the instruments he includes sound like, will appreciate the wonderful and unusual opportunity of becoming intimate with the color, range, technique and handling of each individual instrument, and of discovering the effects obtained by the blending of various string and brass and wind and percussion sounds.) "The pianists are apt to find ensemble work especially difficult at first," Mr. Gardner continued. "I try to give them as much opportunity as possible to play with other instruments, so that they can hear any number of them at once and still keep their own playing going. They have to forget their own technical difficulties and listen to what is going on around them, which is precisely what they are not accustomed to doing, and which is a good experience for them. I am very anxious that the students know the whole composition which we are playing, not merely their own part. With the violinists it is easy, as they take turns at first and second violin and viola, but the others have to depend upon their ears and intelligence to seek out the part each instrument takes in forming the total effect."

Mr. Gardner seems indeed to have given his classes bounteous sound-fare. So far they have tried such combinations as a quartet for flute, oboe, clarinet and bassoon; a quartet for trumpets and horns; a Beethoven septet for strings and wind instruments; a trio for piano, strings and oboe; a Brahms trio for piano, violin and French horn; and if Gardner's ambition is fulfilled, there will be eventually a voice and string quartet.

Last March a full ensemble concert was given at the Institute. The interesting program consisted of a Schumann Quintet for piano, two violins, viola and 'cello; a Brahms Sonata for violin and piano; a Mozart Quartet for piano, violin, viola and 'cello; a Brahms Sonata for clarinet and piano; a Dvorak Quintet for piano, two violins, viola and 'cello; and a Bach Concerto for two violins with string orchestra accompaniment. At the last anniversary concert, an annual occurrence on January 16th in memory of the birthday of Betty Loeb, in whose homage the Institute was founded, Dr. Damrosch conferred a great honor upon the students by giving them a chance to play the Mozart String Quintet in G Minor. It was played with a double set of instruments and was so enthusiastically received that it will be repeated on the program which is now being prepared for the first week in April.

*The Elshuco Trio, founded by Willem Willeke in 1918. Willem Willeke, 'Cello; William Kroll, Violin; Aurelio Giorni, Piano.*

Gardner and Jacobsen both emphasize the fact that ensemble playing is of the utmost importance in the musical curriculum. It not only gives the ambitious student an invaluable opportunity to learn things outside his own finger exercises and the few solo pieces he studies during his school years, but it necessitates the subordination of his own personality—and the adaptation of all his faculties to the general requirements of a composition, as well as the acquirement of the ability to keep his individuality of tone and self expression at the same time. They believe it to be the hardest branch of music. Fine chamber music requires better players than an orchestra, whose volume may cover up trifling individual discrepancies; but it is not so much the difficulties of technique as the absolute necessity of thinking together which makes chamber music more exacting. In orchestral playing one

has to follow the thought of a single man, while in performing chamber music one must combine personal initiative with a certain amount of following the other performers.

The genial Mr. Willeke, who conducts the Institute's orchestra, talks little about his activities. He said laughingly the other day after rehearsal, "You see, that is all! We have a fine time—sometimes I explode at them, and at other times I am a good sport!

"We are to be greatly honored sometime in May," he added enthusiastically. "The committee which will judge the compositions submitted for the Prix de Rome, will select the two best and have them performed by the Institute Orchestra under the leadership of Walter Damrosch. This will enable the committee, consisting of Mr. Damrosch, Richard Aldrich of the *New York Times* and Frederick Stock of Chicago, to choose the winning composition after hearing it with all the orchestral coloring which, in modern scores, cannot be fully obtained with a piano."

Dr. Frank Damrosch urges an early acquaintance with ensemble music, as it is sure to be a lasting one. "When the pianist, the violinist or 'cellist has done his day's work: playing concerts, practicing, teaching, he needs recreation just as does any other human being, for 'all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.' And the musician who takes his work seriously is under great physical, mental, and nervous strain. How, then, shall he employ his leisure in order that he may get the recreation he needs?

"There is the theatre. A good comedy or a fine, stirring drama, well-acted, will serve this purpose at intervals, and an occasional attendance at performances of the best operas affords not only pleasure but very necessary education.

"Leaving out such occasional diversions, what can one do with the many evenings at home? Reading good literature is, of course, a resource which never fails, but there are times when one wants sympathetic companionship and there is nothing which yields so much real satisfaction and even happiness as does ensemble music.

"The literature for piano and violin is fortunately very large. Sonatas by Schubert, Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Raff, Brahms, etc., etc., provide, in all degrees of difficulty, the most exquisite material for enjoyment. Those who have once started in exploring this rich mine of beautiful music can never get enough of it. The players forget to be conscious of themselves, of their excellences or of their inadequacies, and listen only to the delightful music they are performing.

"The first pleasure comes with the reading at sight; but with every repetition, and with the greater facility gained by these, new beauties appear and are appreciated until the work stands out in its full loveliness.

"Of course, if to the violin may be added a 'cello or a viola and 'cello, the range of choice is enormously increased, but such combinations are not always available, especially as 'cellists are not as plentiful as violinists. But surely every pianist knows a violinist and every violinist knows a pianist of about equal ability as himself and these two should get together as often as possible for this most delectable of musical pastimes.

*The Musical Art Quartet.*
*Sascha Jacobsen, Paul Bernard, Marie Roemaet-Rosanoff, and Louis Kaufman.*

"Even the greatest artists grow tired of hearing only themselves play and gladly turn to ensemble playing whenever the opportunity presents itself. Fritz Kreisler, Mischa Elman, Albert Spalding, and many others play quartets with special enjoyment, and Harold Bauer, Cortot, etc., grasp every opportunity to play compositions for two pianos or sonatas with violin, trios, quartets, etc. John Erskine, although primarily interested in the piano as a solo instrument, knows a great deal of chamber music in which it is represented. He has played a Brahms Quintet with the Musical Art Quartet.

"Therefore, I urge upon all students to begin this form of musical recreation at once. Commence with the easier sonatas so as not to get discouraged by difficulties at the beginning and the reward will be happy hours of pure musical enjoyment."

*(The foregoing interviews obtained and recorded by Elizabeth Stutsman.)*

# String Quartet in G Minor

*Opus 74 No. 3*

## By Joseph Haydn

*Excerpt from a Quartet frequently played in chamber-music concerts.*

Largo assai

# The Twilight of the Gods

## *An Etching Slightly Colored*

*By* Joseph Machlis

SUNDAY afternoon on the Rue Grande of Fontainebleau. A burst of blue sky, splashed with sunshine. Tooting taxis, honking bicycles, groups of blue-garbed soldiers at the corners, fat busses with loads of perspiring American tourists. On the sidewalks in front of the "cafes"—called that because coffee is the last thing in the world you would think of ordering, blossom little round tables, red and blue; where sit, leisurely, obviously dressed in their holiday-best, Monsieur and Madame, plus the children; in direct contradiction of Bernarr MacFadden's ideas on child-welfare. Frankly commenting on the crowd of promenaders streaming by in endless procession. The sparkle of vivacious eyes, the sweep of rapid gestures, the splash of staccato laughter. Movement. Animation.

It was on such an afternoon that I sauntered down that Main Street. Sauntered? Not quite the correct word. For it holds a connotation of aimlessness, of simply wandering at one's leisure. Whereas had there been any one sufficiently interested to observe my movements, he would have noticed at once that they were directed by those of the lady some paces ahead of me. When she slowed down, I did. When she stopped, I did too. When she proceeded on her way, I started. Always preserving the slight distance between us. On the Main Street of a Cape Cod village, more than one pair of eyes would have watched closely my manoeuvers from behind noncommittal yellow shades. But here, so occupied was each with his own emotions and impulse that both I and my object, or rather, both the lady and her follower, passed quite unremarked—I suppose that is why so many Americans find themselves in a constant state of exuberance while in Paris; the relief of knowing that you can turn a hand-spring on the Place de l'Opera, or sing a Negro Spiritual on the Boulevard des Italiens, and every one else would be much too occupied with their own emotional crises to fuss about yours.

Milady stopped at the curbstone, while a swarm of automobiles rushed past from the side-street. Meanwhile I meandered on, so that I stood directly beside her. She who had so aroused my curiosity and interest, quite unaware of that fact, stared straight ahead, at the swishing motors. Now I had the opportunity to observe her more closely.

French people never do seem to be very much surprised at each other. At least so it seems to an outsider. In Times Square my Lady would have held up traffic. Indubitably paralyzed Grover Whalen's regulations for at least half an hour. While here. . . . But I quickly dismissed that thought as irrelevant, as well as irreverent. For I did feel a shade of reverence, standing so close to her. That awed feeling which, presumably one has, the first time he stands before the Statue of Liberty, the Sphinx, or the Woolworth Building.

Gigantic? Enormous? Spectacular? Did one speak of her as of a D. W. Griffith screen spectacle? Mountainous? Overwhelming? Brünnhilde twenty years later. Isolde, with purple picture-hat, purple flowing gown, purple slippers, purple parasol, purple mantilla. With three little curves of chin, billowing down to more than ample bosom. Queen of women; in her royal toga—or whatever it was the Empresses of Rome wore. Is it any wonder that I felt awe standing beside this apparition on the curb of the Rue Grande?

She leaned heavily on her parasol, lowered the brim of her large hat, to protect her from the rays of the July sun. Gathered about her the draping mantle. Fussing so, her handkerchief fluttered to the ground. (It always does in novels to give the hero a chance to make his entrance.) I picked it up, caught a whiff of its subtle perfume; sweet mellow scent, as of a flower long pressed between the pages of a book. I held it towards her, and said, "Madame!"

She turned to me. Above the undulating chins, a tiny mouth, painted reddest of vermilion red. It curved a smile, which rippled up to the eyes. But I could not see their color. For between the red of her lips and the purple of her hat, all color was forgotton. I know only that they flashed and sparkled from between their blackened lashes, as the majestic old lady extended her little plump, puffy, pinkish hand. As she turned away, I caught again that scent, that perfume of a flower mellowed between the leaves of a forgotten book.

Madame crossed the street. With slow regal tread. Ah, but there were still traces of the days when she had trod the boards of the Opera, making reverberate the blue hills of Valhalla. Brünnhilde, gleaming of eye, sending forth her hero on his journey. The great Nordica's only rival, smiling that way to Jean de Reszke's Siegfried. . . . Madame crossed the street. I followed.

Suddenly she stopped, waved her hand, boomed "Elise! Elise!", in a voice that . . . well, you remember Ethel Barrymore's greater moments. Think of that voice, resonant, deep, full-throated, husky, yet velvety in a way peculiar to itself, and you will hear that unbelievable "Elise!" From somewhere there bobbed forth a little something clothed in black. Meek, flat-chested, sallow-skinned, looking as though she had been shoved up from underneath into her drab black hat. One of those timid self-abnegations

who are fashioned for express purpose of being governesses or "companions."

The gorgeous purple mountain bent down, gathered to her bosom the scared-looking thing in black, solemnly pressed the vermilion lips on the other's pale ones, finally released her. Arm-in-arm, the two women now continued on their way.

Brünnhilde, and her devoted, always faithful Elise. At twenty-three, the rising prima donna needs a chaperon—there is Elise, pale, silent, discreet. At thirty-two, queen of the opera, idol of the Continent, she must have someone at whom to throw her silver slippers while indulging in one of her temperamental fits—there is Elise, pale, suffering in silence, faithful; perhaps the same one, or perhaps another who came when the first faded away; it matters not, generically, they are all alike, those chirruping little bits of drab colorlessness. . . . At forty-six, the diva's voice has mellowed. Now she sings "Isolde" as never before—especially the Liebestod. For she has learned that Tristans may go, as well as come; there is still an Elise, faithful, understanding, sensing those things which lips may not utter, which eyes are too proud to betray. Subtle crafty years linger not, bring that inevitable terrible moment. Madame has sung for the last time, Brünnhilde—in the "Twilight of the Gods."—"Yes, do you hear, Elise, for the last time. I cannot again. It is too much for me." Stifled words not to be spoken.... There is Elise, sallow, faded, understanding. Fifty-nine. The glamor of Valhalla is a thing of the past. Dreams, reminiscences, the afterglow of a departed splendor. Madame sings no more. Except to illustrate a point of phrasing to her pupils. Of a Sunday afternoon, if it is not too damp for her asthma she may take a short stroll to the forest.

"Ah, but do you know, ma chère, you remind me so much of my first companion. I think her name was also Elise. Can't remember. I was . . . let me see . . . twenty-three then . . . twenty-three. . . ."

Arm in arm the two women advanced. I following. They turned up a little side-street. Stopped at a very reserved-looking establishment. The proprietor came forward, respectfully brought Madame a chair.

"Elise, those." The little lady in black picked from a basket some luscious peaches. The singer's eyes sparkled with merriment beneath the brim of the purple hat, as she pointed to a box of marmalade. "Those, Elise."

"Mais non, ma chère. The doctor said you must not."

Myriad laughing lights awoke in those lucent eyes. Wild, adventurous, swashbuckling. The unquenchable remains of thirty years of fame. "Bah, that doctor. Viens, Elise! Only this time. The last. Never more, I swear it to you." She pleaded petulantly. Her rose-petal lips curled into a round dot above her three quivering chins. Irresistible. The little lady in black had to yield.

Leaning on Elise's arm, Madame departed. In full sail. Magnificent. And the brilliant sun beat itself into a purple haze about her—couldn't be otherwise—even reflected that lurid glow onto the pale skin of the little companion.

* * *

Dusk of a summer evening. Dusk sliding in through the branches of trees. Silence in the gardens of the Palace of Fontainebleau. Only the ceaseless drone of a fountain. Only the dreamy grace of two lone swans. In the little grotto near the lake I espied her.

Two steps led down into it. A sunken grotto. Three guardian nymphs. Dryads. Once marble-white. Now discolored by the weathers of two centuries. Green shot with sun-gold. A rustling stillness. The brim of a white picture-hat, white parasol, white slippers, white flowery gown, white fringed mantilla. The gloaming light caressed her more kindly than that lurid gleam of sun-on-purple in the Rue Grande. More kindly. More harmoniously. Rippling half-light, seeping through, melting about her.

She was absorbed in examining the fringes of her mantilla, where they had been torn by the stubby under-growth. Now she let the frayed border of the mantle sink on her lap. Her eyes wandered off. Blue eyes, lost in reverie. She might have been thinking of . . . but of what not? How gauge the depth of a pellucid pool of blue? Her first love, her next piece of marmalade, the stupid little American brat she had had to teach that morning, the loveliness of the summer evening, the last time she sang the Valkyrie, what she would have for dinner . . . or, possibly, she was thinking of nothing at all?

Suddenly she felt herself being observed. She turned her head swiftly. I continued along my way, down the steps into the sunken grotto. Immediately she was roused from her day-dream; remembered. With a gesture so subtle, so deft, she slipped the torn edge of the mantilla to the ground. Presto, the tear disappeared....And her lips parted in a guileless, affable smile. Clearly Brünnhilde had forgotten nothing of her art.......

The eyes which had flashed so often to Siegfried, now looked out from under the brim of the picture-hat. Ever-young eyes. Undimmed. And beneath them the vermilion lips which had drunk so freely of magnificent, intoxicating life, curled up into a little round dot, poignant, poised above the three quivering little chins. As I passed, there was wafted to me once again that faint subtle perfume———as of a flower once pressed between the pages of a forgotten book.

Dusk of a summer evening. Dusk pouring over the enchanted grotto through the leaves and branches of tall, silent trees. Madame sat quiet, motionless. The Twilight of the Gods.

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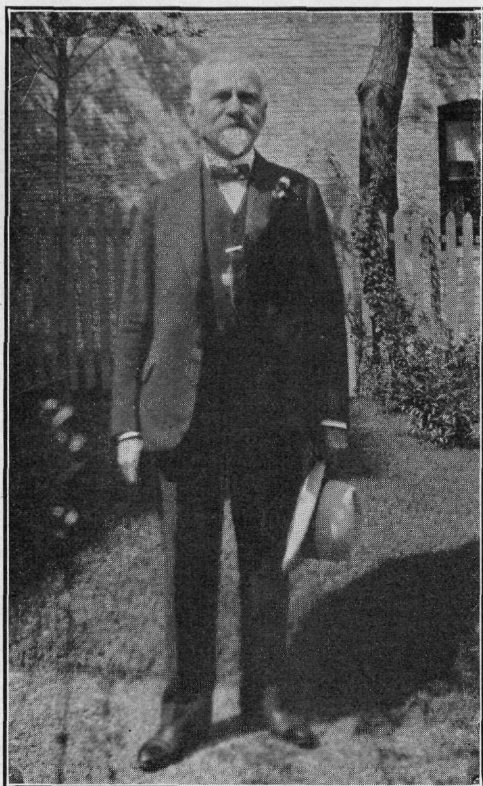
### Learning to Add

Teacher: "If there were Mr. Jones, Mrs. Jones and the baby, how many were there?"

Johnny: "There were two and one to carry."

*By* Gerald Tracy

DR. FRANK DAMROSCH, our well-loved Dean, has gone to the great open spaces of the West this winter instead of vacationing among the islands of the West Indies as he usually does about this time of year. He spent three weeks in Arizona, where he says the horseback riding is especially fine. We suspected that the sunshiny days would be too full of out-door activities to allow much time for music, but Dr. Damrosch is reported to have had a most interesting talk with Geraldine Farrar before her concert in Tucson. Perhaps on his return he will tell us of his many delightful experiences, and so tide us over the spring-fever days until June arrives with our turn at vacation!



*Dr. Damrosch, with his holiday—and work-a-day—smile.*

Those who resent the fate that compels them to listen to the untold agonies of others' practicing, should remember Rimsky-Korsakoff and Moussorgsky, two famous members of "The Six." They lived together, and it was Rimsky-Korsakoff's fate to orchestrate against the incessant strummings of Moussorgsky on the piano!

Someone listening to the much-discussed "Jonny Spielt Auf" said he would rather have a page of Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" than all of the "Jonnys" you could concoct. It interested us to learn later that Mr. Gershwin has operatic inclinations himself. He hopes to devote himself to the composition of an opera when, according to him, he has made a more exhaustive study of the ways and means of vocal ensembles. We are anxiously awaiting the end of the incubation period!

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Yehudi Menuhin sailed for Europe on the Deutschland March 23rd, for appearances in Berlin and Dresden. The month of May will be spent in Paris, and from June 1st to October he will study in Basel with Adolf Busch.

Arrangements have been completed for his concert appearance in Dresden. It will be held at the Dresden Opera House, and will be the first time in the history of that place that the opera has been suspended a night to accommodate a concert. Early in December he will sail back to America where hosts of friends watch his development with the greatest interest.

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Yehudi recently received the following letter from Ernest Bloch, the eminent composer.

For a month, I have been working from 12 to 15 hours a day, often till 2 in the morning. Busy the day, with lessons, courses, lectures, our little string orchestra, at school . . . and then, when I am at home, I am practically safe—I do not answer my bell, any more, which is not very polite, but is a necessary measure of protecting the works I have *to give* to the world, and which people *say* they like! Thus, I presume they will excuse me, if they really are sincere. Then, I have a tremendous correspondence! In twelve days, I wrote more than forty letters, some very long! And I have a suitcase here, filled with telegrams and other letters, not yet answered! In spite of all this turmoil of my life, at the outside, I have been able to instrument almost completely a new work.

I talked of our little string orchestra! It is rather scratchy! And there are no "Yehudis" in it! One contrabass (or is it one-half one?!!) Two violas, when both come! But, in spite of that, we all enjoy it! We read, last Tuesday, two marvellous things "Concerto Grosso" by Händel, I at the piano, playing the "Continuo", and also one of Bach's Brandenburg Concertos, for three violins, three violas, three celli, bass! You may ask how two violas could play three parts at a time! Well. . . well. . . they did not! I sang the third viola, when necessary! But

(*Continued on Page* 17)

# The Flonza

*Hail and*

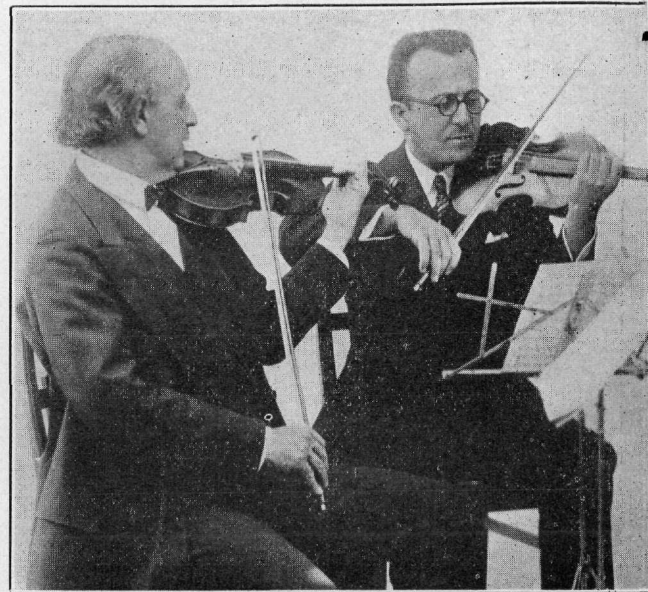
By Dorothy

A NEW YEAR'S celebration which drew a gathering of distinguished musicians, including the members of the Flonzaley Quartet, was held at the home of a renowned predecessor of this organization, the late Franz Kneisel, pioneer in the chamber-music history of America. In 1917, its twenty-fifth season in New York, the Kneisel Quartet made its farewell bow. Since then, the same high standards have been upheld by the Flonzaleys, the only Quartet to achieve equal perfection and fame, which now in 1929, after twenty-five years of public performance, will conclude its career. The announcement that the Flonzaley Quartet, at the zenith of its maturity and success, would disband at the close of the present season, came as a surprise and was received with regret and even consternation by music-lovers everywhere.

Iwan d'Archambeau, 'cellist of the group, explains the decision as due to the excessive strain of arduous travel necessary to play an average of one hundred concerts every season. "Sooner or later it is bound to affect our physical strength," he said, "and in a Quartet it is very important that all four of us keep in condition. The fatigue of constant journeying cannot be endured for an interminable period. Twenty-five years is long enough!

"Two of our members, Pochon and Moldavan, with Wolfinson of the Lenox String Quartet and Gerald Warburg, will form a new organization, the Stradivarius Quartet, founded by Felix Warburg. But it has been agreed that there shall be no traveling. All of the concerts will be given here." Questioned about his own future plans, Mr. d'Archambeau said he expects to return to his solo work and he is interested in promoting a series of Popular Concerts for the working classes in his native Belgium.

The final opportunity to hear the Flonzaleys play together will be in the Atwater Kent radio hour on May 7th, when, appropriately, the largest possible audience can participate in this historic occasion. Thus will end a chapter of chamber-music activity, in which the Flonzaley Quartet has been a chief factor in developing an appreciation of this highest and purest form of music.



*A String Quartet which h*
*First Violin, Adolfo Betti; Second Violin, Alfred Pochon;*

## An Illustrious Record

It was about 1843 when the first chamber-music concert took place in New York. Later, in 1880, Edward J. de Coppet, a banker of Swiss origin, was one of the first music-lovers who founded a string quartet in the United States. This quartet, the forerunner of the Flonzaley Quartet, played in his home for his family and friends. In this way, he helped to create an interest for a form of music very little known up to that time. In 1902, he invited a Swiss friend violinist, Alfred Pochon, to come to New York and study the prevailing musical conditions in this country. Mr. Pochon realized that the upkeep of the organization was much too great for the results obtained, because the members had various occupations other than that of playing exclusively for their patron. He studied the situation and proposed that Mr. de Coppet should subsidize a permanent string-quartet, with musicians who would devote themselves exclusively to quartet playing. This suggestion was highly approved by Mr. de Coppet, who asked Mr. Pochon to help him in the formation of such a quartet, and to be one of the two violinists of equal artistic standing, both capable of taking the parts of first and second violin alternately.

Now the difficulty arose of finding four young artists ready to adapt themselves to the ideal nature of the plan. They would have to give up their individual positions for a future as yet vague in regard to artistic and financial success. They would have to devote themselves heart and soul to a most uncommon task, since aside from their material existence—assured for the first year by Mr. de Coppet, who also paid all expenses strictly connected with the administration of the Quartet—the musicians would have to accept the proposal for the love of art alone.

Pochon set to work immediately. He wrote to all his friends and many great masters whom he knew, inquiring about artists for this "ideal quartet". Among others, he wrote to Joseph Joachim, who exchanged many letters with him on the subject, and who remained up to his death keenly interested in the Flonzaleys' career. Joachim was quite anxious to have his pupil, Klingler, considered (later on first violinist of the Klingler Quartet in Berlin). But Klingler's mother objected to her son's migration to America. Among many young musicians of that period, now world-famous, who contemplated association with the Quartet, were Jacques Thibaud and his brother F. Thibaud, the 'cellist; also George Enesco and Pablo Casals. At that time the Queen of Rumania, Carmen Sylva, sent Pochon a message asking him not to insist on taking Enesco to the United States. Finally, the choice fell on two colleagues of Mr. Pochon's student days in Brussels, Adolfo Betti and Ugo Ara. Iwan d'Archambeau was secured through V. Vreuils, composer, at that time teacher at the Schola Cantorum in Paris.

In the summer of 1903, the first contract with the members of the new Quartet was signed in

# ley Quartet

*Farewell*

Crowthers

*ıas had a brilliant history*
*; 'Cello, Iwan d'Archambeau: Viola, Nicholas Moldavan.*

Switzerland, at Mr. de Coppet's summer home, Villa Flonzaley, near Lausanne. The word, "Flonzaley," a combination of Italian and old French, means "brooklet." It was decided to adopt this name for the Quartet, in honor of its founder and of the place where the organization originated, and to which it has returned faithfully every year.

The personnel of the Quartet has remained unchanged, with the exception of Ugo Ara, who offered his services to his country during the war, and later was forced to give up his work with the Quartet through illness. His place is now filled by Nicolas Moldavan.

The first year of its formation, the Quartet devoted itself to study only, except for a few seances given at Mr. de Coppet's home, and later a few concerts for charity, for which Mr. de Coppet permitted the Quartet to play.

In the third year, Mr. Pochon observed that the alternating change between first and second violin hindered the work, and was no benefit to the performance. A slight uncertainty resulted at the beginning of each change of first violin, and much time was lost in rehearsals. Pochon conferred with Mr. de Coppet and expressed his intention of definitely taking the part of second violin, a resolve which added to the ultimate success of the organization.

In 1905, the Quartet inaugurated its public career in a series of three New York and three Boston concerts and appearances in other cities, under the management of Loudon Charlton, which connection has been unbroken throughout these many years. Shortly thereafter, as its public career quickly broadened the Quartet became independent. The friendly relations with Mr. de Coppet continued until his death, and to this day his son, Andre, has shown keen interest in his father's work.

Every year in the spring and autumn, the Flonzaleys devoted two months to their European tours, which have covered England and Scotland, France, Holland, Spain, Italy, Belgium, Austria, Germany and Switzerland. A special welcome was always extended to them at the Belgian Court, where the Queen, a good violinist herself, showed the greatest interest in the Quartet.

The Flonzaley Quartet may safely be said to be the only organization of its kind holding supreme rank both in Europe and America. It is interesting to note that each season this Quartet is forced to decline almost as many engagements as it accepts, because of the rule of the organization that it devote as much time to rehearsal as to public performance.

"Our contract with Mr. de Coppet was a rigid one," declared Mr. d'Archambeau. "It called for three hours daily ensemble practice, three hours of personal practice, and it required that none of us should teach or engage in outside pursuits. We were permitted a few concerts as soloists but we soon found we had no time for this. I believe our Quartet has been unique in giving undivided attention to the cultivation of string quartet music and its performance. This concentrated devotion is necessary to completely satisfactory results."

### Perfection of Ensemble

The characteristic which seems superfluous to note in the case of the Flonzaley artists, but which strikes one anew at every hearing, is the complete co-ordination of each musician's performance and the submersion of all individual contribution into a practically perfect single instrument. For twenty-five years the Quartet, or rather three-fourths of it, has been in constant close association, with the result that an instinctive feeling for the work of his fellow-artist is felt by each member.

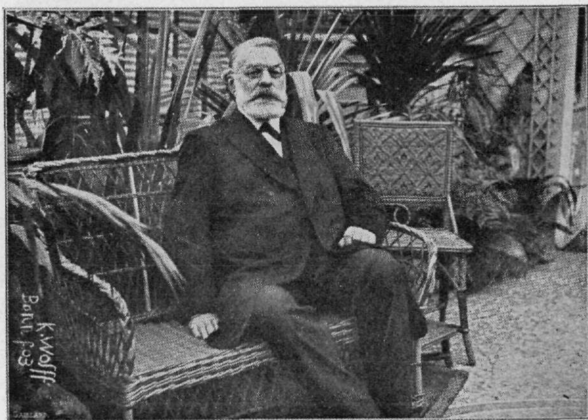
"The music of a string quartet cannot by its very nature include the physical persuasiveness of a great mass of tone, something which the untutored music-lover demands," continued Mr. d'Archambeau. "It is made by four stringed instruments which at their most powerful crescendo cannot sound tremendously loud and vibrant. The art of the string quartet form is more intimate and delicate, and depends simply on the musical devices of harmony, melody, contrapuntal treatment, and form. They are essentially a solo instrument, and yet they have a difficulty which the single performer does not have to overcome. The four artists of the string quartet must be as one; they must, by long practice and by a deep understanding of each other's temperament, work in perfect unison and sympathy. A soloist may be as subjective as he pleases, his accompanist must follow him. An orchestra is the pliant instrument of a single man, the conductor. A string quartet however is four soloists who must learn to be as one.

"Obviously the tax of self-sacrifice falls very heavily upon the chamber musician. Not only must he be an artist of concert ability, but at the same time he must be willing to mold his individuality to a combined effect. Thus, the combination of four men fitted by temperament to work together is not easy to find."

The Flonzaley perfection of ensemble and interpretation always awakens enthusiasm. Only years of study and unhesitating self-

sacrifice could bring about the results so noticeable in their playing, which made a critic write of them. "The string quartet in its perfection is what the Flonzaley Quartet represents."

"I believe that everything dogmatic is fatal to art," is the pertinent remark of Adolfo Betti, who besides occupying the first chair of the Flonzaley Quartet is its spokesman and leader. "Music is something too ethereal to be imprisoned by formulas. In music more than in any other art, the spirit, not the letter, counts. Each artist must be first of all a creator, not an imitator. In a large sense, I believe there is and there must be a tradition. Kufferath in his booklet, 'Tradition et Interpretation,' has a paragraph about tradition in its true sense. He says that it




*Joseph Joachim, leader of a famous quartet, who "was deeply interested in the Flonzaleys' career."*

does not limit itself to prescribing the imitation of specific effects or details of execution, or the readings of this or that interpreter. True tradition is based on the direct study of the work, on an understanding of the composer's tendencies or aspirations, or the affections of his spirit at the moment of creation. Its task is to reconstruct life as he saw it, and to manifest spirit as he felt it. Without these, work has neither charm nor expressiveness."

Mr. Betti cites also the precept of Goethe, which he claims should be the guiding star for every artist on the steep upward path of achievement. "Only when the form is clear, can the understanding become clear."

Few people realize the pains which the members of the Flonzaley Quartet take in the preparation of their programs. Aside from the long period of rehearsal, there are innumerable details which combine to make the Flonzaley performances as perfect as they are.

In the matter of strings for their instruments, the members have met with particular difficulties. After considerable experiment, they have found they can obtain the best of metal strings in Berlin, and the best of gut strings in England, although the raw material for the latter comes from Italy. Even this selection is not infallible, for damp weather affects adversely the English E string, and the Quartet has found it necessary to substitute under these conditions another kind found only in Paris. Great inconvenience is caused by the changeable atmospheric conditions, and two sets of strings are required for damp and dry weather. Each string is carefully tested and its perfect accuracy is fully determined in advance of the concert. It is not at all unusual for the members to devote fully a quarter of their rehearsal time to what is generally considered the simple matter of tuning up.

Allied to this problem is the question of mutes. The members have spent much time experimenting with wood, corn-cob, ivory, and other materials. Finally, they have found that aluminum mutes produce the best results, but it is necessary to find a special position for them, in order to acquire absolute equality of tone.

Since its first public appearance in October, 1904, the Quartet has played in more than five hundred American cities, and has given over nineteen hundred concerts on this side of the Atlantic. Its major operations have been carried on here, but each season it makes a short tour to Europe. Its foreign appearances, which include London, Milan, Venice, Rome, and Paris, bring its European total of concerts up to more than five hundred.

Last season it played in eighty-nine concerts in the United States, and this season made its eighth visit to the Pacific Coast.

In the matter of programs, the Flonzaleys reverence the old and meet the new half-way, which was the advice of Robert Schumann. He it was who also said that the music of a string quartet was the refined conversation of an intimate circle of friends. At the outset of their public career, the Flonzaleys were more noted for their playing of the strict classics, quartets by Haydn and Mozart. Today, while still holding aloft the classic standard which they raised over two decades ago, they are prominently identified in this country with the introduction of compositions by living composers. Their policy is to bring these new works before the public in small portions, not frightening audiences with too many strange dissonances, but bringing in the unfamiliar harmonies gradually, and in company with what is already known and loved, so that the mind and ear of the auditor is not so much disturbed as attracted.

It is perhaps their early and close association with the classics that enables them now to keep an involved ultra-modern piece as clear as an Andante by Haydn; and it is very likely their sympathy with the modern movement that gives to their readings of older music a plasticity and freedom that takes away any suggestion of stiffness and proves the immortality of the older works.

"During the past twenty-five years, audiences have undergone a marked change," claims Mr. d'Archambeau in speaking of the progress of musical culture in America. "I remember an incident on the train after a concert we had given in Des Moines some time ago. There was a man who got in conversation with us. It seems that when he saw one of

our concerts advertised, he asked his daughter what a Quartet might be. She showed him a picture of one and played him some of our Victor records. This aroused his curiosity so much that he came a hundred miles to hear us and he said he enjoyed the new experience enormously!

"We always plan our programs for the type of audience to be present. In more remote places, where chamber-music is less frequently heard, we play a Haydn Quartet, perhaps the second movement of a Debussy Quartet, and two smaller compositions such as an Adagio by Glazounow and a Scherzo by Tchaikovsky. In New York, however, we play the ultra-modern works of Schoenberg, Reger, Bartok, Hindemith and perhaps the last Beethoven Quartet for classic contrast."

### Programs

It is first the old masters of the eighteenth century, who apparently dominate the programs of the Flonzaley Quartet. At one time the members of the Quartet used to visit the libraries of London, Paris, Washington, in search of old manuscripts and rare books. As a result of these pilgrimages, unknown or half-forgotten works by composers such as

*Autographed menu of the farewell dinner tendered the Flonzaley Quartet by "The Bohemians."*

Boccherini, Leclair, L'Aine, Giuseppe Sammartini, William Boyce (the old musicologist) Friedemann Bach, etc., were presented to the public. These were works of rare elegance, of aristocratic style, imbued with the spirit of classicism, pure in their outlines, simple in their melodic brightness. The Flonzaleys liked them and played them often.

And yet the lure of modernism had already appealed to them. As far back as December, 1905, the name of Reger appeared in one of their programs, probably for the very first time on any New York program. Reger was then almost a legendary figure. "The Bavarian Bach," as he was called in the meagre reports which came here from Germany and England, was said to possess a mastery of counterpoint and a fecundity of invention almost equally amazing. His idiom—the report continued—was desperately obscure and involved. He was the one musical problem of the day. Yet, when the Flonzaleys in March 1906, played his Trio Opus 77 for violin, viola and 'cello, the success was immediate, and strange to note, the Scherzo, with its disconcerting humor, made such a success with the public that it had to be repeated.

During the season of 1908-9, Dohnanyi's Quartet and Hugo Wolf's works were introduced. Then came Debussy and Ravel. Debussy had already won his way into the affection of the amateurs. Not so Ravel, who was still considered intricate, baffling, cerebral. The Kneisels had played his Quartet earlier, with the result as told by one of the members that the next morning a deluge of minatory letters from subscribers flooded them, threatening to desert their concerts.

The Flonzaleys, about two years later, introduced the work in Berlin, but were much more lucky. The success was instantaneous, in fact, one of the most popular ever recorded. To prove how the appreciation of the public grows, it may be recorded here that the Flonzaleys played the Ravel Quartet in 1919, and it was decided that "the music was cause for twenty admirations" as a very modest amateur said, and the work won a decidedly popular recognition.

In the Spring of 1913, Mr. Betti went to Germany to visit Arnold Schoenberg, that "true anarch of art," and the following Fall his apocalyptic Quartet in D minor, which had provoked such stormy demonstrations in Vienna (the police had to intervene) and in Dresden was produced in Europe and here. Again a new name and a new art were introduced by the Flonzaleys in America; as a matter of record, we may say that in comparison with Vienna, Berlin, London (the work was not produced in Paris) the Quartet was extremely well received in New York.

Other modern composers presented were Milhaud, Emanuel Moor, Stravinsky, Bloch, Paul Roussel, Alberic Magnard, Rosario Scalero, Max Reger, Eugene Goossens, A. Salazar, Vincent d'Indy, Ducoudray, Samazeuil, Thirion, Lekeu, Sibelius, Ansorge, Gustave Doret, Sinigaglia, Zemlinsky, Klose, Suter, Dalcroze, Kodaly, Kaun, Paul Vidal, Enesco, Arnold Bax, Albert le Guillard, E. Halffter. Most of the works of these composers had their initial performances in America, and several of them were especially written for, and dedicated to, the Flonzaley Quartet.

In 1917, under the auspices of the Friends of

Music, the Flonzaleys gave the first official concert ever organized to be dedicated to American chamber-music.

During the last few years, they have presented American works by Templeton Strong, Daniel Gregory Mason, David Stanley Smith, Samuel Gardner, Victor Kolar, Charles D. Griffes, Charles Martin Loeffler, Albert Spalding, Ernest Schelling, John Beach, A. Lillienthal, Edwin Grasse, Frederick Jacobi, Leopold Mannes and Alfred Pochon's "Indian Suite" based on Indian themes.

The Flonzaleys were the first to make phonograph records of chamber-music, requiring a great deal of experimenting and trouble until successful results were finally obtained. The popularity of these records is manifested by their enormous sales.

The Flonzaleys were also the first known quartet heard over the radio in America. When the Vitaphone decided to include chamber-music in its programs, the Flonzaleys were the first to be approached by the Vitaphone Company for such recordings.

### The Quartet's Members

While the members of the Flonzaley Quartet are all European, the ensemble in its origin is an American outgrowth. It took root on these shores, and its first recognition was gained in this country.

Adolfo Betti, first violin, is Italian by birth, and was born at Bagni di Lucca. When he was sixteen, his superior musical ability was recognized, and he was sent to Belgium to study with Cesar Thomson at the Liege Conservatory. He remained with this famous teacher four years, and was awarded the Gold Medal in 1896. He then toured Austria, Italy and Germany as a virtuoso. In 1900 he was appointed assistant to Cesar Thomson in the latter's virtuoso class at the Brussels Conservatory, where he remained three years until he joined the newly formed Flonzaley Quartet.

*Haydn's Quartets appear on nearly every chamber-music program.*
*The room where Haydn died—now a Haydn Museum.*

Alfred Pochon, second violin, was born in Lausanne, Switzerland. He too studied the violin at an early age, and went later to the Liege Conservatory to work with Cesar Thomson, where he won numerous honorary diplomas. He followed this study with a tour of Europe, and varied his virtuoso work with appearances in the Thomson Quartet in Brussels, and as concertmaster in the orchestra of Eugene Ysaye in the same city. In 1902 he left for the United States, where he joined Mr. E. J. de Coppet in founding the Flonzaley Quartet.

Iwan d'Archambeau, 'cellist, was born near Liege in Belgium. At the age of sixteen he began the study of the violoncello at the Conservatory of Verviers, where he carried off the highest honors. He continued his work at the Brussels and Frankfort Conservatories, and then toured with great success as a soloist in Germany, Belgium and Scotland. In 1903 he joined the Flonzaley Quartet.

Nicholas Moldavan was born in Odessa, Russia. He is a prize graduate of the Petrograd Conservatory. Forced to flee Russia during the Bolshevist upheaval, he came to the United States in 1920. The invitation to join the Flonzaley Quartet came in 1925, when Felician d'Archambeau was forced through ill-health to relinquish the viola desk.

With four nationalities represented in the Quartet, and perhaps as many opinions in the matter of interpretation, the question arose as to how an agreement was reached when disagreement occurred! "Ideas are not apt to differ widely," Mr. d'Archambeau claimed, "if each of the four members is an artist. But the secret of harmonious work and happy results in quartet playing is to be *broadminded*."

### Flonzaleys Honored by Bohemians

At the annual dinner of the Bohemians, which took place at the Hotel Commodore on December 16th last, the members of the Flonzaley Quartet were the guests of honor. The brilliant audience, composed af famous musicians and their friends, listened to a notable address by Mr. Rubin Goldmark who presided as toastmaster. In recounting the history of this organization, Mr. Goldmark paid tribute to their devotion to the highest ideals, and ranked them, both as individuals and artists, second to none in the esteem of musicians and music lovers. Following along the way which was prepared by the Kneisel Quartet, the Flonzaleys faithfully preserved this reverence for art throughout their existence.

On March 17th, their final public concert was given at Town Hall. The Quartet had volunteered their services as a benefit for the Musicians' Foundation, a charitable organization, founded by Franz Kneisel for the assistance of ill-fated musicians by their more fortunate brethren. Mr. Goldmark expressed appreciation on behalf of the Foundation for the generous spirit which prompted these noble gentlemen to close their career with a contribution to this worthy cause.

And so we hail the Flonzaley Quartet for its great achievement in art and we say farewell with regret but with gratitude for many beautiful hours of music which can never die as long as memory endures.

*(Material for this article was obtained from an interview with Iwan d'Archambeau and from a record of the Quartet's achievements compiled by Loudon Charlton.)*

# Some Aspects of Quartet Playing

## *The Technic and Interpretation of Chamber-Music*

*Reprinted from "String Quartet Playing," by M. D. Herter Norton. Courtesy of Carl Fischer, Inc.*

A DISCUSSION of quartet-playing of necessity begins with the subject of style. Style is not easily defined, because it is itself an element of music and also it pervades all elements of music. There are two aspects of style to be considered: the style of the music, which is the final crystallization, all technical elements perfected, of the composer's musical thought; and the style of the performer, which is

*Beethoven*
*One of the principal contributors to chamber-music literature*

the very quality into which his powers are crystallized. Style is important in solo music and in the comparatively simple character of the individual performer; or in orchestral music and in the great body of typical sounds dependent upon the conductor's baton; but its importance is as though intensified in the string-quartet which involves on the one hand a literature of the most clear and perfect specimens of musical thought and on the other the necessity of blending four individual and equally important personalities into a unit.

Interpretation of a work depends, then, on both the performer's style and his sense of the music's style. There is obviously a *right* style. Beethoven demands other qualities than Haydn; Debussy or Ravel, with their multiform *pianissimi,* than Brahms, the red-blooded; and a confusion is unmusical, offensive or merely bizarre. This is what we mean when we say that a certain quartet excels in playing Beethoven, another in modern French works. There is undoubtedly a temperamental inclination of the individuals composing a quartet, as among soloists, towards one type or another of music. National and racial elements enter in here, which become a part of the man's playing. The Latin may not feel ready sympathy for Brahms, nor the Bohemian for Debussy or the Modern French School. But, precious as these characteristics are where the music is essentially national, they limit dangerously the player's conception of musical style and of the style of quartet music—the abstract and pure—particularly.

There is only one worse sin a quartet can commit than playing in a mistaken or impure musical style, and that is playing with no *quartet style.* Such a quartet is nothing. It leaves quartet music inarticulate, chaotic, senseless. Before it can attempt, therefore, to interpret musical style, a quartet must master the essential style of its own form. There lies before the quartet-player a set of problems distinct from either solo or orchestral problems. For the quartet means four individuals who make a unified whole yet remain individual, unlike the soloist who is a whole in himself or the orchestra which loses individuality in numbers and is held together by the personality of the conductor. It means, moreover, an adaptation of stringed technic to the production of quite other effects than the customary solo effects.

The purity of quartet style demands absolute subjection of virtuosity to the music, and while the best technical equipment is not too good for it, the skill of the player in an elaborate technical passage will be tested rather by his treatment of the passage in relation to the rest of the parts than in any outstanding brilliance of execution. It is well known that the great violinist is not necessarily a good quartet-player: his individualistic vitality, noble though it may be, disrupts the spirit of ensemble music. Even four equally accomplished virtuosi do not constitute a quartet: the *mere* virtuoso remains hopelessly foreign to the style while he who grasps the musical intention has difficulty in subjecting his habits of individuality to the whole. The training in all-round musicianship which quartet style gives is riper and broader than any other, because it requires adaptability to others, without the lack of personal initiative which so often results from orchestral practice.

The history of music is the history of style. Haydn established quartet writing as real musical matter, in forms which Mozart with his greater delicacy and wider developments still adhered to, which Beethoven burst out of into freer forms, giving impetus to developments that are to this day unexhausted. Tradition, therefore, which hands on the atmosphere in which a certain style of music is writ-

ten, must be heeded. By tradition and a right style let not an unchanging conservatism be imagined. Violin technic developed tremendously from Haydn's time to Beethoven's and from Beethoven's to the present, and is susceptible of always more growth. Technical conditions affect the composer's range of possibilities, and vice versa, and the possibilities of further development in quartet music are infinite. Tradition helps retain the distinguishing features of a style—what we call the purity, simplicity, gaiety of Haydn, the breadth, romance, passion of Brahms, the shifting, shadowy, chromatic color of Debussy.

There are two sources of tradition. One might be called *theoretical*: concerned with general knowledge of the composer's ideas, his nature, his time, the artistic features and state of instrumental technic of his period, giving the student fundamental reasons for his own conception. The other *aural*: hearing the interpretative descendants of those who played with the composer's direction or approval. Vienna, the home of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and Brahms, in the golden age of music produced violinists, conductors, critics whose influence will be felt far down the years. Mayseder played Beethoven's quartets under the composer's own direction; the Helmesbergers, father and son, inherited these ideas and passed them on to men of our day. A good critical faculty should be brought into play in this second sort of tradition, for these are personal idiosyncrasies in every player. Mayseder's manner of playing was a small and fine one, to judge from his own style of compositions, dainty variations, etc., and it is recorded that Beethoven was never altogether satisfied with his work. Schuppanzigh, giver of famous quartet evenings, was a grotesquely fat man, so that it was said of him in his later years that he could not reach the higher positions on his instrument! An interpretative artist, furthermore, does not play at all times, or all his life, alike: and changes and developments in technic and musical conceptions pertaining under modern conditions must be understood so that musical expression may be adapted to the times without losing its essential distinction.

The creative mind objects that it needs respect no tradition, being a law unto itself. None, we grant, save the perfect achievements of creative genius. But the very style in which music has been created is an inherent tradition, inescapable but also invaluable to the player who not only creates but *re*-creates. He should regard tradition as a test, a guide, not a law. He is at liberty to alter it when he can prove good and sufficient reason for the triumph of a new way. For artistic individuality *is* free to do as it chooses provided it has learned that accuracy, which, as Emerson says, "is essential to beauty." Meanwhile it may save him from the pettiness of the interpreter who thinks that by mere tampering with custom—mere erratic upsetting of inherited interpretations of tempo or phrasing—he is projecting new light upon the music. This is destruction, not creation. And tradition will be the guide giving steadiness and direction to his experimentations in quartet playing: for phrasing, bowings, fingerings, pizzicati, all means of color production, take on a new significance in quartet music. Just as the composer finally crystallizes his thought only by experiment, by process of trial and error (there is not a manuscript of Beethoven which does not show how many stages his thought went through before it suited him) so only by experiment, by process of trial and error, will the quartet-player finally master the details of quartet style.

The general principles of playing together, as epitomized in the string quartet, might seem fairly obvious: style, homogeneity, and the intrinsic interest of the individual players. An organization like the Kneisel, the Flonzaley, Capet, or London Quartet is easily preferable to four chance players who play without quartet style, because an interpretation is only alive and interesting when it is subserved by a highly developed understanding and sublety of ensemble.

*Johannes Brahms, composer of many works for string ensemble*

Yet style is not easily achieved and the homogeneity that sounds so simple depends on many details which cannot be used or appraised without much critical thought; while the role of the individual personality in the performance and of the instrumental voice in the composition involves subtle and various problems subject to much understanding study.

The first requisite of a good ensemble is that each player shall have the *sense of the whole*. This he can only feel by *listening to the others*—constantly, whether he knows the music or is reading. With study, then, he becomes familiar with the other parts and is ready to adjust himself to them or to assert himself so that they can adjust themselves to him, but he can never afford to stop listening. Only by remaining acutely aware of what is being done about him can he be sensitized to the necessary degree. In reading, this is the only way to make the most of strange matter, not only following one written part but being quick to perceive its bearing upon the other

parts. The poorest reader is he who tries for all the notes regardless of the general gist of the music: while the best is alert to the new structure, harmony, voice-leading, and takes an intelligent if not a note-perfect part in the whole. In performance, it is the only way to achieve the necessary give-and-take, to play in and out, to respond freely to the others' interpretations, to meet the unexpected. For circumstances condition the best-prepared performance: weather, acoustic properties of strange places (which may make it very difficult to hear each other and know whether one is taking up one's own part of the ensemble properly), the influence upon the individual's playing of his own nervous and temperamental state.

Think of the forward motion of music as of a river. Tempo, as we shall see, is the current. Each player should feel his part a tributary stream winding in and out and in again. Part of a greater same. He must *enter without beginning* and *cease without stopping*. He should feel as though the whole emanated *from his own mind,* his fingers only being limited to his special instrument.

The playing of a quartet part requires just as much *vitality of interest* as any solo performance. The student may consider the second violin or viola part merely subsidiary, and his indifference will promptly show itself in monotony. He should not forget that every voice needs *convincing quality,* that accompaniment or the color of an inner line of harmony is just as important as the most melodious theme. He is the medium of an expression more extensive than his one part. If he listens well and feels the whole, he will know in his own mind the meaning of his part; then he should listen to himself more critically to be sure the meaning is clear to the listener.

It is essential that each player should have a *proper appreciation of the role of his instrument* in the quartet.

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### THE BELL IN MY HEART

*By Ruth H. Bugbee*

If I could fashion these shining hours
Into a crystal vase,
To be filled with petals of love-crushed flowers
And kept in a secret place,
It would only gather the dust of time;
So I'll blow these moments into a rhyme.

Though I brushed away the signs of age
And struck the glass like a gong,
It could only sound one note on the page,—
Monotone, never a song.
The bell in my heart, untouched by time.
Can vary its tone to fit my rhyme.

## IMPROVISATIONS

(*Continued from Page 9*)

*what music,* my friend! As great as the ocean, as fresh as the breeze at the top of mountains! How you would like it! These were MEN! Real men! Not puppets or morons—

Now I go to Bach. I am studing the choral "Gelobet uns in Jesu Christ" which he made in four different settings, all of which are differently and marvellously harmonized. I prepare that for my pupils—But few of them have the *patience* and *love* to study it thoroughly, as ought to be! And I am longing for the day when you will do it. For I know, when you start, you will be as I am, never satisfied, and always anxious to do the best. It takes a lifetime! But this is the greatest thing life—to do one's job *well,* be it music, or cooking, or carpentering, or cleaning the windows!

When everybody feels that way, and *acts* that way, the social problem will be solved!

But it requires the greatest revolution that ever was: the revolution in the *minds* and in the *hearts* of man—a bloodless and peaceful change—we will not see it! But we both may help it, in our ways. The world needs beauty, hope, faith, honesty, patience, confidence, love, understanding, *sincerity* above all. And music can help, as it goes directly to the hearts of people, and *all people* have a good heart, at the start.

Thus, you and I, humble servants of Music and of Man, for higher aims, we have our *duties* before us! And the greatest treasure, the greatest richness, in life, is to *help*.

There are so few real people in this world that one must meet them. How I wish in London you could meet Havelock Ellis, one of the greatest, the freest minds of our time—a young man of seventy, full of freshness. I never met him, but we wrote to each other. Some day he will stand as one of the most gigantic pioneers (spiritual) of our time. He lives away from crowds, but he adores music and has written beautifully about this art. He has the most tremendous culture on all subjects. He is the man of our time who has read the most! He heard of my music through the record of "Nigun"—and I wish you may play it to him, if you meet. Anyhow, I give you his address, and if you meet him, as I hope, tell him that I love him, and that his books are my companions and have helped me, and still help me, day after day.

—*Ernest Bloch.*

### Wagner and Debussy Triangles

It took the recent performances this year of Debussy's masterpiece, "Pelleas et Melisande," to draw from at least two of our serious and staid music critics, some of the most eloquent and glowing tributes of the season. It even aroused the ardor of Mr. Olin Downes of the New York Times, to a point where he travelled to Boston to witness still another interpretation of the work than that given at

the Metropolitan Opera House. From him we learn that Mary Garden's Melisande remains one of the memorable stage portraits of our generation, one that young musicians should journey some distance, if necessary, to see. Mr. George Wedge, corroborating this opinion, threatens a trip to any city within half a day's mileage, where the Chicago Company pitches its tent for a performance.

Mr. W. J. Henderson, revered member of our Faculty and Dean of Critics, penned a masterly comparison of "Pelleas et Melisande" with "Tristan und Isolde." Part of it is quoted:

Whether the reflective mind which ponders the problems of the lyric drama in the seclusion of an office at Thirty-ninth street and Seventh Avenue planned the mystic order or not, the program for the last week at the Metropolitan Opera House assumes an aspect easily regarded as tinged with symbolism. Let us not speak of the symbolism of "Jonny Spielt Auf"; we have had a surfeit of that.

What leaped to the mind last week was the juxtaposition of two supreme lyric dramas of the eternal triangle. Did Mr. Gatti mean it when he gave "Tristan und Isolde" on Wednesday night and "Pelleas et Melisande" on Friday, or did it just happen that way because the different sections of the company had to be employed alternately? Whether purposeful or not, the plan made a new combination of allurements.

Did Mr. Gatti invite a comparative study of musical methods? Who cares for one? For the despised students of masterpieces Wagner is tremendous and Debussy subtle. One smites with a mighty sword; the other asks us to "die of a rose in aromatic pain."

Wagner's overwhelming work conquers by the stupendous rush and tumult of its torrential score. Debussy's makes for Maeterlinck's play a transparent medium of incomparable delicacy and fineness through which the tragedy comes to us with its intrinsic theatrical spell magically intensified by something intangible, but wholly exquisite and precious. Perhaps it would not deepen the discontent of those who find that nothing good can come out of Nazareth to ponder the fact that the Metropolitan Opera House is able to give a good, if not a great performance of "Tristan und Isolde" and a very impressive one of "Pelleas et Melisande."

But best of all, we liked Mr. Henderson's parting shot directed at the public:

But it is a labor of love to give the opera at all at the local opera house and Mr. Gatti-Casazza deserves thanks for the sacrifice. It is not popular; it is too suppressed in its utterance, too introspective in method and too delicately transparent in musical texture. In short it demands imagination on the part of the public.

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### Heavy Marching Order

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—*N. Y. Times.*

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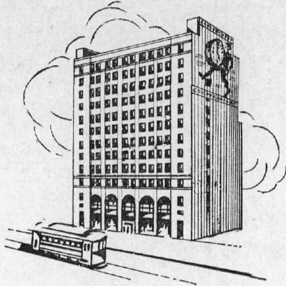

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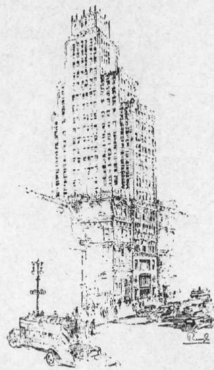

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