

Music and Musicians

Edited By

Vincent E. Speciale

NOTE—In this department the VENTNOR News seeks to print everything of interest to music lovers of Absecon Island and is glad to receive any notes concerning orchestras, musicians or singers. Such notes can be mailed to the Music Editor at 8 South Troy Ave., or phone, Neptune 1278.

(The following is an essay by the eminent Dr. Frank Crane. It is worth while reprinting it on this page as its spirit is ever present and its moral more than timely. One may not agree with Dr. Crane on some points especially at the beginning of his essay, but his latter reflections throw a powerful illuminating ray of wisdom that if pondered upon would give thought for serious consideration to many aspirants in the field of the art beautiful.)

Music: Make It Yourself

The American people are the worst singers in the world, at least as far as my observation goes. And they are missing a lot of fun. We flatter ourselves that we play more than Europeans. We do not. For instance, we don't play baseball. We go and see it played. Ditto football and polo. Our boys and girls play, but once the American passes the hoop and marbles and leap-frog age, he settles down into the capacity of spectator. He doesn't perform plays; he watches them. He doesn't sing in church, as the English and Germans do; he hires a quartet to sing at him. He doesn't play the fiddle or trombone or clarinet; he goes to listen to hired men who work (not play) on these instruments for a living.

He doesn't take the time to learn Rigoletto or the Messiah, which would provide him not only with immense recreation and most enjoyable refreshment, and also would enable him really to understand the music and unlock for him an infinite treasure of delights; he only goes to hear professionals perform such works.

I doubt if the Metropolitan Opera is of any real cultural value. A lot of experts, mostly foreigners, are hired to sing. We go and listen. Our young people aspire to be like them. Every big city is full of pitiable boys and girls, studying music. I say pitiable, because they aim to make a living by music. Worse, each dreams of distinction, of being a Caruso or a Farrar. Not one in a hundred thousand achieves fame. Not one in ten thousand even becomes able to earn a livelihood. If instead of this sad spectacle, we could have great choruses and orchestras where people would sing and play for the joy of it, then music would be a blessing and not a fever. Why cannot we take up music as a species of fun, to be participated in by ourselves? We don't hire dancers; we do our own fox-trotting. Why can't we make our own music or at least have our young people learn to do so? Plato said: "Musical

training is a more potent instrument than any other, because rhythm and harmony find their way into the secret places of the soul, on which they mightily fasten."

You do not get the benefits of music unless you make it yourself. To learn to play one of Mendelssohn's Songs Without Words will give you more genuine soul-rites than to run off a barrel of records and rolls on the talking-machine and the player-piano.

Whoever will induce our people to sing will do a national service. Oh, the dumb congregations in church, the dumb audiences in theatres, the dumb soldiers in camp, the dumb crowds in the street! How they would be liberated, fired, invigorated, if they could and would sing!

The vocal pupils of Mrs. Mattie Belle Binge gave an interesting informal recital at the home of Mrs. Lee Jacoby, of Ventnor, on Thursday evening. The affair was the first given in the city by Mrs. Binge and judging from the excellent showing made by her pupils it was evident that they had received a splendid training. Those who took part were Mrs. Lee Jacoby, Wayne Redfield, Harry Collamer, Florence Raikes, John Truex, Elmer Campbell and John Brown. The program contained well known works and it was cordially received by those present.

Mrs. William Parsons presented her pupils, Miss Janet Fleishman, Miss Sara Gettleman and Miss Edna Meltzer in an interesting recital given recently at 297 South Vermont Avenue. Considering their youthful age, the participants showed considerable efficiency. The program contained works by Grieg, Sinding, Rossini, Dvorak, etc.

The Schubert Choir Club, Nora Lucia Ritter, director, gave another of its interesting and splendid concerts last Tuesday evening in Central M. E. Church. The affair was for the benefit of the Ladies' Aid Society of that institution. Vocal and instrumental numbers were offered and the concert was immensely enjoyed by those present. Mrs. Robert L. Warke and Mrs. Mattie B. Binge acted as accompanists.

William Tell Overture and Schubert's Unfinished Symphony were the outstanding features of the excellent program presented by Merrick's Symphony Orchestra

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at the Steel Pier last Sunday evening. Ethel Dobson, soprano, was the assisting artist and her pleasing voice delighted the large audience present. She chose as her solos the Aria "Una Voce Poco Fa" from the Barber of Seville, Rossini, which was rendered beautifully. Enrico Aresoni, tenor, who has been a favorite with the Steel Pier audiences for many seasons, was enthusiastically received. In the Aria from "La Boheme," Puccini, his powerful voice showed all its dramatic expressiveness. Both the orchestra and soloists were repeatedly acclaimed by the large audience present.

Annita Ribecova scored a great success at last Saturday evening's concert in connection with the concert given by Conductor Vessella and his Band at the Steel Pier. She sang "Rachem," by Mana Zucca (one of the foremost American women composers) with intelligence and keen insight of interpretative qualities receiving a most cordial approbation by the large gathering present.

Sara Novellino Fiaccone, a well known Philadelphia pianist and excellent musician, is spending the summer months in our resort.

WEEKLY MUSICOGRAM
Students spend too much time in playing and too little in work.—I. J. Paderewski.

DO YOU KNOW . . . ?
That—Jenny Lind commenced to sing in public at the age of ten and made her operatic debut in Stockholm at the age of 18.
That—One of the first opera librettists was Pope Clement IX, who wrote seven works.
That—The Guitar is the instrument most used in Creole music.

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—WAFFLES AT ALL TIMES—

That—Before the introduction of pianofortes, dancers used to carry around with them in their pockets a miniature violin, known as "kit" with which to provide music for dancing.

That—A Berlin critic after the first performance of "Die Meistersingers" said: "Shut a hundred organ-grinders in a circus and start them playing different tunes at the same time and the result would be less horrible."

That—Gounod, at eleven, having a good voice and a great capability of reading at sight, was appointed soprano soloist among the choir-boys at the Lycee, St. Louis.

That—Prince Grassalkowics tore up in pieces the manuscript of a Mozart quartet because "the hideous stuff was so full of mistakes that no one could play it."

That—The first noteworthy opera performed in America was "The Beggar's Opera," by an Englishman, John Gay, offered to the New York public in 1750.

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