

Charms of Music.

[By Philip Harrison.]

(Copyright, 1914, by W. G. Chapman.) Sometimes a poet is born (they are not made) in an unpromising place...

At least, hardly a farmer father in Middleboro. It is essentially a farming community. The banker and the parson, the storekeeper and the livery man have their proper recognition...

However, Henry Milton was not a poet; he was born a musician. And that was worse. For poetry, unalloyed as it is, was known by reputation to Middleboro, and a young fellow with such an unfortunate name as Milton might have been expected to succumb, but music—

"See here, Hen," said his father, "I don't object to your playing the old piano. I guess that's what planners is meant for, though I don't seem to see as you gets much tune out of it. But you've got to get down to work, my boy. Planners ain't work, unless you makes 'em. Now, it is to be the farm or Mr. Stuphen's insurance business?"

It was the scandal of the town; a hulking lad of twenty, home long ago from the high school, spending his days at the piano composing airs.

"And there's no tune to them," wailed his father. "I heard the fellow who wrote 'The Star-Spangled Banner' get a heap of money outen it. But who's going to print that rubbish Hen's writing?"

In the eyes of the good citizens of Middleboro, the profession of music



"I Don't Object to Your Playing the Old Planner."

was associated with a barrel organ, a dark Italian face, and a monkey.

"Never mind, Harry, dear. I believe in you," said pretty Lucy Rollins. "They don't understand. But I know you are going to become a great composer, and some day Middleboro will be proud of you."

The end of it all was that Henry Milton packed his grip one morning and took his departure for the metropolis, with the evil predictions of all Middleboro ringing in his ears. But there was sweeter music than that, sweeter even than the melodies which came to him night and day. Lucy had promised to be his wife when he had achieved success.

Of the boy's struggles in New York nothing need be set down. Lucy waited three years, four, five. Occasionally, in the first part of the long wait, a letter came, full of promise. Then the letters ceased. New York had swallowed up the boy, as she swallows many others.

"I reckon that Hen Milton went to the bad long ago," said the insurance agent, remembering sundry errors of omission and commission which he had discovered after Henry left his employment.

That was the universal agreement. Old man Milton had had the misfortune to have his only son turn out bad. The stubborn old man mourned for the young fellow secretly, but he set his face as hard as a flint in public.

Then came the day when an attack of paralysis seized him, and he awakened from his coma to see Lucy at his bedside, nursing him. When he recovered he asked her to keep house for him. He meant to adopt her, he said, as he had no children.

The months passed. Lucy sometimes dared to speak of Henry, but the old man would not betray his emotion. "He was a bad lot, my dear," he said. "I know there was something between you, but you've had a mighty narrow escape. I want you to find some young fellow that will be worthy of you."

Then Lucy would sigh and say nothing. It was three years now since she had heard from Henry.

Then one day the insurance agent came in, breathless with excitement. All the city was talking of a new opera, he said, composed by one Henry Milton. He was America's great musical prodigy. The newspapers were full of him.

Middleboro reluctantly agreed that it might have been mistaken. But not

so the old man. He was more stubborn than ever.

"I don't care if he can fool the public," he said. "Any knave can do that. When Henry takes up a clean line of work and makes good at it I'll take him back. Till then—no, sir!"

Yet Lucy knew that he secretly devoured the newspapers, searching for his son's name. He was secretly proud of him. Lucy had an idea.

"Father," she said coaxingly—she called him that nowadays—"he is to conduct at a performance in Boston next Friday. Now you know you have been promising to take me into Boston. Let us go and hear him."

"What do I want to hear him for?" growled the farmer. "Hain't I heard him times and again strumming on that old piano? I've had enough of hearing him, my lass."

However, by dint of coaxing, Lucy inveigled him to Boston, and thence to the opera house, where, upon a dozen billboards, as large as life, were the words Henry Milton, beneath a flesh and blood reproduction of the young man.

Lucy felt herself trembling. She knew that he had long ago forgotten her; she had never herself to accompany the old man only out of a sense of duty, in the hope of effecting a reconciliation; if she saw Henry she meant to show him her indifference.

But when the farmer saw his son conducting in the orchestra, a strange look came over his face. And Lucy, watching him, knew that the past was forgotten in the joy at finding his boy.

The old man's stupefaction increased as, seated all through the bewildering medley of sounds, he saw Henry waving his baton and his hand, sometimes in alternation and sometimes together.

"Well, I'm swinged!" he exclaimed. He turned to his neighbor.

"How much do you reckon that there young fellow Milton makes a night out of this?"

"O, perhaps three hundred dollars," answered the other.

The farmer gaped at him and subsided into his seat.

They were at Henry's side almost before the piece was ended. And Henry, looking up, suddenly perceived his father and Lucy. His face grew pale.

"Hen! Hen!" faltered the old man, and suddenly he grabbed Henry to his heart and muttered something about forgiveness and coming home.

"Well, father, I wanted to scores of times, but you know you told me not to see you again until I had got a better job than composing music," said Henry.

"Better job? Suffering snakes, you ain't composing still, Hen, are you?" demanded the farmer. "Three hundred dollars a night for working that wooden plug and making the band go—say, it beats blowing the church organ out and out. Go on and compose all you want to, Hank, so long as you keep at that there job of yours."

But Henry, knowing his father, was content with the compromise. It was all his stubborn old soul could bring itself to. Besides—

"Lucy, dearest, if you had answered me—"

"But it was you, Henry, who stopped—"

And that explanation was the beginning of the long-promised paradise.

Saved the Children.

Our class was held on the third floor of an old wooden school building. One afternoon another boy and myself scattered some snuff in the air before the afternoon session began. When the professor began talking to his assistant they were seized with a fit of sneezing, bobbing their heads toward each other in a most ludicrous fashion. The students howled with laughter when they were not sneezing.

Finally the professor managed to get his breath long enough to question the class and all but we two guilty boys were dismissed.

He took us to his office and while we were there—about twenty minutes later—fire was discovered in the building. We got out with difficulty and the school was burned to the ground.

From an angry man the professor became deeply thankful and he has since maintained that we boys were the instruments of fate, for the building burned so rapidly that there would have been great danger if all of the children had been in class when the fire started.—Exchange.

Various Compounds of Coal.

Coal has given to the world several hundred thousand compounds, most of which are of great value. For coal contains carbon, oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, sulphur, phosphorus and the halogens. It sometimes even contains gold and radium. Among the materials mentioned by Dr. Louis Cleveland Jones in an address before the Franklin Institute as obtained from coal are acid bases, alkaloids, gums, varnishes, solvents, sugars, saccharine, stuffs as bitter as saccharine is sweet disinfectants, dyestuffs of brilliant hues, stimulating and sleep producing drugs, healing medicines and violent poisons, vile odors and pleasing perfumes.

Coal and Its Formation.

Each different kind of coal—peat, lignite, semibituminous, bituminous gas coal, smokeless coal, semianthracite, anthracite, graphite, diamond—represents only "a different step in nature's slow process of converting the vegetation of the carboniferous era into the fuels so necessary to our modern civilization."

The earth's crust is a vast retort and in its work of carbonizing vegetation it saves us the by products in the form of asphalt, bitumen, petroleum and natural gas.

SNAKES WERE ALL DROWNED

But Animals, Liberated From Their Cages Just in Time, Swim Ashore From Wrecked Scow.

Tied to tall trees on the banks of the Skagit river is one of the strangest collection of animals ever harbored in this neck of the woods, as the result of the wreck of a scow towed by the gasolin launch Tango, carrying the 50 members and full properties, exhibition tents, and cages full of the Sound Amusement company of Seattle, bound for this city.

The launch dragged itself across a snag on the North Fork, but in pulling the scow over, a plank was ripped from the bottom and it sank.

The men on the Tango sprang on the scow and tore open the cages to free the animals, which leaped into the water and swam ashore. There they scattered in the woods and kept the showmen busy all day rounding them up.

The scow sank before the snakes could be liberated, and locked in the cages, the wriggling, writhing reptiles went to their death. One big snake cost its owner \$500.

Bert Mansfield, who owns the dog and pony part of the show, remained on the scow with his pet dog Chester, despite the entreaties of his companions, until he barely escaped with his own life.

Another valuable animal still at large is the trick mule, High School Jack. There were six horses and 20 trained dogs. Several trained racoons were lost.—Mount Vernon (Wash.) Dispatch to Seattle Times.

BECAUSE HIS DOG LIKED HIM

Why the Southern Mountaineer Was Willing to Pay to Check a Mongrel.

The pedigree of a dog makes no difference if you love him. This was the opinion expressed by a citizen of Pioneerville, in Boise, Idaho, when he found that he would have to pay \$7.50 to check a mongrel as far as St. Louis, about two-thirds of the journey.

He and his brother, two southern mountaineers, who still dress in the Tennessee mountaineer style, appeared at the Boise station with tickets to Nashville. He remarked that he wanted to check his dog through and asked whether or not he could get off at certain stations to feed and pet the animal!

"That dog is powerful fond of me," he remarked in explanation.

His face felt somewhat when he was told that it would cost him something like \$10 to check the dog.

"Why can't he go on our tickets?" he said.

When told that he would have to pay \$7.50 to St. Louis and another fee from then on, he said:

"Well, that cur thinks so powerful much of me I reckon I'll have to pay it. It makes no difference about the kind of dog, if you love him, you know," and he slowly counted out the money from an old miner's wallet and put the dog in the baggage car, with a final love pat on his head.

Find a Death-Proof Boy.

Six thousand volts of electricity and a plunge of twenty feet headforemost upon an iron rail could not kill fourteen-year-old Edward Krout of Spring Grove, though either would have been thought to do it, according to a York (Pa.) dispatch to the Philadelphia Record. The boy's companions thought so, and in fact had already bundled what they regarded as the lifeless body of their chum upon a small express wagon to haul it to his home, when the "corpse" came to life.

The boy was seated on the overhead Western Maryland railroad bridge, near the borough, when one of his legs, dangling over the edge, came in contact with the highly charged trolley wire beneath. Immediately he was hurled to the trolley track, twenty feet below, striking violently on his head.

Moratorium Abuses.

Appropos of bank hoardings and the consequent exorbitance of interest rates, Representative Reilly said:

"Thank goodness we haven't got a moratorium, like the French and English ones, over here.

"A great many people, you know, abuse the moratorium. Two English maid servants were talking one day when a man sauntered past them.

"Look at Mr. Brown," said the first maid, 'swingin' 'is stick and smokin' 'is cigar. Nobody'd believe 'e was 'ard up'.

"Lumme, no!" said the second maid. 'Why, since this 'ere moratorium come in, 'e walks down past all the bakers and butchers and pubs as if 'e didn't owe 'em a penny.'"

English Lads Shout "Marseillaise."

Never say that the English are not a musical people. You shall meet seven little muddy boys, keeping loyally to the gutter, clad in not many inches of old clothes, and none of them so much as ten years old. Yet they will all be shouting the whole of the "Marseillaise," which is not an eight-bar tune, but a very complex melody, without a mistake.

Whether the London urchin has been furnished with a translation of the French battle hymn it would be hard to say, for though the music is well rendered the words are indistinguishable.—London Chronicle.

Whale a Victim of War.

An enormous whale drifted ashore near Margate, England, the other day. It had been killed by a mine in the North sea.

The Oldest Handicraft

The toy industry is one of the oldest industries in the world. The British museum can show us a doll (with strings of mud beads for hair) and others with movable arms, with which the children of ancient Egypt played on the banks of the Nile. Jointed dolls and dolls' furniture have come down to us from the days of Greece and Rome, and we know that balls, tops and toy animals were favorite playthings at an even earlier date.

Like Pickled Grapevine Leaves. Pickled grapevine leaves are considered a great delicacy by the Syrians.

Life's Bitterness.

One of the worst of life's bitter nesses is to send to some distant post-office for a package held for postage and find that it is a sample copy of a magazine that you had bought two weeks before.

Medical.

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