

Democratic Watchman

Bellefonte, Pa., March 5, 1926.

THE PRETZEL.

By "One Who Does" in the Litz, Pa. Record.

A piece of dough, seized with the cramp,
Began to groan and twist and stamp;
Large salty tears came out his hide,
As great convulsion raged inside.

The baker saw him in his pain,
And knelt at once how he could gain
By thrusting him into the fire,
And bake him as hard as wire.

No sooner was that dough within,
Then color came into his skin;
Hard, salty grains replaced his tears,
Enough to preserve his life for years.

The baker sold him to the store,
And with the profit made some more
Just like him, for a great demand
Was made for him on every hand.

Into the homes of poor and rich
(It surely had not mattered which.)
He has been going, far and near,
To grace their boards for many a year.

But people find, who travel much,
He's specially liked where men are Dutch.
The reason's plain; it's his alone:
There he was born; it is his home.

So there among his own, you see,
He finds the greatest sympathy;
Now recognize his fearful pain,
And eat him to relieve the strain.

This then, becomes a humane act,
Based solely on a well-known fact;
When dough with cramps you plainly see,
Just put him out of misery.

THE BRIDE'S WALTZ.

When he was twenty-six and his admirers began to call him a genius to his face Iglesias used to shake his head and say: "Yes, but it is not my fault." This was because he had never quite forgiven his parents for what they had done to him.

He had been kind and generous to his parents while they lived, but there were two injuries for which they might never expect his pardon. He still cherished in his heart the unwarranted belief that he would have proved as great a civil engineer as he was now a concert pianist. He was proud of his income and proud of his reputation, but although these vanities often consoled him for the memory of his slavish boyhood, he continued to resent the arbitrariness with which music had been commanded for him and science forbidden. With all the obsession of genius, he still maintained that his parents should have offered him his choice.

As to the lesser injury, he was far more sensitive. When his parents had realized that his career was merely a matter of the calendar, they happened to be convinced of the principle that the most serious handicap to any musician is to be born American. The boy was eight years old, dark-eyed, dark-haired, even rather dark of complexion. He had never played in public; his talent was unheralded. So they very quietly by process of law had "Arthur Church" translated into Spanish. And this was beyond Iglesias's power to forgive.

At the time of the discovery of their son's talent the Churches had just moved to Pennsylvania from Oregon. Oregon had already forgotten them and Pennsylvania was hardly aware of their existence. The canny parents delayed only long enough to have their own names altered, too thereby preventing the newspapers from unveiling the subterfuge, before they sailed for Spain.

The boy learned to read Spanish and to write it and speak it. Presently he began to think in Spanish as well and to put quaint accents into his native tongue. He studied and progressed and was "discovered." Then they all came back to America, and Iglesias's parents were happy when they died.

For nearly a score of years, then, he had lived under a name he abominated. And yet this distinction was founded upon it. He couldn't tempt fate and the caprice of the public by changing back.

At twenty-six he began to compose a little, and on the day of his signing the publisher's contract for Opus 8, a tone-poem in B flat minor, he had already received in royalties on the seven earlier works a trifle more than \$30,000. He was becoming a standard composer as well as a standard performer.

"And yet," said one critic to another, "he still lacks something. Both in his playing and his writing. Something vital. And it's all that keeps him out of the very front ranks, too."

The second critic nodded confirmation. "True. He's gone ahead too smoothly and that is the answer. He hasn't had any troubles, and he hasn't been in love. He's just the least little bit—well, say apathetic. Give him time."

Iglesias had been playing at a private musicale. When the last encore was accomplished he had risen, as usual, to stand by his hostess and suppress his boredom while a long train of guests saluted him with conscious smiles and still more conscious flattery. And Iglesias hated this. He liked flattery in print, especially if it were direct and straightforward, said what it had to say and got over it, but he hated to be gushed at or stammered at or patronized, and so in receiving strangers he kept himself as mentally aloof as possible.

To-night, however, he was dragged out of his aloofness by a girl who brought up the end of the line. At the first glance he saw that she was exquisite—her coloring was as warm and delicate as a pastel; her eyes were blue and thoughtful, and her mouth and chin were at one instant adorable for their child-like appeal and at the next adorable for their striking firmness. Incidentally, she had a beautiful figure and she was wearing a gown of sapphire-blue velvet which snatched at Iglesias's imagination.

Iglesias was hoping that she wouldn't shatter the effect by some gross banality.

"It was the very nicest thing I've ever heard," she said.

Iglesias caught his breath.

"Then to reward me," he said, with his faint Castilian accent, "won't you let me take you to supper?"

"But it wouldn't be fair of me to monopolize you, would it?" she protested.

"Fair to whom?" Already he was guiding her toward a convenient corner.

It was fully half an hour before they were interrupted, and during that interval Iglesias had fallen irrevocably in love. Nor was it an aimless passion which overcame him; it was a normal and profound emotion caused by a girl he had admired on sight and found absorbing on acquaintance. He was possessed by her appearance, her voice, her manner, her opinions. He had been physically weary when he had risen from the piano; now he was alert and tingling with electric energy.

"And shall I see you again—ever?" he asked anxiously.

"Of course, you will," she said.

"Might I?"

Her quickness of perception charmed him.

"There will be a fight," said Iglesias, "between convention and impatience. I have to thank you for—"

He broke off abruptly and made his familiar, infinitesimal bow.

"You were going to say?" she suggested.

"I forgot myself. I had not asked any question. I almost earned another reproof." He bowed again, gave her his best smile, which was matchless. "Oh, never mind," he finished, "I shall hope to have the honor of earning it later."

"Tea is at 5 o'clock. You've met my mother already. She was just ahead of me in the line. We'll both be glad to see you any afternoon at all."

He went home on tiptoe, inhaling from the bottom of his lungs in accordance with all the best theories of good health. Before his largest mirror he stood for several minutes, deprecating his features and wishing that he were better looking. Finally he shrugged shoulders at himself, thanked his stars that he at least wore his hair short, like a gentleman, and whispered an excellent Spanish proverb which has to do with inherent conceit of mules. Then he took himself off to bed and slept poorly and was glad of it.

When impatience had mastered him he went to tea, and became so thoroughly demoralized that he broke, of his own accord, one of his most stringent rules and consented to play informally. More than that, he trotted out his new tone-poem in B flat minor, Opus 8, which he had never intended to play at all except as a final encore on state occasions.

Later, when he had won a brief tete-a-tete with his divinity, he explained to her just why he had played the tone-poem.

"But you mustn't say those things," she persisted.

"And why not?"

"Because I don't want you to."

In spite of her intonation, Iglesias looked hurt.

"You women—all of you—you puzzle me. If I say a silly, gorgeous compliment I do not mean you are pleased, while you know very well I do not mean it. But if I say the thing that comes truly to me, then you pretend not to like it. Why?"

She looked at him from under her heavy lashes.

"It isn't that. But I want us to be friends."

"Friends?" Said Iglesias, with his palms outward. "How can a man and a woman be friends? For a man and a woman there are no fine distinctions of friendship. They are thrilled to be together—which is love, or they are not thrilled to be together—which is indifference. There is nothing between. They may have for each other affection, sympathy, understanding, pity, hatred—but not friendship, unless they are of different generations, or else they are icebergs. I speak, that is, out of my own observation. I have known many women, some of them for years; they are not my friends. It is impossible. And you who have come so without warning into my life—"

"But you've only met me twice."

Iglesias waved his hands.

"But Dante had met Beatrice only once."

She gave him a smile so elusive, and yet so comprehending, that his heart moved a dozen beats a minute.

"I don't agree with your philosophy; so let's try to be friends, anyway. Oh, there's one thing I meant to ask you. Did you ever write any waltzes?"

"Yes," said Iglesias, reluctantly accepting the change of subject; "my first composition was a concert waltz."

She shook her head.

"No; I don't mean a concert waltz—I mean a real waltz."

"And what," he inquired politely, "is a real waltz, then?"

"Why, it's one you can dance to."

Iglesias sat up straighter.

"I? I write waltzes for people to dance to? For crazy orchestras to play in restaurants—and hand organs—hand organs with the little monkeys attached—to murder on the street corners? My dear young lady, you do not realize what you are saying."

"Oh, yes, I do," she assured him.

"You see, the other night you were kind enough to ask me what I really thought about your playing. And I said almost what I thought."

"Almost?"

"There was something I—I didn't dare to put in. I didn't think I knew you well enough. But my idea about friendship—it's so different from yours—is that friends are simply people who want to help each other. You play beautifully, of course, but—may I talk to you just the way I want to? Everything you do seems so cold and polished and brilliant. And a good deal of it I can't quite understand. It's so—academic. You're living away over our heads. And the one thing that would bring you and

your audiences ever so much closer together is—well, suppose I say melody—melody, instead of mathematics."

"Hm," said Iglesias. "You would have me support the hand-organs? Is that it?"

"No. I'm terribly afraid I'm not making it clear to you."

"I share your terror," he said humbly.

The motion of her hands was very pretty and very expressive.

"I was just thinking that if you once let yourself go and put all the—the interest into it that you put into the things you say to me, you could write the most wonderful waltz in the world. And it would be good for you, too. You've got everything but feeling; you aren't common enough yet. And music is the commonest thing there is. It ought to be, so that everybody could understand it. And I was wondering what you could do to make the very best out of yourself, and I thought—"

"You love to dance?" said Iglesias.

"I beg your pardon?"

"I said, 'You love to dance.' It was not an inquiry; it was a statement."

"Why, yes; I do."

"As the saying goes, you would rather die than eat—I mean, you would rather dance than eat, and die dancing. Is that it?"

"Pretty nearly."

"I will write you a waltz," said Iglesias.

Her eyes widened, and the color flamed in her cheeks.

"Not really?"

Iglesias's eyes were burning.

"Not for the hand-organs, but for you. If you doubt you shall see, you shall hear. It will still be Iglesias, still be music, but you shall dance to it, if you like, and when you hear it you will know that Iglesias is whispering to you, between the notes, 'I love you.'"

She shrank away from his vehemence.

"But I told you you mustn't say those things."

Unseen, he pressed her hand and rose.

"In that case I shall have to go home and write them. I shall ask your mother to bring you to my studio on Wednesday. I shall play for you anything you say. You will tell me what you like best, and I shall play it. Then I shall know better how to write for you. And in the mean time—"

She looked down.

"In the mean time," said Iglesias, subdued, "you have the opportunity to learn for yourself how it feels to be a lodestar."

Tuesday afternoon he appeared in recital at Aeolian Hall, and Wednesday morning, the critics were still searching for fresh adjectives. At the last moment he had changed his program, and instead of interpreting the ultra-modern composers, including himself, he had unexpectedly chosen to linger over the harmonies which may be called chestnuts and are still classics and still beautiful.

It had taken the house exactly ten seconds to realize that a new Iglesias had come before them, and after that he got a reception which had no parallel in his career. Never before had women cried among the audience.

Ingenuities had sometimes crowded to the platform, hearing flowers and merrons had sacrificed their gloves in applause, but nobody had cried. Nor had ever a sweeping wave of emotion rippled from the stage to the lobby and back again, and ceaselessly, so that you could feel it in the air and sense the personality which caused it. Not in all his days had Iglesias taken his calls as he did this afternoon—taken them with tears in his eyes, as though at last he had found communion with his people. And they wouldn't let him go and Iglesias didn't want to go, and it was 6 o'clock before the carriage numbers began to shine through the mist like little beacon lights to signal the arrival of Arturo Iglesias in the top flight.

By Wednesday morning the force of the reaction hadn't left him, and he was very tired and depressed. The newspapers came and he read them and put them down quietly and sat thinking.

"I must be worthy of her," said Iglesias to himself. "I must deserve her. I must write her a waltz."

His manager telephoned him that the recital was worth, cumulatively, a hundred thousand dollars. Might he come at 3 to discuss a series of performances for which they could now demand the highest prices.

"I have a previous engagement," said Iglesias curtly, and hung up the receiver.

She came with her mother at the appointed time, and both of them were radiant. They also had read the newspapers.

"Tell me your favorites," he said.

"Tell me the music you love best in all the world. Make me a little list." And in accordance with the little list he played in order the Chopin "Nocturne" in E flat, the "Military Polonaise," the Paderewski "Minuet," the threebare "Prelude" of Rachmaninoff, Mendelssohn's "Spring Song," "Traumerei," "Liebestraum" and the "Beautiful Ohio Waltz."

Before he could complete his obligation, however, he was compelled to admit his ignorance in one respect.

"I am sorry," he said. "I am very sorry indeed, but I have never in my life heard of the 'Beautiful Ohio Waltz.'"

Here she had struggled with her muff.

"That's what I thought, so I brought you the music."

Iglesias examined it carefully.

"It would seem to be very pretty," he said with an effort.

Another genius or a less purposeful lover might have trifled with the situation, but Iglesias was too far gone even to feel contempt for the popular tune. He played it with every regard for his character and his own, and he made it of in consequence a gracious reverie. He had no means of knowing that he roused by his attitude toward it the girl he adored. He had no means of knowing that from this instant she forgot to look upon him as the prop-

erty of the world and saw in him only a lovable, talented boy, whose sincerity was not to be discounted and whose vast ability was incidental to his affections.

Certain it is that the weakening of her resistance dated from this afternoon. In another week he had called her Doris unrebuked. There were swift-flying seconds during which he was permitted to rest his hands upon hers. Paradise was in the foreground, and yet, with all his new-found motives and all his resolution, he was still fumbling for the theme of his masterpiece.

It was not through lack of diligence that he had missed a theme, and it was not through any inhibition. He never said to himself or thought that the project was beneath his intelligence. On the contrary, he accused himself of gross stupidity.

As he sat at the piano seeing visions of her he was twice smitten with vigorous conceptions. He converted them on paper into Opus 9 and Opus 10. One of them was rather like Debussy and the other was slightly less intelligible. Both of them, judged by the measure of modernity, were works of art, but Iglesias knew in his despair that Doris would call them coldly brilliant, and he didn't venture to confess them to her. With dogged calmness he placed them with his publishers at an increased royalty.

There came an evening when he danced with her for the first time. It was at a formal, gloomy function, but there was a little of gloom about it for Iglesias. She danced superbly; she was the incarnation of the music that swayed her. And presently she said to Iglesias, looking up into his eyes:

"This is the 'Beautiful Ohio.' Don't you see what a difference it makes?"

"I have been conscious of it," he said gravely.

"Well, can you imagine your getting any closer to people's lives? Look around. And I can tell by the way you're dancing, too. Don't you wish you'd written it yourself?"

Iglesias didn't change. Let her taste be what it might, here was a definite thing which she appreciated.

"I only hope that mine will please you half as well."

"When will it be done, Arturo?"

"I cannot say. As soon as possible."

During subsequent weeks she made the same inquiry and got very much the same response. Iglesias was growing nervous about it. In sheer desperation he manufactured a bright little impromptu for her, and she was grateful, but not remotely satisfied. She told him once pointblank that unless he kept his promise to her she might easily doubt his ingenuities. She implied that there was something very mysterious about this professed love of his—love which could obtain for him an increase of 50 per cent. in his income but couldn't stir him to the creation of so small a token of esteem as a simple waltz.

Iglesias boiled over. The trouble was that Doris had demanded a task so infinitely far below his comprehension that he couldn't get his mind down to it. He was literally unable to think in musical terms at all without thinking on a higher level than she demanded. The task was too elementary.

He tried to explain to her and she grew dignified and said that she refused to believe him. He expostulated, pleaded, lost his head and swore by all the saints that she was more to him than any of them. Perhaps unintentionally she looked at him from under her lashes.

"Heavens!" said Iglesias, under his breath, and the next instant she was in his arms.

She shrugged, and Iglesias, frightened by his own courage, merely held her. She relaxed, and fright departed from him. He bent to her and she averted her head. There was a tremendous silence; at length he bent lower and more pulsing silence.

"You'll have to go now, Arturo."

Iglesias was aghast.

"Why, dearest? Why?"

"I—you'll have to go."

"After—that?"

"Yes."

"But it is impossible!"

"No—you must."

"Say first that you love me."

"I can't."

"And yet you do?"

"I—I don't know."

"You will marry me, dearest? You know that."

"No—please, Arturo!"

"I shall see your father, and—"

"No! You mustn't! Not yet! Not until I'm sure—you really love me."

"Sure? Have I not said I?"

"And still you won't do the least little thing for me, Arturo. Oh, you may want to kiss me and all that, but—"

Iglesias leaped to his feet.

"Minicement!" he thundered. "Is it the infernal waltz again? I say I love you and you demand a waltz? Doris!"

"Arturo!"

"I ask your pardon, dearest! But I say I love you, and then you—"

"But you make me wonder, Arturo. And it was such a little thing I asked."

He thought wildly of Opus 9 and Opus 10, the impromptu, and his recent press notices.

"Without it, am I so hateful to you?"

"No, dear; no—but it's all I've ever asked. You promised it yourself. And if you can't keep such a little promise to me as that, don't you see how I have to wonder—about bigger promises?"

Iglesias mopped his forehead.

"And when I bring the waltz to you, then you are convinced?"

"You must keep your word, dear. For your own sake, too."

"Then I may see your father?"

"Yes, Arturo—but you mustn't kiss me again. No! You mustn't! Not until—until then, Arturo. That's your rule of you! Where are you going?"

Iglesias, who had turned away, turned back to gaze down at her.

"Where would you suppose? To the studio."

"But you're tired, dear. It's past 11 o'clock."

"The piano," said Iglesias stolidly, "never sleeps. Until I have won your

confidence, dearest, I think I am to follow its excellent example. You have challenged me very well. I accept. I shall come to you only when I bring you your music."

She stood by him, with her hand on his sleeve.

"I don't want you to kill yourself, Arturo, but—won't you come soon?"

"Soon—or never," he said.

He immersed himself in his studio and his temper rose by degrees until he had almost reached the point of hysteria. He sent frenziedly to Broadway for an armful of the latest popular waltzes, and after he had dashed through them he deliberately selected the least expensive vase from his mantel and soothed his soul by smashing it against the bricks of his fireplace. Then, miraculously, at this precise juncture, he caught a motif out of thin air and rushed to the piano and played it over and over. With descending enthusiasm he cocked ear to it, and, finally, with a loud thump in the bass, consigned it to oblivion. It would do very well for a concert waltz, but not for Doris.

He telephoned to her, and the sound of her voice inflamed him. He was almost persuaded that she loved him. Then he went back to the piano and battled with it for half a day, and broke down and cried, out of utter helplessness, on the keys.

Fortunately, he was ashamed of himself. That alone might not have saved him from wrecking his disposition; he was assisted by an engagement in New Haven, and the short journey came as a timely respite. He achieved another triumph and returned home. To Doris, over the telephone, he said:

"You have not forgotten?"

And she replied:

"Not yet, dear. Have you?"

"I am working," he said. "And you?"

"I—I'm waiting, Arturo."

Once more he took to the piano, and the motif he had caught out of thin air was recurrent. He played it, and frowned. He shook his head. With a sickening consciousness of failure he hunted up one of the popular waltzes and stared at it with loathing. Then grimly. Then enviously. And, of a sudden, the motif ran in his brain again, and inspiration came to him.

He took the manuscript to Doris, and she sat by him as he played from it. She had had ended he remained motionless until he heard her speak.

"It's beautiful Arturo—it's beautiful!" she said, hushed.

Iglesias could hardly breathe.

"What did you call it, Arturo?"

"The 'Bride's Waltz.'"

"Oh!"

His hand, as it touched hers, was icy.

"I understand that your father has been reading in the library. May I kiss you—once—before I go to him?"

"Yes, Arturo—because I'm afraid."

To Doris's father the interview was distinctly embarrassing. He was a cosmopolitan, and he was proud to have his house frequented by greatness; but Iglesias as an acquaintance or as a friend and Iglesias as a son-in-law were two separate matters. And, in his best diplomacy, he tried to make Iglesias see that Doris's mother must also be consulted. They liked him; they admired him; they approved of him, but—

"I am calm enough—and I am man enough," said Iglesias, "to listen respectfully to the exception."

Doris's father looked Iglesias straight in the eye.

"It is the—er—the international feature, my dear sir. And I repeat, without prejudice to you or—"

"Then I shall have to tell you what fills me with shame. It is a secret. It is not my fault. You are not sure of me, because of my name, my nationality. Your daughter was afraid of that, she told me she was afraid of something. I did not guess. She was afraid of this. Listen. Because of your daughter, I have risked my reputation as an artist with my public. I have done it gladly. There is no need to be alarmed—it was music I wrote to please her. Now, because of her, I gladly risk the reputation of my parents, as people of discrimination and tact, with you. My name was Arthur Church, and when it was changed we were living in Scranton, Pennsylvania—if that is international, I will be hanged. If I look like a Spaniard, it is because I was born so; if I have the name of a Spaniard, it is because it was done by law when I was young, to make capital of it; if I speak like a Spaniard, it is because I was trained in Spain for this music business."

A day or two after the engagement was announced Senior Arturo Iglesias, the famous concert pianist, rode in a taxicab to that part of the metropolis known as "Tin Pan Alley" and told the chauffeur to wait.

Three stories nearer heaven, he presently intruded upon the privacy of a young man who, together with a battered upright piano and a stool, was the sole occupant of a large and dusty loft. The young man, who wore a wrinkled green suit and a checked waistcoat, had neglected to remove his derby hat, which was pushed far back on his head. As he played, he smoked a thin, dyspeptic cigar.

"Good morning, Mr. Milliken," said the genius, bowing.

The young man stopped playing and greeted him effusively.

"Oh, hello, Iglesias! How's every little thing?"

"Most excellent, thank you. I have made the contract. The advance payment is \$10,000. There is also \$5,000 for exclusive privileges for one month for some idiotic musical comedy. They are mad over it. They say it will sweep the country. I have here your check for one-half the amount."

The young man at the piano crossed his legs and hugged them.

"That's fine! Much obliged. Almost wish I hadn't agreed to keep my name off it. Oh, it was generous of you to split even. I don't dispute