

BERLIN CAPTIVATES PHILADELPHIA, BUT HOW DOES HE MANAGE IT?

Some Considerations of the Unusual Music Treat in "Stop! Look! Listen!" and of Ragtime in General

THE question which agitates musical breasts in Philadelphia today is not concerned too much with the respective merits of Schoenberg and Scriabin. The performance of "Rosenkavalier," next Tuesday, is interesting, but it isn't important. Nothing is important except this:

In what key does Irving Berlin compose?

Granting that it is not vital to the subject, it would be interesting to know the answer. A writer in The Theatre says F-sharp, another says B-flat. Still others say that Mr. Berlin writes in C and G. And there is a wonderful story about this shifting, transposing keyboard. Mr. Berlin is a figure.

His second great success is with us just now in "Stop! Look! Listen!!" and the success preceding that, "Watch Your Step," is scheduled for Christmas week, so we ought to know a great deal about him. Unfortunately there is little to know, but that little is good. Mr. Berlin was a cabaret singer and then he wrote "Alexander's Rag-time Band." After that, the deluge.

But who has forgotten Alexander, the glorification of ragtime? In "The New Republic" Mr. Hiram K. Moderwell has called ragtime the one true American music, and it is rather appropriate that its chief exponent should be a Russian Jew. In separate songs, "Alexander," "The International Rag" and "Waiting for the Robert E. Lee" and "Everybody's Doing It," all of which, I believe, are from the same brain, syncopation, the essential thing, has been exploited. In "Stop! Look! Listen!!" it has gone mad.

Listening to it casually you recognize the types of song. You hear again "I'm Here and You're Here" and "This is the Life." You catch echoes of "He's a Devil" and of most of the sentimental songs that manage to keep pace with the rollicking ragtime. But the accents are shifted and re-shifted, there is no end to syncopation, and the marvel of it is that it is not monotonous. Two numbers, "The Hula-Hula" and the magnificent "Ragtime Melodrama" are the highlights of the whole series.

The first of these is distinguished by the extraordinary way in which it injects pure Americanism, the jerky, high-spirited snappiness of our normal life, into a laxy, sensuous and exotic atmosphere, and does not sacrifice one thing to the other. The second, even more unusual, is a perfect dictionary of ragtime. Virtually every manner and every style is represented, and the bizarre action, the absurd words which are carefully adjusted to the music, make it the more enjoyable.

Mr. Berlin is credited with a desire to write the great American opera, in syncopation. When you remember that he did the "International Rag," an imperishable work both in immediate appeal and in sheer musical excellence, in an hour or so, you may well believe that he will succeed. The only weak thing in the ragtime manner is its sentiment, and that is chiefly due to the lack of melodic invention. But ragtime exploits the element in music has the most potent appeal, namely rhythm. It is a libertine, and like some famous libertines, it establishes itself above ancient laws and fogged traditions. G. V. S.

The first free Sunday concert of the Philadelphia Orchestra will be given at the Metropolitan Opera House, December 19, at 3 o'clock. Tickets will be distributed by the newspapers on Wednesday, December 15, beginning at 9 in the morning. The program will be that Wagner program which was heard with such pleasure a few weeks ago at the Academy. Details of the EVENING JOURNAL'S distribution will be given later.

At last Philadelphia will have an opportunity of passing judgment on Richard Strauss' "Der Rosenkavalier." It will be presented at the opera house, on North Broad street, next Tuesday evening by the Metropolitan Opera Company. Although it has been done in New York for two seasons past, the composer had up to the present not granted the permission for a Philadelphia production. However, Philadelphia will be none the worse for the delay, for in the form in which the Metropolitan Company now presents this much-talked-of work and with the cuts made by the new conductor, Mr. Artur Bodansky (reducing its length by half an hour) "Der Rosenkavalier" as a popular entertainment has doubly increased in value. "Der Rosenkavalier," which may be translated "The Rose Bearer," "The Knight of the Rose," or "The Rose Cava-

lier," had its first performance in Dresden, Germany, January 26, 1911. Its American premiere in New York took place December 9, 1913. Although the book is by Hugo von Hofmannsthal, who furnished the text for Doctor Strauss' "Electra," this later opera is a wide departure from the former, and is quite as different both in subject matter and in style from the sensational "Salome." The librettist called his book "a comedy for music," and the work might be described as a "grand comic opera." It is worth noting that there is a waltz theme running all through it that is sure to grip the hearer and almost tempt him to whistle it as he is leaving the opera house. This fact alone should dissipate all fears on the part of the "man in the street" that the opera might be "over his head." For, although Doctor Strauss exploits all his own technical resources and those of the modern orchestra, the music is thoroughly understandable from beginning to end.

General Manager Gatti-Casazza has given "Der Rosenkavalier" a most sumptuous stage setting, while the cast is admittedly an ideal one. Mme. Margaret Ober's impersonation of the boyish lover, Octavian, hero of the piece, being irresistibly fascinating. Mme. Hempel is thought by many to be at her best as the Princess. Mr. Goritz makes of Baron Ochs a most comical character.

The Princess Werdenberg..... Frieda Hempel
Baron Ochs..... Albert Reiss
Octavian..... Margaret Ober
Von Faninal..... Hermann Weil
Sophie..... Edith Mason
(Her first appearance here.)
Marianne..... Rita Fornia
Valzschki..... Albert Reiss
Annia..... Marie Matfield
Commissary of Police..... Carl Schieler
Major Domo..... Pietro Audisio
Master of Ceremonies..... Max Blich
A Notary..... Basil Ruyssel
An Inkeeper..... Julius Bayer
A Singer..... Paul Althouse
Three Orphans.....
Louise Cox, Rosina Van Dyck, Sophie Martin
A Milliner..... Frieda Martin
A Flunky..... Ludwig Burgstaller
An Animal Vendor..... Alfred Sappia
A Little Negro..... Ruth Weinstein
Conductor—Arthur Bodansky.

A program of great variety and contrast, ranging from Bach to Debussy, and a distinguished soloist in the person of Emilio de Gogorza, the baritone, will be features of the Philadelphia Orchestra concerts on Friday afternoon and Saturday evening next, when the following numbers will be presented:

Suite No. 2, in B minor..... Bach
Aria, "Diana Impitoyable," from "Iphigenie en Aulide"..... Gluck
Emilio de Gogorza.
Symphony No. 2, in D ("London")..... Haydn
L'Adieu midl d'un Faune..... Debussy
Serenade from "La Damnation de Faust"..... Berlioz
Emilio de Gogorza.
"L'Apprenti Sorcier"..... Dukas

The only recital of Paderewski that is scheduled for this season in Philadelphia will be given in the Academy of Music next Wednesday afternoon, December 15, at 3 o'clock. The program in full is as follows:

1—Sonata, Op. 53.....Beethoven
Allegro con brlo.
Adagio molto.
Allegretto moderato.
Frescissimo.
2—Impromptu, Op. 142.....Schubert
3—Sonata in B minor.....Liszt
4—(a) Ballade in F major
(b) Impromptu in F-sharp major

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- (c) Two Mazurkas
- (d) Two Etudes..... Chopin
- 5—(a) Barcarolle in A minor
- (b) Etude in C major
- (c) Valse Caprice.....Rubinstein

The third annual concert of the Musical Art Club will be held at Witherspoon Hall December 18.

- The program:
1. String orchestra, Serenade ("cello solo, Wm. A. Schmidt).....Volkman
Conductor, Henry Gordon Thunder.
 2. Piano solos:
 - (a) Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue.....Bach-Busoni
 - (b) Liebestod.....Wagner-Liszt
 - D. Hendrik Eberman.
 3. Tenor solos:
 - (a) Aria from "Manon".....Massenet
 - (b) "Die Drei Wanderer".....Herrmann
 - Philip Warren Cooke.
 4. Violin solos:
 - (a) Adagio.....Spohr
 - (b) Elstanz.....Hailf-Popper
 - Frederick E. Hahn.
 5. Aria for baritone, "Credo," from "Otello".....Verdi
Lewis James Howell.
 6. Trio, "Waltz Marcher".....Schott
Emil F. Schmidt, William A. Schmidt,
Joseph W. Clarke.
 7. Tenor songs:
 - (a) Recesue from "Jocelyn".....Godard
 - (b) "Here Awa, There Awa".....Glichrist
 - Henry Gurney.
 8. Cello solo, "Elegie".....Faure
Bertrand Austin.
 9. Piano solos:
 - Three Intermezzi (MS.).....Sternberg
 - Constantin von Sternberg.
 10. Baritone songs.....Selected
Harry Saylor.
 11. Concerto for two violins.....Bach
John K. Witzemann, F. Wilson Cook.
 12. String orchestra, reel, "Molly on the Shore".....Grainger
Conductor, Thaddeus Rich.

ENTER MOVIE SILHOUETTE

Continued from Page One

the pearl. They find the dragon, and just as he is about to attack them they pour the tabasco sauce down his throat and he coughs up the pearl. As they flee with the gem they look back and see the monster being consumed by fire from the burning condiment. Seeking the Sultan to claim the reward, the sailor discovers the supposed beautiful princess to be an unprepossessing old woman; so, turning his companion back into a monkey, he sets sail on the magic carpet for New York, intending to dispose of the pearl. He takes it to a pawnshop, only to find the gem is a counterfeit and is worth only 20 cents.

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WHAT THE DANCING TEACHERS THINK

An Official Statement From the Philadelphia Association Teachers of Dancing

By J. Joseph Cantelly
Chairman Press Committee.

The evolution of modern dances has been convincingly traced from Orient to Occident and down through ancient Rome. The "one-step" and "fox trot" have come to stay, whatever may be the current opinion.

The vulgarization of these dances by inartistic and ignorant exponents was the principal cause of a lull in dancing circles, which, on Thanksgiving Day a year ago, was self-evident to the leading teachers of dancing.

Three years ago, in this city, there were 1200 teachers of dancing—nine-tenths of whom were teaching shuffles and twists, wiggles and jumps, strenuous clasping of partners, abnormal twisting, salacious suggestion, and—oh, well, what is the use? They were trying to make the ballroom a stage. Dancing was degenerating into a mere muscular movement without any uniformity. No two were dancing alike. The dancers ceased to be gullible.

The older teachers, with large halls and long leases, saw "the handwriting on the wall." They met and agreed that the man who can laugh at adversity can laugh for the universe. Don't surrender, they said, the fight is on—aim higher than ever—we have no cause to fear despair—our feet and hands are not tied. Let us unite. Show teachers how to win. What was the result? The "birth" of the Philadelphia Association Teachers of Dancing, which, in its infancy, has won the confidence of the public by standardizing the steps of the modern dances. Heterogeneity was cast to the winds. Homogeneity and simplicity the slogan. The dances purified and simplified to such stability that public opinion was more than restored. There is no denial of it. They are dancing alike, keeping to the right, and progressive in all movements. Visit any one of the dancing schools and you will find both young and old mastering the purified and simplified steps, with such grace, skill and precision that would inspire Billy Sunday (if he had a look) to say: "On with the dance."

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Continued from preceding page

THE MOVIE NUT!

Continued on next page

