

Graduating Thesis

Subject
Music and Its Influence.

Henrietta M. Hofer.

Music is the most beautiful - and inspiring - gift of God, to - all the world below. It is - as Emilie Frances Bauer has so fittingly - defined it - "A vehicle in which to carry such emotions, thoughts, - and sentiments - as are too vast, too - deep, too - great for words. Musical study is not enough. After having this magnificent vehicle - one must have thoughts, emotions - and sentiments that - deserve to ride in such state."

What is - a home without music? It is barren - and unhappy. Music is soul inspiring; it makes the home happy, it keeps the children at home; it strengthens - char-

-acter; - gives - great enjoyment
for entertainments; - and - cheers
the sick. Its - chief - object in
life is to strengthen - and en-
noble the soul; to lift - one from
the - cares - and troubles of life
to higher - and nobler thoughts,
to - a better - and purer life.

Self - consciousness: - No person
- can be - a - good musician if
he is inclined to be self - con-
scious. This self - consciousness
has often been cultivated in
- childhood by parents who pick
- at their - children - continually
- and scare them - out of their
enjoyment by telling them that
every - one is looking - at them
- and thinking of them. This
develops - consciousness more

-and more through youth and manhood; -and, in performing in public, instead of having his mind wholly centered on the piece he is playing, the performer thinks, "What do the people think of me?" He becomes nervous - and his hands flutter over the keys; the more he thinks of the people the worse he plays until, in all probabilities he is obliged to stop in the middle of the piece.

An amateur musician often makes a great mistake by looking over the audience before performing, - and if he sees several good musicians who have studied longer than he, - and have had more oppor

tunities, he becomes conscious of the fact - and - as he performs he thinks of - all kinds of criticisms that they might possibly give, while they may not have ~~one~~ thought of - criticism. A - good musician - does not - go to entertainments for the express purpose - of - criticizing; he - goes for the enjoyment - and - good he can get - out - of them.

Practice. - That - good old saying "Practice Makes Perfect", is indeed - a true - one. No - one can become - a thorough - and brilliant - player or singer without practice.

There is, - of - course, such - a thing - as too much practice - at - a time, - and it should be

avoided - as it is, in the case of piano playing, apt to stiffen the fingers, and overwork the muscles instead of developing them.

In singing, too much practice at a time is very injurious - as the muscles of the throat become tired - and the voice is husky - and is more liable to grow weaker than stronger. One should not practice singing more than thirty minutes at a time.

In preparing to perform in public - one should learn the piece well - and practice it a great deal before the day on which it is to be rendered. On that day he should not

look at it now think of it until the final time comes. His mind will then be fresh and he will be less nervous.

Exercise strengthens the muscles and the best way to get this exercise is to practice and do some work that will develop muscle. A half hour of good hard work is very strengthening.

Force is needed in piano playing; without force the playing is tame; it lacks brilliancy and energy. In practicing one should keep this in mind and play with force but not bang and pound.

In practicing scales and exercises, they should be

played slowly - and - correctly.
Too rapid practice is not - good - as
- one is inclined to become - careless
and pass over the keys, not mak-
ing every note sound - and count.

While practicing - one should
- criticize his - own playing - and
use the brain - as well - as the
fingers.

There is - one thing we - are all
so - apt to - do, - and that is to
neglect the splendid opportuni-
ties which - are offered - to us.

So often - a - good musical
- comes to the city - and instead
of - going to hear it we go to
some play where we - do not
- get - nearly - as much enjoyment
- and inspiration - as we would
have in going to the musical.

Some-authority has said, "Do not let-a-day pass without having heard some fine music, read some noble poem, or seen some beautiful picture."

Attention. One of the worst insults to offer to-a singer or-a player is to converse while music is-going-on. It not only-annoys the performer but it-also-annoys the people in the-audience who-are anxious to hear-and-are so unfortun-ate-as to be seated near the-annoyers. Careful attention should be paid-out of respect for the performer if for no-other reason.

The performer has to pay the strictest-attention to his part;

he does not dare to let his mind wander. He has to put his whole soul into the part he is taking.

Music in Germany. - Germany has had vocal music for over six hundred years. The reason for this is that the German people have always been singers - and their lives are interwoven with song.

The music was started by the Minnesingers who were noblemen - and sang in an inspired manner of love and Nature's beauties.

Before the Minnesingers, the chief use of music was for the service of religion. There were some secular singers but they were of a low type.

They were called Jongleurs, - and from it we - get the word 'juggler'. These jongleurs went from place to place singing - and performing tricks, - and sometimes exhibiting monkeys - and bears. They were little more than clowns.

The secular music lasted from the Eighth to the Eleventh Century and when the Minnesinger - came - a dignity was given to the secular music which it did not have before. They sang of sweetness and modesty. The melody was very simple - and the words - and tune would be nothing - apart from each - other - as they were so closely interwoven.

These Minnesingers never

received money for their performing but were given costly presents such as horses, capes, and jewels.

After the decline of the Minnesingers German music did not amount to much for a time. For three centuries the music was of a low order and composition was very weak.

At the beginning of the Fourteenth century the Mastersingers arose. They formed societies and guilds in which they composed poetry and music. There was considerably more competition with the Mastersingers than with the Minnesingers.

When the Mastersingers performed several critics were appointed;

-one for criticism on the grammar;
-one on contents, whether the thoughts
were good and worthy; -another to
criticize the metre; -and another
the music, to see if it were properly
composed. The singer was allowed
to use an old tune or make up
one, as he chose. He sat on a stool
while performing. There were
very strict rules as to the songs
sung. Prizes were given to the best
singers, prizes such as a medal
or a scarf. These Mastersingers
lasted until eighteen hundred
and thirty nine.

The Germans had folk song
and in the Catholic churches
they had congregational singing.
The songs were more secular
than sacred although at

that time there was very little difference between the two.

The folk song, at the end of each verse repeated the refrain - and words, which gave the song no meaning. These songs were, at first of war, as they were introduced when the war was going on.

The earliest printed works in Germany were folk songs.

Instrumental parts arose about this time and this, of course made the songs sound much better. The drum and trumpet were used a great deal during the Fifteenth and Sixteenth centuries.

The Reformation in Germany changed the music to religious sentiment.

In fifteen hundred and twenty four the Protestant hymn book was published. The music was very simple and the words were good. They were simple enough for all the people to be able to sing them. These songs were not only sung in church but were taught in all the schools.

When sacred music came in, organ playing came in also.

At about this time the German Opera arose. It was at first a rude and coarse affair but later, under the leadership of a fine composer Keiser, it became far advanced. Keiser composed over one hundred and twenty operas. These operas were not very deep but were fascinating and interesting. Keiser's career ended by

the coming of the great Handel who had a great influence over German song.

The American people are very fond of music and nearly every one who can afford it, has some training in that line. Perhaps not for public work, but for the enjoyment one gets out of it, for himself. It is so nice, after a day's hard work to be able to throw care and toil aside and to be able to sing and play.

That old idea the Americans had, that no one is an accomplished musician until he has studied abroad, is going into a decline. We have excellent instructors in America and they have turned out as fine musicians

as any European master.

How the Americans love our national hymn, America! How all the people in the nation sing it, and with what enthusiasm it is received! Do we ever tire of that grand old song? No. It makes us thrill with love for our dear, our native land. It kindles within us that grandest of all things, — patriotism.

Influence. Music has a marked influence over man. It has been the means of converting many a soul, and saving many a criminal. It melts the hard hearted man to tears, and wilds around him a higher atmosphere which cannot help but be felt.

In Alexander's Feast by Dryden

the Theban musician, Timotheus played the lyre, - and the different styles of music that he played changed the mind - and passions of the king. One soft sweet strain melted the old king to love - and tenderness. As the strain grew louder - and quicker his passions changed; he dreamed he was in battle again; his eyes kindled with the old sparkle of love for the battle field.

The beautiful music of St. Cecilia has led many to higher and nobler life. She was called the "Inventress of the Vocal Frame". The story goes that St. Cecilia was under the protection of - an - angel. She is said to have brought - an, angel - down from heaven to guard her. She was very pure - and beautiful

-and her music, her deep passion for sacred music, inspired her to the life of great religion.

It was told by a musician that he had seen a mere infant, whose father was an excellent musical critic, weep when it heard music that was sad and in a minor strain; as soon as the music was changed to that of a lively and joyous nature, the infant laughed and crowed and clapped its hands.

The influence of music upon adults is great - as it is largely due to the association of ideas. Some people cannot bear to hear a certain melody as it brings to mind some sad event, or brings them back to the thought of home.

The best kind of music is that which will please the imagination.

Shakespeare has well said in his "Merchant of Venice":—

"The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet
sounds,

Is fit for treasours, stratagems, and
spoils;

The motions of his spirit, are dull
— as night,

And his affections dark as Erebus,
Let no such man be trusted."