Graduating Thesis

Subject

Music and Its Influence

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Music is the most beautiful and inspiring gift of God, to all the world below. It is as Emile 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 everyone 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 performed 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 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 prac-
tice at a time is very injurious
as the muscles of the throat
become tissued 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 making 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 opportunities 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 if 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 most insults to offer to a singer or a player is to converse while music is going on. It not only annoys the performers but it also annoys the people in the audience who are cautious to hear and are so unfortunate 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 bird 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 thought 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 song sung. Prizes were given to the best singer, prizes such as a medal or a scarf. These Master Singers 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 Rhein, it became far advanced. Rhein composed over one hundred and twenty operas. These operas were not very deep but were fascinating and interesting. Rhein'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 works, 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 accom-
plished musician until he has
studied abroad, is going into
a decline. We have excellent in-
structors in America and they
have turned out as fine musici-
as any European nation.

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 grandeur 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 wields around him a higher atmosphere which cannot help but be felt.

In Alexander's Feast by Dryden
the Sheban musician, Timothear 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 strains 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. Cecelia has led many to higher and nobler life. She was called the "Inventress of the Vocal Frame." The story goes that St. Cecelia 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 treasons, stratagems, and spoils;
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
And his affections dark as Erebus,
Let us such man be trusted."