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MELODY

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR LOVERS OF POPULAR MUSIC

FEATURES IN THIS ISSUE

MUSIC

PUBLISHED BY
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STARMER

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MELODY

A Monthly Magazine for Lovers of Popular Music

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Myron V. Freese, *Literary Editor* Walter Jacobs, *Business Mngr.*

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Volume II *November, 1918* *Number 11*

Why They Didn't Win the Prize

By G. L. C.

OUR idea of a couple of unenviable jobs is umpiring a worlds series baseball game and judging a popular song-contest. The insurance companies regard the holders of such jobs as very great risks. No matter how conscientiously they use their judgment, umpires and judges are always assailed and called harsh names because they have not succeeded in the impossible task of pleasing all the people—all of which leads to the reason why this article was written. Some of you song-writers who were disappointed because you were not fortunate enough to win the hundred "simoleons," hearken and learn how the judges eliminated your lyrics one by one until at last the prize-winning one was decided on.

In judging anything there must be a standard to which one may compare the things to be judged; and, if there be no actual standard, then the specifications of such a standard may be used. We quote these specifications from the publisher's announcement in the August MELODY.

"However, the words must have permanent value, yet be such as will appeal to the music-loving public of TODAY. Don't waste time knocking the Kaiser; he's too near all-in now, and, moreover, we want words that will out-live any present-living man."

From this we gather that the specifications are two in number—the words must be good enough to endure, and they must have such qualities as will make them become popular as spontaneously as possible. At first thought these two qualities may seem easy of attainment, and so each of them is, possibly, by itself. The prize-winning feat was to combine them in a pleasing and satisfactory manner, and therein is where most of the competitors failed.

The lyric that was sent in by Harry D. Kerr of Los Angeles, a writer who has collaborated with the best composers in the country, is typical of the kind that possesses one quality, but not the other. Here is the chorus:

There's an emblem that has ever stood for freedom,
For the freedom of the world;
There's a nation standing firm beneath it's glory,
When it's banner is unfurled.
Ev'ry heart that beats with love will share it's blessing,
While it waves on thro' eternity,
Red, White, and Blue, we all love you,
Dear victorious, glorious emblem of the free.

There is a fairly well-defined idea expressed here; first the writer speaks of the *world*, then of a *nation*, and finally of *ev'ry heart*. Even though this idea is not very strong, it is expressed well and clothed in good language, so that we can safely say that the lyric has a claim to permanence. Now, on the other hand, would this lyric strike the popular music-loving, and more especially the music-*buying*, public of today?

Before answering this question, let us study for a moment the greatest march song of the day, "Over There." Hum through the chorus once. Do you notice how the writer, the clever and inimitable George M. Cohan, has accentuated the rhythm of the song by rhymes? For instance, each time the opening bugle-call strain is repeated, he introduces a word rhyming with "there." In one instance he says, "So beware," in another, "Say a pray'r," and in still another "everywhere." So again in the lines, "The Yanks are coming, the Yanks are coming; their drums rum-tumming ev'rywhere." What could better accentuate the syncopated measures than these double-rhymes, "coming" and "rum-tumming?"

In the "National Emblem March" there is a wonderful opportunity for double-rhymes, of which every writer should have taken advantage, since they bring out in bold relief the marked rhythm of this rousing march. Let us see how Mr. Kerr has taken advantage of this opportunity. In the first line he uses the word "freedom" for both rhymes, which, although permissible, is not the best way to utilize the natural effect. In the next line he misses the opportunity altogether, for the words "glory" and "banner" come in the places where the two rhyming words should go. And in the third and last place he uses non-rhyming words, "blessing" and "waves on." Compare this with the corresponding lines of the prize-winning lyric.

"Red is for the soldier-boys, their muskets *swinging*,
While they're *singing* songs of cheer."

Here we have two rhyming words, "swinging" and "singing," that have a ringing lilt and measured rhythm that seem to carry the march along with them. Just hum it over a couple of times and you will see exactly what is meant. Furthermore, the writer has taken advantage of these places each time—as witness his use of the words "pining" and "shining," "sailing" and "failing"—while at the same time he tells a connected story and has the customary rhymes at the end of every other line. Mr. Kerr has missed the chances which Mr. Levenson has taken advantage of to the fullest.

From the Windy City came a lyric that is sadly representative of a surprisingly large percentage of those submitted. Here is the chorus written by Benjamin L. Miller:

For the right we'll fight for dear Old Glory always,
And we'll stand by to defend,
We will carry it upon the field to Vict'ry
Never failing, without end.
Flag of red and white and blue, we pledge allegiance,
Ever ready for the summon's call,
We swear our lives, our hearts, our love, for the flag,
(Yes for the flag) we pledge our all.

In the first place it should be pointed out that song-lyrics are subject to the rules of English grammar, in spite of the fact that many song-writers do not seem to think so. Now, then, we should like to have Mr. Miller show us the object of "to defend" in the second line. We know he means the flag, but he doesn't say so. Another phrase that demands explanation is "for the summon's call," since a summons means a call. Also, the proper possessive form of the word is *summons'*, not the way he has it. The repetition in the last line is weak, too. Mr. Miller meant well, but his good intentions alone were not sufficient to carry him very far on the road to the one-hundred-dollar-prize goal.

From East Orange, New Jersey, came a poem that is thoroughly worthy of the home of Edison and his remarkable inventions. It is written by W. M. Clark and the chorus follows:

Hail our flag! Red, White, and Blue, our nation's emblem,
Proudly floating in the breeze!
Stars and Stripes forever! Swell the mighty anthem,
Over land and over seas!
Let the earth resound with echoes of its praises,
Hear the mountains break forth in loud accord!
Heaven's arches ring "All Hail the Flag!"
And the seas take up the swelling glad refrain!

This excellent lyric, while undoubtedly of a permanent quality, would not become spontaneously popular. It might become known among a certain limited group of people, but it would not become widely popular. It is obvious that the writer has not brought in his double-rhymes as he might have; he has not even rhymed the sixth and eighth lines, but this is not the only weak point. His idea is a hail to the flag. He carries this out well enough, generally, but falls down in the last line. Here is where the climax should come, but there is none. We might just as well have had here the same idea that is contained in the third and fourth lines or in the fifth line, or in the sixth; no one is more forcible than the others. In one the hail swells over "land and seas," in another the earth resounds with it, and then the mountains and finally the seas take it up. But where is the so-called "punch" which should be strong enough to fix the idea firmly in the hearer's mind as a parting shot? Read the prize-winning lyric. There is a simple idea definitely and straightforwardly expressed. The writer tells just what the red, white and blue means, and he sums it up at the end by saying, "*That's* What the Red, White and Blue Means." That is the climax. Take "Over There." The last line sums up the whole idea of the song, "We won't come back till it's over over there." That tells the story; those are the lines that the public remembers.

There was a lyric among those sent in that had the very same idea as the prize-winning lyric, and it is interesting to compare the two. Here is the one written by C. Earle Trucksess of Philadelphia:

Stars and stripes each have a meaning in Old Glory.
Hear the story, old and true.
Red is blood of heroes shed on fields so gory,
They died for me and for you.
And each stripe of white for purity is gleaming,
Stars are beaming from a field of blue.
So carry on till vict'ry's won—
That's the story of Old Glory ever new.

Both writers start out to tell the same thing—what the Red, White and Blue stands for. Mr. Trucksess, you will notice, has in some places taken advantage of his double-rhymes, although one of them, "they died for me," is a little awkward to sing and is not a true rhyme with "gory." In expressing his idea, he tells first of all what red stands for—and while it is a good thought, we do not imagine that many people would like to sing about the "blood of heroes shed on fields so gory." White standing for purity is a well-known idea, but he forgets to tell us what blue stands for. He mentions it, but does not explain it. Contrast this with Mr. Levenson's prize-winning chorus. Two lines are devoted to explaining the meaning of red, symbol of courage, two lines to white, two lines to blue, and the last two lines sum up the idea. So much for the technical construction. Mr. Trucksess has not divided up his lines as evenly. As for the thought, it is far better to have white symbolize mothers rather than the abstract quality of purity. When mothers are mentioned, a picture arises in the minds of each one of us, and our hearts are touched; but does the mention of purity carry any sentiment with it? Mr. Trucksess was working on the right track, but he didn't get very far along.

A good many of the lyrics were deficient in the elementary points of song-writing. No one can write a song who has not a sense of rhythm. Words that are set to music should fit that music, not only in metre but also in choice of words. For instance, no song-writer worthy of the name would set a short, concise word like "shot" to a note that is to be held four beats. Here is a lyric that offends in this respect:

Fair America, we love you, yes we love you,
And to you we will be true.
And we love the starry flag that floats above you—
Love its bright Red, White and Blue.
There's no other land that can compare with thy land,
There's no banner that can equal thine;
And so we say hip! hip! hooray!
For the peerless banner of the U. S. A.

By singing this chorus to the melody of National Emblem, you will see that the two words "you we" are set to a couple of notes that are held two beats and three beats, respectively. They are prominent notes and demand prominent words. The words this writer has given them sound all out of place. In the next phrase, the two words in the corresponding place are "bright red," which leads one to think that the writer is going to speak of something of a violently crimson hue, perhaps the tassel. Another fault is inconsistency in the use of the second person pronoun. In the first three lines he uses the pronoun "you," but then he feels it is more poetic to say "thy" and "thine," so he does. The repeated phrase in the first line is also weak.

Perhaps our readers will now appreciate, from the few criticisms offered above, how painstakingly and carefully each one of the numerous manuscripts received had to be gone over and studied. It's the little things that make the big differences. This has been said in many ways, but the great painter Michael Angelo phrased it best of all. When asked why he gave so much of his time to "trifles," he replied, "Trifles make perfection, and perfection is no trifle." The writers who paid no attention to "trifles" had to bear the consequences of losing consideration for their efforts. The prize-winning lyric was as near perfection in "trifles" as could be found.

Follow the words from the verse. The first line makes a statement and the second gives a reason for the statement, and the reason is a mighty true as well as a striking one. The following lines of the verse are on the same subject, and they bring in a rhyme, "old" and "told," just where it is most effective, because the music demands it. The chorus, as mentioned previously, is simple in construction. It is divided into four equal parts, one for each color and the fourth for the final summing up. In expressing the meaning of each color, Mr. Levenson uses subjects that are live and interesting and that always will be so. For instance, red, symbol of courage, stands for soldiers. That brings up a picture in our minds which could not be inspired by the mention of the mere quality of courage. So with the mothers and the jackies. These terms are so intimately connected with the lives of each one of us that we have no difficulty in getting a sympathetic understanding of the idea.

Notice that the words fit the melody perfectly, without the addition or subtraction of a single note from the arrangement as published in the August MELODY. They read easily and are singable. You have often noticed that in some songs the words are hard to sing. Not so with these, they roll out smoothly. Most of all, notice how natural and easy the phrasing is. In the lyric by Mr. Trucksess you will find a line as follows: "Hear the story, old and true." Putting the adjectives after the noun is permitted in poetry, but it is more natural to say, "the old and true story." In Mr. Levenson's lyric you will find practically none of this stilted,

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Robert Levenson

The Clever Young Word-Rider Who Came in First in Melody's "National Emblem" Lyric Race and Captured the One-Hundred-Dollar Prize Purse

ON solid flesh (in this instance there is much solidity involved) the physical substance which is casting a typographical shadow as caption for this article represents the man who has lyrically linked his name with "The National Emblem," thereby not only winning publicity, but the $100 cash prize offered by Publisher Walter Jacobs for the set of words best fitting the spirit and rhythm of that imperishable march-melody. In its new vocal form the big March is to be known as "That's What the Red, White and Blue Means" ("To Ev'ry True Heart in the U. S. A.").

Presumably, in the minds of the readers, there at once arises the questions: Who, and from where, is Mr. Levenson; what else has he written, and what are some points of his personality? Regarding the "who," we will first quote the opening words of his own humorously optimistic contribution to the January (1918) issue of MELODY under title of "The Spell of Song-Writing:" "Just by way of a formal self-introduction, permit me to announce myself as one of those many, many persons who try to write popular songs." That is absolutely true, as far as his self-conception is concerned, but as it is not the whole truth, let us outline the "who" according to the perception of others.

Robert Levenson

To the physical eyes of his friends and associates, Robert Levenson is a big fellow with an impressive physique which makes him appear somewhat older than he is in actual years (he has seen but twenty-one birth anniversaries), yet beneath the exterior of the *man*, and hidden from casual view, is the exuberant spirit of the *boy* who will play with life as a football and win his goal. To the mental visualization of those who really know him, however, Mr. Levenson is a likeable sort of a chap of congenial personality, possessing a keen sense of the humorous in life while sensing its pathos and tragedy; somewhat of a dreamer by nature, yet never permitting dreams to over-shadow the waking, living and working; endowed with an inherent inclination towards the higher and more beautiful in poetry, prose and song, yet scraping easy acquaintance with the lighter and more popular; lastly, a Bostonian throughout every inch and pound of him, and those are many.

In more explicit detail, Mr. Levenson as a boy, began his school life in Boston, completing it as a boy-man in classic old Cambridge just across the historic Charles River. He attended the Boston Latin School for the higher grades, graduating from that sterling institution in 1913. While at this school, true to literary instinct and aptitude, he was the assistant editor of "The Register" (the official school paper), for which he wrote his first (and in all human probability by no means his last) love story. After his graduation from the Boston Latin School he entered Harvard College, where he studied for two years, leaving the famous old University in 1915. Freed from actual pedagogic restrictions for a time he "took to the road," traveling about a year for a music publisher. At the present time of life he is following the more prosaic line of the mercantile, although never turning the cold shoulder of business to an insistent muse.

If Mr. Levenson looked upon future chances from the view-point of some few of his past experiences in writing, winning a "century mark" in dollars as a prize probably was far from his thoughts when he decided to take a plunge in the "National Emblem" word-contest. Nevertheless it was only natural (call it destined, if you wish) that he should win, for outside of song-contests he seems to have possessed a happy faculty of winning prizes all along the line. At the Boston Latin School he walked away with first prize in classical studies, did the same thing for excellence in bugle-playing (note the musical tendency), and won prizes in declamation—here again winning, as Hamlet said, by "words, words, words!" We likewise understand that with words he has built a sales-winner in his perhaps best known song-lyric, "My Belgian Rose" (published by Leo Feist).

Right here arises a point of some pertinency, namely, that a close acquaintance with and a strong love for the classics does not seem to preclude a possibility of writing well in the popular. To the contrary, and don't forget he was a prize winner, it is possible that in one may lie the secret of his success with the other, for underlying the most of Mr. Levenson's published popular lyrics the discerning reader will detect certain little graces or touches that could come only from aknowledge of the higher forms in writing—a little thread of story or a lilt in words not generally conceded to, nor usually found in, the more popular forms.

Concerning that which Mr. Levenson really has accomplished lyrically during his short term of apprenticeship to his "muse-lady," if we are to rely only upon what he states of himself in the semi-humorous plaint running through his contribution to the January columns of MELODY, the sum of his accomplishments is "negligible" (his own word). On the other hand, however, if we may accept the printed copies of his song-words as evidence, then "negligible" becomes *langible* and proves a material quantity of more than ordinary quality. Listen for a moment to his own little self-insinuation of failure.

"For quite a few years I have followed the *muse* of song-writing, if there be any such lady, like the children who followed the luring music of the Pied Piper of Hamlin. Again and again I have sought to win her with honeyed words and accents sweet that—to me, at least—seemed to flow as mellifluously as a singing brook, but almost all in vain. One song was too weak in some spots; another was too good for a ten-cent number and not good enough for a thirty-cent number; that one didn't have a new idea, while this one (the manuscript of which my economical mother has used to line her pantry shelves) lacked some of the 'essential elements of popularity'—whatever that may mean."

For a word-writer all of the above self-confession is becomingly modest—incidentally modesty is one of Mr. Levenson's most pronounced personal traits—but as it does not tell the whole truth we must depend upon his published song-words for cold facts of accomplishment. As with most song-writers (and composers), Mr. Levenson undoubtedly has been "stalled," "dumped" and "turned down" by so-called "callous-hearted," "cold-blooded," "close-fisted" publishers a sufficient number of times to make his head steady enough for an A-1 aviation ace. Nevertheless (despite loups, spirals, pockets, air-bumps or other wind gymnastics), he has kept his lyric-motor well "tuned up" and humming, held his word-plane true in hand and is steadily mounting to the upper air-stratas of song success.

While it is undoubtedly true that more than one of Mr. Levenson's lyric air-flights may have been estimated by some publishers as "not good enough for a thirty-cent-number" trip, one of them has been accepted by Publisher Jacobs as the successful candidate for a world-wide, one-hundred-dollar-cash-prize flying. In a lyric nutshell—whether in a modern airplane or astride fabled old Pegasus (the mythological airhorse of the ancients), Robert Levenson has made a dozen (lacking one) successful flights and here is the record: "My Belgian Rose," "My Little Gypsy Wanda," "I'm Knitting a Rosary," "The Mississippi Volunteers," "When the Lilies Bloom in France Again," "Beautiful Girl of Somewhere," "He's Got the Gimmies," "Just Keep the Roses A-Blooming," "In the Old Front Parlor," "Somewhere in Erin" and "THAT'S WHAT THE RED, WHITE AND BLUE MEANS" ("To Ev'ry True Heart in the U. S. A.").

Why They Didn't Win the Prize

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poetical phrasing. Read it apart from the music and you will see how natural, how much like prose, it sounds. And yet the writer has taken advantage of every opportunity that was offered for double-rhyming, in addition to having the single-syllable rhymes at the end of every other line!

We know that our readers will now see, in view of the facts pointed out in this article, why we believe we have in Mr. Levenson's prize-winning lyric words "that are good enough to endure and that will become popular as spontaneously as possible."

Just Between You and Me

GEORGE L. COBB'S own corner, wherein he answers questions, criticises manuscripts, and discusses the various little matters close to the hearts of Melody readers—all of a more or less "personal" nature, and for that very reason of interest to all.

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THEN AND NOW

ONCE upon a time when pianos really cared who played 'em, there was a young teller in a little up-state village who used to tickle the ivories in a careless manner and ev'rything just as easy as anything. He couldn't read a note by note nor could he scale a scale correctly, but, Oh Goshallhemlock, how he could play! He seemed to see the notes by ear and sight 'em by sound, always tearing off a lot of new stuff that even the home-folks didn't recognize. Sometimes, when the week-end drew nigh and Saturday night drifted around as a sudsy reminder of the "Knight of the Bath," he'd drape his shape over a piano stool that was very clubby with the piano in the candy store next door to "Hooverses Hardware Empo-*re*-um," and would tear off big chunks of his own originating to entertain the local yokels, or yokel locals.

It was on one of these aforesaid soap nights that a villian who looked as if he hooked up with one of our larger cities, his map framed in horn-rimmed glasses and his pedal extremities encased in spats, sat at a table sipping hot chocolate and our young piano-wizard's music at the same time, while ofttimes he would gaze awful uncouthly with an incipient sipping expression towards some of the village belles who had rung in on the sipping entertainment.

Three weeks later, in a music store in a nearby burg, our young and callow friend of the piano-tickling propensities heard one of *his* original tickles played by a big blond behind the counter. Three months later found him in New York City, sleeping in a hall bedroom o' nights and haunting tin-pan alley by days. Three years later, he was cleaning up much money by writing popular songs that were popular.

MORAL: *Keep your lamps trimmed, else you'll get trimmed.*

J. O. D., Buffalo, N. Y.

When the Irish Navy has a Hebrew Admiral and wool grows on hydraulic rams, then and not before, will your song, "I Have Corns" get by. This number is the worst piece of "nuttedness" that has ever crossed the vision of yours truly. Your words are vapid and almost disgusting and your music and its arrangement is way beyond crudeness. I don't wish you any hard luck, Doc, but if you ever turn over another song like unto this, I'll put a jinx on you so all your children will be born acrobats. "Mother I Am Coming Home," while having very old fashioned music and a poor arrangement, is a good ballad.

G. T. B., Reno, Nev.

You've got a huge flock of unadulterated nerve when you try to tell me that your musical setting of "The Rosary" is as good if not better than Nevins'. You go on to state that three big publishers have turned this song down, but not on account of its merit. This statement savors of the male bovine, in other words, bull. If you are so anxious to see this piece in print, publish it yourself, then you'll know why it was turned down. Frankly, this number has no melody to brag about and the way it is put together is pathetic. What you need is an ear for music and an operation on your ego.

L. P. K., New York City.

"You're All the World to Me," while not the most original title in the world, hits the bull's-eye dead in the centre as being a fine ballad. The words are above criticism and the music, while a trifle heavy, is really beautiful and correctly written. Would advise you to put this song one whole tone higher before you submit it anywhere.

W. M. T., Rogers, Mich.

"There's a Heart in the Heart of Yankeeland," etc., is a pretty war ballad lyric that in general character is slightly reminiscent of "Girl in the Heart of Maryland" and "Trail of the Lonesome Pine." Nevertheless, combined with a thoroughly up-to-date melody, this poem would make a good song. I wish you luck with this number.

C. K. F., Peoria, Ill.

"Where Have I Met You Before?" is a very catchy little number that could be used by boy and girl and singing and dancing acts. Your words are clever and full of punches and your music, while not any too original, is all to the merry. In submitting this song you'd better add a few more verses, as they are short, and acts fairly grab songs of this kind that have lots of punch lines.

A. D. M., Utica, N. Y.

"If War Is Hell, What Is Matrimony?" is one solid laugh from stem to stern. Must be that you belong to the Club. This song might never sell, but I venture to say that some publisher will be glad to put it in his catalog. Have a better arrangement made of your melody and your song will be all there.

O. P. Mc F., Harlford City, Ind.

"After the Kaiser" is a flop from start to finish. The words are patriotic but fail to reach any given point. The music and the arrangement is crude and very amateurish. It was a waste of money to ever publish this song as you have no doubt found out by this time.

A. B. P. A., Atlanta, Ga.

"We'll Win the Victory." If you had had someone who knew something about music go over this song before you had it published you might have had a better number to handle. Your words are fairly good but your music is absolutely terrible. Your time is incorrect and you make too many repetitions of your melody. The arrangement is difficult and incorrect. Better turn the hose on this piece twelve minutes after you set it on fire.

O. R. D., Pittsburgh, Pa.

"Let Us Be Joyful and Welcome He Whom Is Returning." Yea, old top, let's kill the overweighted calf, have mother look over the beans and have pop put on a collar and tie, and "welcome he whom is" caming back to his abode. Your music to this marvelous song isn't so rotten, but your title and poem has about as much pep and punch as a dog catcher with hookworms would have on duty. Up with the flag, boys, it's going dry.

Miss P. G. F., Chicago, Ill.

"How I Miss You Sammy Boy" is a very pretty high-class ballad and could be made popular with a certain class of music buyers. If it were written in a more popular style think this song would have a wider appeal and sale if published. The words are very fine as they are, but the music lacks originality. The arrangement could be vastly improved in places.

F. E. M., E. Akron, Ohio.

"Happy Days in Dixie" and "When I Get to Birmingham" are two very unoriginal song poems. They contain nothing but what has been done over and over again. "I Want To Be in Honolulu" is a first-class lyric in every respect and with a catchy melody could be made into a regular song. "Couldn't You Tell I Loved You?" is a fair ballad minus a punch. "When It's Summertime in Dixieland" is on a par with your first two poems. When a publisher accepts a song on a royalty basis the number is his property.

E. T. C., Middleton, Mich.

You have rhyme, my dear sir, in the three poems submitted but no reason that I can discover. In your lyric, "Your Personal Charm," you start off all right about the bright sunny day, etc., and then when you and your dame are comfortably seated by the old mill pond she asks you to tie the can to vile weed, tobacco. This is really a wonderful idea for a ballad, but I don't believe it would take. "Your Picture in Our Album" would make a splendid "mock" ballad, as it is just as ridiculous as your first one. "If the Kaiser's Brains Are Dynamite" is a nutty effusion, that's all. You'd better nip this poem producing passion of yours in the bud if the above are samples of your work. No, I do not consider a musical education necessary to a lyric writer but I do think they should be able to spell so their poetry won't smell like —— well!

G. J. L., Gillespie, Ill.

"Illinois" is a regular song now. Your music is thoroughly up-to-date and extremely original and catchy. Whether "Illinois" will ever appeal as a title is a question, but the song is up to snuff. Hope you land it somewhere.

Miss S. D. W., Canton, Ohio.

"Love Is a Treasure Rare" contains all that is necessary to make a high-class ballad. Outside of a few errors in spelling the poem is more than ordinarily good. The music is charming. The range is perfect and the melody and arrangement are above criticism. I sincerely hope that this song will be accepted by some house and meet with the success that it deserves.

Dr. G. T. O., Los Angeles, Calif.

You've got the right idea, Doctor, nix on the war songs. Anyway they'll have to stop writing them soon because the Yanks are headed straight for Berlin, and they'll get there. Your ballad "Back Home," while not an original title, has many new lines and rhymes and if combined with the right melody this number could be made a good seller. No. I wouldn't put Dr. before your name on manuscripts. Folks won't know whether you're a horse or a foot doctor.

B. P. O. E., Lincoln, Neb.

I'll bet you're an Elk if your initials mean anything. Got your letter telling me all about the song you were sending in for criticism, but you either forgot to write the piece or else you failed to send it. Give my regards to Bryan and tell him we'll all be girding our loins with a white ribbon before long. Put a little syrup in mine, Phil.

F. L. P., Jackson, Mich.

"Over the Top" is a lively military march containing a liberal amount of originality and a lot of force. This composition would make

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Interpreting the Photoplay

(Note: Nos. 23 and 24 of Mr. Norton's "Interpretative Movie Music" Series appear on pages 19 and 20 of this issue)

By Harry Norton

PRACTICE

HOW many movie players ever do any real practicing aside from their work in the theatre? Because you play five or six hours per day you don't need any other practice; is that the idea? Then you have the wrong idea.

The photoplay musician's daily routine of playing in the theatre does not constitute practice in the generally accepted sense of that word as applied to the study of music. Practice as applied to the performance of a musical composition upon the piano or other instrument, means the study of that piece and the necessary repetition of those passages containing technical difficulties until all obstacles are overcome and a smooth rendition results, free from mistakes, hesitation or stumbling.

It is quite obvious therefore that a musician cannot and does not practice while playing a picture show. If he were to do so, and indulge in five or ten-time repetitions of particularly "sticky" passages, the manager and audience would object and suggest that he practice outside of business hours.

This article suggests that idea, also. While it is a simple matter to read at sight and play correctly the current popular songs, one-steps and fox-trots, the picture musician should aspire to play a better class of music. A better grade of music will require some preparation in advance of its performance in public in justice to yourself, the composition and its composer.

No matter how clever you may consider yourself at sight reading and interpretation, you know well how many times you have glossed over or faked a measure or two rather than take a chance on hitting a "bunch of blues." You "get by" very nicely, but you didn't play as written and you will probably continue to play that same number many times thereafter without being sufficiently interested in your art to practice the "tricky" places that you know were not properly executed. That is the form of practice which should be done by the theatre or business musician. It does not require much time and it will increase the confidence and self-respect of any performer to know that he is playing accurately and conscientiously.

For illustration let us take a Dvorak number, "Silhouette," opus 8, No. 2; simple in construction and within the scope of any ordinary pianist until the cadenza is reached. Then Mr. Player will wish that he had known what was coming and had just peeked at it in advance. There are only two measures in that cadenza, but unless it has been practiced and the fingering decided upon, the execution of it will not be smooth, and if the performer is not a rapid reader in the key of D-flat he will either fake or omit the cadenza entirely. To master that number it is necessary to practice but the two measures referred to. How much better to do that and feel confident than to "play at" the piece and "fall down" or hesitate every time at that place.

In your audience may be someone who can play that number correctly and in his opinion you are a "faker." Continue to treat other and numerous compositions in the same manner and you will soon be branded as an "almost" musician in the opinions of many people. Never let a few measures of any composition be your "bete noir." When you reach the point of struggle, tackle that part and "put it on the mat" after a good wrestle.

Musical magazines frequently have articles on the subject of "Practicing." Their suggestions are intended principally for students who are able to devote several hours a day to practice. One who has commercialized his musical ability by playing for motion pictures several hours each day cannot be expected to devote hours to practice, but it is possible to give a little time to the smoothing of rough places in our work, of which we are cognizant.

In the September, 1917, issue of the "Etude," under the caption, "Why do you do it?" the following appeared: "You smear and blur a run because you will not correct some little defect in the fingering; you know there is a chord that you have not played correctly; you go through a piece "any old way" instead of counting time; you are defacing and destroying the divine art of music: Why do you do it?" There were no answers to the above questions, but the writer will venture one: Why do we do all those things? Because we are lazy, lack ambition and don't care.

Most musicians look upon practice as drudgery. It is work, of course, but not drudgery if you have ambition to reach a high goal and consider it only as a means toward an end.

The technique and mechanics of music are not melodious nor soul-satisfying, but they are very necessary in order to proceed to the point of melody and satisfactory performance. Too many associate practice with the early stages of their education, and after acquiring some proficiency feel that they are graduated from further playing of scales, finger exercises and arpeggi. That attitude is erroneous. One never becomes so proficient that he may neglect an occasional review of the technical material which brought him to perfection, or near it.

Pianists should not neglect the practice of scales, especially those with exceptional fingering, such as F-sharp minor, D-sharp minor, G-flat and a few others. There are plenty of melodious numbers which also furnish technical exercise material.

Several of the incidental numbers published in MELODY are good for practice purposes. Numbers 5, 6, 8, 10, 13, 16, 18, 20 and 22 are fundamentally technical and, if played just as written, speed increasing with familiarity, are very useful for keeping the fingers in condition. Number 16, "Storm Scene," is a left-hand study in chromatics which, if persisted in, will develop the power of the left hand that is often neglected.

In order to play incidental music similar to the numbers mentioned above, it is very necessary to keep up on one's technique. The execution of such numbers depends wholly upon the fingering. The reading of them is very simple, but attention must be given to proper fingering if a smooth performance is desired.

Nothing has been written for piano by any reputable composer which is not playable. Patient practice will overcome all seeming difficulties, provided the performer has a fair working knowledge of musical principles. A pianist with very limited training cannot aspire to perform Liszt's "Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2," or any composition utterly beyond his capabilities, but however meagre one's foundation of musical knowledge he should aim for perfection within his limitations.

The writer has never been able to comprehend the nervousness or dread with which many otherwise capable players approach a number written in four, five or six sharps. It is due to lack of practice and nothing else. Like "Calamity Jane"—"they know they can't do it" and as long as they feel that way about it they never will do it.

It is no harder to play in the key of B-major (5 sharps) than in B-flat major (2 flats), if one is familiar with the scale and chords of the former. Why go through one's musical life in fear of the occasion of being called upon to play in five or six sharps when practice will eliminate all dread of those signatures?

It is so well-known that pianists in general are afraid of sharp keys that composers and arrangers of popular music take into consideration that fact and avoid writing numbers with a signature of more than two sharps. The only reason for this aversion to sharps is that players have not practiced the scales and chords of all the major and minor keys. The keys of E, B, and F-sharp are brilliant, and if used as frequently as E-flat, B-flat and F they are no more difficult. Practice in those dreaded keys will make a performer at ease when he encounters them.

If a composition in F-sharp be practiced as faithfully as another written in F, the player finds that the signature is not to blame for any seeming difficulty. Lack of familiarity with E, B, F-sharp and their relative minors—C-sharp, G-sharp and D-sharp, is the only reason that players in general are afraid of them.

What's the answer? PRACTICE.

JACOBS' INCIDENTAL SERIES

THE two incidental numbers contained in this issue, numbers 23 and 24, complete the writer's contributions to MELODY for twelve months. Most of the earlier issues of MELODY have been sold out —are now permanently out of print.

In response to a demand for back numbers of the magazine by movie players, who wish to secure a complete set of the incidental music, Publisher Jacobs has decided to reprint the entire series of 24 numbers in two parts—twelve numbers to each part or set. The style of reproduction will be an innovation in music of this kind. Each number will be printed on one side of the sheet of paper and the twelve sheets in each set will be bound and enclosed in a serviceable cover. This idea leaves it optional with the purchaser whether he wishes to use the music in book form or, by simply cutting the sheets apart, have the collection in loose-leaf style—twelve separate sheets, one number on each sheet. The price of each set will be 50 cents.

There having also been considerable demand for orchestra arrangements of this series of incidental music, each will be published for small orchestra (8 parts and piano), price 30 cents, with additional parts for full orchestra at 5 cents each, including organ part. The orchestra arrangements are by Mr. R. E. Hildreth, arranger of all the Jacobs publications, which is sufficient guarantee of the excellence of the work.

The incidental series will continue in MELODY, two numbers each month, numbers 25 and 26 to appear in the December issue.

CLINCHES HIS CITIZENSHIP

Although a staunch American by birth, residence, registration, conduct and future intentions, to clinch his citizenship beyond question and to avoid any possible hint or suggestion of Teutonic taint or stigma because of its German form, Mr. C. Arthur Pfeiffer (music publisher of Quincy, Ill.) has legally Anglo-Americanized his name and hereafter will register, vote, work and live under the legalized spelling of F-I-F-E-R. In past upheavals of war American fifers have rendered valuable musical and fighting services, as witness the "Spirit of '76."

Chicago Syncopations

By Axel W. Christensen

LAST week I attended a dinner given by the Chicago branch of the War Camp Community Service in the Italian Room of Stevens' Restaurant. This was given exclusively to the entertainers who had given their services during the past season in entertaining the soldiers and sailors at the camps within a radius of a couple of hundred miles of Chicago, and it was a revelation to me when I entered that dining room. There must have been no less than four hundred persons there, all entertainers and mostly all of the female sex, which would seem to prove that the women are more entertaining than men—I'll say they are, anyway.

After a delightful luncheon (there was one man assigned to each table of about twenty ladies) we heard some real thrilling experiences at first hand from a girl who had been entertaining the boys almost in the very front-line trenches. There were some speeches by officials high up in the war service, a hearty word of thanks for all the performers present who had donated their services during the past season, and I am proud to say that I had the presence of mind, just before we adjourned, to suggest a vote of thanks to the chairman, Miss Huyck, for her splendid efforts in giving us the opportunity to do a little bit now and then for the cause, which suggestion was carried out in a rousing manner.

On my way back to the office, being in haste, I forgot to take off the white silk badge with the word "Entertainer," which still fluttered from my lapel. In fact I had forgotten it until in the elevator I heard a couple of young women remark, "Well he don't look like one—I wonder if he *can* entertain?" To which I replied with a bet that I could make them laugh anyway—and whether it was on account of my personal appearance or not, I don't know, but I won that bet.

Guy F. Lee, who is with the Chicago Tribune, has written words to a Liberty Loan song called "Pushing On." John Philip Sousa wrote the music.

"Oh Moon of a Summer Night" is a new song with a regular war tinge that is going over nicely in Chicago.

"Every Eye Is on You," a new popular song, is attracting attention here.

Egbert Van Alstyne is doing a lot for Remick's "united plug" on "Smiles," which is one of that firm's biggest hits.

Henry Waterson, of Waterson, Berlin and Snyder, expects to visit his Chicago office soon.

Rocco Vocco, the Chicago manager for Feist, claims that the catalog of that firm was never in better shape.

Ray Samuels, who has been known for years in big time vaudeville as the "Blue Streak of Ragtime," is playing the Wilson Avenue Theatre in Chicago, this being her first small time date in five years. No doubt the salary is big though.

Merle Dappert, now first lieutenant with the American Expeditionary Forces, was known as a rising song writer and a clever ragtime pianist before the war. In addition to the many duties that are part of an officer's work he has made good use of his talent in the army and has entertained countless numbers of his comrades with his piano playing. He writes in for more music for the boys. Therefore music publishers should take notice and send professional copies to Merle Dappert, 1st Lt., Co. I., 130 Inf., A. E. F., France. Dappert in his letter to me says: "I'm too busy to write to the publishers separately, so if you have a lot of professional copies, or old stuff that's good, and don't need same, wrap me up a bundle and mail it to me and I'll kill one extra German when I go over the top. We are now trying to keep our men entertained with ragtime during the lonesome hours when we are behind the lines. We are now at a place where we can do it, and the winter is going to be depressing—but we can help out with music. If it isn't asking too much you will be doing a great favor and any orchestrations you send I'll turn over to the regimental orchestra. We are giving 'em 'ell and are hoping to be home before so very long."

Peter F. Meyer, the one time star contributor to the Ragtime Review, writes from France that he is searching, with 2,000,000 others, for the same thing—namely, the Kaiser's goat. More power to him.

David Reichstein

The photograph presented immediately above is that of Dave Reichstein, one of the pioneer teachers of ragtime in Chicago. He started in when both he and the ragtime industry were young and has reaped the success his hard and faithful efforts merited. As his school is located close to one of the large government ammunition plants he is helping to keep up the morale of our industrial army by teaching a great part of the workers to play ragtime, and incidentally he accepts many dollars of the present high wages in return for his services.

The photograph of J. M. Roche shows that famous pianist of Springfield, Ill., as he looked before he put on his uniform. Uncle Sam's uniform may have improved his looks—I don't know—but it certainly cannot improve his skill as an ivory teaser.

Robert Marine, of New York ragtime fame, writes in to the effect that there has been born to him a daughter.

Edw. Mellinger has purchased a new bungalow in St. Louis. More ragtime money.

Ray Worley is reporting a record breaking business in the Cleveland school in spite of the Liberty Loan drive and other obstacles that now present themselves.

Hannah Harris of Milwaukee has turned her school over to her assistant, finding it necessary to go to her home in Merrill, Wisconsin, for her health.

Board S. Williams, one of the star pupils of Mr. Corbitt's school in Boston, has accepted a four months' engagement at Hot Springs, Ark., which speaks well for Mr. Corbitt's teaching.

Mary Shugart, private secretary and cashier at a Chicago ragtime emporium, is sick with the influenza.

Edna Morton, who teaches ragtime in Chicago, told me the other day that her lesson periods were booked so full that she could not find space to squeeze in a visiting card unless somebody quit coming. Whether it's due to her ability as a teacher or to her personality, or to both, they won't stop coming.

F. C. Corbitt of Boston expects soon to leave for Chicago for a visit to the schools of syncopation in that city. He has a way of whooping things up that makes him a welcome visitor. It seems that he had taken a dormant school and made it come to life in no time. His colleagues in Boston call him the life saver.

Edythe Horne will take complete charge of the Boston school as soon as Mr. Corbitt leaves and from her past record she is fully competent to do this, having proved herself a tireless and loyal worker, in addition to being a talented and brilliant musician.

Miss Irene Little of the Boston School had to leave suddenly for Washington, D. C., to attend the sick bed of her fiance, who is in the service.

David Reichstein of Chicago has engaged a new assistant and increased his advertising, which points to a prosperous school.

John Scheck is lucky in having married a charming girl, formerly Miss Moe, who was for years an instructor in a Chicago school, so that now while he is making shells for the government Mrs. Scheck runs the school at one hundred per cent efficiency.

S. A. Thomas, operating a school on the north side of Chicago, has recently engaged the services of Miss Sloan, a pianist and teacher of much ability.

Esther Gomberg, the hustling Duluth teacher of ragtime, on her way to New York, passed through here a few days ago, accompanied by her talented brother, a lad of only eleven years, who plays the great masterpieces like a master. The young pianist gave an impromptu recital in our studio, which was a revelation to us all, and when it comes to piano playing Master Gomberg can make a lot of us look sick. He is so clever that the famous Epstein of New York has agreed to take him as a pupil free of all tuition. Esther just escaped the terrible fire that raged in Duluth and surrounding country just after she had left.

Francis Roberts has taken charge of the organ department for the Chicago School of Popular Music and will fill this position with credit, as he is an organist of foremost rank.

Charlotte Light of Cincinnati is conducting an extensive advertising campaign.

Harriet Smith is just too busy with her numerous pupils in Detroit to write us this month, which we consider a good sign. That's the stuff Hattie; get the money now and write to your friends in the summer time when business is dull.

Esther Caldwell, who teaches artistic syncopation in Des Moines, has apparently overcome the opposition that was first made by a classical few who thought they would keep ragtime out of that city, judging by the numerous pupils she is enrolling these days.

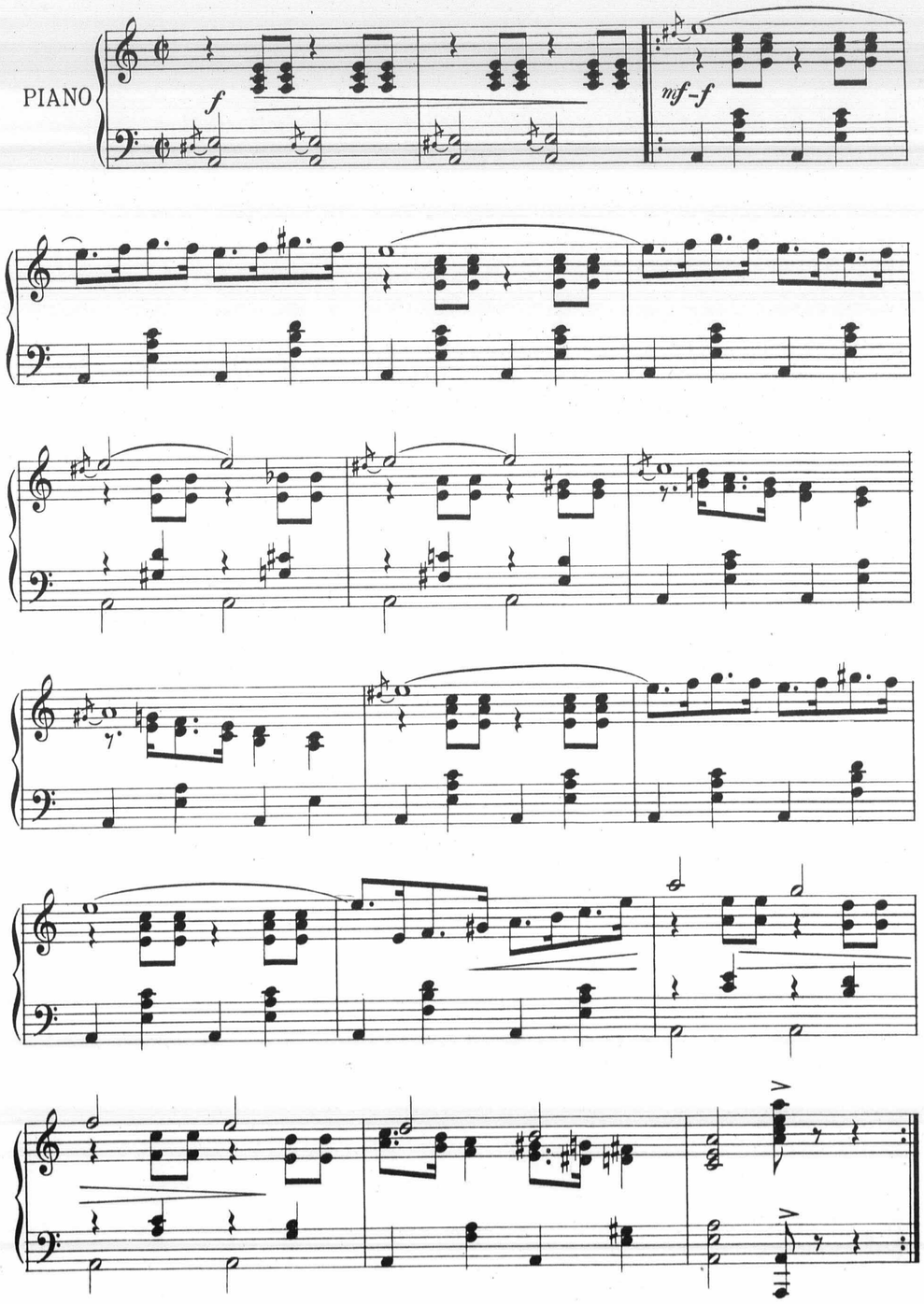
Mrs. Van Tress of Houston reports a splendid season so far.

Continued on page 21

Calcutta

ORIENTAL FOX TROT

GEORGE L. COBB



mf

f

ff

MELODY

TRIO

f

mf

f

mf

f

ffz

MELODY

That's What The Red, White And Blue Means

(To Ev'ry True Heart in the U.S.A.)

Set to the Music of the World-Famous "NATIONAL EMBLEM MARCH"

Words by
ROBERT LEVENSON

Music by
E. E. BAGLEY

Tempo di Marcia

PIANO

ff

Ev - 'ry stripe that's in the flag means some-thing dear to me, For
Ev - 'ry-one that's in the land should keep in mem - 'ry clear Just

ffz *mf*

it's the em - blem of our land and of de-moc - ra - cy; And ev - 'ry time I see Old Glo - ry
what the mean-ing is of that old flag we love so dear; For ev - 'ry sin-gle word is thrill-ing

Then I want to tell the sto - ry Just as in the days of old the tale was told to me:
'Cause it shows we all are will - ing When there comes a time for it to do our bit with cheer.

CHORUS

Red is for the sol-dier boys, their musk-ets swing - ing, while they're sing - ing songs of

mf 2d time *ff*

cheer; White is for the moth-ers, while their hearts are pin - ing smiles are

shin - ing through each tear; Blue is for the jack-ies on the o-cean sail - ing,

— nev - er fail - ing once to win the day That's what the Red and

White and Blue means to ev-'ry true heart in the U. S. A. Red is A.

1 2

ff *ffz*

The Fire-Fly And The Star

SCÈNE DE BALLET

NORMAN LEIGH

Allegretto

PIANO

mf L.H.

rall. *accel. poco a poco molto*

Moderato

f *rall.* *mf*

rall. *a tempo*

rit. *a tempo*

Allegretto

f

poco rit.

a tempo *rall.* *a tempo*

p *poco rit.*

f *mf*

Moderato

rall.

a tempo

rit. *a tempo*

TRIO

f

L.H.

rall.

p

Amoroso

molto rall. *mf*

a tempo

MELODY

allarg.

Allegretto

mf

L.H.

rall. *accel. poco a poco molto*

Moderato

f *rall.* *mf*

rall.

a tempo

rit.

a tempo

molto accel. poco a poco

f

ff

MELODY

Piano Solo Arrangement of Chorus of

"A Good Man Is Hard To Find"

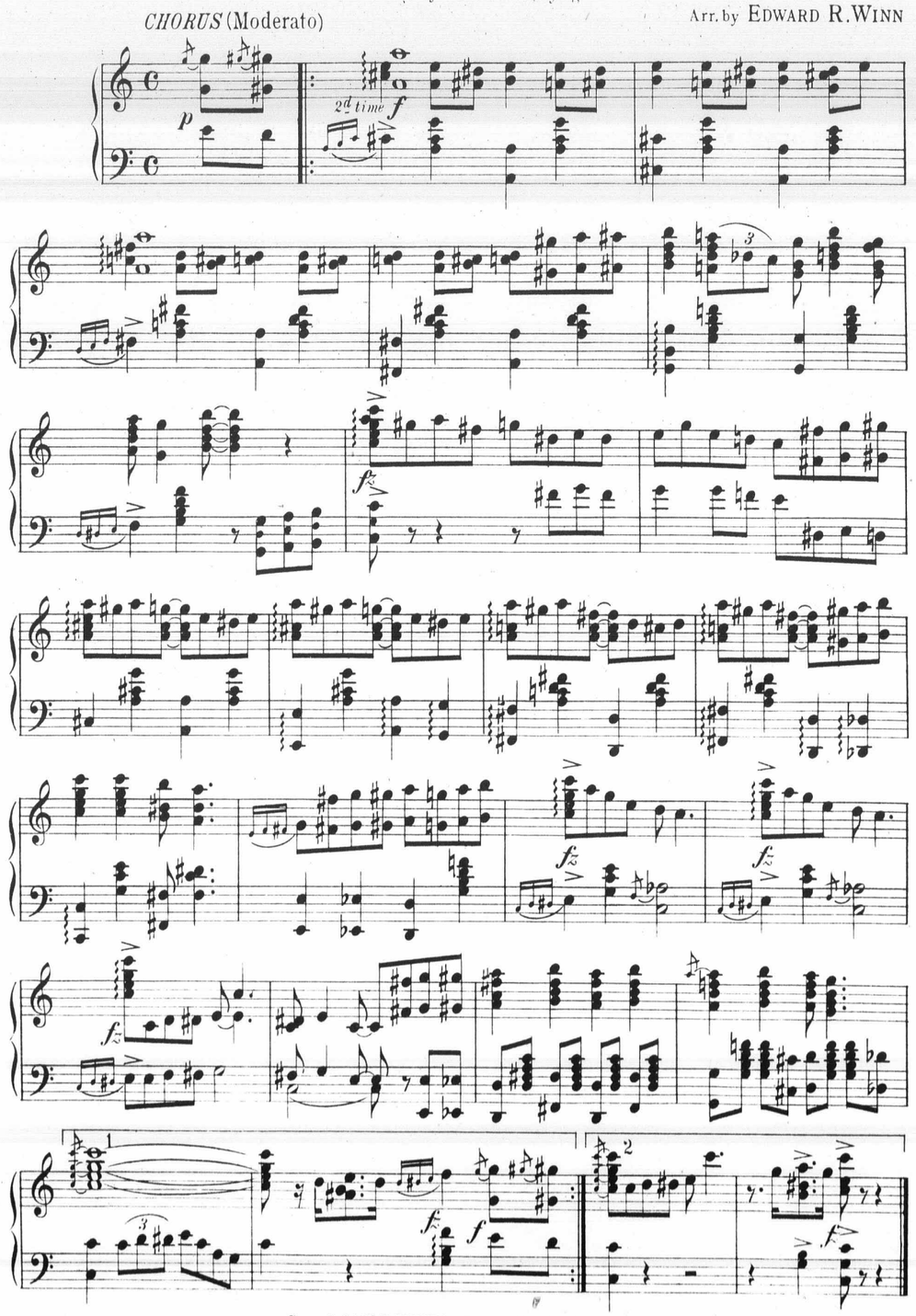
Containing a few "Blues" and some Jazz effects

In Winn Style of Piano Playing

Words and Music by
EDDIE GREEN.

Arr. by EDWARD R. WINN

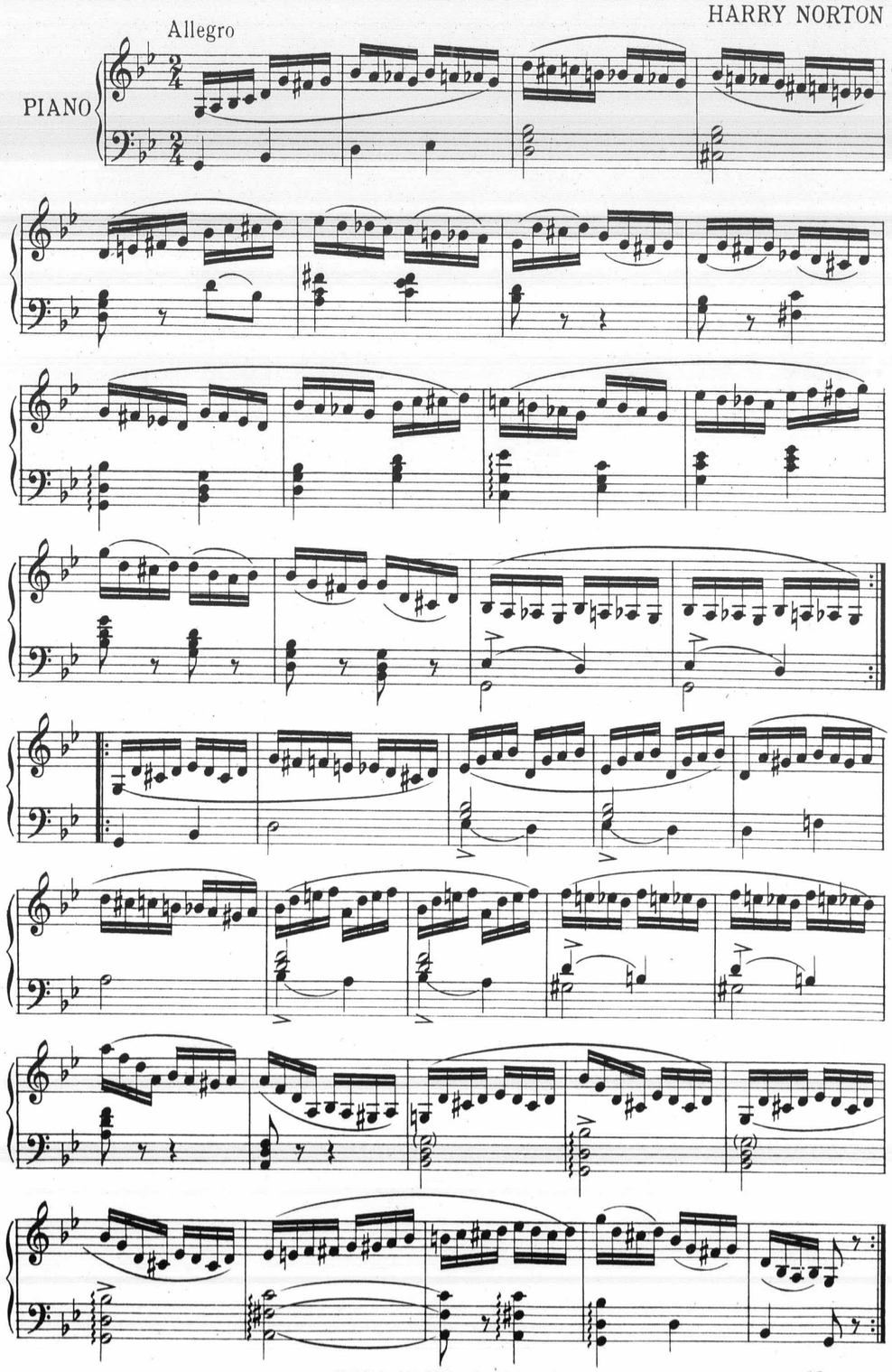
CHORUS (Moderato)



Nº 23

Hurry

HARRY NORTON



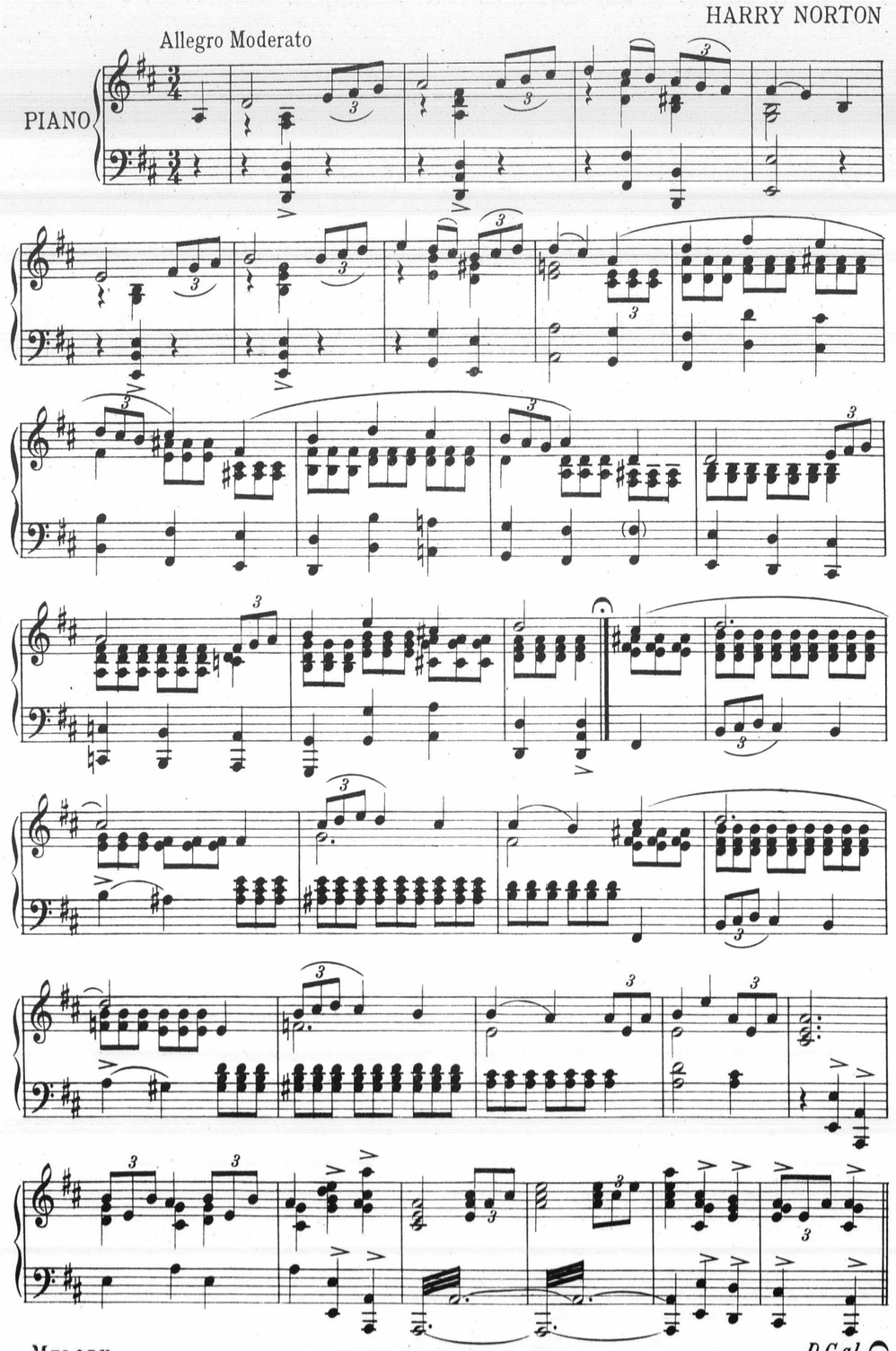
Published by Walter Jacobs, Boston

No. 24 Grandioso Triomphale

HARRY NORTON

Allegro Moderato

PIANO



Published by Walter Jacobs, Boston

D.C.al

Chicago Syncopations

Continued from page 8

Mr. Briggs at Kansas City teaches not only ragtime piano playing, but voice and all wind and string instruments as well. He's bound to do well.

Bessie Leithmann, who has taught ragtime in Philadelphia for so long that we dimly remember the day she started—she was a girl in her teens then—had a record-breaking week the first of this month, the best week financially in the history of her school, she claims.

Edw. A. Larsen, a cousin of mine, writes from France: "I have been getting MELODY every month and I sure appreciate it as do all the boys here. I always give it to the French lady pianist at the theatre here and you should hear her murder those dandy ragtime selections and other piano pieces you print in the magazine."

Miss Vivian Hiles dropped in the office while I was getting this matter ready for friend Jacobs. She has been playing piano in all the principal cities, such as Oshkosh, Fon du lac, Wausau, etc. Her work has been in great demand in the cabarets and hotels and she is now going hunting at Winnecone Lake, Wis., after which she will return to Chicago to pursue her piano studies—I'm too modest to mention the name of the instructor.

POPULAR SONGS COME TO THE FORE

THAT war is no respecter of castes, and it is fully evident this season that popular music is achieving a vogue with all classes of people never before enjoyed by the concocters of everyday jingles along Tin Pan Alley, is the opinion of the Chicago *Morning Telegraph*.

This fact became evident through a visit to various publishers of popular music. The demand for songs of the war and compositions of martial strain has been greater, the publishers declare, these last few months than in many years past. Music shops downtown and in the shadows of staid Lyon & Healy's, too, declare the call for operatic scores and so-called classical music has decreased perceptibly and their explanation is the same as the popular music publishers'.

"The war has done it," Rocco Vocco, of the Leo Feist Company, declared. "A war song or one even remotely suggesting war is almost certain to have a big sale, and the demands for this type of composition come from all classes of people. I daresay if you were to invade the music library of many of the patrons of grand opera you'd find today copies of 'Over There' and similar songs lying alongside of the works of Chopin, Schubert and Hoffmann.

"The spirit of the times is martial and the public demands a song of more widespread, more universal appeal than is to be found in the average offering of grand opera. Only in the markets of popular music, of the glossy, brilliant covered sheet music can they find what they seek. Just let an orchestra render the 'Serenade' and then let the same musicians strike up 'Over There' and watch the audience.

"You'll find every last one of them, if there's nothing wrong with their ears, instinctively keeping time to the latter and a good share of them will start home whistling the strains of the stirring war song. And that comes pretty close to being the answer to the reason for the popular song coming into its own."

Even Caruso has taken up the popular song, and a few nights ago he sang George Cohan's "Over There" at a benefit in the East. John McCormack has also placed this song in his repertoire, and several other operatic stars are placing this and similar songs on their concert programs for the season.

TRENCH PIANO FEVER

A PART of the German propaganda seems to be to ridicule the many efforts that are being made to amuse our boys in the cantonments here, as well as in France.

The following is taken from a circular printed in Germany (in English) and dropped over our lines from aeroplanes.

"When the United States entered this war the American public immediately began the preparation and invention of countless articles that were designed for the comfort and entertainment of soldiers in the trenches, and some of the most marvelous and unheard-of contraptions have resulted, a few of which have really been of some use to the men in khaki.

"But the latest of these inventions, so far as Camp Gordon and her men know, is the trench piano, a portable musical instrument that can be folded automatically to fit snugly on the pack commonly worn on soldiers' backs, and one that is warranted to give unqualified satisfaction and to afford infinite possibilities of amusement even in the thick of the fight.

J. M. Roche

"Piano lessons in three weekly instalments have been fitted to this marvelous instrument, and now the ordinary soldier is led to believe that if his company will invest an insignificant sum in one of the instruments, squads can retire from sniping duties a few minutes and refresh themselves with the strains of 'Long Boy,' played magnificently and without difficulty by any man of the unit.

"Pictures of 'home touches' in the trenches—a 'baby grand' trench piano sitting open near the mud bank of a trench with a squad gathered round it singing soulfully, while another squad calmly picks off the enemy sharpshooters and with screaming 'minnies' and bullets flying overhead unheeded—all are vividly portrayed to the mind of an imaginative trooper.

"Recently an advertisement of the trench pianos was sent to Camp Gordon, and, like all of its kind, it was first looked over by headquarters. Receiving the O.K. of authorities, it immediately began the circuit of organizations of the camp.

"After looking over the ad and thinking of its possibilities, one of the commanding officers is said to have recommended the immediate organization of a '307th Trench Piano Battalion' for service in the field against the Huns.

"In the event that the project proves successful it is possible that a 'Sixty-fifth Vaudeville Brigade' will be formed to do duty with the piano batallion. The operations of these units, many believe, would be retaliation for the use of gas.

"At any rate, the trench piano fever is fast getting a hold on the camp, and if nothing intervenes in the way of war department orders, the fad will soon be as strongly prevalent as the old 'trench kit' idea, the same being composed of a fingernail file, a stick of rouge and a powder puff, in addition to sundry other articles that were said 'to be of great value and convenience to men in the trenches.'"

While the trench piano has been slightly exaggerated in the above article we sure have formed a "vaudeville brigade" in the "Over There Theatre League" which has been sending the biggest headliners and entertainers of

the country to France where they have been giving performances under conditions that have been unheard of before this war.

RAGTIME DEMORALIZING

I happened down to St. Louis the other day and was fortunate enough to get an audience with John Stark, the dean of music publishers, and I drew him out some on the subject of ragtime. Here's what he told me:

"Some time ago I saw a letter in one of the papers deprecating the prevalence of ragtime as demoralizing to the people, implying that it was evil in itself and baleful in its effects. This is a palpable misconception of the mechanism of the human ego, and is also gross ignorance of what music of any kind (without words) really is. The human mind has but two faculties, the intellectual and the emotional. Music as such appeals to the emotional.

"The only difference between ragtime and any other music is the ragtime tie, and this only fluctuates the intensity. Music of any kind carries nothing whatever into the human consciousness, but only awakens to life and feeling what it finds there.

"If some sober, sombre individual with much piety on display hears the Cascades Rag, Grace and Beauty, Nightingale or other of the higher class rags and they make him feel like robbing a henroost or swiping a milk bottle from a neighbor's door let him be very sure that he had that propensity tucked away somewhere in his system before he heard the music. Also if some scapegrace hears them and feels like treating the house, or buying a Liberty Bond, then we should know that he is not as bad as we thought he was.

"The emotional faculty of an idiot may be as intense as that of the strongest minds. Blind Tom created beautiful melodies with their harmonic setting, that appealed to minds great and small. He also tried his luck on lyrics, one of which started like this—

'I must confess almost of you
And take ourselves to thee'

These didn't furnish the average intellect much nourishment.

"It is true Mendelssohn wrote songs without words, but he was careful to give them names that pointed our musings. His 'Consolation' would have been desolation to a man who had just lost his last dollar in a jack pot—by changing the name.

"As to ragtime as an evil, let me quote the highest possible authority—'Not that which goeth into a man defileth him, etc.' As to its being light or trashy the next time you hear this from a man just gaze straight under his hat rim and ask him why?

"The fact is that the classics in ragtime pass over the heads of many so called musicians who are enslaved—'all wound around with a woolen string'—by some antiquated, fossilized, back-number musician with an ax to grind."

Bully for you, John.

C. Arthur Fifer, the Quincy, Ill., publisher with the New York office, has turned out two new songs, "Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep" and "Here We Are, Lafayette," which are meeting with wide sale and popularity the country over. He fortunately has the happy faculty of writing the stuff that contains the heart appeal, and that's the very reason why he enjoys a nice income out of the sales of his writings and publications.

"You might forget the title—but you can't forget the tune" of the "12th Street Rag" published by J. W. Jenkins' Sons Music Co. of Kansas City, Mo. This number and "The Nation's Awakening" March, are two hits from the middle west that are sweeping the country.

Just Between You and Me

Continued from page 6

a rousing band number. But for the love of the proverbial "Mike," change your title as fifty other composers beat you to it.

O. L. T., Columbia, S. C.

"Barnum Was Right" tells a heap of truth and has an abundance of punches, but your music is so poor that the number is utterly worthless in its present state. Make a neat copy of your words and try to interest some composer who is capable of giving this lyric a decent melody. It can be done and the poem warrants it.

"LET A LITTLE SUNSHINE IN"

GENTLE GEORGE, the genial gusher of this collum or colyume, isn't going to feel real tickled when finding this little ar-ticle has been hitched to, tacked on and stuck in one corner of his own word factory. Why? Because in his blushing modesty he was flattering himself that he had something safely and snugly side-tracked for the cold-storage department, whither he might hie himself every once in a while to read and gloat over it in private. Not so, however, hence it is quite likely that Gentle George is going to be a glumly-glowering, gloomy and flabber-Gasted George when he pops his peeps on this little story, but as it's too late to put up a kick or make a holler once a thing's in cold type, we should worry over Gentle George getting a grouch.

"Gentle George" (he was christened George L. by his immediate progenitors), when in the full panoply of editorial war paint, is Conductor Cobb of this column which he thinks he runs. Perhaps he does to a certain extent, yet sometimes he seems to forget that the publisher has both a first and final crack at all magazine matter, also that even the miserable editor gets an occasional look-in, all of which explains the *how* of this little butt-in and here's the *why*.

Everybody who is hitched up with MELODY knows that, when under pressure of unexpected compliments, Conductor Cobb not only looks like a second-hand porus plaster but exudes modesty like perspiration percolating from a fat man (George is anything but thin). Quite recently G. G. received a most complimentary letter which made him actually sweat modesty—he so reeked with modesty that it oozed out and beaded his brow like dew on a chilled canteloupe. In sheer kindliness of heart Publisher Jacobs suggested that the letter be reprinted editorially in MELODY, but George threw a cold sweat, got chilled feet and flatly refused. Disgusted at such unusual and unnecessary modesty in a composer the Chief asserted his publisher's prerogative and did more than butt-in—he smashed-in—and that right in Gentle Georgie's own little word-factory. He turned the matter over to the editor, with instructions to be nice about it—which we have. Here is the letter, and put right where G. G. the g. g. will be sure to see it, as he always reads his own stuff.

Greenville, S. C.,
October 23, 1918

Mr. Geo. L. Cobb,
Boston, Mass.

Dear Sir:—

My wife and daughter have played nothing else but the chorus of "SUNSHINE" since receiving our October MELODY, yet that is not the cause of my complaint—the darn thing is contagious, and now it's got me. I go to bed singing it and get up in the morning humming it; have it for breakfast, dinner and supper, and then it decides to spend the night with me again.

I don't mind a *little* sunshine, but when one's system gets as thoroughly inoculated with it as mine has, it is time to make a kick. Where you secured all the sticky stuff you have put in that chorus is more than I can figure out, but am convinced that a case could be brought against you for hoarding sugar, as you never could have done it on the present allotment.

Permit me to say that I think the song is fine, and that it ought to go over BIG.

Yours truly,
(signed) James A. Roscoe.

Those readers who ever have sung the hymn, "Let a Little Sunshine In," and who know Mr. Cobb's song of "Sunshine" referred to in the letter, will at once note the significance of the caption at the head of this little interference. The letter was a well-deserved compliment to the lyric genius of Mr. George L. Cobb, and instead of butting-in or smashing-in the publisher really is trying to "Let a Little Sunshine In" on "Sunshine" and warm up Gentle George's cold-blooded sweat of modesty.—M.V.F.

BOOK OF MUSIC FOR SOLDIERS

The McKinley Music Co., Chicago, have just issued "The Army and Navy Song Folio No. 1," which contains about forty of the most popular of the company's numbers, and which is intended for free distribution among the soldiers.

PIANO—Fortissimo and Pianissimo

HERE are three good piano stories from the Boston *Herald* and the New York *Evening Mail*, two in *fortissimo* as illustrating how the instrument is valued by the men fighting "over there" and the other in *pianissimo* as showing what *not* to play for men who are in training to fight.

Fortissimo

PARIS, July 21 (by mail)—Trying to carry off a piano on which the Huns were playing with a machine gun at the time was the unusual night's experience of two Y. M. C. A. secretaries and three Anzac orderlies on the Australian sector, as reported here recently. Music had such charms for this quintet that, after finding the ponderous piano too heavy to carry through the ruins of the "Y" hut, the five adventurers tried to remove a smaller upright, only to have it stick in the doorway.

A. J. Gould, a "Y" secretary with the Anzacs, who tells the story, says that when the Hun advances forced a retirement the hut was burned. The Germans quickly were pushed back to the outskirts of town. Believing the pianos and another moving picture machine intact, Gould, with another secretary and orderly, cycled by a back road into town under cover of night to investigate. The Germans put over a shell on speculation, which burst above a house in which they took shelter. On reaching the ruined "Y" hut they found the pianos and movie apparatus in usable condition.

The two secretaries, with three orderlies who volunteered, got a motor lorry and started for the hut the following night.

The piano proved too heavy for four men to carry over 200 yards of wreckage. The men started back for a second piano known to be stored in a nearby house, when they ran into a blinding beam of light playing down the main street—an enemy trench search-light. The machine gun began rattling briskly again. Its deadly tune caused the volunteer pianomovers to speed up their work, but they could not push the piano through the narrow door. Then the lorry driver shouted that he was going to leave because the Germans had sent up red rocket signals for the artillery to search the town and three shells had been dropped.

So with shells curving overhead they violated the speed regulations going away from there, carrying the picture machine and leaving the enemy artillery to practice on the two pianos.

Every day a new story comes across the water, calling attention to the soldiers' dependence upon music, but this incident emphasizes the music-longing more graphically than any we have heard yet.

A SURLY, unsinging battalion is half licked before it gets into the fight, Maj. Donald Guthrie declares in Scribner's; but he adds, "I don't think I have known such a battalion.

"There is an epidemic of melody at the front, and he is a gross, sour soul who escapes the infection. He may exist as an individual, he certainly does not exist as a regiment. A song has indeed a subtle strength for the keeping up of one's courage; and such are the stress and strain of conditions in France and Flanders that one need have no shame in owning to the use of all the big and little aids to the maintenance of courage.

"In our mess we had a little old piano. It came from the ancient burg of Dunkirk, and had venerability in keeping with its place of origin. Gibert, in a 'Bab Ballad,' writes of 'the piano's martial blast.' Our piano had no 'martial blast.' It was a pathetic, meek little affair. It had two tarnished candle holders, rattly and insecure, one on either hand. I remember the evening it came, in one of our three-ton motor trucks. It shared the interior of the truck with about two tons of laundry and a box of shrimps—which (both the laundry and shrimps) our quartermaster never failed to bring from Dunkirk. He presumably went for the laundry, but we all knew it was for the shrimps.

"How gently and tenderly the little piano was carried over the 200 yards from the clearing station to the mess! Our R. C. chaplain, a monster of flesh and good-heartedness, strained at the carrying until his face became perilously purple. I have never known a casualty on a stretcher more delicately handled than was that piano. It was only a gritty, hard-toned, jangling little thing; but I have seen our medical officers worn out with continuous operation—15 to 20 hours at a stretch when 'things were doing' on the line—I have seen them gather after dinner about that creaky little piano, with a whole night of ghastly work fronting them, and have heard them sing new strength and courage into their souls to the strains of 'O, Canada,' 'Alouette,' 'Mother Machree,' and other simple pieces.

"Often, when no officers were in and about our mess—say between 10 and 12 of a morning—our good old cook W. would steal into the ante-room with three or four other orderlies, and the welkin would ring in short order. W. played the piano even better than we played football, and as a footballer he was a tough customer.

Pianissimo

THE story is told of a temperamental concert pianist who volunteered to entertain the boys in training at the cantonments. His offer was accepted by an amusement director who either was short of more suitable "acts" or shy of that brand of common sense that should tell him soldiers in training are not likely to be interested in the performance of a temperamental concert pianist, with or without long hair.

The pianist, however, was determined to do his part. His first audience was huge and reasonably expectant. A bit noisy, perhaps, and rather scuffly about the feet, but still ready to give the gentleman a chance. The

pianist played a classy bit from Chopin. Then he offered a little something from Debussy. But just as he was about to honor Bach he became suddenly conscious of a great shifting of places in the audience. All the boys in the room appeared to be changing their positions. The aisles were crowded, the pianist could see that, though looking across the footlights he could not see clearly. He began to play a second time, and then stopped.

The manager of the Liberty theatre in which the concert was being given stood in the wings. The pianist approached him. "Either those boys will have to stop coming in or I shall be unable to continue," he said. "That's all right, mister," replied the manager, sympathetically, "they ain't coming in; they're going out."

PATRIOTISM FROM THE PIT

OUR American patriotism runs at white heat in these days and finds vent in much singing of patriotic songs, yet it is doubtful if any one of us will ever listen to one of these airs sung in unison in a crowded concert hall (one from the pit and one from the stage) by the greatest American statesman and the greatest world singer. It was during the time when the excitement of political debate over the question of American slavery was at its height, that the marvelous cantatrice, Jenny Lind, gave a concert in the Capitol City. The hall was crowded with the elite of Washingtonian society, including President Fillmore and his cabinet, the congressional lions of the day and all the social and diplomatic dignitaries. Here is the story as told in the Boston *Evening Transcript* by an auditor:

"The first half of the program was over when Daniel Webster, Henry Clay and Crittenden (three intellectual giants of Congress) entered late from a somewhat prolonged dinner engagement, and whether because of the hurry in which they came, or due to the heat of the room, their faces were a little flushed and they appeared a bit flurried. When the applause evoked by the entrance of these great political lights had subsided, the second half of the program was opened by Jenny Lind with 'Hail Columbia,' as being peculiarly appropriate to the spirit and excitement of the times.

"At the close of the first verse Webster's patriotism boiled over; he could sit still no longer, and rising like an Olympian Jove he added his deep, sonorous voice to the chorus. I venture to say that, never in the whole course of her career, did Jenny Lind hear or receive one half the applause as that with which her song and Webster's chorus were received.

"Mrs. Webster, who sat immediately behind the great statesman, kept tugging at his coat-tail to make him sit down or stop singing, but it was of no earthly use, for at the close of each verse Webster joined in and it was hard to say whether Jenny Lind, Webster or the audience was the most delighted. I have seen Rubini, Lablache and the two Grisis on the stage at the same time, but such a happy conjunction in the patriotic air of 'Hail Columbia' as Jenny Lind's wonderful soprano and Daniel Webster's bass will never be heard again.

"At the close of the song the statesman, with his hat in his hand, bowed to the great singer with a grace which would have put Lord Chesterfield or Count D'Orsay to shame; Jenny Lind, blushing with pleasure at the distinguished honor, courtesied to the stage floor, while the audience applauded to the very echo. Mr. Webster, determined not to be outdone in politeness, bowed again; Miss Lind recourtesied, the audience reapplauded, and this was repeated nine times."

"A GOOD MAN IS HARD TO FIND"

Through the kind permission of its publishers, MELODY is enabled to present in the music section of this issue the chorus theme of the song above captioned—the latest publication of the Pace & Handy Music Co. of New York City—with a special piano solo arrangement by Mr. E. R. Winn. This song is of the kind that Bert Williams does so well, and having been recorded for talking machine and player piano reproduction it is bound to have a long life. All the Pace & Handy music is somehow "different." Pianists who are desirous of acquiring an ability to produce "blue" effects, when rendering popular melodies, are advised to secure piano copies of a few of their numbers and study the unusual effects presented. However, the actual employment of this musical idea necessarily must be left to individual instinct, taste and judgment.

Pace & Handy are the originators and first publishers of the "blues" style in music composition. After migrating from Memphis (Tenn.) to Chicago and thence to New York, they now have settled permanently in that Metropolitan haven of popular music publishers—the Gaiety Theatre Building at 1547 Broadway—with Harry H. Pace as president of the company, Charles E. Handy as vice-president and W. C. Handy (the writer of the celebrated "Memphis Blues" and several other famous numbers of that style) as secretary-treasurer.

Melody Professional Service Dept.

Important Announcement to Lyric Writers and Composers

MELODY is constantly receiving letters of inquiry from readers who desire the assistance of a professional composer and arranger of songs and instrumental music. While up to this time **Melody** has not felt obligated to give lyric writers or composers assistance other than that available through our free criticism columns, the demand for additional help, especially on the part of amateur and semi-professional lyric writers, has become of such proportions and so incessant that we have decided to establish a special composing and arranging branch. We have, therefore, made the necessary staff and equipment additions to provide a *Melody Professional Service Department*, the purpose, scope and restrictions of which are stipulated in the following paragraphs.

Melody's Professional Service Department offers the services of a professional composer and arranger of national reputation, who will arrange melodies, compose music for song poems and carefully edit and revise and properly prepare manuscript for publication. This work will include, when required, the services of a lyric writer of established reputation, who will also edit, correct or compose lyrics complete, as desired.

The scope of the Melody Professional Service Department is confined absolutely within the limits implied by its name. The Department will not undertake to publish any composition, either in the magazine's music section or otherwise, assuming responsibility only for such professional services as are outlined herein. To this end we are able to make no guarantee whatsoever, except that *all work will be musicianly*, and when manuscript is delivered it will be *complete and flawless and ready for the engraver and printer, or for the eyes of the most critical publisher.* In short, *our one guarantee is the high-grade, original and perfect workmanship of a first-class* professional department.

Only meritorious compositions will be handled. Lyrics or music obviously unworthy of the efforts of our staff, or which in our opinion promise only certain waste of money and effort for the author or composer, will be returned with a candid statement of our opinion.

As a general rule we do not advise writers—especially amateurs—to publish their own compositions if a reputable publishing house can be interested. While the greatest waltz success of today, Missouri Waltz, was first published by the composer—likewise Chas. K. Harris' "After the Ball' and other hits—these instances are not common, and the safe plan is to submit finished, workmanlike manuscript to the publishers, who have means for properly exploiting compositions and who are always on the watch for new and original numbers of "hit" calibre. However, in cases where composers, with full knowledge of the conditions, desire to assume the responsibility for publishing their numbers, we will furnish such advice and information as our long connection with the publishing field affords.

Estimates submitted only after receipt of manuscript, accompanied by self-addressed and stamped envelope. No responsibility assumed for manuscript submitted without sufficient postage (letter rates) for return. Charges will be based on the length and style of composition and amount of work required, and will be as low as commensurate with *first-class work.*

Bear in mind that this department is instituted solely as an accommodation to subscribers and readers of MELODY, offering at a nominal cost the services of one of the Country's best professional departments—and nothing more, except advice, which is free. Part of that advice we deliver now: Don't send us your manuscripts unless you have confidence that they are worthy of our best efforts, and don't ask us to do anything more than is outlined in the foregoing paragraphs. Address all communications to

Melody Professional Service Department 8 Bosworth St. Boston, Mass.

Sam Fox, of Cleveland, has secured the publishing rights to "Sabre and Spurs," a new march by Lieut. John Philip Sousa. It is being published as a piano solo, with a most attractive title page, as well as a band and orchestra number.

* * *

The A. J. Stasny Music Co. is having a big demand for "When the Yanks Come Marching Home," which they recently purchased from the William Jerome Co.

* * *

"Keep the Glow in Old Glory" is one of the big numbers in the catalog of the McKinley Music Co. With its unusually attractive title page, splendid words and music, it is destined to become one of the big sellers of the year.

* * *

"Are You from Heaven," from the pens of the well-known team of Gilbert & Friedland, is meeting with success in every theatre where this pair of actor-song-writing publishers are heard.

* * *

"Oh, Moon of the Summer's Night" is proving one of the best numbers in the catalog of Al Piantadosi & Co., Inc. Allen Flynn is the author. Many leading vaudeville singers are using the song, and according to reports in the trade it has the promise of having a large sale.

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FEATURES IN THIS ISSUE

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