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MELODY

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR LOVERS OF POPULAR MUSIC

FEATURES IN THIS ISSUE

PUBLISHED BY

WALTER JACOBS BOSTON MASS

STARMER

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MELODY

A Monthly Magazine for Lovers of Popular Music

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Volume III FEBRUARY, 1919 Number 2

Editorial

PRO AND ANTI

IN this issue of MELODY there is printed a letter to Mr. George L. Cobb and his reply. Both letter and reply have been passed by the publisher-censor, and each in intent is designed to present the pro and anti sides of using slang. On the "pro" side of the question, Mr. Cobb does not so much try to offer an apology for the use of slang as he endeavors to show the (at times) potency in its using, and while we may be pardoned for a feeling of personal pride in the effort of a staff-writer, we also must confess to a distinct (if impersonal) sense of admiration for Mr. Vane as a man with enough courage in his convictions to express them squarely. When published in any magazine, it is such open expressions of honest opinion from those outside the regular staff of writers which add the spice of variety to its contents, and whether any subscriber *agrees or disagrees* in part with the policies of MELODY this magazine will gladly welcome and give as much space as possible to more of such letters when believed sincere.

This letter (with its reply) has not been published as either a joke or a "jolt," and it should not be so misconstrued. Rather is it presented as a hint of open invitation for others to follow suit. Please do not forget that, other than an increase or decrease in its subscribers, a magazine has no barometer for registering popularity—that is, it has no guide as to whether its contents and style of presenting them please or displease its reading constituency, unless through just such letters as that from Mr. Vane.

We honestly believe that readers of MELODY are interested in little friendly controversies between subscribers and staff-writers over current questions and topics, and are glad that Mr. Vane has set a good example. On our part we are willing to both give and take, so come on men and women subscribers to MELODY! Come on and "go over the top" with your letters whether they are pro or anti! Unless you come too swiftly, and in too great numbers, MELODY will not squeal, but will try to give each a square deal.

A LITTLE WIGGLE!

WHICH or It (manuscript)! 500 or 100 (dollars)! Consign or Assign (sell)! Marked Similarity (letters)!

Nay, Jack and Jill, James and Julia, Luke and Lucy, Samuel and Sarah or any others of our patient and probably puzzled readers, the preceding (and apparently meaningless) conjunction of exclamatory phrases have nothing whatsoever-in-common-in-any-way-at-all to do with the compiling of a new dictionary or encyclopedia, for we possess neither the brain nor backbone necessary to compile either. Neither are we locoed nor loony, for they (the words themselves) are the principal points of difference and distinction between *two* letters which accompanied *two* music manuscripts that were submitted for approval from *two* widely separated geographical places. Except for the above quoted d.d.'s (difference and distinction) the *two* accompanying communications might have been written by the same *one* (person), and both letters enclosed exactly the same amount in stamps for return postage, all of which leads us to suspect that *both* (writers) may have been coached or "posted" and thereby hangs the "little wiggle."

Personally, we are gifted with so little of the sleuthing instinct that ordinarily we couldn't find the proverbial "nigger in a woodpile," but when one foot is left sticking out *and the toes are wiggling* then we begin to have a faint "suspish" that a body must be hitched to that foot with the wiggling members. Nearly everyone who has ever been bitten by the composing or writing bug knows there are certain individuals or firms who, for a mere stipend, announce they will fit music to words or make words to fit music or, if fully made, will revise and *fit them for publishing*. As a bait to catch that "stipend" some of these talented fitters and makers further agree to *assist* prospective customers in getting published, and there you have the foot which we *think* was inadvertently left sticking out, while we *suspect* the "wigglers" to be a certain prescribed or set form of letter (varied perhaps in a few minor points to suit time and occasion) and which is about all the "assistance" one gets for his money. This set-form of "assisting" is presumably sent to the composing-customer, who in turn sends it to the publisher with his or her manuscript.

Not even if it were to keep us from experimenting with the electric chair could we prove a durn thing in substantiation of this statement before a coroner's jury, but (as before mentioned) we strongly "suspicionize," and our "suspicionizations" are based upon the two letters themselves and their astonishing similarity in form and wording, although one letter is type-plucked and the other is hand-picked. One letter (the more modest of the two in point of publishing price) comes from our own Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The other one comes from way down in old Alabama, and (with the exceptions of difference in titles) both letters open with exactly the same phrase, namely, "Enclosed please find *MS.* entitled . . . "(censored).

In that opening phrase there isn't of course enough of circumstantial evidence to convict a cat of catching the canary, or to hang a Hohenzollern for his horrible Hunnishness, but listen further. Unless following a form furnished by the factory that fitted, it is doubtful if *two* persons (who evidently are beginners in the game of writing) would have used the professional abbreviation of "MS" for the word manuscript; we also have the devil of a doubting as to whether, when submitting a *first* manuscript to a publisher, any beginner (if acting wholly upon personal initiative) would have the professional egotism to set a selling price of $100.00 (the modest one), to say nothing of $500.00 (the other one). Neither does it deeply indent itself into the editorial gray matter that when setting a price *both* writers would use the same identical word-formula, unless following some suggested set-form of letter. Get the wiggle?

Here are the two letters in juxtaposition:

————, Ala., October 22, 1918.
————, Mass., October 29, 1918.

"Enclosed please find Mss entitled ————, which I will sell
"Enclosed please find Mss entitled ————. I will sell it outright to you for the sum of $500.00, and when this amount has
outright to you for the sum of $100.00, and when this amount has been passed will execute a proper bill of sale to you, and also
been passed will execute a proper bill of sale to you, and also consign copyright which is now in my name.
assign copyright which is now in my name.

I enclose stamps for return mail, if you cannot use it, and
I enclose stamps for the return of the Mss if not usable, and ask that you let me hear from you at your earliest possible con-
ask that you let me hear from you at the earliest possible mo-venience."
ment."

Both of these writers "will sell it (MS.) outright to you for the sum of $100.00 (in one instance and $500.00 in the other), and when this amount has been passed *will execute a proper bill of sale to you"* (note the professional legal wording as coming from a musician). The more modest one-hundred-dollar aspirant (who hails from our own New England state) will then "assign the copyright which is in my name" and *word for word* save for the slight variation in using "consign" for "assign," the five-hundred-dollar one from Alabama will do exactly the same thing. Some Wiggle!

Dear readers—Jack and James and Jill and Julia, or whatever your particular moniker may happen to be—don't run away with the idea that this little spiel has been spilt as a slam, for it has boiled out as a show-down only. We certainly haven't slammed these two aspirants for fame or money, as besides themselves and ourselves nobody knows who they are or where they live and we don't propose to tell. The wholly kind intention of this "little wiggle" is to help others to help themselves. Aspiring ones, if you must have assistance to help you out in a music or word inspiration get it by all means, but get it from the many honest music-arrangers and word-writers that any reputable music magazine will be glad to recommend. Moreover, when you write a letter to send to some publisher with your manuscript, write it for yourselves and don't depend upon somebody's say-so.

And don't forget that neither arrangers nor helpers can push or shove you into the good graces of a publisher. Nothing can help you as much as *what* you submit for a possible publication, and you must stand or fall wholly on the merits of your own work. It's the *stuff* in a composition at which a publisher looks, not the accompanying letter—in fact, he doesn't care such a whole lot whether there's anything more in the letter than your name and address. Not all of us are smoothly polished letter-writers, and many times an honest-to-goodness letter (never mind if it is a bit ungrammatical) will carry greater weight with any publisher than an evidently made-to-order affair, no matter how elaborate in phraseology. Be honest with yourselves, and don't try to hide your own individuality behind somebody's stock in trade while leaving your toes sticking out and wiggling to betray the hide and hiding.

R. S. V. P.

A Reply to a Request

OALLAH! Allow a limping literateur to scintillate for one brief moment as a star and answer a luminous letter from the "Lone Star" State in a just and seemly manner; not with reams of rhetorical rodomontade, neither with sardonic slings nor with sarcastic slams, but with probity and circumspection becoming to the contrite conductor of this column. Shade of Shakespeare! Shoot a spooky shaft of thyself within me and shed thy sublime sun upon me for a short space!

To be complimented in one inhalation of the breath and in the exhalation of the same breath to be condemned—reproved, rebuked and rebuffed—not only upsets a man's mental poise and unbalances his moral equilibrium, but e'en moves him to mutiny. To be for a brief breathing space uplifted to the highest pinnacle of praise, and ere the astonished and exalted soul can accustom itself to the beautiful buoyancy born of the rare faction of adulative atmosphere, to be plunged into the pit of Plutonian night—splash! just like that! jabs one an awful jolt in his job-lot of slats. Pardon me! I meant to have written that it disarranges and dislocates those brittle, bony barriers which protect the thoracic region of the human body. Be that as it may, however, all of this upsetting and unbalancing, this lifting up and then plunging down, this disarranging and dislocating have been mine—mine, because of a letter which has biffed me on the bean and cracked me on mine conk until I mope in a melancholia of morbid misery. In short. I thought I was being presented with an orange, but found I had been handed a lemon.

Houston, Texas, January 2nd., 1919.

Mr. George L. Cobb,
Editor of "Just Between You and Me" Dept. of "MELODY,"
Boston, Mass.,

Dear Sir:—As a new acquaintance, in a musical and literary way, may I be permitted to ask you a strictly personal question?

Let me say first, that I am a reader of some of that delightful musical magazine MELODY; and also a player of some of the musical gems that have emanated from your facile pen; some of them seeming of so spontaneous a nature, as to make it impossible to think of them as being "musical compositions" written according to fixed rules, as definite and unalterable as "the laws of the Medes and Persians."

I think of a star, a flower, a sunset, as individual expressions of nature beyond the power of man to conceive or produce. Without any flattery, some of your compositions appear to me to stand as individually alone—born, as it were—not made. The "One-Step" in the December number of MELODY, just dripping from the ends of my fingers, until I can almost imagine I hear the movements of the floor of a ball room beneath my feet; see the lights and dancers, to my own rhythmic execution and thorough enjoyment.

But, alas, I must confess that your penchant for slang, both in naming your pieces (such as "Knock Knees" and "Treat 'Em Rough") and the style you have adopted as the language for the reviews and criticisms of pieces—that are doubtless sent you in good faith, for your expression of opinion is such—must not only plant many a thorn in the hearts of aspiring composers, but make the comparison of your ability as a musician, and that of a critic of the music of others, not a favorable one to you. I do not imagine that the music sent you, however poor from a musical standpoint, is all "written in slang," either as regards the words or music.

Would it not be fair, then, to give your criticisms "in the same coin," from a musical standpoint with the slang omitted?

In conclusion, please permit me to quote from a book recently read: "The use of slang," said Dr. O. W. Holmes, "or cheap generic terms, as a substitute for differentiated specific expressions, is at once a sign and cause of mental atrophy. It is the way in which a lazy adult shifts the trouble of finding any exact meaning in his (or her) conversation on the other party. If both talkers are indolent, all their talk lapses into the vague generalities of early childhood, with the disadvantage of a vulgar phraseology. It is a prevalent social vice of the time, as it has been of times that are past."

Also, so the book goes on to say, "Remember that slang consisted originally of the cant words used by thieves, peddlers, beggars and the vagabond classes generally."

If this be true, is it then I ask you the proper vehicle to use when desiring to encourage, instruct, praise or condemn those aspirants in a line of endeavor, that stands as a twin-sister to religion; which is as much without beginning or ending as is God, for it sprang from Him, co-exists with Him, and is part and parcel of His glorious and wonderful creation, "forever and forever?"

Will you answer me, in "Just Between You and Me," and tell me whether you think my candid opinion, given in a kindly spirit, is a timely and suggestive one; and is received in a spirit equally as kind?

With best wishes for the New Year, and for many new compositions from you, with titles as harmonious and beautiful as the compositions I feel sure will warrant from a musical standpoint.

Yours truly,
PHILIP EDGERTON VANE.

Before attempting a little dissertation to diagnose that distemper of diction commonly called "slang," I most heartily thank the writer of the above letter. First, for his warm and kindly words in praise of MELODY, the magazine which aims to please many people rather than any one person, and at whose editorial shrine I am but an humble postulant in prosody; second, for the encouraging encomiums which he has heaped upon my modest meanderings in the melodic field. To Mr. Philip Edgerton Vane I tender my deep appreciation of and sincere thanks for his orange, while deprecating the acidity of the lemon, and beg to assure him that it will ever be my earnest endeavor to meet the merit he has been pleased to find in my music measures.

To Philip from George

AS a corrective and alterative measure, Brother Vane, your letter is splendidly intentioned, and no doubt in a measure it may have been somewhat deserved by perhaps an occasional too profuse use of word-slumgullion, yet even at that one's just deserts need not be served as a fruit dessert. If it were not that I look upon the personal pun as pernicious, I might be tempted to tell you it is in vain to try and be a word-vane to a weather-beaten old word-marker like myself. Nature is nature, and I am neither a leopard nor a lizard; if I would, I couldn't change my spots, nor can I at will change color like a chameleon.

I frankly admit that, although the over-abuse of the colloquial is diametrically opposed to the inherent and higher aesthetic side of my intense literary nature, nevertheless as forager for a family of four it becomes necessary for me to cop the coin whereby to pull out the daily eats and provide the hay whereon to bunk for nightly sleeps, all of which is no bunk. I do this little pulling and providing by catering to a clientele who seem to prefer the lower "defaulting" (?) to the upper highfaluting, in proof of which I receive bunches of nice nifty letters telling me that my verbal jazz-junk is all to the merry and then some. Coming right down to brass-tacks and safety-pins — MELODY caters to the mass, rather than to the man; to those who, although at times appreciating the not too classical, can gouge a big gob of enjoyment out of the more common colloquial.

In simple justice to myself, may I further state that possibly my published piffle is quite some different from my private palaver? Let me explain this before I'm lined up for another calldown. What I mean is that, when domestically domiciled in my humble hut, behind its closed doors my manner of expressing is precise even to the punctilious. This wholly as an example for the children, although up to the date of this writing there isn't as many as one tiny "cobb" or "cobbess" rolling happily around my domestic cornfield. However, you never can tell, so it is better to live under conditions of perpetual preparedness rather than be caught napping.

Suppose that sometime a little golden ear should happen to drop into the Cobb corn-belt; suppose that sometime I should happen to let loose a lot of linguistic lubricants just because the "ham-and" didn't happen to be hustled on the hash-board in a hoo-hoo of a hurry; suppose that sometime all of these should happen and—well, who would be to blame if the blooming kid happened to shoot a few hot shots for itself? Yes indeed, Friend Philip, I am mighty careful never to slump into slang in the presence of children, preferring to reserve my humble efforts for the grown-up sophisticated.

What is slang? To crib (and also crab) a famous phrase from "Madame Sherry"—"Ev'ry little slanging has a slinging all its own." When judiciously used, slang oftentimes imparts virility to one's linguistic flow. At such times slang is to language as tabasco to an oyster—a spice to give pep and make the ears wiggle while the swallow is working—providing potency to a punch that otherwise might be only a slap on the wrist. It is the subtle something which verbally transmogrifies "Willie" into Bill and differentiates in nomenclature between the Jim's, Jack's and Dick's, and the Percy's, Claude's and Clawrence's. Now please wait a minute, my friend, and don't chew off the wrong end of the cigar. I'll face my cards before my hand is called by saying that I know as well as anybody there are thousands of fine fellows inflicted with those names, who both speak and write "by the book," as it were, but I also know that when they trot with the bunch they always are BILL.

Admittedly, Dr. Holmes—"O. W." as you designate him, but always more familiarly referred to by us lit'ry fellers as "Oliver Wendell"—admittedly, then, the good and genial old Doc never indulged in slang in his writings, yet many bigger guns than himself have boomed in it, as I will endeavor to prove later on; nor must we forget that the mode of his day is far removed from the mode of these days. Also, *admittedly*, we of today know the jolly little doctor by his writings only, while as a live-wire college boy, and a man among men, we can only guess as to the manner in which he may have *talked*.

Yes, the "Autocrat at the Breakfast Table" was right about slang being descended from the argot of thieves and tramps, but so are other things that are now in common usage among honest people. However, Son, don't forget that slang is the elemental in language, nor overlook the fact that *every man—jack of us in this little old unverse has the elemental underneath the veneer* Somebody once remarked that a man is known by the food he eats, and (again admittedly) words are the mental fodder of the brain, yet listen. When mixed of the same stuff and fried in fat, whatever may be the size of their holes, doughnuts is doughnuts—hot, fatty facts!

It is the same with the doughnuts of speech. Let the books, pedants, savants and philosophical philologists preach, prate and palaver as they may, and no matter whether fried in a pot, kettle or spider, you can't duck the fact that "woids" originally were the medium of expression for common (lowbrow) people, who got here first and were here for some time before the uppercrust (the highbrows) was put on the human pie. It was only later that the highbrow conversational tools were painstakingly extracted from and built upon roots and bases and coinages of the more common. There are today listed in the dictionaries, as words in the best usage, terms that originally were slang, cant or worse. Yes, Boy, doughnuts is doughnuts, and whether they are digestible or otherwise depends upon *how they are fried and on the state of the stummick.*

Perhaps the religious side of the slang equation would better have been left out of the discussion, but since you have raised that side of a debatable question—"Come, now, and let us reason together." The great Nazarene, upon whose words and teachings the Christian religion has been built, left to the world nothing committed to writing by himself. All his teachings of nearly two thousand years ago practically have come down to us orally—that is, *passed mouth to mouth from one to another before being written by others* —and these oral teachings have been collected, collated, coordinated, re-coordinated, translated and transcribed by many scholars and wrought into diction of great beauty.

We have no means of knowing whether or not any of the original phrases and words of the Great Teacher were colloquialisms (current slang), yet if we may rely upon historic evidence we do know that the disciples or exponents of the wonderful Galilean were selected by Him from among the least educated of the less educated of the people. With this point in mind, then, is it unreasonable to suppose that the Great Teacher would speak to his pupils and to the common people in language that should **not** pass over their heads—that is, in the colloquial idioms of that day which they best would understand and in what possibly might have been slang to those of the higher educated classes of that time? And granting this to be true, would any words or language, however plain and ordinary, have lessened in any way the basic truths which the Master may have spoken? I think not; how think you?

Many times the force of slang lies in its over-accentuation of the seemingly impossible, in its gross exaggeration of the improbable, or in a suggestion opposed to actual intention. Thus, when somebody is invited by someone to something in the extreme the understanding and intention may be quite contrary to its expressing, the supposition being that it may lead to the opposite and perhaps better. When viewed in such light was it superfluous admonition to tell thinly sandalled or wholly bare-footed people that " it is hard to kick against the pricks," or was it a gross exaggeration intended to accentuate the folly of so doing? Might it not also have been equivalent to the modern slang way of telling a man not to butt his head into a stone wall, when we know that a sane man would not so foolishly "butt?" In the same light, *and in its following closely word-connections*, what of that wondrously beautiful admonition to "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow?" Although far more beautiful, was it much varied in meaning from the modern "You should worry?"

To land with a bump and a slam right down slap in our own day and generation, among all the great evangelists there is none who has converted as many thousands of poor souls and turned them to better modes of living as have the late Sam Jones and present Billy Sunday. And how have these men reached the minds and hearts of their converts? Certainly not through the higher and more aesthetic flights of rhetorical elegance, but by a descent into slang of the very slangiest—yes, at times expressing in what some of us high-browed and lofty-domed critics might term the vulgar. This is particularly true of Mr. Sunday, who holds rank preeminent as both a slang-slinger and a wonderful converter of men. Who, then, shall have the nerve to say that nothing good can be born of slang?

There is a story to the effect that, on a certain night in a ticklish time of war, a port light on board a war cruiser had in some mysterious way gotten itself lighted contrary to express order for darkness. A young officer in command of the watch, and fresh from the academic curriculum of Annapolis, saw the danger and immediately gave order to "Extinguish that luminary on the larboard side." Nothin' doin'! Again he passed along his academic formula, but the "larboard luminary" continued cheerily to blink an invitation to a possible enemy to take a shot. About this time an old sea-dog of an officer hove up from below decks, at once spotted the dangerous light and quietly passed the word to "Douse

that damn port glim." It was "doused!" Beyond all questioning Mr. Sunday has "doused" full many a port and starboard "glim" of wickedness, but you can bet that thing which you fasten your collar around that stickling for the finer words didn't get 'em "doused."

Just a brief word in substantiation of our statement about them "bigger guns," and then (like the doughnuts) I am "done." When speaking of the child-players of London, Shakespeare (a real BIG gun) made Hamlet ask: "And do they *come* away with it?" Now just substitute "get" for that word come, and there you have it—modern slang. Sir Thomas Malory, a literary light of England in 1470, wrote in his "Morte d'Arthur:" "And then anon that damosel *piked* her away privily, that no man wist where she was become." May I ask, without being jumped on, what is our modern "piker?" Is he not one who turns tail and hikes him from danger or duty, "that no man wist where he was become?"

Let's toboggan a little farther down into the modern. "Oliver Wendell" was some literary light, yet compared with President Wilson and our late lamented soldier and ex-President, "Oliver's" literary brilliance today is as a safety-match butting against a star-shell. It may be true that "Oliver" never used slang, but both "Woodrow" and "Theodore" have and most effectively, nor is their fame as speakers and writers jolted one little jolt thereby. As an example in one instance—when the present head of the American Nation (a man whose smoothness and elegance in diction stands indisputable) had pressed the button which was to signal the hurling skywards of tons upon tons of earth from the Gamboa dike and open a great water-way to the world, his only (and quite ordinary) remark was: "Well, Gamboa's *busted* that's all." A torrential flow of high-flown oratory could not have expressed more, even if as much. How 'bout it?

It was the same with the great red-blooded American who was beloved by the country almost to a man, and whose loss every warm-hearted American is mourning—the late Theodore Roosevelt. This man not only could speak and write in well-rounded language, but he also could use the vulgate in words and phrases that had the keen-cutting edges of a sword. He it was who gave us the "mollycoddle," "worn to a frazzle" and many more which described while they ridiculed and reformed. One of the very song-titles that has so jarred your phrase-sensitiveness was a phrase coinage of our much-loved "Teddy," and the same phrase has been exploited through millions of patriotic posters enjoining us Americans to "Treat 'em Rough"—which we did, and would of more if they hadn't of quit.

As the modern equivalent to the biblical "let thine eye be single," open your peeps and wipe the steam off your glims, Mr. Vane; take your belt up another hole and spit on your hands (in language more ancient, but no more honorable, "gird up thy loins and grasp thy staff"); boost into ballyhoo the dead ginks who don't slang it because they can't sling it, then shove in with us live guys who never shake a shiver when a little loose slang is shook out of someone's word-shaker.

Complying with your request for a reply, I have expressed my "candid opinion" in a like kindly spirit with yourself, although at perhaps a too great length. To be even more candid in this mutual exchanging of candy and fruit "just between you and me" —said a well-known clergyman and war chaplain: "If swearing will end this war, then I'm for swearing." Say I: If slanging will in any way ease a burden by raising a smile, or will show anyone the error of his way, then it's me for slanging.

Yours sincerely,

Cobb of the Colloquial Column.

P. S. Guess I'd better gird up my own loins. I've chewed up all the space the Chief will give me in this issue and have got another idea, so don't be surprised if I "fry a few more doughnuts" in a postscript to this in the next issue.

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.

No Manuscripts Returned Unless Accompanied by Self-Addressed Stamped Envelope. Address all communications direct to MELODY.

O. L. and F. M. L., Philadelphia, Pa.

"You Never Can Tell" is a comic song that the public would laugh at but never purchase in large quantities. The thing for you to do with this number is to try and sell it to some comedian who can put a song of this type over. I don't think a publisher would look at it. "Yesterday" is a melancholy and morbid ballad. Put something bright in the words and get away from death, etc. The music to this piece is highly original and deserves a better poem. Visit us again, boys.

N. P. L., Akron, Ohio.

"Summer Moon" is an exceedingly pretty novelette for piano. Your changes in harmony are unique and fully show that you have a good working knowledge of composition in general, but if you ever expect the ordinary pianist to wade through this number you'd better put it in an easier key. Three sharps is a little too hard for the average player and the number would be just as effective in four or two flats. "When the Merry Widow Came to Town" is an absolute hunk of junk. The music is good and very cleverly put together, but the words reach such a high pinnacle of piffle that words fail me to give them any kind of criticism. Hang a wet blanket over this child of your brain.

K. O., Glen Flora, Wis.

I think the reason why your composition "Echoes of Hawaii" fails to sell is because the craze for Hawaiian music has fallen off. Also your title page, which is rather plain, may have something to do with it. The piece is very pretty and well arranged, but I guess they've played the final dirge on Hawaiian music.

R. J., Madison, Wis.

I'm sorry, but your questions cannot be answered in this column. If you will write to Mr. Robert Levenson, care of MELODY, he will no doubt answer your queries. Don't forget to enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for a reply.

G. C. B., Payson, Ariz.

"Trixiana," while being an intermezzo, can be played and used as a novelty fox-trot or one-step. The Spanish rhythm that you have interpolated in places makes the number very interesting. I consider "Trixiana" a composition of merit and the number should find favor with orchestra leaders if ever published.

C. A. D., Monee, Ill.

"Garden of Melody" is a well conceived, well balanced, well arranged and captivating waltz. This piece is worthy of the consideration of any publisher of this kind of music. "In the Land Where the Lilies Grow" has many new and original ideas in the words, and the music is bright and snappy, but there is nothing startling about the song. It is as good as any and no better than many.

P. G. S., Pomona, Calif.

Your fox-trot, "Oriental Delight," while being badly arranged, contains a good bit of melody that is original. I like the introduction and the way it modulates into your first strain. There is hardly enough contrast between the first and second strains, so I would advise you to write the second in a little different rhythm. It would also be advisable to add a third strain to this composition. If you will follow these suggestions and have the number properly arranged, it might pay you to submit it to a few houses that publish this sort of work.

T. O. F., Atlanta, Ga.

"She's the Pride of Old Virginia" is an old-time ballad, the kind that was popular many moons ago and not the kind that would appeal to the music-buying public of today. "I'm Always Missing Someone" is a good title and has a lucid lyric, but the music is so reminiscent of "I'm Always Chasing Rainbows" that a publisher would hardly give it the once-over. Sorry, but you'd better feed these pearls to the swine.

L. E., Baltimore, Md.

"Your Love May Find Love's Light in Mine." This three-verse poem might be used for a semi-popular song. It tells a rather rambling story and the verses are a bit too long, but it would look and sing well with an appropriate musical setting. "Sweet Blend of Harmony" and "Lil and I" are simply poems and in no way would they be available as song lyrics. "The Wound That Never Heals." If I gave this poem the criticism that it deserves I would stand a mighty good chance of being arrested for participating in the white slave traffic. If you will get in touch with our MELODY Professional Service Department, they will gladly give you the information you desire regarding composing and arranging.

R. W. S., Denver, Colo.

I'm glad that you sent sufficient postage for the return of the nine war songs you sent in for the once-over. I gave them the once-over, and once more let me warn the young and ambitious to cut out writing and submitting songs to this department about the "Kaiser," "Clown Prince," "Our Boys are Coming Home," "Over the Top" and all other numbers of this kind and ilk.

Interpreting the Photoplay

(Note: Series C—Excerpts from Schumann —of Mr. Norton's "Interpretative Movie Music" appears on pages 16 and 17 of this issue)

By Harry Norton

WHAT CAN I DO TO IMPROVE MY PLAYING?

IT is characteristic of the American spirit to want to "get ahead." We all want to succeed in our particular line of business, yet in most instances success depends upon our individual efforts and upon the improvement our work shows as time goes on. To be successful we must have first, an objective point and, second, a definite method of reaching that point. This creates a demand for purpose and for understanding—literally, *thinking* about the problems involved. Haphazard methods must be replaced by something definite, by something involving scientific thought.

Scientific methods, as they are called when applied to engineering and industrial problems, may be applied equally well to the profession of music. Capt. Richard P. Hobson (of Spanish War fame) defined the "Scientific Method" while speaking upon the necessity on the part of the American people to use every energy which they possessed to meet the problems forced upon them by the war. He said in part: "The Scientific Method" consists of three parts:

1. To clearly define the objective and keep it always in view.
2. To analyze the objective and determine the factors involved in its realization.
3. To prepare and execute plans for its attainment.

Principles like the above, which make for success when applied in commercial enterprises, should also be applicable to the business (or profession) of playing for the pictures. Our objective is good music, better music and the best music as an accompaniment to the photoplay.

When you began your playing career your ideas were vague, uncertain and indefinite. You were obliged to grope, to feel your way along for a while, but improvement came in a short time. Yet is it not true that many of us have been satisfied with that slight improvement and have made no real effort to continue improving? Are you one of those who are content to go along in the old rut, satisfied merely with "getting by?"

One cannot stand still. To permit methods to crystallize means comparative failure sooner or later. Some of the old-timers may wonder why a new-comer with less experience can successfully compete with them, overlooking the fact that they have not *competed with themselves* —they have not tried to improve upon their previous best. It is simply a matter of keeping one's "nose to the grindstone." You are your own keenest competitor if you force yourself to greater and better effort.

If after a few years you have reached a standard satisfactory to yourself, decide right then and there that it is not as satisfactory as you have believed it to be and that there is yet much room for improvement. Self-satisfaction is a bar to progress. The ambitious man is never satisfied with himself, well knowing that his *best* efforts might have been *better* and hoping and striving to make them better in the future.

The second point, said Capt. Hobson, is "To analyze the objective and determine the factors involved in its realization."

The objective of the movie musician is to be as good a picture player as he can possibly make himself. As the "objective" that does not require any special analysis, but the "factors involved" should be studied carefully; attention to detail, sincere and conscientious performance of the musical program, and exercise of care and good judgment in the application of music to the picture —these are the prime factors involved.

Attention to detail means that "the little things count." From his own observation the writer would say that the sins of moving-picture musicians are those of omission rather than of commission, due mostly to laziness and loss of view of the objective.

There really are but two classes of movie players, namely, those who care and those who don't. The first named group are ever on the alert to adapt their playing to every change in mood or action on the screen, no matter how short the time occupied by that action. A change of music with each change of *scene* is not always necessary or even desirable, but change of music with every change of *action* is absolutely essential. No radical change in the picture is too trivial to be passed unnoticed. Those players who gloss over "short cues" thereby place themselves in the second group—*they who do not care.*

A recent release, entitled "I Want to Forget" (featuring Evelyn Nesbit) offers a number of opportunities for good work in "picking up short cues." One scene, a society entertainment and ball, contains six short cues in a space of five minutes duration: the arrival and reception of the guests; a vocal duet; a tableau; a Spanish dance; a second and third tableau, immediately followed by dancing in the ballroom to the music of a colored jazz orchestra; meeting of the two principal characters and a flash back to the ballroom scene.

Such a scene loses much of its "punch" and the character unless suitably and carefully interpreted. A few suggestions in regard to the handling of such a spot in a picture may be of value to those players who may be called upon to accompany this picture or one similar.

For the arrival and reception of the guests—a Valse Lente; the vocal duet—either "Life's Dream is O'er" or Barcarolle from "Tales of Hoffmann;" the first tableau (Justice directing Allied soldiers)—"Battle Hymn of the Republic;" Spanish dance—excerpt from "Carmen" or Mozskowski's "Spanish Dances;" second tableau (Joan of Arc)—the "Marsellaise;" third tableau (surrender of the Kaiser)—either "We're All Going Calling on the Kaiser" or "You Can't Beat Us if it Takes Ten Million More;" dancing scene—"Tickle Toe" from "Going Up" (very jazzy); meeting of principal characters—"When You Look Into Her Eyes" (from "Going Up"), continuing this number as a fox trot for flash back to ballroom scene.

Point three in Capt. Hobson's outline is "To prepare and execute plans for the attainment of the objective."

In our business, preparation would consist of improvement in our technic, reading and a larger repertoire. Plans might consist of the acquiring of a larger and more comprehensive library of music, the committing to memory of some of the incidental and dramatic cue-music which we must use daily and, principally, the adoption of a method or system of doing our work. Work of any nature must be systematized to a greater or lesser extent if we are to secure efficient results.

In the next article of this series we shall speak of the systematizing and classification of the library of music, whereby characteristic music for any atmosphere is instantly available.

METRONOME MARKINGS

A MELODY subscriber (H. M. F., Halifax, N. S.) expresses the opinion that metronome markings on the Incidental Music published in this magazine would be of value to players. All suggestions or criticisms from subscribers, and those who use the Incidental Series, will be welcomed and given thoughtful consideration.

Dramatic music in the forms of "Hurry," "Agitato" or "Furioso" cannot be arbitrarily labeled with a fixed tempo, because such material must be *played to the action of the picture*. When the action of a scene is fast and furious, the spirit of the music must be the same. In some other instance the *same* Agitato or Hurry music would be used at a slower tempo, if the action on the screen be merely agitated or confused. The same Hurry or Agitato may be played in varying tempi to coincide with the screen action. Instead of "suiting the action to the word," our aim is to "suit the music to the action."

Number 10 of the first series of Jacobs' Incidental Music illustrates the point. The first sixteen measures portray the lunge, thrust and parry of a sword duel; the second strain is constructed for more speed, as the fight waxes hotter and the combatants are imbued with the lust of battle. It readily will be seen that to place an absolute metronome marking on such a number must wholly kill the effect which is intended. Experienced picture players will use their own judgment in regard to tempo, and individual ideas in that respect are really better than any marking made by the composer.

There are no "speed limits" on movie "Hurries," aside from those imposed by the player's technical limitations, and assiduous practice of such material will soon extend the player's ability to "get over the keys."

A SUGGESTION

To players who may have upon their show programs the feature "The Mad Lover" (Robert Warwick), may we suggest that "Series B," "Excerpts from Beethoven," fits the performance of "Othello" as shown in that picture very satisfactorily.

Use the "Love Theme" for scene between "Othello and Desdemona" until Othello smothers Desdemona; *segue* to the *allegro* movement for Othello's flight and use the "Marcia Funebre" upon discovery that Desdemona is dead, also while her body is being borne away. Repeat the *allegro* movement until Othello throws himself over the cliff.

Continued on page 21

Chicago Syncopations

By Axel W. Christensen

THE conductor of this department in MELODY does not claim that "popular syncopation" (as American ragtime might well be termed) is the only music for the people, or that it will ever supersede the so-called more legitimate—all music is "legitimate" which pleases. He does claim, however, that popular music appeals to and reaches the hearts of thousands of music-lovers, as against the hundreds who delight and are able to indulge in the more scholastic. He also makes further claim for the easier assimilating of the "popular," as compared with the years of training necessary to the recognized "standard," and its wider attaining by those unable to pay the prices demanded for the symphonic and operatic.

GARCIOTTO, one of the best known and most expert of string instrument men in the New England States, is now handling a large class of string instrument pupils in a large Boston School of Popular Music. Garciotto will be remembered as the leader of the old Mexican Serenaders that created such a sensation in musical and theatrical circles a few years back.

F. G. Corbitt, manager of a School of Popular Music in Boston, was called home to Chicago because of the critical illness of his sister, but informs me that he will soon be back on the job in Boston.

Bessie Hamilton, well-known cabaret and restaurant entertainer in both Chicago and New York, is now taking a leading part with the Lady Bountiful Minstrels.

Frances Carley, who is connected with Jimmie Corbitt's ragtime school in Boston, is making a specialty of teaching ragtime duets and achieving splendid success.

Miss Edythe Horne, a charming lady and teacher of popular music in the City of Boston, writes me she is so busy that she hardly has time to eat and sleep. Well, that's what you get, Edythe, for being such a good teacher and teaching what the public really wants and enjoys.

Say! the other day who should come walking into the office but Ed. Mellinger (manager of a big popular music school in St. Louis), Edw. J. Schweibel (who is conducting a branch school in St. Louis) and Jimmie Corbitt. They all just happened (?) in about lunch time, and out of courtesy I invited them to lunch with me. Did they accept? I'll say they did! To make matters worse, just as we were seating ourselves in the restaurant who should come strolling in but "Pinky" Shaw, and he hungry also. I really had a very enjoyable time with these boys—the only distressing part being the settling of the check.

Charlie Schultz, who formerly conducted a ragtime school in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, has received an honorable discharge from military duty and will soon be connected with a large Chicago school.

Barney Barnhart, who was formerly with a Chicago ragtime school, but has been conducting a school of his own in Rochester for some time, writes me from "Somewhere in England" to the effect that he anticipates establishing a branch in "Dear Old Lunnon."

Hattie Smith of Detroit has added another piano studio to her suite.

Finally got a letter from George Schulte, the Cleveland ragtime king. He's still in France—more power to him!

Just got a line from Bernie Brin of Seattle who started in as usual bragging about the climate on the western coast, about going in bathing in the Pacific while we wear furs on the shores of Lake Michigan. Without slamming the Pacific coast, and speaking only what is fact, here in Chicago this winter we have not yet hankered for the Galapagos Islands, through which runs the equator. We haven't even had a chance to place a second order for coal or get any good out of our winter auto-top, and the temperature here on the 19th of December was 57 in the shade, what?

Will Newlan, well known as a saxophone soloist in vaudeville, and former director of the Kilties Band, is having good success with his new school in Chicago where all brass and string instruments are taught.

Mrs. M. Davis, one of Chicago's residents on the Sheridan Drive, finds a keen delight in learning to play ragtime. She shows great proficiency in taking a piece written in the ordinary style and doing wonderful things with it in the form of ragtime variations, playing the melody with the left hand, while the right hand just wanders around the keyboard at will doing pearly variations that always seem to fit.

Mary Shugart, the registrar of Chicago's largest ragtime college, was seriously ill with the "flu," but has now returned to her desk fully recovered.

Ed. Schweibel, operating a school in the Odeon, St. Louis, had to have a partition erected so he could crowd in another piano and teacher to accomodate the overflow.

Hannah Harris, who taught ragtime in Chicago and had her own school in Milwaukee, is planning to return to the teaching field after the first of the year and following a rest at her home in Merrill, Wis.

Miss Georgia McClure received a wonderful Christmas box from her home in Colchester, Ill. All the other teachers at the school where Miss McClure teaches artistic syncopation "stuck around," which was well worth while because the box was full of real fruit cake made by "mother" herself.

Mrs. Dagmar Blessing, who before her marriage was known to the show-world under the name of Fredericks, sang beautifully and appropriately at the funeral service of the writer's father, Mr. Charles C. Christensen, who passed away on Friday, December 13, 1918.

Mrs. Van Tress, of Houston, Texas, writes, "My class is the largest it has ever been. I am working day and night as it is impossible to get a competent teacher. Cannot afford one that drives business out faster than I can hustle it in."

DISTINGUISHED JAPANESE ARTIST PLAYS RAGTIME

GEORGE Nagahara, called the Imperial Japanese Oddity, is now appearing in vaudeville with great success. This clever Japanese has certainly created a real novelty number in vaudeville, as the instruments used by both Chinese and Japanese are not, as a rule, built to play "ragtime," or for that matter any music except the weird, mournful, moaning minor sounds called music by the two Oriental nations.

Ragtime, as played by this clever performer on American, Chinese and quaint, ancient Japanese instruments, has a peculiar inimitable charm not heretofore associated with the happy-go-lucky, jolly American ragtime.

MARY GARDEN SAYS RAGTIME IS TYPICAL OF AMERICAN LIFE

MARY Garden, internationally famous as an operatic singer, has solved the unexplainable. In an article which has been prepared for a Parisian musical journal she tells why "ragtime" music has such a wide vogue in America.

"People in America like ragtime for the same reason that Chicagoans are always in a hurry," writes the operatic celebrity. "It is a matter of action, and in this America believes in getting there first. Ragtime is the 100-yard dash of music, and its followers are the sprinters of musical scores.

"All ragtime is not necessarily bad. In fact, some of it has been particularly good. Ragtime can find its classic counterpart in some of our most celebrated and enduring music. The following selections are glorified ragtime: "Tarantella," arranged Rossini; "Two Russian Folk Songs" (Molodka and Sun in the Sky); dances from "Casse Noisette," Tschaikowsky; "Witches Dance" from "Hansel and Grettel;" "Linda Mia," Spanish folk song; "Shepherd's Hey," Grainger; "Habaners," from "Carmen;" "Dagger Dance," "Natoma," Herbert; "Liebesfrend" (Old Vienna Waltz), Kriesler; Intermezzo (between Acts 2 and 3), "Jewels of the Madonna" and "Seville." To like ragtime is more an indication of joy in the ephemeral than proof of bad taste. It is the sprightliness of this class of music that has recommended it to America."

WHEN MARTIN LUTHER PLAYED THE FLUTE

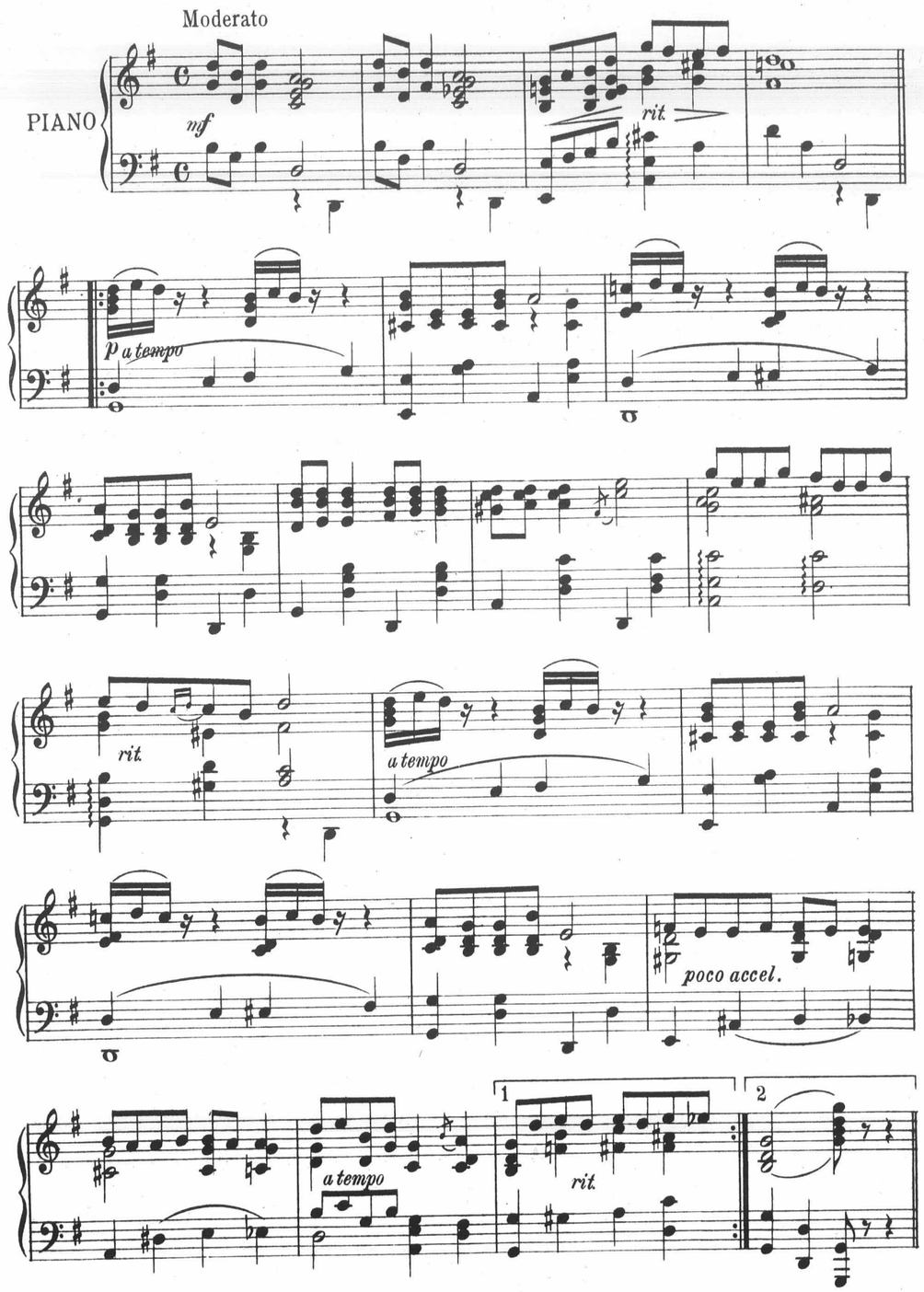
NOT many people know that the great religious reformer, Martin Luther, was also a musician and composer of note. The monk who upset the Church of Rome and made a new religion was fond of improvising church chorals on his flute, while his friends—the conductor, Conrad Rapff, and the cantor, Johann Walther—wrote down the music.

Continued on page 21

June Moon

NOVELETTE

BERNARD FENTON



Più mosso

f

Meno mosso

rit.

Tempo I

p

rit.

a tempo

poco accel.

a tempo

TRIO

f

mf

2d time f

1

2

f

A Little Later On

Words by
ROBERT LEVENSON

Music by
GEORGE L. COBB

Moderato

PIANO

f

fz

𝄋

till voice

I know you've been long-ing for the day When I said that I'd come back to stay; You're not wait-ing in vain, dear, We'll be hap-py a-gain, dear;
Ev-'ry day seems like a year to me, Wait-ing for the hap-py time to be; I've been pa-tient-ly wait-ing, My heart nev-er de-bat-ing,

p

p

Soon we both will wear a hap-py smile;— Please be pa-tient just a-while.
I have dried my tears and smiled in-stead— Ev-er since you wrote and said:

rit.

CHORUS

A lit-tle lat-er on — I'm com-ing back to you, — A lit-tle lat-er on. —

p a tempo

2d time *f*

on — When all the skies are blue; — Just keep a smil-ing as the days roll by, —

— Look for the sil-ver lin-ing in the sky. — So, Hon-ey, brush the tear-drop from your eye, —

— Now don't you cry; — The sun will shine a-gain, — Then you'll be glad to

see — That it was not in vain — You prayed for me; —

— And when my lit-tle girl-ie in my arms I hold, I'll make up ev-'ry kiss you've missed a hun-dred fold, When

1 2

I come back to you a lit-tle lat-er on. — A lit-tle lat-er on. —

f

fz

D.S.

My Dusky Rose

Words & Music by
THOS. S. ALLEN

Moderato

PIANO

f

Down in Al - a - ba - ma where the
When they close the shut-ters and the

'till' Voice

fz *p* *p*

south-ern skies are blue, My Dusk-y Rose, My Dusk-y Rose;
folks have gone to bed, My Dusk-y Rose, My Dusk-y Rose;

I could nev - er tell yer just how much I think of you, For no one knows, My Dusk-y
Out be-neath the shad-ows there I nod my sleep-y head, When no one knows, My Dusk-y

Rose.
Rose.

When I pass yer cab - in as I do most ev'- ry night, I
All a - lone Im sit - ting by the sweet mag-no - lia trees, I

love to hear yer sing-ing, then I know yer heart am light; I'd like to meet yer, hon - ey, when the
see the corn a - wav - in' with the gen - tle sum-mer breeze; I sing to you my hon - ey, and it

moon am shin - in' bright, I've got a lit - tle song I'll sing to you:
sets my heart at ease, Per - haps yer might have heard me when I said:

CHORUS

My Dusk-y Rose-bud, My Dusk - y Rose, You are the sweet-est flow-er that

p-f

grows; When the stars are in the sky, And the moon am shin - in' high,

That's the time for you and I, My Dusk - y Rose. Rose.

1 2

f *D.S.*

JACOBS' INCIDENTAL MUSIC

SERIES C—Excerpts from SCHUMANN

(1) Sonata in D Minor (2) Why? (3) Santa Claus

Concert Edition

Themes Selected by HARRY NORTON

Adapted and Arranged by R. E. HILDRETH

1 Hurry — Allegro

2 Plaintive — Lento

3 Mysterioso — Andante quasi Moderato

For Her

ROMANCE

NORMAN LEIGH

Moderato

PIANO

mf

rall. *a tempo*

poco rall.

L'istesso tempo

più rall. *mp*

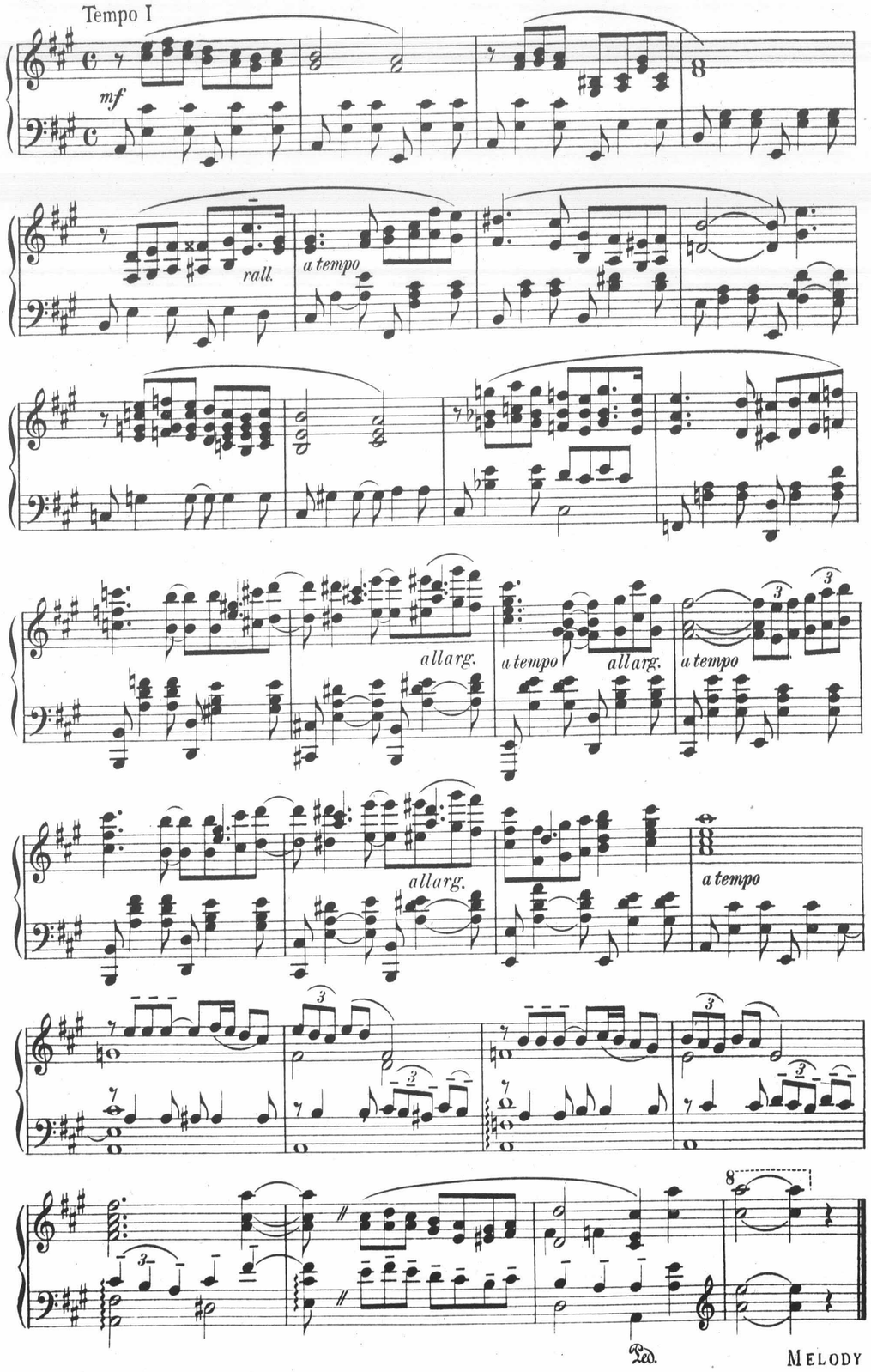
Incalz poco a poco

f

ff

mp *rall.* *a tempo*

rall. *a tempo*



Interpreting the Photoplay

Continued from page 7

INCIDENTAL MUSIC—SERIES C

Excerpts from Schumann

THE dramatic cue-music in this month's music supplement of MELODY has been selected from the compositions of Robert Schumann.

A (Agitato) is adapted from the violin and piano sonata, Opus 121, fourth movement.

B (Mysterioso) is an arrangement of Opus 68, No. 12, one of Schumann's Child Songs entitled "Santa Claus." This makes a very effective mysterioso.

C (Love Theme) is the famous "Warum" (Why?), a tender, pleading melody that is universally known and liked.

ROBERT SCHUMANN

ROBERT (Alexander) Schumann was born at Zwickau in Saxony on June 8, 1810—the youngest son of a bookseller of pronounced literary tastes and inclination. The taste for literature was also strongly developed in the son, who at the age of fourteen aided his father in writing a Biographical Gallery. Later on Schumann wrote many striking essays and critiques under the pseudonyms of Florestan, Eusebius, Meister Taro, Jeanquirit, etc., and his critical advice and technical helps for young musicians and youthful genius stand today among the noblest of such works. He edited and published a paper, wrote many lyrics for his own musical settings and, as an example of his literary taste, utilized a portion of Moore's "Lalla Rookh" for his choral number, *Paradise and the Peri*, and drew from Goethe's masterpiece for his choric music of *Faust*. As a literateur Schumann's writings are published in four volumes, and his many letters were edited and published by his wife.

It was as early as 1853 that Schumann began at intervals to manifest symptoms of melancholic insanity in fits of moody abstraction, although not to an alarming extent. In 1840 he consummated what proved to be one of the happiest and most ideal marriages known among the master musicians when he wedded with Clara Wieck, who as Mme. Clara Schumann became distinguished as one of the world's greatest woman pianists. In 1844 acting upon the advice of Mendelssohn, his warm personal friend, he devoted himself entirely to teaching pianoforte and composition. His mental trouble slowly but surely developed, increasing in intensity until 1853 when it compelled his retirement from public life, and in 1854 caused him to attempt suicide by throwing himself in the river Rhine. The attempt was frustrated by nearby boatmen, and he was then committed to an asylum at Endenich near Bonn, where he sank into a condition of acute melancholia, varied with normal lucid intervals during which he composed as before. He died at Endenich on July 29, 1856.

As a composer Schumann was prolific and rich in themes, and while he did not leave to the world such great songs as Schubert's "Death and the Maiden" or "The Erlking" he left a number of melodic songs of great beauty, which should be far better known and more widely sung. He was a master at writing chamber music and for the larger string ensembles, and from these the versatile picture-player with musical acumen can glean scores of themes which are splendidly adaptable to the modern photoplay.

CHICAGO SYNCOPATIONS

Continued from page 8

He wrote the words of at least thirty chorals, and is credited with having composed the music for thirteen of them. Probably the most famous of these is the choral sometimes played even today, "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God."

It is related that once, following the famous religious declaration of Luther and the establishment of the Restoration, the erst-while monk was traveling through Italy. At night-fall he would take out his faithful flute and play sweet tunes to the even-tide air. One evening he encamped near the walls of a convent, and all unknowingly entertained the nuns and their abbess. But bedtime approached—the nuns were ordered to their downy couches—still the flute's shrill notes resounded. The abbess was in despair, and she would have been more so if she had but known the offender's name. Finally she sent out word by her gardener: "The mother superior would sleep—her sisters cannot close their eyes with your Devil's notes." Martin Luther sent back word: "Say that Martin Luther is playing the flute, so pray that God will take the Devil out of my notes."

HINTS FOR THE PICTURE PIANISTS

MARCELLA Henry writes the following splendid suggestions for the movie pianist:

Don't be what the people call a thumper. Nothing jars more on the ears of the audience than a lot of noise. Some pianists have the idea that, to gain a reputation as SOME PIANISTS, they must make all the noise possible and "tear the piano apart," so to speak. FAR BE IT FROM SUCH! To be an A1 picture player a pianist must bring out all there is in a picture, and all the finer effects are lost if the pianist keeps ff from the time "Welcome" slide is thrown on the screen until "Good-night" is shown.

For comedy pictures lively music, but not too loud unless action is very rough. The people go to a theatre to see the pictures, and if the music is too loud it draws their attention from the picture. The music should fit into the picture. Popular songs, rags or any 2/4 tempo, are very good unless eccentric—then some popular fox trot, rag or chicken reel fits in nicely. Western pictures require 6/8 and 2/4 marches; also cowboy songs, and should always follow the action of the picture. If the action is slow, play slow; if scene is chasing robbers, etc., where horses and riders are speeding the limit, play fast.

For scenic and educational pictures concert waltzes and overtures from the standard operas can be used. In the animated weeklies always change with each scene. If soldiers are marching, play "America First" or any popular or national patriotic air. For showing latest fashions, with ladies in beautiful costumes, play "Beautiful Lady" or some pretty waltz. Selections from musical comedies are good for comedy-dramas, which do not require any particular style of music. Always try to play appropriate music whenever possible. For example: (No. 1) Young man sees pretty girl, tries to flirt. What would be more appropriate than to play "Pretty Baby," "Whose Pretty Baby Are You Now?" or Will Carroll's great ballad, "If I Could Call You Mine." (No. 2) Where there is a pathetic scene of a mother and child, "Mother" fits very well.

In pictures depicting scenes and characters in Ireland, always play as much Irish music as you can. For war pictures of Blue and Gray: never play a Southern patriotic air when the Northern flag is shown, or a Northern air when the Southern flag is seen. Music for the war pictures usually requires a lot of noise, especially for the battle scenes, and here is where our friend "the thumper" can SHINE.

To follow a picture, scene for scene, a pianist must have quite a number of pieces by memory. I always make it a rule not to read a sheet of music for the first show. If there is an intermission a pianist has time to sort the program for the following shows. Some managers get the synopsis of the plot a few days ahead of the date the picture is to be shown, in which case the pianist has ample time to get the program ready. All pianists aren't gifted in the art of improvising, a gift which helps considerably in following a picture.

If the film should break and leave the curtain dark, always play something; never have any dead waits in a theatre, but have the music go with a snap.

If you want to take a few minutes rest,

time the picture, and don't stop playing when the picture stops, but keep on playing until operator has next reel well started.

When there is an orchestra it is almost impossible to follow a picture unless you can sort the program beforehand and know when to change the music. The new photo-players, now used in a number of theatres, are a relief to some of the pianists who have been working with leaders. They didn't have the first idea what to play for a picture, but would be playing a heavy overture when lively scenes were on, and I also wish to state that no dying man wants to hear "Too Much Mustard."

Here is success to the various photo-players, when they have a musician who understands the instrument and can follow the picture.

ANSWERING THE CRITICS

By W. T. Gleeson

DR. Muck, once a leader of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, some time ago assured us in the most solemn and authoritative manner that ragtime was poison and that we were poisoning the musical life of the future at its very fountain-head when we allowed the youth of the country to devote themselves to ragtime in such widespread fashion as is seen today. He moaned in distress on the occasion of a visit he paid to a subscriber to the Boston Symphony Orchestra and found a gay collection of ragtime phonograph records in that gentleman's library, and declared that this circumstance occasioned in him the grief one feels over the loss of a dear friend. Poor Dr. Muck! do you not feel sorry for him; and not only that, are you not sorry for yourself also, getting poisoned all the time and helping to poison all the other fellows that are going to come after you? This is rather a serious matter, is it not? Let us look into it closer.

The scandalized doctor did not go to the trouble of explaining the why and the wherefore of these terrible statements, so if we want an explanation we must find it out for ourselves. In the first place, who is Dr. Muck anyway? Let us take a second look at him. He once led the Boston Symphony, one of the best orchestras on this earth, and he probably received a very high salary. The Boston Symphony is composed of players each one of whom was individually excellent before he joined the organization, and these players became collectively excellent by daily practice for years under the direction of other leaders. The task of Dr. Muck, then, was to continue the good work of others, and he can hardly claim the honor of making the Boston Symphony Orchestra what it is today.

In the light of these facts his importance is somewhat reduced; still in all fairness, his standing was exalted and he must have felt that standing when he denounced our national ragtime so strongly without giving us a single reason and expecting us to take his bare word only. So much for Dr. Muck.

Now as to ragtime—the joyous music of our own which in spite of all criticisms we have persisted in for twenty years without any sign of abatement, and the appeal of which has been felt around the world wherever music is loved!

Unlike the symphony, ragtime does not require years of study to learn it or to listen to it with intelligence; it can be learned by the average unit of the masses within a few months, and listened to with pleasure by anyone, whether possessed of musical experience or not. It contains all

the essentials of real music, viz: rhythm, melody and harmony; it affords scope for inspiration, and a melody with a ragtime rhythm may be just as truly beautiful as a melody with a rhythm of any other kind. As for harmony, while an average ragtime tune is harmonized simply enough, it may be and often is elaborated by rich harmonic progressions identical with those to be found in the works of the best classical writers. I have examined ragtime songs by the score, noted the harmony used and found the very same forms again and again in the works of Chopin and others. Yet while in the case of Chopin these harmonies are accounted great and glorious, they must be set down as poisonous and immoral when used in ragtime. This one word "immoral," by the way, sums up the judgment of the honorable Olive Fremstad (opera singer) concerning ragtime; but why the C-sharp minor chord, for instance, should be pure and holy and beautiful when used in the "moonlight sonata," and poisonous and immoral when used in a ragtime piece, surpasses my comprehension. I doubt if even Dr. Muck or anybody else could explain it.

It may be admitted that ragtime is not equally good—that some of it may even be accounted trashy—but this is not a reason to condemn it from top to bottom, because the same thing can be truly said in regard to music of any other kind. We all know that there was plenty of musical trash before ragtime was ever thought of, and plenty of such trash may be found today without taking a single step into the field of ragtime. Mr. Stark, the well-known music publisher of St. Louis, had the same thing in mind when he referred some time back to those "cold skeletons" dignified by such names as "Preludiums" or "Valse Syphonique." Yet this sort of trash excites nobody's criticism—ragtime alone must be made the goat and the outcast; indeed, considering the manner in which year after year it has been cursed from the heavens above to the earth below, the wonder is that it has not long ago perished from the face of the globe.

It should not be forgotten that in the study of ragtime there is ample opportunity to develop at least the fundamentals of many things which are considered of vital importance in classical music; for instance, technique, tone-quality, strict time, etc., things which the bloated pedagogue is accustomed to rave about and to claim for his very own. Ragtime pupils learn technique, and learn something also about graduations of tone; the pedagogue has no monopoly of these things. Another thing also may be pointed out, namely, that when learning ragtime first the pupil is able to discover whether he possesses a natural equipment sufficient to warrant him in the study of music more deeply. In some cases this is so, and the study of classical music may be pursued with every prospect of success. In other cases, where the mind of the pupil has been cast in smaller limits, he becomes a ragtime player anyhow, and can thus feel a like move of the thrill and joy of living thereby. There are millions who can get a little pleasure this way, so why should it be taken from us? But Dr. Muck says it is bad and poisonous. Whether it is better to spend years of time and labor in the drudgery of learning classical music, only to fail ninety-nine times out of a hundred and finally be compelled to satisfy oneself with ragtime, as I have seen over and over again, or to learn ragtime first and then go no further unless properly fitted to do so, is the question.

It is consoling when dealing with critics of ragtime to remember that others, standing high in the world of music, do not all agree with them. Percy Grainger, a very eminent pianist who has also come to the front as a composer for piano and symphony orchestra and won high praise in many lands, has publicly stated that he likes ragtime and doesn't care who knows it. And there are many prominent musicians who feel the same way, so it must have some beauty after all, that one may like without being aesthetically dead. It might be possible that Muck and Fremstad caught a glimpse of the dollar sign floating across their mental vision, and feared that symphony and grand opera might decline as ragtime increased in popularity.

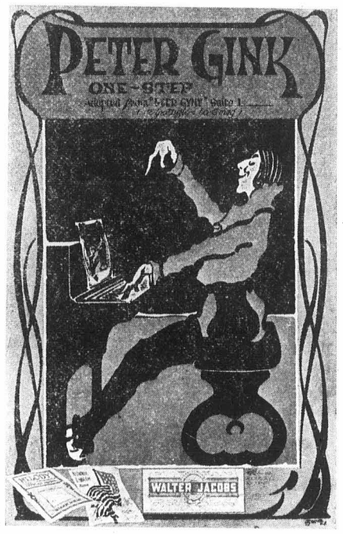
PETER GINK

SOME SIDE LIGHTS

By Merle Dappert

DENNIE Davis, the tuba player, tells me this one: "I went over to the village of Buckeye to examine a second-hand tuba, intending to buy the instrument if it was in good condition as the owner had said it was.

"The fellow showed me the horn. I took it, and tried to run a chromatic to get an idea of the tone of the instrument, but found one of the valves completely to the bad. 'What's the matter with this third valve,' I asked, 'Why won't it work?'



"'Oh! Somebody plugged it with chewing gum. It really doesn't matter though, a guy never uses it much anyway,' the owner replied."

I stepped into a piano store the other day, and while waiting for the manager I happened to overhear the conversation between the salesman and the prospective customer. The lady was examining a second-hand piano. Presently she turned and asked the salesman: "What makes these piano keys so pink? Ivory should be white, not pink. These keys are surely but a celluloid imitation."

The salesman replied carelessly: "Oh, don't let that worry you. Those are genuine ivory keys. You see, these ivory hunters, after they kill the elephant, saw off the tusks. Now in this case they must have cut too close to the quick. That's why this ivory is colored, it's a little bloody! But it's genuine 18 carat ivory nevertheless."

Heard in a movie theatre:

"I got Charlie Chaplin's walk the other night."

"How did you get it?"

"Went over in front of his house and took it."

When I first made my debut in the music world, I was the proud possessor of a little eight-keyed wooden flute. A bunch of old-time musicians gave me the glad-hand sign of welcome, and made me a member of their orchestra. This orchestra consisted of five "never-was-es" of which I was the juvenile member.

Those rehearsals we had! Those weird blue chords we used to play! Those discordant crashes! It's a wonder the gentle (?) public didn't tar and feather us, and then exile us from the city.

One day we were practicing on a "double number"—that is, a piece of music with one composition on one side and another on the reverse side of the sheet.

We finished the piece and the leader remarked: "Boys, we sure are getting along fine. Now that piece 'Dragon Fly March' we played better than the opera house orchestra could hope to play it. If we just keep on practicing, we will soon——"

"Oh," the trombonist interrupted, "were you fellows playing 'Dragon Fly March?' I was playing the piece on the other side—'Frolics of Fancy'!"

Another time the same orchestra was struggling with a classical selection, which for convenience of the players was stationed off in four sections, A, B, C and D respectively.

The cornet player tuned his horn in A when we started the piece. When we reached station B he made a quick change to the key of B-flat. Pretty soon we reached station C and the cornetist grabbed his C-shank and tuned to the key of C. Finally, we reached the station D, but the cornetist was nonplussed. "Well, I'll be d—d," he cried; "I've heard of cornets being tuned to A, to B and to C, but who the h—ll ever heard of a cornet being tuned to D."

None of the musicians had ever heard of a cornet in D, so they ditched the com-

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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.

position, with some very caustic remarks relating to the ability of the arranger.

I enrolled a young lady recently, who had studied several months with the old method before starting with me. I tried her out on several pieces she said she knew, gave her the first ragtime movements and was starting her on ragtime simplicity in our ragtime instructor. As it is customary for a teacher to ask the pupil when beginning a new piece the time in which it is to be played, I naturally did so. The little lady, with a cute little look at her wrist, answered: "It's just 2.15."

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