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AUGUST, 1925
Volume IX, No. 8

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Universal Pitch---A-Four-Forty
By J. C. Deagan

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“FROM FLOWER TO FLOWER” (Butterfly Dance by Frank E. Henson)
“The BATTLE ROYAL” (March by Thos. S. Allen)
“SONGE D'AMOUR” (by Norman Leigh)

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"Universal Pitch---A-Four-Forty"

Y OU have asked me to write on the pitch question, now that this subject has been opened again for discussion. I will endeavor to state my views, not as a theory but more as a matter of personal experience, in the hope that they may help in the final settlement. Please overlook an apparent over-intention of the personal pronoun, for there is no intention of making the ego prominent.

The heading given in the article would have been devised malapropos a decade or two ago, but through the gradual adoption of the pitch of A 440 by various musical organizations, associations, leading piano and organ builders, etc., throughout the past few years, we cannot help but feel that A 440 is now really a "universal pitch." It simply remains for the Piano Tuners' Association to adopt A 440 by popular vote, a vote which it is hoped will be unanimous.

When I was invited by the president of the Piano Tuners' Association, Mr. Charles Henschel, and Mr. F. C. Miller, to attend the Tuners' Conference in Chicago on March 10, 1905, which was called to discuss and, if possible, adopt a standard pitch and submit it to the United States Government for adoption, I was surprised to learn that many members of the Piano Tuners' Association did not know that A 440 at 44-60 vibrations per second had already been adopted by the United States Government (after the government had learned of its serious mistake in adopting A 433 some years previously).

At this meeting there was a general feeling that if the Piano Tuners' Association would adopt A 440, the pitch of the wind instruments of the orchestra would have to follow. And there would be a demand[ing] the right thing, but if they adopted any pitch higher than A 433 it might be a dangerous experiment. Some of the members thought that if the pitch A 440 were adopted, it must be an imperative to go higher and higher later on, possibly to A 445. A 446, or 450. One member stated that the Boston Symphony Orchestra had been using A 445, but following the upward tendency of pitch had left A 440 and is now using A 446. It is on this phase of the pitch question that I would dwell, having manufactured musical instruments pitched in order for leading musicians in almost all of the musical centers of the world during the past thirty years or more. This unique experience recirculated a keen interest in the pitch question, and at a time when that question was in a state of evolution.

In advocating the universal adoption of A 440, pitch throughout the last quarter of a century, I have done so with but one purpose in mind, namely, to bring order out of chaos in the interest of good music. And you may be assured that I did urge adoption until I had made very careful, personal laboratory investigation of the various pitches used today for all time to come. But, as a matter of fact, the temperature was too low for American instruments; a higher temperature would throw the woodwind instruments and pipe organs much higher—to about A 440 in normal temperature. It seems to us not uninteresting at all the tinkering and experimenting with the pitch question, there has been no serious change among the better class of European musicians for more than a hundred years.

In the mix-up of high and low pitch experiments during the past century, it is interesting to note that only three different kinds of pitch have been considered seriously: the old, the new standard A 433 (440), and the new pitch A 440, and all the others were special. But, though it all, it is interesting to notice a tendency in sort of tacit understanding among the better class of musicians and the manufacturers of wind instruments as a matter of business to stick to a more or less uniform pitch. It was this tendency toward uniformity which made possible the modern orchestras of mixed nationalities, and this pitch today is nothing more or less than the old "Schott und Stumpf Standard A 440," established in Germany in 1834 after the death of Beethoven.

Of course we had the old, high pitch in America for many years—A 445 to A 446 about a half-tone higher than A 440. It became popular in about 1890. Even the Thomas Orchestra played in this high pitch for some years, but somehow or other it wouldn't stick. So finally we went back to the old German low pitch, and have remained there ever since.

Many of the musicians deny this claim that the A 440 pitch is better, but it is our opinion that anyone tinkering with A 440 pitch in the future will not be able to go either higher or lower, as some of the theorists and non-commercial people think can be done. If you want to know just how little these writers know about the real basis of tone, simply ask them to explain why it is that every third or fourth interval in the major and minor scales has to be a semi-tone. Of the "skilly" of the whole thing, and sentiments in the words. It is true that the questions, then see them for what they are, and consider the subject. If pianos are afraid of the signs of a half step of a semi-tone higher on pianos--from A 445 (C437) to A 440 (C 435)—let them consider these old days when pianos were tuned about a semi-tone higher than A 445. The actual stress on the strings did not give much trouble.

For some years A 445 was the official pitch of the American Federation of Musicians, the largest organized body of musicians in the world, and also the pitch generally used by pipe organ and piano builders. The fact re-
WILSON FOR AUGUST NINETY TWO-FIFTEEN

ABOUT THE WASHINGTON ORGANIZERS

By IRENE JUNO

The real piano pitch (and there are many of them) is the real salt of the earth. What would music or musicians or civilization itself do without it? First of all, he should be a man of long experience, a great artist, an attracted personality. He would be able to bring into his art a whole of culture, and respect for music and freedom from a conception of music, and respect for the composer's intention, and respect for the audience. The great pianist would not be afraid of repeats, or any other necessity of the moment.

The man makes one big mistake, though, in his conduct. He always looks up to the people, and he should look up to them, for he is just as much of a musician as the audience, and perhaps more than they. Mind you, I am now speaking for the people, who has mastered his art and can "simplify the real equal temperament."

Arthur Gibson

Eaton Bay Page

ARCHER GIBSON

"Tell us, "I implored, "old comedienne, why?""

"With thumb on the string of his key, he presented his fingers lightly together to tip--a characteristic pose of his, I believe, especially among the audience. The audience would--or, rather, their audience would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--would--woul..."
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FRANK E. HERSOM

PIANO

Moderato

Tempo di Gavotte

Andante

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MELODY

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ing to some of the Concerts my own self, and now I see where it's killed a man. He was walking along 32nd St. in New York, and a Radio set fell out of a stuff window and hit him on the head."

A lot of people think the trouble with the radio is getting people to broadcast. I see where in England they finally passed a bill where you can't make Photographic Records by taking 'em off the air, which was why a lot of Artits wouldn't broadcast because they were afraid of somebody doing it, if you can tell what I mean.

But you take it from me, the trouble isn't in getting people to give their services, it's in keeping 'em from doing it. That's what our Congress needs to pass a law about.

JST the same, Americans is coming right along musically. Now we get a Boston girl, Madeline Keiley, you might think she was Scotch but she ain't, who has finally made a big success in Paris. Last year she was a hit in Hong and Monte Carlo, but they didn't get such a grade against the Valkyrie there.

But in Paris they have a few less hands around, 'cause lately in American singers, so they was kind of from Missouri, but this Keiley girl certainly put it over good. And here in New York I see where a Delektive, and who do you expect to be any dumber than a delektive, was trading some Counterpoints, whose passing was ushering a Goodfolk Song.

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IT'S FLYING HIGH

by LLOYD G. SEL CASTELLO

Number a system I explained at length in this column in the issue of May, 1941. These classifications vary considerably in scope, extent, and volume, from the Suite, too bulky for a solo and occupying a full shell, to the Light folks, which belong to a rather narrow niche, or those of low and unsung themes, dear to the hearts of all the artists, such as the Jalousie Suite, or the Cryptic Canto, or the like. puppy music, the more sophisticated music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elaborate and ornate music, the more elabor...
An Attractive Suite

A Love Episode

By THEO. BENDIX
Birdland

FOR PIANO

A love song

The Gentle Dove

(a love song)

The Heartbroken Sparrow

(a pathetic appeal)

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(a joyous flight)

The Magpie and the Parrot

(a quarrelsome humour)

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Improvisations

Passing Comment—Editorial and Otherwise—on Topics of Current Interest to all Those Who are Interested in Music

WE notice with interest that the Hammond Organ, manufactured by the Hammond Organ Co., has announced the perfection of a new type of device known as a "bell pedal." The device is capable of producing any kind of tone, and can be used in connection with any other instrument.

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"MOUNTAIN LAUREL" (Waltz by Thos. S. Allen)
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