

*Library of
The Harvard Musical
Association*



Bulletin No. 27
January, 1959

Library Committee

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Custodian of the Marsh Room*
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To the Members of the Association:

Your attention is called to an article in this issue by Cyrus Durgin.

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This is the last bulletin I shall issue—the final one by me. I have resigned the official positions I have held since 1932—some 26 years. During these years an abominably disgraceful library has been brought to a high state of perfection mostly through the efforts of Muriel French, a capable, efficient and initiative Librarian who succeeded Mary Alden Thayer. I am confident that the library, which can successfully meet comparison with any Special Music Library, now under Albert Sherman, who has succeeded Miss French, will maintain its standard and continue to be a credit to the Association.

I extend my best wishes to my successor and the hope that he will have as pleasurable and satisfactory a regime as mine has been over the twenty-six years.

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It has been the practice over many years to send to new members the first twelve issues of these bulletins in order that they might read the notable history of this organization, now in its 122nd year. For at least its first fifty years this Association, including in its membership men prominent and influential in the community, organized and successfully managed various musical matters for the edification and even the education of a public somewhat ignorant of certain kinds of presentations of music, until finally there was no corner in the field of music not exploited for the benefit of the public—what these members called “public benefits.” The supply of these twelve bulletins is now exhausted and since none will be reprinted copies cannot hereafter be sent to new members.

There are on hand, however, bulletins of succeeding years which continue the story of music and allied subjects. These bulletins narrate, for instance, such significant subjects as the founding, management and financial success of the Harvard Orchestra, conducted by Carl Zerrahn, which performed for seventeen seasons and was disbanded when Henry L. Higginson founded the Boston Symphony Orchestra; the National Peace Jubilee of 1869, celebrating the end of the war, a huge affair

lasting a week; the World Peace Jubilee of 1872, even more ambitious; the visits of various opera companies; the celebration of the opening of railroad communication between Boston and Canada, with a dinner on the Common attended by thousands, addresses by persons of distinction including President Fillmore and Charles M. Conrad, Secretary of War; the story of "The Lone Fishball" and of the amateur operetta *Il Pesceballo* it occasioned; the amusing records of the Secretary of the Arionic Sodality (1813-1831) whose sense of humor flavored his minutes; and other subjects. Members who have not these bulletins and wish them may obtain them by applying to Mr. Sherman.

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Our collection of operas—piano scores with English translation—is notably large and comprehensive in titles, containing a few, according to visitors, not found elsewhere in Boston. Interest in opera and in presenting it has spread widely over the country in, say, the last ten years. A number of cities have organized local companies and even high schools have presented opera creditably according to "Opera News," an excellent weekly magazine published by the Metropolitan Opera Guild of New York. Here the Boston Association, in trepidation and with a screwing eye on the box office, ventures a very short season by the Metropolitan Opera Company of New York, presenting mostly the old stand-bys heard since the year one. The New England Opera Theatre (here in Boston) sponsors annually a series of operas under the management and direction—in all details—of our fellow member Boris Goldovsky, who began the series a few years ago, is still doing so and will, it is hoped, continue to do so *ad infinitum*.

In 1958, over this country, there were 738 opera companies; approximately 4000 performers took part in 250 different operas.

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A year ago the Directors initiated a matter of wide interest in their purpose: to offer a commission to young composers for original chamber music compositions. The plan was explained in full in the February, 1958, bulletin (Bulletin No. 26) and will not be repeated here. The committee on awards has made its report and I submit it as follows.

REPORT ON AWARDS

In March, 1958, the Harvard Musical Association commissioned the writing of a chamber music work from four composers, each commission carrying with it an award of \$500. The recipients of the awards were as follows.

John David Kraehenbuehl. Born 1923. Assistant Professor of Music Theory, Yale School of Music. Studied at the University of Illinois, Yale, Schola Cantorum Basiliensis (Basel). Work submitted: composition for tenor, soprano, flute, bassoon, trombone, violin, cello.

Robert Walter Moeve. Born 1920. Assistant Professor of Music, Harvard. Studied at Harvard Conservatoire (Paris), American Academy in Rome, Mlle. Boulanger. Work submitted: solo sonata for violin alone.

William Overton Smith. Born 1926. Instructor at the University of California, Fellow of American Academy in Rome. Studied at Juilliard, Mills College, California, University of California (Berkeley), Conservatoire (Paris). Work submitted: quartet for piano, clarinet, violin, cello.

Chaloner Porter Spencer. Born 1923. Instructor at Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut. Studied at Princeton, University of California, Roger Sessions. Work submitted: string quartet.

The four compositions were submitted in the fall of 1958. It is expected that they will receive their first performances at the Association and that copies will be filed permanently in our library.

COMMITTEE ON COMPOSERS' AWARDS

Stephen B. Fassett
Chester W. Williams

Grover J. Oberle
G. Wallace Woodworth
ARNOLD S. POTTER

Chairman

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This Association is neither lethargic nor somnolent, and its four committees are active. It is worth-while for members to know what they are doing. I submit their reports for the past year.

REPORT ON THE LIBRARY AND ON THE
MARSH ROOM FOR THE YEAR 1958

To the President and Board of Directors of the Harvard Musical Association:

"When you have finished something in which you have put thought and energy it is a satisfaction to realize that the labor is over and the result worthwhile, providing that the purpose also was worth penetrating attention."

This quotation, penned by the Earl of Chesterfield in his famous *Letters to His Son*, seemed to me a pertinent preface to this report, it being my practice now and then to open with a preface in order to give a pseudo-literary touch to the narration of prosaic facts. For this is the last and final report I shall make to you after being on the job since 1932, a period of twenty-six years. I have some reluctance in retiring, for it has been a satisfying labor to raise the library from a low state of direness to its present state of excellence, though that was done mostly by Muriel French, a capable and efficient Librarian until her fairly recent death. Possessed of a certain historicalness, I have enjoyed assembling from far and wide accounts of the noteworthy deeds of a notable association and for the first time recording them in print, as was done in my first twelve bulletins. The passing of twenty-six years, however, plus the accumulation of years to a certain degree, which you all will reach if you hang on long enough, hint that it is well to fade away, as is the fate of many generals, and to retire from some of the matters in which I have taken an active interest.

There is nothing to report except the usual statistics. At best, statistics are dull but these have the virtue of reliability and truthfulness and may, perhaps, be welcomed by some unknown person who, with unexplainable curiosity, may wish to compare them with previous statistics. However, my predecessors have always presented them, although fewer in subject. Mr. Sherman reports the following statistics and other facts.

There were 800 visitors to the Library. Books and music taken out number 356. Of the borrowers, 24 were guests and of these 11 were students in local music schools. Of the 356 loans 66 were vocal scores of operas, 45 compositions for solo piano, 34 biographies, 22 histories of music, and 22 of chamber music.

Of 1320 playing periods in the Marsh Room 967 were used by 88 players. Besides the usual pianists there were 5 vocalists, 2 violinists, 1 violist, 1 oboist.

The evening use of the Marsh Room included 12 evenings for the usual concerts, one evening by the Guild Library Committee, 32 times by the Apollo Club, 19 times by a Concert Ensemble, 16 times by the H. M. A. orchestra, one evening for the annual dinner.

Besides these more or less regular activities the Marsh Room was used 22 times by music teachers and their pupils and performers for functions, which were attended by 1132 people. One very nice function was a meeting in December of the local branch of the French Legion d'Honneur who were entertained by a recital of music for cello and piano performed by two sisters who were completing a transcontinental concert tour and were about to return to France.

In conclusion I can assert that the library is in excellent condition and that the proverbial hanging goose still hangs high in the heavens.

Respectfully submitted,
CHARLES R. NUTTER

REPORT OF THE ENTERTAINMENT COMMITTEE
FOR THE YEAR 1958

During 1958 the Entertainment Committee have presented the usual dozen programs including the entertainment following the Annual Dinner and the double Ladies' Night program. The year started with the substitution of the Claremont String Quartet for the Griller Quartet, who were forced to cancel their engagement because of illness. The substitution, however, was not an unhappy one as the Claremont Quartet gave us a very good evening.

The rest of the spring season went off as planned, and the winter season started without any unfortunate occurrences.

ALBERT C. SHERMAN, JR.
Chairman

REPORT OF THE ORCHESTRA COMMITTEE
FOR THE YEAR 1958

The orchestra continues as a source of great pleasure to its members; we should be happy to have more of the Association's members join us when they find it convenient, whether or not they can come regularly. A number of guest players from the Conservatory faculty have come regularly, with a noticeable improvement in our balance, particularly in the woodwind section, and some new talent has strengthened the violins. On the other hand, circumstances beyond the control of our oboists have left us occasionally without that most essential instrument. We'd welcome particularly anybody who would enjoy playing with us in that department.

Our Treasurer, Arnold Potter, played Mozart piano concerti with us a number of times in 1958, and we hope he will do it again. Our conductor, Chester Williams, makes the whole activity possible.

We stayed well within our budget, partly because the project of buying scores and parts for permanent loan to the Conservatory got off to a slow start. Your committee intends to push this project harder in 1959; accordingly we are making the same budget request as for 1958, namely \$1,000.

Respectfully,
JOSEPH B. FYFFE
Chairman

REPORT OF THE GUILD LIBRARY
FOR 1958

The previous Guild Library Committee had succeeded so well in organizing the various functions of the Library that it would have been almost impossible for this committee to improve on any aspect of their work. It would be fitting in this report to congratulate the former committee on its accomplishment.

This year's record acquisitions have helped to fill out the standard repertory in the fields of orchestral, chamber music and choral recordings. We have made several additions to the Archive series. It was thought best to obtain several tone poems of Richard Strauss. Our string quartet library now includes the very best quartets of Haydn, all the famous Mozart quartets and the complete string quartets of Beethoven. Replacements have been made where certain records were badly worn.

It was hoped that sufficient interest would be shown by the membership in the tapes on file in the Library. Our hopes were not realized and so the project of copying the originals for listening purposes was given up. It is still hoped that the membership will avail itself of the privilege of hearing on tape any particular concert or selection which gave them particular pleasure.

Tape Night this year drew a still larger audience and it is sincerely hoped that the growth in attendance will continue as we again assemble this coming May for our annual review of the season's best performances.

Acknowledgment should be made and appreciation expressed for the efforts of those members of the committee who have helped in continuing the work of the Guild Library.

Respectfully submitted,
GEORGE HUMPHREY
Chairman

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Again—and for the last time—I am indebted to Cyrus Durgin for his unhesitating willingness to write an article for this issue. It is no casual task for a man whose duties days and evenings claim prior attention. I appreciate, as I am sure you do, his willingness to write the following article.

SHOP TALK, OR THE IMPORTANCE
OF MUSICAL OPINIONS
IN PRINT

It may be due to atomic fall-out in the air or merely to the fact of advancing age, but I do seem to perceive some things much more clearly now than used to be the case. Such things as the role of the individualist citizen in an increasingly conformist society (continue to be an individual and direct your powers upon things which most interest you, taking the ethics exemplified by Jesus Christ as your guide), or such a thing as musical and theatrical journalism, which happens to be my own profession.

This profession is extraordinary. To practise it well you must be a student all your days; you must have been born with an analytical turn of mind, good ears and good eyes, and ability to write simple and informative prose morning, noon and night. Long hours and hard work are required; one must turn day into night and vice-versa, and the job is never finished, like housework or the determination whether the hen or the egg came first. This profession offers little in the way of honors and less in the way of getting comfortably well-off, let alone rich.

“Then why practise it at all ? “, I can hear being said by some practical soul with what Bernard Baruch defined as “the knack for making money.” Why? Because I like it and, as such extrinsic matters go in this world, I believe it to have value, though it cannot be eaten, drunk, worn, driven or taken shelter in. Musical and theatrical journalism is today’s news and tomorrow’s history, when written by a reviewer (or critic) of knowledge, experience and judgment with a serious and devoted approach.

Well, granted then that it is all this, still what is it worth?

Its worth is not intrinsic, save as favorable comment may be taken—usually out of context—and diverted to advertising purposes. by managers of artists. Its worth must be calculated in the currency of the intellect and the human spirit. Intellect and human spirit, let us never fail to remember, are all that keep us from existing merely as a super-species of animal engaged in a deadly struggle for survival and gain.

By intellect is meant the power of reasoning and knowing, and by human spirit that congeries of dynamic sensibilities generated by desire to learn and governed by the civilized virtues of charity, tolerance, understanding, sympathy and creative inclination, and often seasoned with humor.

Musical journalism, with which I am here more concerned, is a craft combining accurate reportage with statement of opinion. It is exercised upon what the late Lawrence Gilman, himself one of the most sensitive and polished practitioners of the craft, claimed to be “the most adorable of the muses”. For that reason it arouses the interest—though in varying degree and for differing reasons—of musicians, other writers about various aspects of music, and those of the general public who have a taste for music.

These last, sometimes called “amateurs” because they can perform music to a certain extent, and sometimes just “people who like music” because they enjoy hearing it though knowing little of its technical side, are highly important both to music and the musical journalist. They are the collective force which, operating over a considerable period of time, determines the ultimate life and success of a composer’s creative art and of the professional performing artist’s re-creative work. They are also a

goodly portion of the musical journalist's readers. Since they have their own opinions of compositions and performers they also are interested in the opinions of others, if only to ascertain whether other people agree with them.

It is true, I believe, that an individual who knows much about music, technically and historically, will give you an opinion more reliable in its judgment than will a person without much knowledge, who merely "has a love for music". Love is not the equal of, nor a substitute for, knowing, in this matter.

Hence it follows that while the person, with only an appetite for music, multiplied by thousands and millions, does make his influence felt at the box office, he will not and cannot provide you with as comprehensive, as reliable or as objective a critique as will the journalist who for years has been so doing for public consumption in the daily newspaper

The word public is all-important here. That is because opinion expressed in print, by the very nature of so appearing, is generally regarded as important. If it were not important, why would a newspaper publish it? The answer is, it would not be published. Trivial or superficial opinion is soon perceived to be what it is; people no longer read it and it has no effect. I am referring, of course, to metropolitan journals of high standards and large circulation. This does not mean, either, that only published opinion is valuable. There are many whose knowledge and judgment match those of musical journalists, but whose views are not expressed publicly in terms of printing.

It has taken me many years to learn what I now am certain is the quintessential truth here. That is, opinions respected by the public for their responsibility and authority are not the opinions only of the person who wrote them. They are, by extension, the opinions of a great many persons of the reading public. Though human-kind exhibits remarkable variety, it is not so extremely varied that opinions upon any one subject resist a reduction to a comparatively small area of disagreement.

Thus the printed beliefs of a widely respected journalist reflect the opinions of his readers, probably among the thousands if a correct estimate could be made. That is why most people tend to be constant readers of a reviewer with whose views they usually agree. That is why Mr. X will have his public, Mr. Y his own, and Mr. Z yet another. Those with the highest degree of curiosity and the most intense interest will read several reviewers, digest often contradictory opinion and then come to their own conclusions.

Unfortunately, as I see it, these highest types of readers, only a little lower than the angels, are not numerous enough. I wish there were more of them, because if there were we should have a society of much livelier intellectual and artistic activity.

The very existence of reasoning powers and the desire to learn excite a desire for comment. The basis and the process are the same whether one observes that the bearnaise sauce is very good, subtly flavored with tarragon, or that Charles Munch's conducting of Beethoven's "Pastoral" Symphony was deft and gentle and agreeable in tempo. The difference comes in the fact that some taste buds can detect a subtle flavoring of tarragon and others detect it less, just as some persons will say the "Pastoral" performance was not gentle enough and the tempo was wrong. What counts is that it was right or wrong for them. It cannot be right or wrong for everyone. But everyone justly considers it a born right to make his own comment.

In any civilized society, comment is as essential to the health of the intellect and the well-being of the human spirit as is food to the body. That alone would be its value, and by extension the value of musical journalism and its reason for being.

Musical journalism is not to be considered as dicta from on high (though the more informed, seasoned and well-expressed it is, the more reliable will it be) but simply as one manifestation in public of the natural desire for comment. Nor is even the best musical journalist ever a fount of all musical knowledge. No lifetime would be long enough in which to accomplish that. But the best of the hard-working reviewers never cease learning, and, as such things go in this imperfect world, they get to know a lot about music.

Along the way they manage to communicate a good bit of comparative truth about the art and its performance, just so long as they do not take very seriously that wretched maxim of Anatole France, one of the few highly questionable observations that Gallic literary genius ever emitted, that "Criticism is the adventure of a soul among masterpieces." It is a good deal more than that. Objectivity as against subjectivity, in each case pure, undiluted, 100-proof and bottled-in-bond, is infinitely preferable. But it all depends upon the soul.

That, however, is another, and perhaps an even longer story.

CYRUS DURGIN

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The following list contains most of the purchases and gifts since the issue of the last bulletin. The Library appreciates the generosity of donors.

PURCHASES

Offenbach, J.—"La Perichole" Vocal Score with English Text
Arensky, A.—6 Pieces enfantine pour piano à 4 mains
Bach, J. C.—Drei Sonaten für Klavier zu vier Händen
Bach, W. F. E.—Zwei Stücke für vier Hände
Debussy—Marche écossaise pour piano à quatre mains
Dvorák—Legends for Piano Duet
Gade, Niels—Nordische Tonbilder piano à 4 mains
Grieg—Norwegische Tänze, #1-3. Klavier zu 4 Händen
Moszkowski—Nouvelles Danses Espagnoles, piano 4 mains
Debussy—Petite Suite pour piano à quatre mains
Poulenc, F.—Sonata, piano four hands
Babin, Victor—The Piper of Palmood for two pianos
Babin, Victor—Hebrew Slumber Song for two pianos
Babin, Victor—Russian Village for two pianos
Strawinsky—Agon. Ballet for twelve dancers. Pocket Score
Grieg—Norwegische Tänze #4. Klavier zu 4 Händen
Bacon, Ernst—The Burr Frolic, for two pianos
Cassadesus, Robert—Danses Méditerranéennes Op. 36 Nos. 1, 2, 3 (2 pianos)
Foss, Lukas—A Set of three Pieces for 2 pianos
Goldman, Richard Franko—Le Bobino, for 2 pianos
Milhaud—Bal Martiniquais for 2 pianos
Milhaud—Carnaval a la Nouvelle-orleans for 2 pianos
Milhaud—Kentuckiana for 2 pianos
Moszkowski—Mazurka in F for 2 pianos
Talma, Louise—Four-handed Fun for 2 pianos
Infante, M.—"Gracia" 2 pianos 4 hands
Honegger—Cantate de Noël. Vocal Score
Farnaby, Giles—For Two Virginals, for two pianos
Couperin, F.—Allemande for two pianos
Dvorák—String Quintet in G Op. 77, Parts
Dohnányi—String Quartet in D^b Op. 15, Parts
Turina—La oración del torero, para cuarteto de cuerda, Parts
Leclair—Trio-Sonate D, Parts
Locatelli—Trio-Sonate d min, Parts
Haydn—Nine Sonatas for Violin and Piano

Thompson, Randall—Quartet #1 in d min (Strings) Parts
 Knüpfer et al—Denkmäler Vols. 58 and 59
 Piston, W.—String Quartet No. 3, Score & Parts
 Gold, Ernest—String Quartet No. 1. Score & Parts
 Jacobi, Frederick—String Quartet on Indian Themes. Score & Parts
 Powell, Mel—Divertimento for Five Winds. Score & Parts
 Rochberg, George—String Quartet (1952). Score & Parts
 Bach, J. C.—Sonate G dur für zwei Klaviere
 Mozart, W. A.—Missa—c min—KV 427. Vocal Score
 Mozart, W. A.—Eighteen Sonatas for Piano and Violin
 Barber, Samuel—Vanessa, Opera in 4 acts. Vocal Score
 Wolf, Hugo—Mörrike-Lieder. Vols. 1, 2, 3, 4
 Wolf, Hugo—Goethe-Lieder. Vols. 1, 2, 3, 4.

The Soldier's Tale—libretto to music by I. Stravinsky
 Men, Women and Pianos—Arthur Loesser
 A General History of Music—Charles Burney
 Personal Recollections of Arnold Dolmetsch—Mabel Dolmetsch
 Vivaldi, Genius of the Baroque—Marc Pincherle
 The Essence of Music—Ferruccio Busoni
 Woodwind Instruments and their History—Anthony Baines
 The Naked Face of Genius—Agatha Fassett
 Schubert—Memoirs by his Friends—Otto Erich Deutsch
 Schubert—A critical biography—Maurice J. E. Brown
 The Way of the Conductor—Karl Krueger
 Il Conte Ory—libretto in Italian
 Companion to Beethoven's Piano Sonatas—Donald Francis Tovey
 Essays on Music in honor of A. T. Davison—his associates
 Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians (5th Ed.) —Nicolas Slonimsky

GIFT

Friends and Fiddlers—Catherine Drinker Bowen—gift of publisher

CHARLES R. NUTTER