

*Library of  
The Harvard Musical  
Association*



**Bulletin No. 1**  
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## Library Committee

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*To the Members of the Association:*

To many members of our Association the Library is merely a collection of unknown and rather uninviting books shelved around the walls of the room which they frequent on certain Friday evenings for the excellent concerts arranged by Dr. Nathaniel K. Wood. As a matter of fact, our Library is much more than a collection of musical and book publications. It is unique in other collections and in possessions of an interesting, entertaining, and picturesque nature. It is the purpose of this bulletin, and of any others that may be issued occasionally and at irregular intervals, not only to inform members of usual Library affairs but to recount some of these unusual matters which illustrate the significant and unique features of our Library, in order that members may know something of what characterizes and individualizes it.

Certain facts, in part historical, in part statistical, though not picturesque in nature, should be briefly noted, both as a record and as of interest at least to more recent members.

The origin and the history of the Association, now within three years of its 100th anniversary, have been scantily and disconnectedly related in scattered journalistic or periodical publications. A brief account will suffice for those who are ignorant. On July 27, 1837, a "call" was printed and issued, signed by E. S. Dixwell, J. S. Dwight, Henry Gassett, Jr., C. C. Holmes, J. F. Tuckerman, W. T. Davis, proposing "on behalf of the Pierian Sodality a meeting to be held August 30, 1837 . . . to unite the old members of the club in permanent association for the promotion of musical taste and science in the University . . . to encourage cultivation of music in college . . . to enrich the walls of Harvard with a complete musical library . . . to prepare the way for regular musical instruction in the college." Some thirty or forty gentlemen attended this meeting, presided over by the Rev. Jonathan M. Wainwright, 1812, and they concocted the cumbersome if descriptive title of "The General Association of Past and Present Members of the Pierian Sodality" which title, in 1840, was mercifully changed to "The Harvard Musical Association." In succeeding years the meetings were held in 6 University Hall, in Lyceum Hall in Harvard Square, in the rooms of various members, for several years at the Revere House (at which time, along 1858, a dinner became part of the annual proceedings), at 12 Pemberton Square (now part of the Court House site), at 11 Park Square, and finally at No. 1 West Cedar St., the home of Mr. Malcolm Greenough, purchased by the Association, opened in November, 1892, with a reception graced by the presence of Dvorák, reconstructed in 1907, and, in 1914, completed with the addition of the Marsh Room.

The earliest activity was the formation of a musical library which the *Salem Register* referred to in 1843 as "the largest, best and only musical library in the country." Somewhat incongruous terms! We can no longer claim these adjectives as correct, but we can substitute others very satisfactory. From Mrs. Julia M. Marsh came a bequest of \$75,000, with the stipulation that the fund be used in providing suitable rooms for hanging certain paintings, also bequeathed by her, and for the pleasure playing of chamber music by deserving students of music. The Association has been the originator of several notable musical activities: the founding of *Dwight's Journal of Music*, for thirty years regarded as one of the leading musical papers of the world; the proposition of erecting the Boston Music Hall, with its large organ, the greater part of raising the necessary funds being done by the Association; the founding of The Cecilia Society; the giving, for the first time in Boston (1844-45), a course in classical chamber music; the organization, twenty-five years ago, of the Alumni Chorus, led for many years by Warren A. Locke, the much loved college organist and chorister; the establishing of the Symphony Concerts (1865) with an orchestra of fifty players conducted by Carl Zerrahn which, after continuing seventeen years, was taken over by Mr. Higginson and translated into the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Thus the Association has been the root and the originator of much that has made musical Boston.

Our Library, which numbers some seven thousand volumes, contains the compositions of nearly every composer of interest or of practical use to the student or the artist, as well as some two thousand books covering in subject the various classifications of music. En passant, members are invited to send the Librarian titles of such books and music as they would like added to the Library. All suggestions will be carefully considered. The Library possesses the bound volumes—not complete in every case— of 77 periodicals, American, German, English, and French, still of distinct worth and of potential value to the professional and especially to the critic. Current magazines—not to be circulated but conveniently displayed—include the Musical Courier (N.Y.), The Chesterian (London), The Musical Quarterly (N.Y.), Modern Music (N.Y.), The Musical Times (London), New Music Review (N.Y.), The Periodical (Oxford Press).

The piano in the Library, a Mason and Hamlin owned by the Association, is considered by musicians who have used it as of the finest quality and action. Of the three pianos in the Marsh Room, the Steinway is a bequest of Mrs. Marsh, the Chickering is loaned by Mr. Henry Ware, and the Mason and Hamlin is loaned by Mr. Herbert Allen.

Facing you over the piano is a portrait of Gluck by Joseph Duplessis, one of the leading French painters of the day (1735- 1802). It is a replica of the one bequeathed by Gluck's widow to the Royal Gallery in Vienna, considered to be an excellent portrait, the most characteristic and best known likeness of the Chevalier Gluck. This was purchased by the Association in 1870 for \$300 and was described in the Art Catalogue as "a noble and most effective portrait, painted from the man himself, by one of the leading French painters of the day." At the rear of the room is a portrait of Henry Gasset, Jr., one of the signers of the "call" in 1837, a member for fifty years, at one time Corresponding Secretary and then Treasurer. He was much interested in the Association and remembered it in his will, thus setting an example to those who now comprise our membership.

On the wall over the fireplace, on the upper platform, is a portrait of John S. Dwight, '32, President of the Association from 1873 to 1893. The artist was Caroline Cranch, daughter of Christopher Cranch, a painter, musician, and poet. Mr. Dwight was editor and owner of *Dwight's Journal of Music*, a musical critic of prominence and writing for the *Transcript*. He was a kindly gentleman, but Wagner was to him the proverbial red flag that stirs the antagonistic emotions of a more violent animal, and it was not to his liking that he was drawn into a Wagnerian episode worth a brief narrative. It seems—so the story runs—that in 1880, when Wagner was restless and discouraged over conditions at Bayreuth, he wrote to a certain American dentist, who had enjoyed his friendship when practising in Dresden, proposing to emigrate with his family to America permanently, on assurance of receiving an indemnity of one million dollars, with further funds for annual special performances of his works and on his

agreement to confine productions of "Parsifal" to this country. The dentist forwarded this modest proposal to Mr. Dwight, who was later accused by Cosima Wagner of indiscretion in showing it to others, and the resulting newspaper publicity was not pleasing to Mr. Dwight. A certain 'noted local musician wrote Wagner admonishing him for his lack of "musical sense" and advising him to withdraw the letter. By the time the fracas had moderated, Wagner had regained his courage and was preparing the production of "Parsifal."

On the wall near Mr. Dwight's portrait, obtained from unknown sources and at present not well placed, are autographed letters with photographs or engravings of Rossini, Verdi, Mendelssohn, Liszt, Wagner, Berlioz, and Richard Strauss. Near the door is a framed autographed letter of Beethoven. It had been purchased in Vienna, through the aid of Alexander W. Thayer, by the Hon. Robert C. Winthrop and by him presented to the Washington Statue Fair (organized to raise the necessary cost of the Washington statue on the Public Garden) for which it arrived too late. A subscription was raised by the Association amounting to \$50.00 which went to the statue and procured the letter. The text deals with the purchase of a piano.

From various sources the Association has received donations of music from members or friends. Many of these are of note and will be described in a later bulletin. Four of the most recent came from the estate of Wulf Fries, Charles Peabody, the estate of Theodore Chase, and Mrs. Frances G. Lee. Wulf Fries was first 'cellist in the early orchestra conducted by Mr. Zerrahn, and he held the same position for the first year of the Symphony Orchestra. Charles Peabody was Curator of European Archaeology at the Peabody Museum, a member of the Association and a flute player. When he moved permanently to Paris, he made us a gift of excellent music, chamber music in particular, filling eighteen large boxes. Theodore Chase, an amateur in music and a member of the Association, willed us most of his music (received in 1925), amounting to 500 volumes—a truly noble gift, and, in addition, portraits of Mozart and Liszt, plaster statuette, a handsome mahogany music stand, and other items. Mrs. Frances G. Lee, who at one time used the Library as a guest, has more recently given us a large and very fine collection, consisting of music for wood wind, strings and piano, varying from duos to compositions for ten or more instruments.

The Marsh Room has increased in use as the fact became gradually and quietly known that here was an opportunity for anyone to indulge in pleasure piano playing for two or for three pianos—not for one piano nor for practising nor for instruction. Printed copies of the regulations governing the use of the Library and of the Marsh Room may be obtained from Miss Thayer or Miss French. In 1932 (its 19th year) the Room was used by 1282 persons, including repetitions. We no longer receive such an application for its use as Miss Barkley, the first Attendant, notes in her report for the second year, when two boys wished to use it to practise on two trombones "because they were so unpopular in their home neighborhood that they sought a more congenial and sympathetic locality." They continued their search.

The latest accessions are as follows:

Guild, Courtenay	History of the Handel & Haydn Society, 1903-1933
Scherchen	Handbook of Conducting
Bloch	Avodath Hakodesh (Sacred Service)
Mason, D. G.	Chamber Music of Brahms
Terry, C. S.	Bach's Orchestra
Piston, Walter	Harmonic Analysis
D'Urfey, Thos	Songs . . . ed. by Day
Howard	Stephen Foster
Schauffler	Unknown Brahms
Quantz	Sonata per flauto traverso
Maine	Chopin
Davison	Protestant Church in America

Sibelius	Symphonies 1, 2, 5—full scores
Bekker	Beethoven
Hargrave	Earlier French Musicians
Newton	How to Compose a Song
Mocquereau	Study of Gregorian Musical Rhythm
Riesemann	Moussorgsky
Wellesz	Arnold Schoenberg
Gray	Sibelius
Trend	De Falla
Pratt	Encyclopedia of Music & Musicians

Among less recent accessions are the following:

Regester	Albert Schweitzer: the man and his work
Mason	Prelude and Fugue: for 2 pianos, 4 hands
"	Brahms
Vallas	Claude Debussy
Bax	St. Patrick's Breastplate—chorus and piano
Engel	Life of Anton Bruckner
"	Gustav Mahler
Ravel	Sonate pour violon et piano
Debussy	Nocturne en ré bémol, piano
"	Marche Écossaise, piano
"	Three Poems de Mallarmé
Loeffler	Beat! Beat! Drums
"	Poem for Orchestra. Score
"	Evocation—Women's voices and orchestra
Goossens	Sonata No. 2, violin and piano
Kitson	Contrapuntal Harmony for Beginners
Maier	Five Adaptations of 2 part inventions
Schubert	Letters and Other Writings
Downes	Symphonic Broadcasts
Cortot	French piano music
Sessions	Sonata, piano
McKinley	Masquerade—full score
Berg	Wozzeck

This bulletin should not close without a word of appreciation for the efficient and faithful service of Miss Thayer, the Assistant-Librarian, in reality performing the usual functions of a Librarian, now closing her thirtieth year with us. For twenty-five years, until her resignation last fall, she gave part time as Librarian at the New England Conservatory. She is a musician by training, with a wide knowledge of the works of the old masters, keeping abreast of modern publications in music and books on music, careful in her management of the Library, with an intimate knowledge of it undoubtedly excelling that of the oldest member. Members and visitors will find her ready to give help or advice.

CHARLES R. NUTTER  
*Librarian and Custodian of the Marsh Room.*  
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