

*Library of  
The Harvard Musical  
Association*



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## Library Committee

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*To the Members of the Association:*

Before the latest war occurred, the Association was on various occasions active in certain social functions, aside from the usual Friday evening concerts. One might assume that men, engaged in their business and extra-business matters, would have no time to attend such functions even supposing that they were interested in them. The reverse proved to be the case, for a surprisingly large number made up the audiences. When a distinguished musician visited the city the Association often celebrated the occasion by either a reception or an invitation, usually accepted, to a Friday concert.

For instance, in November, 1892, at the opening of the Chestnut Street quarters, a house-warming was given and Dvorak was present. On this occasion Mrs. B. J. Lang, Mrs. S. Lothrop Thorndike, and Mrs. George Coale received the guests. Mr. Gericke was given a reception in 1898, when the Kneisel Quartet played, and another in 1906. At a reception to Karl Muck the Hoffman String Quartet played. Again, in 1907, at the housewarming of the building after its remodeling, music was furnished by the Hoffman String Quartet and by Messrs. Gebhard, Ralph Osborne, and Wallace Goodrich. On the opening of the Marsh Room, in December, 1913, a grand Christmas Eve housewarming was held, when a chorus under Stephen Townsend sang. When Max Fiedler came to conduct the Symphony concerts he was given a reception, at which Mr. Gebhard played and Mr. Stephen Townsend sang. The latter's programme included a number of Mr. Foote's songs, with Mr. Foote himself as accompanist. Mr. Rabaud, on the close of his engagement as conductor of these concerts and just before he sailed home to France, was also given a reception. The rooms on such occasions were filled not only with professional musicians but non-professional members eager for a closer contact with musicians of repute. The Association wished to make a present to Mr. Rabaud, and the committee, on seeking to learn from him what he might best like, was informed that he was taking home much luggage—inferently Americana of bulk and perhaps of rarity—and that, if something must be presented, a gift of small dimensions would be more acceptable. His own choice was a photograph of the Gluck portrait, now hanging over the piano. There was evidently room to slip this between two pieces of Americana. So this slight token of friendship and of appreciation was duly given him. Again, when Mr. Monteux arrived to take up the baton, he was given a reception at which the Longy Club, then at the peak of its reputation, played. There were occasional receptions to other musicians.

Thus the Association evinced its interest in these artists and, as some publicity followed these functions, appeared as an organization active in matters musical.

Another instance was the observance of the anniversary of the birth of noted composers. For example, in 1909, Mr. B. J. Lang, himself a musician of note and active in introducing to Boston for the first time selections from the choral and sometimes the orchestral compositions of famous foreigners which have since become familiar to us, volunteered and gave a talk on Mendelssohn and played from his compositions, on the hundredth anniversary of his birth. This was a special occasion, not at a regular Friday evening, and it drew a large audience to hear a sympathetic and illuminating talk.

The list of noted guests at our concerts is longer but not complete. The practice of signing names of guests in a guest book, the usual custom in the ordinary club, was more and more neglected by members and was finally so successfully observed in the breach that the book was left in peace in the archives. On its pages are such names as Hugo Heermann, also given a reception, a violinist from Frankfort and a contemporary of Wulf Fries; Busoni, Ethel Leginska, Schuecker the harpist, Molé the flutist, Guilmant, d'Indy, and Coleridge-Taylor, then making a tour as guest conductor at performances of his choral compositions given in various localities. There have probably been other guests of note since but recorded in somebody's memory and not on paper.

In 1908, 1909, and 1910, Mr. George Harrison Mifflin organized and himself maintained a series of afternoon teas with music, for members only. There was an occasional ladies' afternoon. The attendance was surprisingly large. Perhaps Mr. Mifflin's infectious enthusiasm, the unique phrasing of his printed invitations and follow-ups, and the scrupulous care he gave to the last detail explain in part the success. Tea was served from 4.30 to 5.30, at which the pourer was Mr. Alfred J. Mayo, a member, who lodged for years in the building until the removal of his floor to permit increase in the height of the Library threw him abruptly and regretfully into other quarters. The room was decorated with lighted candelabra on several small tables covered with Russian tapestries, flowers, plants, and the like. Smoking was permitted and the affair was pleasantly informal. At 5.30 came the concert, usually by members of the Association.

To list the programmes, even if space permitted, might be dull reading to many readers, but a running mention of some may interest older members who remember the participants. On one occasion Mr. Eliot Hubbard, tenor, sang, Mr. Lynch Luquer played the violin, and Mr. Edward M. Bennett the piano. Messrs. Huff, Peabody, Saxe, and Park, forming a flute quartet, played, with Mr. Luquer and Mr. Bennett again assisting. The music for the quartet of flutes was the *Adagio, Op. 77*, of A. F. Wouters and "Notturnino," *Op. 37*, of V. de Michaelis. Mr. Malcolm Lang and Mr. Charles H. Doersam played a four hand selection, *Psyche et Eros*, from the cantata "Psyché" of César Franck, and a Sonata of Mozart. Miss Roberts gave an afternoon of songs and compositions by John H. Densmore, the composer at the piano. Mr. George Proctor gave a recital. His programme included Schubert's *Impromptu in Bb*, a Nocturne of Chopin, Toccata of Debussy, Tschaikowsky's *Song without Words*, and *Caprice Español* of Moszkowski. On another afternoon the quartet of flutes mentioned above performed alone. A particularly interesting afternoon was provided by Messrs. B. J. Lang, Franz Kneisel, and Alwin Schroeder, with Mr. William Winch, a tenor with a beautiful voice. Mr. William Atherton gave an hour of songs by Percy Lee Atherton (now living in Washington) and Carl Engel. Mr. Edward B. Hill, now our Vice-President, gave a talk on "Certain Observations from Study of Musical History which give a different perspective to views of music at the present time." One afternoon was given to an unusually interesting programme. A Liszt organ was loaned by the Mason and Hamlin Company and Mr. S. B. Whitney played the organ part of a Serenade by Widor, with piano, violin, 'cello, and flute.

These three years of musical afternoons and tea were so successful that the Association then adopted the plan and carried them on into the year 1914. Among the entertainments offered was a talk by Mr. Edward B. Hill on "The Historical Import of César Franck." Miss Alice Nielsen, soprano, of the Boston Opera Company, sang arias from Mozart and Puccini and songs by Grieg and Quilter, and

naturally drew a large and enthusiastic audience. Mr. Wallace Goodrich was her accompanist. Miss Bernice Fisher, a soprano of the same company, sang on another occasion songs by John H. Densmore. Dr. Gould gave a song recital with Mr. S. C. Colburn at the piano. Mr. W. C. Heilman filled an hour; the Footlights Orchestra, conducted by Mr. Charles F. Manney, filled another. These programmes are taken at random from the list.

The Association has a little collection of medals, none of great note but adding to our mementoes and interesting because it is not always clear why we got them or who gave them. One, of some size, very handsome and beautifully engraved, bears the following inscription: "Harvard Musical Association. This the President's Badge of the Anacreontic Society of Baltimore now extinct. From William Edward Coale. 1860." Coale was a member of the Association from 1861 to 1865. The writer confesses to a lack of curiosity as well as of time in digging out information regarding the "Anacreontic Society of Baltimore now extinct." We have from Mr. Foote a bas-relief of Rafael Joseffy, a replica of the larger one given Mm "by his friends and admirers in New York, 1911." Another medal has a bas-relief of Handel and of Haydn—bearing little resemblance to their commonly accepted physiognomies—given in 1915 and marking the Centenary Festival of the Handel and Haydn Society. A medal with the date of 1913 and a bas-relief of Hollis Hall at Harvard marks the 150th Anniversary Celebration of that hall. A fine, large medallion of Liszt, with dates of his birth and death, was given by Dr. John B. Hawes. This little aggregation of medals comprises a small unit in our memorabilia and our souvenirs of the past, pertinent to our special interests, now in our archives.

These archives hold material of all kinds relating to the Association since its inception and organization. During her thirty years as Librarian, Miss Thayer, carrying on the practice of her predecessor, has assiduously collected and preserved in an orderly method every available scrap of matter relating to the Association: in print, concert programmes from the beginning, newspaper and periodical extracts, and the like; what is not in print, in memoranda jotted down, items here and there, accounts of all the dinners, original writings, such as various amusing articles, the poems of the Rev. James Reed (at one time Vice- President), a poet par excellence for dinners in his clever "cracks" and excellent versification. And still more. Selections from all this will appear from time o time in future bulletins.

Brief but perhaps sufficient reference was made in the first bulletin to certain donations of music from members or friends. Much music came to the Association belonging to Wulf Fries, first 'cellist for the first year of the Symphony Orchestra, a musician—and a gentleman—of the old school, in the day of such noted local musicians as Ernst Perabo, Bernard Listemann, Carl Baermann, Fritz Giese, Carl Zerrahn, Carl Faelten, Mrs. H.H. A. Beach, Benjamin J. Lang, George Sumner, Joshua Phippen, George Chadwick. Many boxes of music came from Charles Peabody, a member and a Curator at Harvard and one of the flutists of the quartet mentioned above. Smaller but welcome donations have come from Dr. Philip G. Clapp, Arthur Foote, Nathan Haskell Dole, Hiram Tucker, Edward S. Dodge, Ernest O. Hiler, William L. Johnson, Richard Sears, Malcolm Lang, and others. Theodore Chase, Harvard 1853, a member of the Association from 1858 to his death in 1894 and an amateur musician, willed us much music in fine condition: chiefly piano, some chamber and vocal, and a large collection of operas, well bound. He left us also several musical instruments and a transposing keyboard.

In the number of legacies of money, naturally desirable to maintain and to enlarge its influence, to increase certain facilities, and to carry out several plans now in forced abeyance, the Association has been less fortunate. Mention was made in the first bulletin of the legacy from Henry Gassett, Jr., seemingly small, perhaps, in view of our present day acquaintance with figures, but welcome and at least showing his interest and faith in the Association. The munificent legacy from Mrs. Julia M. Marsh was obtained through the persistence of the late Ernest O. Hiler, who interested her in our organization.

Anyone disposed musically as well as philanthropically (for there is a philanthropic side to our society) might find that the Association appealed to his interest. Its century-old age, its influence and its

participation in musical matters, its successful effort to found a division of music at Harvard, its comparatively small but carefully selected library, its concerts indirectly educational, directly entertaining, its generosity in affording use of the Library to non-members of both sexes on rights given them by members, its Marsh Room privileges available, under mild but necessary precautions, to everyone and anyone, the future with its possibilities—all this, and more, constructs a society worthy of a legacy. Members capable of bequeathing it such, no matter how small, or with similar friends who might be made interested, might bear this in mind.

In the death of Edward S. Dodge, '73, a member of the Association from 1874 to his decease, we have lost a one time active and an all time interested friend. Few members have shown an interest in all matters of the Association equal to his. In point of years of membership he was the oldest member, Mr. Foote coming next. Until his later years he was foremost in various local musical affairs. Incidentally, he was the founder of the Harvard Alumni Chorus. He was particularly interested in even the smallest detail of the Library, and was a reservoir of customs, stories, and incidents connected with the Association which unfortunately were never recorded, for it is of such that "atmosphere" and tradition are built.

Much attention is being given to the long needed repair, rebinding and, when necessary, replacement of the music on our shelves. There is much of this, now absolutely necessary. In time every piece of music will be in durable and attractive condition. A "Member's Corner," or call-it-what-you-will, is being planned for a corner on the lower floor. Here now is a table which will exhibit some of the latest book purchases and certain current magazines. Eventually, with a copying desk equipped with necessary paraphernalia and a comfortable chair, an attractive corner will invite any member who may wish to copy music or to read, in the Library hours.

The literature purchasing policy continues to be the acquisition of a limited selection of the best new publications on nearly every subject related to music. The annual allotted funds naturally restrict purchases, and the decision on these must be made with reference to both the quantity and the quality of our books on any one subject, and the obvious tests to be applied to new publications. We possess few works on music of an ephemeral nature though, naturally through the years, some of the earlier texts have been superseded by those of greater authority. Of music we have the piano compositions of all standard composers, often full editions, a large collection of quartet music and an unusually wide collection of opera scores and other vocal music. Orchestral scores are few in numbers since these are usually expensive and in particular rarely called for by members. Instances are rare, however, where the Library has been unable to furnish a piece of wanted piano music.

The list of recent accessions will appear in the next bulletin.

CHARLES R. NUTTER.