

ECHOES OF MUSIC ABROAD

British Composers Have Their Innings in London This Week with First All-British Music Festival— French Soldier in the Trenches Contributes Common Sense Message to Controversy Between Camille Saint-Saëns and Paris Critic—How Continental Composers Have the Advantage in Selling Their Comic Operas—“Every Piece of Music Produces Not Only Color but Form in the Mental Space Around Us” Insists Cyril Scott—Fritz Delius a Composer Who Never Conducts an Orchestra—One of Lady Gregory’s Plays Becomes an Opera

THIS week London is having its first all-British music festival. Three concerts, given on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, constitute the schedule, and the whole scheme is under the direction of Emil Mlynarski, the Russo-Polish conductor of the Scottish Orchestra in Glasgow, with Thomas Beecham as his coadjutor.

Mlynarski's hope in arranging the festival was, as Robin H. Legge points out, "to afford the opportunity to any strangers within our gates in May to hear some representative British music at a time when we English steadily decline to perform any on our own account. But in order to keep the programs within some sort of bounds it was decided to fix a kind of time limit for the choice of works, and to make the selection from such works as had been produced within the space of about the decade. The programs are of deep interest at once from the national point of view and from the purely musical standpoint."

Tuesday's program consisted of Norman O'Neill's "Humoresque" for orchestra, played for the first time; Frederick Delius's setting of Walt Whitman's "Seadrift" for baritone solo, chorus and orchestra; Granville Bantock's symphonic poem, "Fifine at the Fair"; Joseph Holbrooke's setting for chorus and orchestra of Edgar Allan Poe's "The Bells"; Ethel Smyth's "Songs of the Sea"; two part-song arrangements by Percy Grainger, "Old Londonderry Air" and "Father and Daughter," and Villiers Stanford's Fourth Rhapsody. The London Symphony Orchestra was the instrumental corps used, while the London Choral Society assumed responsibility for the choral work.

The second concert opened with Hamilton Harty's symphonic poem, "With the Wild Geese," and later brought forward William Wallace's "Villon." Edward Elgar's Violin Concerto and Delius's Pianoforte Concerto in C Minor, with Albert Sammons and E. Howard-Jones, respectively, as soloists, also figured in the scheme.

At the last concert of the series there is to be a "first performance" of Cyril Scott's Pianoforte Concerto, with the composer at the piano. Louise Kirkby Lunn will sing Arnold Bax's "Celtic Lullaby" and McEwen's "The Words Aglow," and the orchestral works will be Frederick Austin's Rhapsody, "Spring," Vaughan Williams's symphonic impression, "In the Fen Country," Elgar's Introduction and Allegro for strings and Arnold Bax's fantasy, "In the Faery Hills."

SOLDIERS in the trenches find time for other interests besides the game of war and they can make their influence felt in other than sanguinary engagements. Camille Saint-Saëns and a Paris critic named Paul Souday have been carrying on for some time a controversy as to whether or not the war should prevent any of the Allies from enjoying modern German music in gen-

eral, and Richard Strauss in particular.

The dean of French composers is entirely against all modern German musicians, and especially Richard Strauss, but the critic, says the Paris correspondent of the *London Daily Telegraph*, has scored this time not by his own arguments but by those of an authority on war whose opinion cannot be disputed—a trooper in the trenches.

Between two turns in the trenches

WITH recollections still fresh of the recent performances at Carnegie Hall of the "color symphony" written by Alexander Scriabine, who died a few days ago, it is of special interest to find that Cyril Scott, after his confessedly long-extended study of Mysticism and Occultism, firmly believes in the color phenomena of all musical sounds as a well-substantiated theory.

"There are quite a number of ordi-



Wilhelm Bachaus

Though he had spent most of his life in England before the outbreak of the war and had been looked upon more as an English than as a German artist, Wilhelm Bachaus returned to Germany and took his place definitely among German pianists when the moment of decision came. After a relatively busy season of concert work he has now been drafted into the German army. At the left he is shown in his room at his hotel in Bayreuth, where he attended the festival before it was interrupted by the war, and at the right he and his wife are pictured in the Bois de Boulogne, Paris.

this trooper has actually found time to write to the critic to say that good music is good and bad music bad whatever else may happen, and that the name of the composer does not matter, whether that name be Beethoven, Wagner, Saint-Saëns or even Richard Strauss: "Let the sacred union of the country be maintained and strengthened up to the day of victory, but for Heaven's sake after the war let everyone be free to like whatever he thinks likable. If all Frenchmen took to liking and hating in a mass the same things they would cease to be Frenchmen. It would be a great pity and a great bore, too." Here's the voice of common sense from the trenches.

nary music-lovers who say that with certain notes and certain keys they always imagine certain colors," writes the advanced young English composer in the *Monthly Musical Record*. "At one time I regarded this association as having no rational basis and was inclined to pooh-pooh the whole thing as idle fancy; but later on I came to see that it was a very elementary form of clairvoyance.

"Now, as a matter of fact, every piece of music produces not only color but form in the mental space around and interpenetrating us, and he or she who has developed the latent psychic faculties to the extent of being sensitive to the highly ultra-refined matter of that mental space, can at once perceive this form and these colors, varying in grandeur according to the merit of the piece of music in question.

"Every musical composition has, in fact, an effect on the mental space for

a considerable distance around the place where it is being executed, and this effect lasts even after the performance is finished. Furthermore, it has an effect on the mental bodies of those people within that radius, whether they know it or not, and the loftier the music, the loftier the effect, of course. Music plays a far greater part in life and Nature than both musicians and laymen suppose, and therefore the 'magic of music' is not as mere poetic and laudatory phrase, but evidently a fact which one day, when Humanity is more highly evolved, it will perceive of its own accord."

DISCUSSING the vogue of German and Austrian works on the English light opera and comedy stage in recent years, Leslie Stuart, of "Flora-dora" fame, made the assertion the other day that it has been due to the discriminating manner in which the Continental composers and authors and agents display the wares they have for sale. G. H. Clutsum maintains that Mr. Stuart here placed his finger on the crux of the question.

"Before acquiring the rights our managers are afforded the opportunity of witnessing the complete performance under the most favorable conditions," comments the *London Observer's* critic.

"The goods are placed with all their possibilities visualized. The native composer, who probably cannot sing, is perforce compelled to play his tunes, subject to frequent interruption and the most moderate of understandings, in the manager's office or anywhere else where there is a piano, and let them go at that. Quite naturally they do go—anywhere but on the coveted stage."

WHEN the Scottish Orchestra, of Glasgow, was playing Frederick Delius's symphonic poem, "In a Summer Garden," recently, one of the members of the orchestra, who was not very favorably impressed by it, turned to a neighbor and said, "A few weeds in this garden, eh?" To which the facetious rejoinder was made, "Oh no, mostly dahlias." And thereby the correct pronunciation of the composer's name was definitely established for the layman.

Thanks to the war, Delius's name has figured more frequently on concert programs in England this year than ever before. He is a native of Yorkshire, the son of German parents who became naturalized. It was not to regain his health after a physical crisis that he came to this country to become an orange planter in Florida after all, it seems, but to escape "the sordid commercial environment that threatened to kill the artist within him" when his father was insisting that he adopt a business career. While he was on his orange farm "hundreds of sheets of music were covered with notes, but the young composer was wise enough to destroy these early efforts." Later he abandoned his oranges and went to Leipsic, where he met Grieg and studied under Jadassohn and Reinecke, though he considers that he learned "little or nothing that was of value to him." Since 1888 he has resided in France, either in Paris or in the small village Grez-sur-Marne.

This "practically self-taught composer," although resident in France, seldom hears any French music. He prefers to stay at home and quietly develop his own musical inspirations. He says that he composes slowly and does not allow any compositions to go out

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