

CHANGED STATUS OF THE ACCOMPANIST

No Longer a Mere Accessory in a Recital but an Artist of Coordinate Importance with the Soloist, Declares Authority

"WELL——?"
"Well?"

"Well, I hate to talk about myself, but——"
"But how can it be avoided in an interview?"

Richard Epstein, that masterful pianist-accompanist, leaned back in his chair with an amused expression upon his face. It—the interview—was not, evidently, a serious episode in his life. We were in Mr. Epstein's studio, on Thirty-seventh street, which has become a flocking place for embryonic pianists and those who would learn the subtleties of accompanying. All of which reminds me of the remark of a well-liked accompanist, "What, Epstein? He is the king of us all!"

Richard Epstein, previous to the last few months, had in London a large class of pupils, betimes going on tour with Julia Culp and Elena Gerhardt.

"It was at the end of July that I left London for a rest at Carlsbad. There I found the world about me aflame. In that burning atmosphere I took counsel with myself, and, sufficiently encouraged by friends, proceeded to America.

"Some weeks after my arrival I received a letter whereon the many postmarks informed me that it had been following me about for months. It was from Mr. Zimbalist, asking me to tour this last season with Mme. Gluck. You may imagine my disappointment! But during the season to come it will be my pleasure to accompany Mme. Sembrich. Being with Mme. Sembrich revives many happy memories. Before she began her career as a singer she studied the piano with my father, being one of the pupils in his class, which at that time contained Gustav Mahler, Alexander Lambert, Dr. Kunwald, Paolo Gallico—to mention only a few whose names are now familiar to Americans. And in those peaceful times there came to our home—they were intimate acquaintances of my parents—



Richard Epstein, Master Accompanist. A Recent Snap-shot Taken in New York

Johannes Brahms, Carl Goldmark, Rubinstein, von Bülow, Joachim and many others, among whom was Mr. Higginson, of Boston, founder of the Boston Symphony. To him my father was something like a musical advisor.

"So in this atmosphere it is not surprising that I should have developed into a musician.

"But, while I am convinced that there is very little open nowadays for the average pianist or piano teacher, I am glad to speak of the great opportunities for the accompanist.

As It Used to Be

"There was a time in this poor fellow's

His Opportunities Greater, Says Richard Epstein, Than Those Confronting the Average Pianist or Piano-teacher

life—I speak collectively—when he was looked down upon by the critics and public in general. He was an accessory, which, alas, because of necessity alone, had to be tolerated. He occupied the distinctly unpleasant and often decidedly unenviable position of subserviency to the wishes of chronically temperamental artists. And while this mental attitude was often apparent, the accompanist then had a much easier time in the actual work. The concert programs held much of Schubert and Schumann, and, with but few exceptions, he had rather simple chord accompaniments to deal with.

"As you know, this has all changed. The accompanist must now be an artist who is a pianist and musician at the same time. Modern songs, for instance, those of Wolf, Brahms or Debussy, with their difficult accompaniments, are not at all within the limits of everyone.

A True Duet

"As in many other arts, there are in this one of accompanying many open secrets. To begin with, the entire program is really a duet between the singer and the piano. Therefore, the aim should be to blend the piano tone with that of the voice. This essential point is very often neglected. One who has been a soloist, and especially an interpreter of chamber music, has a better chance of becoming an efficient accompanist. Chamber music is really the only means to develop an ensemble style, absolutely necessary in the modern songs.

"And so, after years of a doom which kept him in the background, the accompanist comes forward triumphant!"

Mr. Epstein smiled in that slow manner so peculiarly his own—a modest smile, preceding a final declaration.

"I remember Mme. Mysz-Gmeiner, a great artist, though almost unknown in America, admitting that her applause was of a noticeably different quality when she sang with her 'best' accompanist!"

AVERY STRAKOSCH.

PROGRAM OF MUSIC BY PENNSYLVANIA ALUMNI

Original Compositions of Merit and Varied Content Well Presented in Philadelphia

PHILADELPHIA, June 5.—Houston Hall was completely filled on Tuesday evening, when a program of original compositions was presented by the Musical Alumni of the University of Pennsylvania, many of the composers interpreting their own compositions.

Elizabeth Bonner's rich contralto was brilliantly effective in an aria from the oratorio, "Jerusalem," by Dr. Hugh A. Clarke, and also in "Ask Me No More," by the same composer, with a cello obbligato well played by Reba Stanger. Emma Hudson Macool, a gifted young soprano of the Cantaves Chorus, captivated the audience with the grace with which she sang Stanley T. Reiff's "Robin's Spring Song," and two pleasing ballads, "The Lily and the Poppy"

and "A Swing Song," by Alonzo Stone.

The Philadelphia Ladies' String Quartet, composed of Dorothy Bible, Elizabeth Porter, Gladys Minton and Reba Stanger, gave an excellent interpretation of an Andante and Intermezzo by John G. Ingle, and an Allegro Scherzando by Stanley T. Reiff, compositions of distinctive merit, and an admirable arrangement by May Porter of MacDowell's "To a Wild Rose." Other cordially received numbers were three compositions for piano by Stanley Addicks and three for organ by S. Tudor Strang, played by the composers; "Elegy," by Lewis A. Wadlow, and Melody in G, by Josie M. Holton, both for organ; an organ suite, by Albert C. Dooner; an arrangement from Bach, for violin and piano, by Charton Lewis Murphy, played by Alexander Zenker and Edith Wells Bly, and a group of songs for soprano by Joshua L. Baily, Jr., sung with artistic effect by Augustine Haughton.

The program was arranged by May Porter, vice-president of the society, whose ability as a program builder is well known to Philadelphia audiences. Miss

Porter also acted in the capacity of accompanist at both piano and organ. Dr. Hugh A. Clarke and Lewis A. Wadlow, the president, spoke at length of plans for establishing a permanent fund for the purpose of financing productions of larger works, choral and instrumental, by talented graduates of the University, whose compositions without such means of help probably never would be heard.

A. L. T.

HEGEDUS MEANS "VIOLINIST"

Unique Instance of Family Name Signifying Owner's Profession

One of the most interesting things about Ferencz Hegedus, the Hungarian violinist who has just been announced for a concert tour of this country, is the fact that his name, in itself, means "violinist." While it is worthy of remark that a people as musical as the Hungarians, where fully sixty per cent of the male population seem to consider violin playing as one of the indispensable accomplishments, have not in many years

sent a great violinist to this country, it is more worthy of remark that when one does come his name should have such significance.

Although the name Hegedus is not uncommon in Hungary, yet it has never been borne by a player of great capacity. Mr. Hegedus, with such a name, was bound to have a career as an artist, even though he has had more than the ordinarily difficult road to travel to realize his ambition. Born in a small and obscure city in Hungary, Hegedus fought his way to the front in spite of difficulties until his name now means violin playing of the highest standard in his native country. In a land where all know and play the violin it is indicative of great merit for a player to have attained the position which Mr. Hegedus has attained.

TO MAKE SAN ANTONIO TEXAS MUSIC CENTER

More Widespread Interest in Symphony Orchestra Sought—Concerts May Be Doubled Next Season

SAN ANTONIO, TEX., June 1.—At a recent meeting of the Men's Liberal Club musical conditions in San Antonio were given especial consideration. The need for wider interest in the San Antonio Symphony Orchestra was shown and twelve concerts were called for next year instead of the six given during the year just past. The good work of the Festival Chorus in "The Messiah" was interestingly reviewed, as was also the excellent work of the Mozart Club and other musical organizations. Arthur Claassen, one of the chief speakers, made particular reference to the large number of excellent voices in San Antonio, and concluded by saying that San Antonio must become the music center of Texas and the South.

One of the rules of the San Antonio Music Teachers' Association is that no member shall play or sing on any program, free of charge, where an admission fee is charged; nor for any club that takes dues from members. The present membership of the association is about fifty.

Gatty Sellars, the English organist, was heard in a series of concerts at the First Baptist Church during May. Large crowds attended his performances. His programs consisted of music by Handel, Hesse, Gounod and other masters, with a liberal sprinkling of his own compositions.

C. D. M.

The value of music in helping to cure sick and wounded soldiers is expounded by Mayol, composer of popular songs, who, according to a despatch from Bordeaux, has been accomplishing remarkable results in singing his songs in a hospital in Toulon. Mayol has composed three songs especially for hospital use. It is claimed that the mental cheer conveyed by these songs has been responsible for a very perceptible lowering of the proportion of deaths and an increase in the rapidity of cures.

Her voice is big, true, and beautifully colored, and her method is faultless.—*Minneapolis Evening Tribune.*

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