

Dr. William C. Carl a Staunch Supporter of Publicity for the Musical Artist

Noted Organist Attributes His Success to Systematic and Dignified Advertising — A Pioneer Organ Recitalist in This Country, Dr. Carl Relates Interesting Experiences That Attended His First Announcements in the Papers—"Keep Your Name Before the Public," Is His Advice to the Professional Musician

DESPITE the fact that publicity in one form or another has been directly responsible for the successful sales promotion of every important American product in the last decade, it is sometimes not easy to convince the musical artist that it is dignified, legitimate and absolutely necessary for him to keep his name constantly before the public, to cry his own wares, so to speak, and to make a strong personal bid for the favor of the people upon whom his livelihood depends.

In an article in these columns, two weeks ago, a press agent spoke of the importance of publicity in establishing an artist in the public eye. A manager of musical artists will shortly give his views upon the same subject. The doubting musician will perhaps claim that since the press agent and the manager are supported by the artist, directly or indirectly, they naturally advocate any means of promoting their own welfare, especially if this means costs them comparatively little.

The best reply to the skeptic of this type is made by a fellow artist, who has advertised in the daily and musical newspapers consistently for the past twenty-five years, and who attributes his present success primarily to effective publicity and secondarily to the ability that must necessarily substantiate any claim to artistic recognition.

The artist thoroughly qualified to give his views upon this subject is Dr. William C. Carl, organist of the First Presbyterian Church, New York, and director of the Guilman Organ School. Dr. Carl is a dignified musician who has forged his way to the front by systematic and legitimate publicity, not by sensational methods, and his statements are the outcome of years of experience in teaching in New York and concertizing throughout the United States.

A Start in Advertising

"When I came to New York twenty-five years ago, after completing my studies in Paris," said Dr. Carl, "my



Photo by Central News Photo Service

Dr. William C. Carl, Organist of the First Presbyterian Church and Director of the Guilman Organ School, Photographed in His Studio

first thought was to devise a way whereby I could advise the public of my intentions in the professional field. I had very little money, and could not advertise in a big way. I was determined to make a start, however, and I did so. It was a small start, to be sure, but I took the first step. I was one of the first organists in America to advertise. My friends smiled. 'Why is he forcing himself upon the public?' they asked.

"I advertised in the daily and musical papers as a concert organist, and my first efforts were so successful that an extensive recital tour was made possible. I played in cities where the organ recital was an unknown quantity. Incidentally, I was one of the first musicians to use a picture in an announcement. The idea of using a picture in an advertisement was not common at the time, but it helped me tremendously.

"Apropos of my picture, let me tell you an amusing incident," continued Dr. Carl. "I was scheduled to give a recital in a little town on the coast of North Carolina. A prominent citizen met me at the train and conducted me to his residence. I was assigned to a room in his house, where, lo, and behold! I saw my own picture, framed, on the wall. The gentleman had seen my likeness in the supplement of a paper and had honored me by hanging it in his home.

"Upon entering hotels in the West the clerks recognized me, to my great surprise. Questioning them, they told me that they had seen my picture in the Eastern journals. I came upon periodicals to which I had contributed articles in such far-off places as Manila and on the islands in the Pacific. Persons from Constantinople, Tasmania, the West Indies and Australia would write to me,

'Seeing your advertisement in such-and-such a paper, we beg to inquire, etc.' We are often unaware of the far-reaching effects of publicity.

Alaska Calls Dr. Carl

"A few years ago I was about to leave for Italy when I received a telegram from Dawson City, Alaska, asking me to inaugurate a new organ in a church there. I wired my acceptance, and when I arrived in the far north I found an organ up-to-date in every respect, and a musical library that contained several of my books on organ playing. The people in the land of snow and ice desired to hear the person who was talked of so much in the 'outside' world, as they termed it. I played a series of recitals in Alaska, panned out some gold in the Klondike, and took a 5000-mile trip with Burton Holmes, going above the Arctic Circle. The réclame of this trip made possible a number of recitals immediately after I returned to the Pacific Coast.

"Another point to prove the value of publicity. A few days ago I met a French professor of singing who had been in New York three years. He confided to me that when he arrived in New York he expected everyone of note to call upon him. As none did him that honor, he discovered the advisability of announcing the fact that he was here. Before he took that action he might have been located in a village in the Far West instead of in the heart of New York, as far as results were concerned. If you want people to know of your existence, advertise, and do it systematically and intelligently.

Publicity Not Undignified

"It does not lower an artist's standing to let people know that he is prepared and willing to do his work," Dr. Carl continued. "Naturally he must have ability and brain force, for advertising with nothing to back it up is of no avail. People are not inclined to run after an artist. He must be persevering and remind them constantly that he is available.

"There was a time when one could easily count the great artists. Now they are legion. It is a simple matter for even the greatest to be forgotten and side-tracked in these busy times. An artist's name should be before the public constantly, if only for a reminder. Our greatest artists recognize this fact, and it is for this reason that they do systematic, regular advertising.

"Anyone who chooses the musical profession should not be afraid of extra work. The plan I suggest is this: Set aside a portion of each day in which to work out plans necessary to keep yourself before the public in a dignified manner. Sensational advertising will avail you nothing. Systematic work with attention to the minutest details is essential. Remember that the successful artist to-day is also a good business man. It is not enough to know how to play or sing. You may be talented, but the public must know it. Make your start in advertising, however small, but make it. As soon as your business increases, turn a proportionate amount of your earnings back into advertising and keep at it until you reach the point where you can command the public to come to you.

Value of "Follow-Up" System

"Just one more point for the guidance of the uninitiated artist," concluded Dr. Carl. "There is a mistaken notion prevalent that it is sufficient to give a recital at Aeolian Hall. Let us take a careful glance at the situation. The singer comes to New York and wants to be heard. Aeolian Hall is engaged. The concert is duly heralded in the dailies. The day arrives. The aspirant for fame appears trembling, or confident, as the case may be. Granted that the recital is a success. Complimentary notices appear in the papers on the following day. But is this enough to launch the young artist upon her career? In twenty-four hours the recital is forgotten. If the matter is permitted to rest here the time and money expended is lost.

"What, then, is the artist to do? A follow-up system is necessary. Keep on advertising in the dailies and in the musical journals. Use the mails. Write letters and send out circulars. Use the same principles that guide the business man when he has a new commodity to put upon the market. Apply sound business tactics to your art and results will follow. If you are a good artist, do not fear that you will be contaminated by commercialism. Above all, do everything in a dignified way, be persevering, be systematic and do not shun publicity. Spend a part of each day in thinking out the best means of bringing your name before the public and keeping it there."

HARRY BIRNBAUM.



Soprano Soloist
St. Nicholas Collegiate Church
48th Street and 5th Ave., New York City

MILDRED GRAHAM

DRAMATIC SOPRANO

Engaged as Soloist in Pergolesi's "Stabat Mater" at Sam Franko's "Concerts of Old Music" at Aeolian Hall, New York, on Feb. 16

Jan. 16, 1917 (afternoon), Joint Recital with Leo Schulz, Jersey City. "Miss Graham has a beautiful voice and it was heard to good advantage. * * * She gave several encores, for the large audience was most enthusiastic.—*Jersey Journal*.

Jan. 16 (evening), Soloist with "The Singers," Bronxville, N. Y. "The work of Mildred Graham, the soprano soloist, was faultless. She has a dramatic soprano voice of beautiful quality and a most pleasing stage presence. Her singing was very much enjoyed and was applauded to the echo. The J. H. Roger's song, 'War,' which she sang in the second half of the program, was a little jewel."—*Bronxville Review*.

"Please extend my congratulations to Miss Graham. It is the most beautiful dramatic soprano voice I have heard in a long time." (Signed) ANRRO RIO.

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