

RESENTS CHAUVINISM IN MAKING OF SONG PROGRAMS

Florence Macbeth, Noted Soprano, Expresses Hope That Americans Will Not Put the German "Lieder" Classics Under the Ban—Singer Is Opposed to Plea That "Star-Spangled Banner" Be Dropped as a National Anthem—Elimination of the Idle Woman a Blessing the War Will Bring to Us

MUSICIANS who are contending that our national anthem should be changed for something containing better musical values do not have the support of Florence Macbeth, the noted young American soprano. On the morning I talked with Miss Macbeth she had just received a request from the Red Cross Chapter of her native city, Mankato, Minn., to give a benefit recital for that organization and the conversation drifted naturally to the war and its effects, present and anticipated, on music and musicians.

"I have been surprised at the discussion as to changing our national anthem," said Miss Macbeth. "What does one find in the songs that have inspired nations for many years? Sentiment, always sentiment. National songs are born out of periods of stress and upheaval. We might have a national anthem that would be finer from a musical standpoint, but it would lack the sentimental associations that have been woven through all the years in which our present anthem has taken root in our national life.

"Undoubtedly some of our composers will give us an American 'Tipperary'; in fact, I think that Irving Berlin has done so already in his 'Your Country and My Country.' It is a matter of surprise to me that it has not taken the public fancy more readily."

War's Start in England

Miss Macbeth sees a similarity between the tension of present days in America and the tension that prevailed in England during the early days of the war, "only here you do not have it brought home to you as we did when the first refugees from Belgium began to come in, and we were literally taking the clothes off our backs to give them to destitute women," said she. "I think America is doing marvelous things in the way of preparation when one considers how remote the war still seems to the 'man in the street.'

"Musicians here must be satisfied to face the same conditions which were met by the musicians in the warring countries three years ago," is Miss Macbeth's belief. "We will find a greater need for music than ever before; audiences will be larger, but financial returns will be cut tremendously—at least for a time, until we get our balance again and realize that the ordinary affairs of life will move on, somehow. Personally, I feel that we must be ready to give ourselves unreservedly to Red Cross work, to singing in the training camps, to every bit of work whereby we can help either in raising money or in inspiring the men who are going out to fight."

And in the ranks of the soldiers Miss Macbeth has a very real interest, for three of her cousins have already answered the call to the colors. The singer's great personal ambition, one that she has not by any means given up, has been to drive an ambulance. "It's comforting, of course, to feel that one can furnish money for relief work



Florence Macbeth, the Gifted Young American Soprano, as Herself and as "Rosina" in "The Barber of Seville"

through singing, but I would so much rather be out in the midst of it, where people could feel they were giving their strength and life directly to the cause we have espoused," is her explanation.

As to German Songs

It was interesting to get the viewpoint of such an ardent patriot as Miss Macbeth on the question of placing German songs on next year's concert programs.

"It is unbelievable to me that German songs may be put under the ban of public disapproval in America," said Miss Macbeth. "We are not at war with Schubert or Brahms or Mozart or the ideals they represent, we are fighting Prussianism. I hope that we will, as a people, be able to keep our minds unclouded by hate and prejudice. Pettiness has no place in this war; it should not be allowed to encroach on the field of art, for, above all other fields of endeavor, art, of course, should know no national lines. I do not believe that any of the nations who are warring against Prussian dominance have anything in their hearts but kindness toward the German people themselves and admiration for German art.

"Out of all the upheaval and chaos of political conditions are bound to come new art forms," said Miss Macbeth. "It is idle to speculate about them, but I think that the people who stand aside, who—through false ideas of allegiance to their art—do not take their share of responsibility now will miss a great opportunity for character building, for broadening their mental horizon—even though it be through hardship and suffering—for fitting themselves to create the new music for the new world that will be built after the upheaval of to-day is ended."

Miss Macbeth believes that one of the

advantages to come out of the war will be the elimination of the idle woman. "France and England have no idle women to-day," she says. "All are making return in some field of service for the food they eat. Such a condition would be the greatest blessing that could come to America. If our participation in the war will make the idle, middle-class woman of the American cities wake up to her responsibilities it will have accomplished a great thing. But it will

take the pinch of want, the necessity for earning her own living, to do this."

Miss Macbeth leaves New York the latter part of June for Ravinia Park, where she will appear this summer in the opera season. She will take a brief two weeks' vacation early in September, which she will pass in Colorado, stopping *en route* to "do her bit" for the Mankato Red Cross Chapter, after which a busy concert season is awaiting her.

MAY STANLEY.

New Suite by Gordon Nevin Played in Oakland by Clarence Eddy

OAKLAND, CAL., June 7.—At last Sunday evening's services in the First Presbyterian Church, Clarence Eddy, the widely known organist of this church, performed an interesting suite, "Sketches of the City," by Gordon Balch Nevin. The seven numbers depict tonally various urban sights and sounds. Other fine musical numbers on this program were Elgar's Prelude to "The Apostles"; an anthem (for quartet and organ), by

Chadwick; offertory, "Evensong," by Easthope Martin; George F. Hamer's "Watch Ye and Pray," sung by the quartet, and the "March of the Magi," by Dubois. Mr. Eddy and the quartet are providing special music at Dr. Frank M. Silsey's Sunday night sermon series at the church.

Francis Rogers was soloist at the concert of the New Singing Society at Æolian Hall, New York, last Saturday evening, June 9.

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