

# WHAT THE REVOLUTION WILL MEAN TO CREATIVE MUSICAL ART IN RUSSIA

Vladimir Dubinsky Predicts a Tremendous Awakening Among the Composers Who Are Now Freed from Autocratic Suppression

TO what extent will the freedom of the Russian people affect the creative musical output of that nation? Will the Russian musical literature, so rich in its essential characteristics, so distinctive in its artistic moods, be augmented by fresh contributions of greater worth or will the indecision, the political unrest of the people be reflected in a nondescript art devoid of permanent merit?

These questions were put to Vladimir Dubinsky, the Russian 'cellist, who has in recent years become so prominently identified with the musical life of America, but whose intimate acquaintance with the musical development of his native country qualifies him to speak with authority.

Dubinsky, a class-mate of Josef Lhévinne, a pupil of Safonoff, is an eclectic by nature. To him the problems of musical art are identified with the problems of literature, of sociology, of politics and science. The centuries of oppression, the dwarfing of individual expression that attended Russian autocracy is responsible, he believes, for the comparatively barren condition of Russian national musical art to-day.

"Remember that Russia's cultivated music is not more than seventy-five years old," he declared, in the course of a con-



Photo by Hall

Vladimir Dubinsky, Noted Russian 'Cellist, Who Predicts a Renaissance of Musical Art in His Native Land

versation with the writer. "The prejudice that existed against musical activity is unbelievable to-day. The little music which had a vogue was made entirely by foreigners, particularly the Germans and the Italians. Then came Glinka, the 'Prophet Patriarch' of Russian music, and his successors, Balakireff, Rimsky-Korsakoff, Cui, Borodin and Moussorgsky—virtually all men who had been

A Study of the Conditions That Have Impeded a Natural Development of Artistic Expression in a Country Fettered by Restriction and Prejudice

trained to other professions and to whom music was originally a pastime only—and we have the beginning of what we know to-day as Russian music.

"In a nation of 180 millions, only 40 per cent of whom are educated and under autocratic conditions which defy description, it is little wonder that these pioneers worked under the gravest difficulties. The tendency of the upper classes was to suppress rather than encourage a national musical expression.

"When the American composer feels that he has suffered from a lack of encouragement or recognition, let him read the history of modern Russian music!

"Now, it is my opinion that if Russia, under such adverse conditions could produce the geniuses who have made so telling an impression in contemporaneous musical art, the new Russia, in which freedom and light will supplant serfdom and ignorance, will give the world an entirely new and vital school of composers. It must be remembered that the Russian Jew, as a class, has not yet been allowed to develop along creative musical lines. With the new freedom it may safely be predicted that these temperamental people who have commanded attention merely as interpreters will flourish into creators.

"It is my firm conviction that the Russian revolution marks a turning point in the musical history of that country."

half of the Navy and Khaki Leagues, reports of which were given in the last letter, \$2,000 has been forwarded to these two organizations. These were the entertainments given largely by the officers and men of one of His Majesty's ship in port here at present.

On June 22 the pupils of Hilda McBrown, L. A. B., held their closing recital in Victoria Hall, assisted by Margaret Bennett, contralto. The pupils who did particularly well were Jessie Thornton, Pearl Dutton, Marion Cornell, Dorothy Rex, Olive Dutton, Frank Taylor, Harold Wakefield and Pentland Spurr. Little Alice Taylor presented Miss McBrown with a bunch of roses on behalf of her pupils.

The Superfluity Shop which is run by a group of local society women for the benefit of the Khaki League, has inaugurated a series of afternoon musicales in connection with the tea room. Local artists have been generous in their assistance and a recent visitor who was kind enough to sing was Margery Maude of New York. I. L. A.

ZANESVILLE, O.—The first recital of Mrs. Charles Chappelle's piano pupils was given June 15.

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## TWO OPERA COMPANIES FAIL TO MOVE MONTREAL

Slim Audiences Greet Unsatisfactory Performances—Margery Maude Sings for War Benefit

MONTREAL, CAN., June 28.—The two short opera "seasons" with which Montreal has been favored have been something of a joke, the second week being really almost a farce. The Boston English Opera Company, which held the boards for three nights the week before last, had two strong points in its favor—the sincerity of its principals and the sound training of its small but unusually efficient chorus. Unfortunately, Signor Spadoni, who was conducting, had nothing but a few travelling musicians play-

ing with the local orchestra, with the result that the orchestral effects were far from satisfactory.

The attempt to give the operas in English was also a mistake, as some of the artists sang Italian, some French and in the concerted numbers the conglomeration was not what one would call pleasing. Joseph Sheehan has long enjoyed a reputation as an operatic tenor of robust and pleasing quality and his work is always pleasing. Arthur Deane showed a rich baritone of heroic proportions. Nello Gardini won, perhaps, first honors in the company, exhibiting both vocal and histrionic skill. Robert Evans and Helen June Hall were fairly good in minor parts. "Il Trovatore" and "Faust" were the only two operas presented.

There was a discreet silence as to the identities of those responsible for the

production of opera at His Majesty's during the week of June 18. A week of grand opera of "extra special" quality was advertised, with the artists singing between the acts and the chorus singing off-stage. The critics described the first night production of "Faust" as an "emasculated edition, minus overture, minus the Kermesse scene, minus the church scene and minus a good deal of what should remain when those scenes are eliminated." The orchestra was dreadful and the chorus practically nonexistent. Romualdo Sapio, the conductor, found himself in the difficult position of having practically nothing to conduct. Georges Simondet, as *Faust*, had a throaty tenor voice with a few good notes in it and seemed to have no idea of action. M. Varillat, as *Mephistopheles*, carried himself with assurance and aplomb, but was somewhat lacking in voice. The women of the company were Clementine de Vere as *Marguerite*, Artha Williston as *Siebel* and Betty Delmo as *Martha*.

"I Pagliacci" and "Cavalleria Rusticana," the double bill for the second night, were sung in French with a dumb chorus, which walked on and off the stage very nicely. *Turridu* was sung by M. A. de Vally fairly well, Artha Williston sang *Lola* prettily and Genie d'Agarioff was a declamatory *Alfo*. "I Pagliacci" was bereft of its opening scene and some others. Alberta Carina, a Montreal singer, was a spirited *Nedda*, but her voice was hardly big enough for the part. M. de Vally sang *Canio* with excellent voice, but super-emotional effect. M. Varrillat contributed a *Tonio* more remarkable for dramatic than for vocal skill and d'Agarioff was a colorless *Silvio*. "Romeo and Juliet" was sung Wednesday night and was equally disappointing. Rumor says that the company is to perform at one of the local amusement parks for the summer. The three bills were repeated during the week to very slender houses and altogether the engagement was a most disappointing one.

June 18 the Y. M. C. A. hall was crowded to capacity to hear the violin concert given by pupils of Emil Taranto. Particular mention must be made of the playing of Annette Lasalle, a young musician of great promise, who figured four times on the program. The pupils taking part were Miles. B. Elie, C. Robert, E. Benoit, Irene Cardinal and G. Brosseau; Masters Greenspoon, Laurence Tombs and Mr. Black. Mme. Masson was the assisting pianist and accompanist and Melle Bernard and Joseph Saucier were the assisting vocalists.

As a result of the entertainments given at His Majesty's Theater in be-



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