

DESCRIBES CONCERTS AT THE FRENCH FRONT

American Soldiers in France Hungry for Music and Huddle in Crude, Dimly Lighted Huts to Hear Entertainers—Y. M. C. A. Calls for Easily Played Instruments

By FRANCIS ROGERS

WITH THE ROGERS CONCERT PARTY

Somewhere in France, Nov. 17, 1917.

WE—my wife, Roger Lyon and I—have had a busy time of it since we landed in France three or four weeks ago. During our first eight days ashore we gave ten concerts; then there was a comparative lull while we were in Paris; now we are averaging a concert a day in the American camps not many miles back from the fighting front.

I have taken part in musical entertainments of many kinds, ranging from grand opera to negro minstrels, but the conditions that surround us at the present time make our programs different from anything that I have ever heard of before. Let me describe to MUSICAL AMERICA one of our entertainments. As our party is traveling under the auspices of the Y. M. C. A., our performances take place in the "Y" huts, of which there are a great number scattered over France wherever our soldiers are stationed.

These huts are of wood about 100 feet long, 30 feet wide, 8 to 15 feet high. In one corner, usually near the entrance, is the canteen or counter where the soldiers may purchase cigarettes, chewing gum, chocolate, hot malted milk and a few simple comforts, like tooth-paste, razor blades, etc. This is presided over, as is the whole establishment, by a Y. M. C. A. secretary, who is usually of the male persuasion, though sometimes supplanted or aided by a female.

As a general thing, there is no floor except Mother Earth; what heat one may detect comes from two or three wood-burning stoves which give comfort to the half-dozen men who can find place within the radius of a few feet. Coal is much too expensive to be available. Electric lights may come in the future; for the present illumination is provided by candles attached to the tables and beams along the walls by a drop of their own paraffine. Last night the scene was brightened by the rays of two kerosene lamps. The piano, an upright of French make, stands upon some planks, and locates the concert platform. The action of the instrument usually is a sufferer from rheumatism caused by the humid climate.

Such is the setting for our concerts—

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the same bears some resemblance to the shanties in the mining camps, so wonderfully described by Bret Harte. There isn't much either of humor or of the picturesque, but it is a scene which I shall recall all my life with delight and gratitude. To complete the picture one must add the figures of from fifty to two hundred American soldiers, seated on benches or small chairs, the numbers varying with the size of the military group to which they belong. They are clad in well-worn khaki; their boots are covered with partially dry mud (mud and dampness are the chief symptoms of a French winter). I have never sung to audiences keener or more responsive than these men in brown. They never heard even the names of Brahms or Debussy, but give them a simple, straight forward melody, or bit of homely sentiment or humor, and they will derive as much pleasure from it as Mr. Finck of the *Evening Post* extracts from the performance of a piece by MacDowell or Grieg. Their taste is much like that of John McCormack's audiences—"Mother Machree," "I Hear You Calling Me," "The Perfect Day," "Mavourneen," "The Nightingale" (from "Lonesome Tunes") "Mother o' Mine"—these are all prime favorites, some of which I sing on every program.

Poems of Home and Mother

Robert W. Service is unquestionably the poet of the American soldier, and his "Rhymes of a Red Cross Man" are well known and always enthusiastically received. No other poet seems half as popular with them as their Englishman. T. A. Daly's Italian dialect poems are greatly liked. Mrs. Rogers recites a number of poems by Service and Daly on all her programs. However masculine

MME. GUILBERT DELIGHTS HER BALTIMORE AUDIENCE

Edward Morris, Pianist, Returns to Home City in Recital—Eddy Brown Again Welcomed

BALTIMORE, Md., Dec. 5.—The recital given at Albaugh's Theater by Yvette Guilbert, the celebrated interpreter of French songs, assisted by Emily Gresser, violinist, and Maurice Eisner, at the piano, proved truly enjoyable to a large audience. Mme. Guilbert's inimitable style was disclosed in a program of great songs of France, in which the characterizations were vividly presented. The charming young violinist made a deep impression with her reading of Eccles's Sonata. Maurice Eisner assists Mme. Guilbert in a definite way, for the piano background enables the interpreter to attain many subtle details.

Edward Morris, the young American pianist, who recently gave successful recitals in New York and who had for many years been loudly heralded as one of Baltimore's most promising pianists, decided to return to the place of his musical training to give a recital on a professional basis. This concert, at Albaugh's Theater, on Thursday evening, Dec. 6, proved to be one of the most refreshing displays of pianistic art that have been given here in a long time. The beautiful reading given to a group of Schumann compositions and other numbers surpassed any former effort, and in his interpretations the young artist rightfully laid claim to all serious consideration.

Eddy Brown, violinist, assisted by L. T. Gruenberg, at the piano, gave the seventh Peabody recital, Friday afternoon, Dec. 7. In a program which contained compositions new to the local public, the Debussy Sonata and the Concerto of J. Conus and several short pieces, which have been transcribed by the violinist, the audience found much to delight them through the sheer technical achievement and also through the beauty and sentiment of the renditions. The splendid support given by Mr. Gruenberg in the Sonata and the Concerto deserves high commendation.

A group of former pupils of the Maryland School of the Blind gave an artist recital at Albaugh's Theater, Dec. 7. This concert was a fine demonstration

and unsentimental our soldier may outwardly appear, he is at heart full of sentiment and most easily reached by recalling to him his home and his mother. Mrs. Rogers has had especial success in this regard with two original sketches—"Now That My Boy Has Gone to France" and "The Old Lady at the Information Bureau." Outside of pieces like this, the boys are hungry for humorous yarns of all sorts. It is, after all, only the world-old delight in listening to tales of adventure and human nature.

After our program of solos, Roger Lyon asks for especial favorites, and perhaps some soloist or a quartet from among them does his little stunt. Finally, we sing "America," all standing, and the meeting resolves itself into a general pow-wow and exchange of personal views and home news.

Many things the Y. M. C. A. has been able to supply, but it has not yet been able to supply the great demand for popular music in sheet form and for easily-played instruments like the mandolin, the ukelele, the harmonica, etc. I wish some of the many readers of MUSICAL AMERICA would interest themselves in this need. The Y. M. C. A. office, 124 East Twenty-eighth St., New York, will gladly forward all music and instruments entrusted to them for this purpose.

America should feel great pride in the soldiers it has sent across the sea to fight in the great cause—splendid, manly, unselfish, patriotic boys. To my mind we non-combatants cannot do too much to lighten the burden they are carrying so courageously. They love music; let us musicians see to it that we provide them with the means to enjoy the art to which we have devoted our lives.

of the splendid musical equipment given at the school and which is carried to fruition at the Peabody Conservatory. Those appearing were Elizabeth Patillo and Elmer Vogts, pianists, the latter also presenting a violin number; Delphine Desio, 'cellist, and Arthur Richmond, baritone. F. C. B.

MANY PROVIDENCE CONCERTS

Mme. Rappold and Lambert Murphy Acclaimed in Joint Recital

PROVIDENCE, R. I., Dec. 7.—The illness of Mme. Schumann-Heink prevented her appearance on the Steinert course concert Sunday, Dec. 2. Manager Albert Steinert, obliged to fill her place on short notice, was fortunate in securing Mme. Rappold and Lambert Murphy, who appeared in joint recital. The work of both artists, familiar to local audiences, met with great favor. Mr. Murphy, who has not sung here in several seasons, showed that he has gained much in voice and interpretative ability.

The Swedish male chorus, "Verdandi," was given before a crowded house on Dec. 1 in Elks' Auditorium, the concert being for the benefit of the 301st Regiment Engineers' Band.

The K. of C. war camp fund was substantially increased at the benefit at Fay's Theater last Sunday evening, when George Dostal, tenor, and concert company appeared. Numbers by Mr. Dostal, Lucille Orrelle, 'cellist, and Emil Polak, pianist, were enthusiastically applauded. A. P.

Schubert Club of Malden, Mass., Opens Thirteenth Season

MALDEN, MASS., Dec. 4.—The Schubert Club, Edward L. McArthur, conductor, gave the first concert of its thirteenth season last evening in the Center Methodist Church, before a large audience. The assisting soloist was Grace Bonner Williams, soprano, who made her third appearance with the Schubert Club. Her excellent voice was heard in the "Ave Maria" from Bruch's "Cross of Fire," a group of French and English songs by Fourdrain, Bachelet and Rubner and folk-songs of Ireland and Russia. In Kremser's "Hymn to the Madonna," which the club sang with piano and organ accompaniments, Mrs. Williams sang the solo obbligato with fine effect. The

club showed the results of thorough drilling in a miscellaneous program of part-songs. One of the most successful numbers was Mrs. Beach's "A Song of Liberty," sung with organ accompaniment. Conductor McArthur is to be congratulated for the degree of efficiency to which he has brought these singers. W. H. L.

Bernard Sinsheimer Engaged to Tilly Brady

Announcement is made of the engagement of Bernard Sinsheimer, the New York violinist and leader of the Sinsheimer String Quartet, to Tilly Brady of New York, a former violin pupil of his. During the last few years she has been studying voice. Miss Brady is a soprano and will in all probability be heard in concerts with Mr. Sinsheimer next season.

Ada Chadwick, the young Springfield violinist, appeared recently in a concert for the benefit of the Red Cross at Westfield, Mass., with Corporal C. B. Richmond. Corporal Richmond is an organist and is now in the band of the Maine Heavy Field Artillery. Lieutenant Ryan, baritone, also assisted at this concert.

WYNNE PYLE

In her New York Recital, Aeolian Hall, Nov. 19, 1917.

New York Morning Telegraph, Nov. 20, 1917—"Miss Pyle is an admirable pianist, whose playing belongs to a solid school. She has strength of touch, mastery over her instrument and a clear cut style."

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