

Boston Première of Mahler 'Resurrection' Symphony Heard in 'Classic Week'

Dr. Muck Leads Orchestra and Chorus in Unfamiliar Score—Latter Possesses Movingly Beautiful Finale—May Peterson and Merle Alcock the Soloists—Enjoy Program Made Up of Three Symphonies by Master Composers—Flonzaleys' Visit Followed by First Local Appearance of Kneisels with Kreisler as First Violinist

BOSTON, Jan. 27.—Musically this has been an extraordinary week, even for Boston—the kind of musical week that other cities call "high-brow," meaning old-fashioned and dull, but actually the type of "high-browedness" (if one may coin the term) which Boston rightfully claims for her own, with a justifiable pride. Whether by accident or arrangement, all the music except the Mahler "Choral" Symphony was drawn from that Germanic period called classic by some, and by others romantic; it might almost seem to be a week end exposition of the Mozart-the-father, Haydn-the-son, and Beethoven-the-Holy-Ghost epoch, with select examples of typical symphonies and string quartets correctly presented. Among Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, Schubert and Schumann, as well as Dr. Muck, the Flonzaleys, and Fritz Kreisler with the Kneisel remnant, music students had an unusual opportunity to hear an extraordinary portion of that solid old music which has long since passed beyond our modern praise or blame, played by musicians competent to do it full justice. In short, a week in which to give the moderns pause, and and secretly to wonder, perhaps, just how much better they can ever do.

The second of the series of three choral symphonies was the Mahler "Resurrection" Symphony in C Minor, No. 2. It had never before been played in Boston, and only once before in America. Wedged between the great Beethoven "Choral" and the Bach "Passion," to be given later, this new choral symphony doubtless suffers by comparison; apparently there were plenty in the audience who found it dull. Appended to the program is a long, rather stupid "program" of the symphony, which Mahler himself rigorously rejected, suggesting the dissatisfaction of the soul with mortal vanities, etc. As a matter of fact, the program is only in the way, and led to misinterpretation. As nearly as one could make out at a single hearing, the music itself is of the type which one fancies Dr. Muck would enjoy writing—intellectual, scholarly, hard, even ironic, with passages of beauty, but a strong rejection of "sloppy sentiment." Not in subject, certainly, nor in mood, but in method, perhaps, it suggests the Strauss of "Till Eulenspiegel"; the intellectual composer playing upon his marvellously plastic orchestra to suggest fine shades of Meredithian wisdom. Not that the symphony is light or comic, though the third movement is grotesque in suggestion; but it is shot through with the stuff of intelligence, rather than of feeling. Despite the program, Heaven alone knows what it's actually about, except a beautiful and brief termination which is undeniably celestial in flavor. It is the work of a thoughtful and skillful composer, unorthodox in his method and not too orthodox in his religious feelings. It is doubtful if the work will ever achieve popularity in America. Certainly, it is a less inspired work than Beethoven's; on the other hand, it is not impossible that the short, truly beautiful choral finale may be more genuinely moving than the more colossal, ponderous, cumulative Beethoven chorus. Dr. Muck gave a sympathetic and impeccable interpretation, and the large chorus added new laurels to itself. May Peterson and Merle Alcock did ample justice to the solo parts.

A Classic Trilogy

Doubtless there are many who doubt if any sufficiently short, varied, and at the same time unified program can be made up of three symphonies alone; if it is not impossible, the Haydn "Surprise," the Mozart in G Minor and the first Beethoven Symphony, played at the thirteenth symphony program, make a most acceptable trilogy. Played in the order named above, there was sufficient contrast in symphonic progress up to the early Beethoven, and the three together gave a sustained impression of that simple, clear-cut, almost always beautiful music which is fundamental to later music. It is amusing that frankly theatrical as the "surprise" double *fortissimo* seems, it drew the admiration of the modern Boston ladies just as Haydn wisely predicted it would the ladies of his own day. In comparison to the Haydn, the Mozart symphony seemed to show less of its architectural skeleton; the different elements are fastened together into an unbroken unit, but with the fundamental conventional pattern unobliterated. Despite its apparent simplicity, its stuff is of a nervous, forward-moving, almost an electric material. The orchestra did it complete justice.

The world seems divided between those who find in Beethoven's First Symphony only empty and unoriginal echoes of his predecessors, and those idolators who find every bar inspired. Heard immediately after the Haydn, and particularly the Mozart, the resemblances are apparent; nevertheless, there is a great leap forward; it is a new music. Particularly in the first two movements, the bare architecture is softened like the lines of a Rembrandt portrait; the music is of a richer, more varied, broader design.

For most of the audience, it was a long program, but not too long, and never

With music, and the spirit certainly, of that same period, came the Flonzaley Quartet, closely followed by the first Boston appearance of Hans Letz, Louis Svecenski, Willem Willeke and Fritz Kreisler in a temporary re-organization of the Kneisels. At best, good string quartets are all too rare in America, and judging by the small audience the Flonzaleys drew, it is largely owing to lack of public appreciation. That the other quartet filled Jordan Hall, it would be pleasant to ascribe to the spread of enthusiasm of the Flonzaley audience for beautiful chamber music, but the sadder truth is probably that the drawing card was Fritz Kreisler, whom the public has learned to lionize, and whose appearance, particularly in a new rôle in which to display his genius, is certain to be an attraction. Any but artists so indifferent to public praise or blame as are the Flonzaleys, would long since have become discouraged.

Chamber music programs are happily almost always satisfying; the Flonzaleys played the Beethoven Quartet in E Flat, Op. 74; an "Intermezzo" for Strings, by Daniel Gregory Mason, from Ms., and, Oh, exquisite! the Schumann Quartet in A, Op. 41, No. 3. If it is high compliment for a contemporary to be sandwiched between Beethoven and Schu-

mann, the height is not without its dangers, and one cannot but remark how pleasing, considering the circumstances, Mr. Mason's "Intermezzo" was. It is in one short movement, made up largely of two light themes, one especially graceful. It was never dull, and was at times lyrical; it is lacking in distinctiveness of outline and impression. The playing of the Flonzaleys was a model of that unified, impersonal, gravely-humorous, intimate manner which is the *summum bonum* of chamber music; the Schumann work, particularly the second and third movements, was nothing short of thrilling in its perfection.

The Kneisels—for one cannot forget the name which they have abandoned—played the Mozart Quartet in C, the Beethoven in F, Op. 59, No. 1, and the Schubert in A Minor, Op. 29. After twenty-five years devoted to the perfection of his art, Mr. Kneisel wisely chose to retire before his clock struck twelve, and one cannot but feel, after the well intentioned performance of Saturday, that he was wise. The Flonzaleys, who have now played together for the relatively short period of fifteen years, recently lost one of their members, but the new viola, Mr. Bailly, has already succeeded in becoming no more Mr. Bailly, but the viola of the quartet, "mingled, and blend, and so become a part." Mr. Kreisler, on the other hand, comes as a distinguished soloist and, though one cannot but applaud his scrupulous attempts to merge his personality with his fellows and his scholarly musicianship, it cannot be denied that, psychologically, at least, the effect is not one of perfect unity. One feels the effort of Kreisler's honest attempt to be only one of four, and its reaction on his fellows. It is not so apparent when they play—and they did play exquisitely—but when they enter, and bow, and go out, there is always the effort of each of the four not to take precedence over the others, particularly on the part of Mr. Kreisler. And the effect does seem to influence the playing.

LUCY GATES IN NEW HAVEN

Barrère, Loraine Wyman and Arthur Whiting Also Give Recital

NEW HAVEN, CONN., Jan. 26.—The Garfield Fuel Bill will have little consequence here upon the numerous concerts that are to be given in the near future, as most of them take place on Wednesdays and Fridays.

Of the musical events of the past week the recital given by Lucy Gates, soprano, in the Sprague Hall, was, perhaps, the most important. Her work was of the highest order and her thorough musical training was always in evidence in all the songs she sang. Miss Gates has appeared before in New Haven and her hearers on each occasion found profound pleasure in her singing.

William Edwin Haesche, composer and instructor at the Yale School of Music, gave a recital of some of his violin compositions in the Edison Shop. This is the first of a series of recitals planned.

The second concert of the season given at the Harugari Singing Society's Hall took place on Sunday afternoon, Jan. 20.

The Arthur Troostwyk Musical Organization was in charge.

The second of the five "Expositions of Modern and Classical Chamber Music" was given recently in Sprague Hall. The assisting artists were Loraine Wyman, soprano; George Barrère, flautist, and Arthur Whiting, harpsichord. A. T.

Earle Tuckerman Sings at Reception for Mary Turner Salter

Kate Douglas Wiggin, the noted author, gave an afternoon on Dec. 28 at her New York home on Claremont Avenue in honor of Sumner and Mary Turner Salter. Many prominent musicians were present in honor of the Salters. During the afternoon Earle Tuckerman, the New York baritone, sang a group of songs by Florence Turner-Maley and a group of H. T. Burleigh's Negro Spirituals. There was much applause for the singer and the admirable songs which he sang artistically.

Dora Gibson, the English soprano, has been engaged for an appearance with the Salem (Mass.) Oratorio Society, Frederick Cate, conductor, on March 4.

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