

Leaves from Diary of Guy Maier, Pianist, with Our Forces Overseas

Y. M. C. A. Secretary, Stationed at Great Rest Camp for Pershing's Men at Aix-les-Bains. Records Activities—Music's Rôle in Enlivening the Daily Round—Tussle with a Refractory French Harmonium

By GUY MAIER

MARCH 17: A "perfect day," like almost every day since Feb. 1. A full day, too. Wrote letters in the morning; played at church service at the Casino afterward, and had photographs taken. A fine dinner, then a delightful French lesson, and a start with about seventy-five of the men for the famous "Hautecombe Abbey."

Back home again, and a hasty supper. The evening service took place in the theater, and, as usual, I played. I was asked to play upon a curious looking French organ (or rather, harmonium) which had been placed in the orchestral pit for me. Ah! sad to relate, I met my Waterloo! The instrument insisted upon heaving and sighing, and made all sorts of impossible groans and wheezes when I "pumped" and played. I battled through "Onward Christian Soldiers," with it, and finally found that the reason for this extraordinary behavior lay in a very simple "stop" called "Expression" which I had pulled out. So after getting rid of the "Expression" I sailed away blithely into "Speed Away, Speed Away," and also "Pull for the Shore, Sailor," two songs which I detest. Alas, my happiness was short-lived! In trying to play the accompaniment for a quiet 'cello solo, the organ insisted upon remaining "full"—that is, it continued to play as loudly as possible, although I had carefully removed the "full" lever, and in fact had shoved in all the "stops," which should have stopped everything, but didn't. Well, then I tried the piano, and was so fussed that I played part of a solo for baritone in "five sharps" instead of *no sharps*, and the poor baritone and the audience had a terrible time of it. *C'est la guerre!*

After the service we had a hilarious St. Patrick's Day party, and played all sorts of Irish games until midnight. It is really curious to see how these men in khaki, after all, are simple children, and are so easily amused and entertained. If only I had time to explain all the Irish stunts which we did. The boys were having such a good time that it was almost impossible to get them to leave the Casino—even at 12:30 a. m.

March 18: Another busy day. Arranged several "acts" for to-morrow and Wednesday night, and planned the whole week's program. The "Craig Players" of Boston are very anxious to do a pantomime for us, but they haven't the music. So they sang the "stuff" to me and I wrote it down, harmonized it and had it orchestrated. More rehearsals for "stunt night," which comes later in the week, and also a rehearsal with the famous violinist who gives a concert here to-night, and for whom I am to play. French lesson, piano practice, evening concert, at which I played some solos, besides a "Sonata" and accompaniments for the violinist, "movies" and a social time (with the inevitable games; how the boys love them).

March 19: Great excitement! A fancy dress ball! It took a tremendous amount of work stirring up interest among the boys—because, you know, these dances and balls are purely "stag" affairs, as General Pershing has forbidden mixed dancing in the army. As soon as I had the fellows "going" they swept everything before them. They begged, borrowed or stole everything in Aix-les-Bains that could be considered a costume or a "disguise" of any sort. Of course, women's costumes were at a pre-

mium, and it really seemed as though every boy wanted to "dress up" in feminine attire. Such a fearful and wonderful sight—and really quite brilliant! Before the grand march we had two short performances in the theater by the Craig Players. The "wooing scenes"



Guy Maier, the Boston Pianist, Now a Y. M. C. A. Secretary, with American Troops at Aix-les-Bains, France

from Shakespeare's "Taming of the Shrew," in which Mr. Craig enlisted some of the boys as actors, and a pantomime from the "Circus Girl," both were screamingly funny.

An Impromptu "Jazz"

March 20: More strenuousness! Spent the day working at shows and acts for the rest of the week. Helped to "incite" the fellows to dance at the usual hour—4 p. m. Played at vesper service at 5. Had a mild professional vaudeville show in the evening. It "left out" early, as I asked the orchestra to go to the restaurant to play for a while, but they "struck," stating that they had been worked to death to-day. So I organized an impromptu "jazz" band, beginning with a piano and a drum, both instruments being expert in this field. Then we secured a violin, and another violin, then a dinner gong, then a bass drum; the music, of course, never stopped for one instant, and anybody who "came in" dove right into the mass of sound. Then we brought another piano, which wasn't in tune with the first, but that made no difference; then I appointed a director, and, really, you never heard such a tumult. But the rhythm was excellent, and we danced a long time.

March 31: I am really exhausted to-night. We decided to hold our "stunt night" in the theater, which meant that it would have to be *very* good. Spent all day rounding up the men and rehearsing everybody, and as a result the evening performance took upon itself an almost professional standard. Ran all sorts of errands during the day. Before the performance in the evening I distributed a couple of hundred whistles, bells, horns, rattlers and gongs to the audience, and you should have heard the racket! Never in my wildest dreams have I ever imagined anything to equal it. The men drove us nearly frantic. At the opening of the show I wanted to make a "speech" in order to tell them the program, and in order to announce, too, that for this evening's jazz band I

had secured about twenty instruments, which would be at their disposal after the performance. It took me at least fifteen minutes to say just that much, so great was the racket. The program was a great success.

CULT HEARS NOTED ARTISTS

John Powell and Sascha Jacobsen Applauded by "Humanitarians"

John Powell, the great American pianist, and the excellent violinist, Sascha Jacobsen, were soloists last Saturday afternoon at the ninety-ninth concert of the Humanitarian Cult in Carnegie Hall. Mr. Jacobsen was ill and unfortunately unable to fulfill his entire share of the program. Hence it was necessary to omit the F Major Violin and Piano Sonata of Grieg, with which the two artists were to have closed the concert. The violinist was well enough, however, to play in conjunction with Mr. Powell the latter's fascinating and delightful "Sonata Virginianesque," which has already been heard in New York, but which ought to be heard much oftener. The performance stirred a big audience, as did Mr. Jacobsen's playing of some Brahms and Sarasate numbers. Mr. Powell's solo contributions included Chopin's D Flat Nocturne and A Flat Polonaise, his own sparkling "Banjopicker" and some other numbers from his "At the Fair" Suite. The Nocturne was meltingly lovely; the Polonaise, which is so constantly misread in the pursuit of "originality," quite as one might have dreamed it. There were no debatable details, and the pianist obtained a magnificent crescendo of power without coarseness, blatancy or faltering endurance. H. F. P.

ANNOUNCE CONVENTION PLANS

N. Y. S. M. T. A. Arranging All-American Programs for Event

Walter L. Bogert, chairman of the Convention Committee of the New York State Music Teachers' Association, made announcement this week of the program, as far as it has been arranged, for the convention, which opens on June 25 in New York City. The program will be entirely American as to artists, composers and speakers. The artists already secured are Florence Macbeth, soprano; Loraine Wyman, soprano; Hart-ridge Whipp, baritone; Tom Dobson, baritone; Eddy Brown, violinist; the Tollefson Trio, Howard Brockway, Eleanor Spencer, Oliver Denton, Charles T. Griffes and Mana Zucca, pianists.

The speakers include Ernest Hutcheson, David Mannes, Dr. Frank Crane, John C. Freund, Hollis Dann, Dr. Holbrook Curtis, Dr. Frank R. Rix, Prof. W. R. Spalding, Prof. Daniel Gregory Mason, W. J. Baltzell, Sigmund Spaeth, Harry Barnhart, Harriette Brower, Perlee V. Jervis, Florence Leonard, Harriet Seymour and Francis Rogers.

Dominant Ninth Society of Alton, Ill., Gives Part of Elgar's New Work

ALTON, ILL., May 1.—The Dominant Ninth Society, of which Mrs. Charles B. Rohland was the director and guiding spirit for many years, gave a beautiful performance of Sullivan's "Golden Legend" in the Temple Theater last night, assisted by a fine array of soloists and an orchestra recruited from the St. Louis Symphony. Also Mrs. Rohland claims first honors in producing a part of Edward Elgar's "The Spirit of England." The chorus and soloists sang "For the Fallen." This and the Sullivan work were finely presented. The soloists were Mrs. A. I. Epstein of St. Louis, soprano; Mrs. Franklyn Knight, contralto, also from St. Louis, and John Miller, tenor, and Burton Thatcher, bass, both from Chicago. H. W. C.

TOLEDO CIVIC LEAGUE ENDS CONCERT SERIES

Metropolitan Stars Are Soloists in Last Two Recitals Given by Musical Club

TOLEDO, OHIO, May 3.—The Civic Music League has closed its series of excellent concerts with two programs that maintained the standard set for the season.

Last Friday evening the League presented Margaret Matzenauer of the Metropolitan Opera Company in a recital, with Frank La Forge as accompanist and piano soloist. The two artists gave a varied program, and Mme. Matzenauer proved that she possesses a remarkable voice of fine range and power. Mr. La Forge, in his solos, some of which were his own composition, and in his accompaniments did notable work.

On Wednesday evening of this week the League's final concert brought Anna Case, soprano, and Giuseppe De Luca, baritone, both of the Metropolitan, in joint recital. Francis Moore at the piano gave them excellent support. Miss Case from the first won her listeners completely and held them throughout the evening. Mr. De Luca was equally successful. The program lasted till long after the usual hour, owing to the number of encores that were given. The League has announced an excellent series for next year.

The Epsilon Chapter of Mu Phi Epsilon Sorority held its monthly musical program in the small hall of the Toledo Conservatory of Music. The program, made up of operatic selections, was interpreted by Neva Bierly, Pauline Brown, Mrs. Horace Hamlin, Mrs. A. Houston, Mrs. W. E. Reese, Mrs. Charles Brady and Mr. Flandorf. Accompanists were Dorothy Elton, Mrs. John Gillett and J. Harold Harder. J. H. H.

Ottawa Symphony Offers Attractive Program at Final Concert

OTTAWA, CAN., May 4.—Donald Heins offered an excellent program for the last concert of the Symphony on April 25, of which the "Tannhäuser" Overture was the principal item. Particular interest was attached to the execution of "Air de Ballet," a short, well scored composition of a member of the orchestra, A. S. Greaves. The work was much applauded. Alice Valiquette, soprano, and Leo Smith, 'cellist, assisted. Miss Valiquette's clear voice pleased greatly and she had to respond to well earned encores. Julia Fortin and Dr. Gibson played fine accompaniments for the soloists. A. T.

St. Johnsbury, Vt., Holds Its Third "Sing"

ST. JOHNSBURY, VT., May 2.—Nearly 500 participated in the third community "sing" held here April 30. Solos were sung by Frank H. Brooks, Allen Hunter and Mrs. Ida P. Brooks, while an instrumental trio, consisting of Miss Boynton, Miss Cramton and Miss Warden, played during the intermissions. These gatherings have proved highly popular, and credit for their inception, as well as their success, is due to the talented leader, Ella Brownell.

Hanna Brocks-Oetteking Displays Gifts in Recital

Hanna Brocks-Oetteking, soprano, was heard in an interesting song recital in the auditorium of the New York Educational Alliance, Young People's Branch, Sunday evening, May 5. Mme. Oetteking won warm praise and applause for her delivery of a varied program of works by Carey, Handel, Smart, Debussy, Rabey, Chausson, Mahler, Reger, Haile, Burleigh, Waldrop and Elliott. Umberto Martucci gave admirable support at the piano.

EDWIN HUGHES

will conduct a SUMMER CLASS FOR ADVANCED PIANISTS AND TEACHERS at his New York studio.

Early application for time reservations should be made and communications addressed to STEINWAY HALL 109 EAST 14th STREET NEW YORK

ANOTHER AUER PUPIL—

THELMA GIVEN

Violinist

Début in the Fall—1918

Management: METROPOLITAN MUSICAL BUREAU, 35 West 42nd St., New York City

