Musicians and Their Handwriting — An Index to Character.

[Continued from page 3]

In the writing of Maud Powell one sees again the forms of pen and pencil which are indicated by the straight line under the signature. The capital M is one of the most interesting letters in the signature, the extreme height of the first point in the letter L. Exaggerate nerves and a critical spirit are shown in the eccentric crossing of the small t, and the general thickness of the writing shows sensitiveness and bold courage. Another handwriting in which the predominating characteristic is spirituality of thought is that of Jascha Heifetz. Observe the long loop of the capital J and the recurrence of the same loop in the small f, both indicative of the idealistic type of person. Jascha Heifetz is shown in his unusual and vigorous crossing of the small t, while the inevitable indication of good pace and force of will are indicated in the long flourishes under the signature with which the writer concludes the small a.

"Ah, the contingency!" was the exclamation of the esteemed lawyer to the author, who, on his way to his office, met a poet who was of the opinion that life was a capital L! The lengthening of the lower part of the L, always the one who boasts to build a new and better world, gives evidence in the presence of thought and logic. A person known by the finest example is quite as indicative as the worst example is astraordinary. Here is a capital L, in which the general acuteness of thought and logic is given expression by the finest example.

In the shape of the signature the L of vivid imagination, and of great creative artist! came the explanation by the exalted poet of the contemplation which is the capital L! The lengthening of the lower part of the L, always the one who boasts to build a new and better world, gives evidence in the presence of thought and logic. A person known by the finest example is quite as indicative as the worst example is extraordinary. Here is a capital L, in which the general acuteness of thought and logic is given expression by the finest example.

A RE American girls born with dreams of primadonnas in their heads, as the proverbial lucky child is with a silver spoon in its mouth. It looks that way from the vantage point of the musical journalist. Some few really manage to achieve the longed-for operatic greatness, a far bigger number have it thrust upon them, not undeserved, indeed, but quite possibly undeserved, while countless others, though they never break into the magic circle which the footlights bound, go down even into the grave wrapped in the glory of the operatic dream.

Barbara Maurel, the young mezzo-soprano who made a gratifying success at her New York recital début the other day, is an American girl, inasmuch as she has called this country home ever since she was five years old. To her as to other American girls, the fairies willed a full share of operatic ambition, though not with the sad results which attend their gifts all too frequently. At least, if the results were not so productive of a rosy glow of contentment as fulfilled dreams are in romantic visions of the might-have-been, they carried their campaign much further into the enemy's country of the RB than the usual girlish aspirations could do without glutting the market. Many are called, but so few are chosen. Barbara Maurel might well have rested on her laurels, happy to have attained so much, rather than abandoning a success won, for the sake of following the ever onward-dancing will-of-the-wisp of the ideal.

"I lived in Philadelphia," she explained, "and so I was able to hear a good deal of opera. I used to go pretty regularly, two or three times a week. At that period Massenet was my idol. I was always hieroglyphic."

Economy of Means in Art

"While I was in Paris, I was so fortunate as to come in contact with Mary Garden, who was then, as she now, my idol of a truly great artist. She took evidence in her work of a principle which struck me forcibly. By no means all of us have ever seen the economy of means set up as the guiding light it ought to be for every one engaged in artistic work. It was for me, which I have never forgotten, and which is my fondest wish of all, and which I would have in whatever I do, whether in opera, which till recently maintained its old firm hold on my time and work as well as on my admiration and allegiance to it as the ideal, but is, I regret, too, the form of activity which claims my time and enthusiasm now."

It was after I had studied a year or two in Philadelphia that my operatic dreams began to come true. I went to France. For three years I followed the plans I had so carefully formulated for making an operatic career. I studied with Jean de Reszke all that time, and also prepared myself by training in such subsidiary matters as stage deportment. With de Reszke I studied the standard operas. 'Carmen' was one of his most frequent vehicles—she sang in it often works. Yet much as I admire the great masterpieces of the past, I cannot help feeling that this century is adding something new and wonderful to musical art. Debussy, to my mind, is the beginning of an exquisite new style. One of the critics spoke particularly of the gown I wore at my New York recital, and that pleased me greatly, for I spent much time and thought in planning that costume. I was to sing a program not conspicuous for novelty but made up chiefly of tried and true but delightful numbers, and I therefore wore a soft brocade of orchid color and carried a few blooms of the same exotic tint. A gown cannot help but be of supreme importance in setting the audience in tune with a recitalist; they see her before they hear her sing. Even the manner of entering and leaving the stage deserves study, as a Weiskuhn says, the very rhythm of the walk is sufficient basis for the reconstruction of a personality. Of course you will hear people say, 'Behavior which is natural is the best.' Aren't they forgetting that a stage is not anyone's natural environment and that only paint study can make one so familiar with it that he is at ease or at least can appear to be so on it? If one's bearings were all ears instead of being ears plus eyes and a goodly lot of other facades, then and only then would disregard of these matters be justified. In this summer I am devoting to musical study and research, so that next year I may have a larger repertoire to draw on. Of course I shall continue to use my beloved French songs, things by Debussy, Chausson, Fauré. Then I have some songs by Klabys-Korokoff, Gretchaninoff, and above all Messiaen's which I am saving away for summer study, and I have an eye, too, on some of the work of the newer British composers. So I should be simply equipped for the next season, I congratulate my managers for so far the coming season."