

# Back from the Clouds, Schelling Will Play Again

**Pianist Contemplates Return to Concert Platform Next Season After Four Years in Europe—Serves as Military Attaché at Berne and Flies Over "No Man's Land"—Airplanes Make Fatalists, He Declares**

"ONE becomes a fatalist, a philosopher, in an airplane," said Ernest Schelling, pianist. He contemplated his winged past in a manner that emphasized his statements.

Back again in America, after four years in Europe, part of which time he devoted to war service as assistant military attaché at Berne, Mr. Schelling is looking forward to his return to the concert platform in the fall. Since he made his farewells here and embarked for the other side of the world, he has lived a life very different from that of the concert pianist, in spite of the adventures that touring often entails. In Europe Mr. Schelling did much of his touring in an airplane, and there were no piano recitals at the end of his trips. "I often flew over 'No-Man's Land' in my three years as attaché to the American legation," he remarked as he chatted over his experiences.

The danger of the air, particularly in war-time, was a subject naturally introduced, but Mr. Schelling declared that his own experiences in aviation had been marred by no disaster. "I never thought much about the danger," he said. "It was all in the day's work. I must confess that flying over the Alps with no possibility of landing except on the top of a few ice-covered peaks is pretty hair-raising, but far too exhilarating to give one a sensation of fear. Yet, you know, it's a queer thing how near accidents sometimes come to one. I had flown with Oscar Bider, who was recognized as the greatest Swiss aviator.

"One day he had an engagement to come and lunch with me at my summer home on Lake Geneva, to meet the Allied military attachés. He was going to fly over. And on that very day he was killed."

If Mr. Schelling escaped a plunge to earth from the clouds, he was not so fortunate in his movements on terra firma. While on a trip to the front, he was injured severely in an automobile wreck. Body lacerations and sprains, and general shock, made his recovery a slow and dubious matter at the time. He spent several months in the hospital, and there was grave danger that he would not be able to play again because of injury to his wrists. Happily he has recovered entirely, and the wrists, so important an asset to a pianist, have all their old strength back again.

### A Genius in the Infirmary

"I must tell you about a case of musical mania I encountered in a sanitarium for soldiers at Baden," said Mr. Schelling. "You know, part of my work, after the armistice, consisted in directing the repatriation of captured soldiers. At this place I found no Americans, but I did discover some of our allied soldiers who were patients. There were two Italians, a Frenchman, an Englishman and an Irishman, and I decided to rescue them. The Italians were in a pitiable state of mind, but the others were not so hopeless, and none were dangerous. The Irishman had constituted himself the commander of the others and, whether they understood him or not, they obeyed his orders implicitly. There was no barrier of language. It is with the Frenchman, however, that this particular incident has to do. He told me in all seriousness that he was, not a reincarnation, but actually Berlioz, Debussy, Gluck and Saint-Saëns, all in one. He also spoke at length of an opera which he had composed, which it would take seven days to perform. When I asked to see the score he handed me a newspaper. He could see music on any piece of paper, and yet I learned afterward that he was not a musician and had no connection with music whatever.

"I am delighted to come back and go to work," Mr. Schelling declared, when the conversation turned upon his art.



Ernest Schelling on War Service in Europe. (1) —With the Alps for Background, the Pianist Prepares for an Airplane Flight; (2)—Portrait Study of Mr. Schelling

"Three years away from the piano and from music in general have made me

absolutely hungry for a chance to work up a new repertoire and to play again in public. And, after all is said and done, presenting to the public the great works of our great masters, and striving for the best in music, are the artist's highest goal. The public is the greatest inspiration to the interpretative artist."

Discussion on the subject of repertoire elicited the declaration that the pianist was a firm believer in music of the

**Describes Strange Case of Musical Mania in Sanitarium —The Man Who Was Berlioz, Debussy, Gluck and Saint-Saëns — Amazed at Wealth of Music in America —Commends Work of Federated Clubs**

melodious order. To this music he will go for his programs. He intends to give attention to modern composers also and will probably play Granados, Albeniz, Ravel, Debussy and some of the less widely-known works of Paderewski.

### Praises Clubs' Work

"Since my return," he observed, "I have been amazed at the multitude of fine musical events in America." He went on to refer to the work of musical clubs. "Some weeks ago," he said, "I officiated as judge in one of the American Federation of Musical Clubs contest. It was difficult indeed to choose between the two final contestants for a piano prize. The high musicianship of the competitors reflected honor upon the organization that arranged the trials. I cannot speak too highly of the splendid activities of the musical clubs in what they are doing for music in this country. As an elevating and refining influence in the community, the musical club has no equal. And now is the time when these clubs have in the hollow of their hand the development of musical taste—the cultivation of appreciation for the higher forms of art. This development must naturally come from musical centers in small communities."

### Spalding Sails for Europe

Albert Spalding sailed on the Olympic, June 4, for a tour of Europe, which will keep him away from his native country for about a year and a half. Mr. Spalding will begin his tour with the series of orchestral concerts conducted by Eugene Ysaye in Brussels, after which he will make an extended concert tour of Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Italy, France, Spain, England and Egypt. He was accompanied by Mrs. Spalding.

**"Optimists" Close Their Season**  
The twenty-fourth concert of the Society of American Music Optimists, Mana-Zucca, founder and president, marked the close of its fourth season on the afternoon of May 29, at Chalif's Auditorium. A large audience demonstrated enthusiasm over a program which opened with the debut appearance of Max Barnett as piano soloist. Mr. Barnett's numbers were John Powell's "Merry-go-round," J. Frank Leve's "Estellita" and the Concert Etude of

MacDowell. Later he was heard in an Intermezzo by Henry Hadley and Constantin Sternberg's "Danse Andalouse." With Elizabeth Martin replacing Francis Moore at the piano, Martha Atwood, soprano, gave songs by Ware, Reddick and Rummel, and later had the aid of the composer as accompanist in two Arnold Volpe songs. The remaining artist was Maximilian Rose, violinist, who contributed two compositions of Israel Joseph, two of Cecil Burleigh and one by George Koepping to the program. He had Mr. Shapiro at the piano.

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