

A Series of Talks on Music

By Prof. C. C. Laugher, Mus. Bac., Sarina.

NO. X.—THE LUTE.

Lutes or Lutists were attached to the household of Kings and Queens; and this form was not abolished until the 19th century.

The Lute was the most popular instrument during the 15th, 16th, and 17th centuries. It is an instrument traced from Egypt, where it appears depicted in sculptures; the lute held a prominent place in European home life and was only supplanted by the key-board instruments of the piano type.

Lutes were generally built very artistically, the pear shaped body being composed of narrow strips of wood glued together with great care; the lute originally had eight thin gut strings arranged in pairs, each pair tuned in unison, this same instrument was considered exceedingly difficult to tune.

The lute was popular because during its long existence and the mandolin may be considered as its most modern form. The lute was the first instrument "except the organ" to make prominently the harmonic style as contrasted with contrapuntal, it was the favorite instrument of high society and was instrumental in familiarizing the musical world with that form of music, of melody supported by chords.

The lute was popular because its playing required less mechanical ingenuity to bring it to perfection, it is also a portable instrument and well adapted to domestic performances.

The kind of music written for the lute contrasted mainly in dance tunes in sets, with some fanciful movements; but the ornamental parts in music seemed childish and tame, yet this kind of music formed the basis of a long and continuous improvement including fantasias and preludes, simple passages of runs and arpeggios.

The pianoforte is now the most familiar object in domestic life and occupies the position at one time held by the lute, the pianoforte has a great advantage over previous instruments from a purely practical point of view.

The lute music was generally slow, soft and delicate; it would neither rage or rattle, the music was certainly peculiar and was written on a six line staff.

The period of the invention of the lute is still a matter of speculation, some having said that it is of Asiatic origin.

Of the principal players and writers for the lute we mention Kapsberger, a Spanish lute player and composer, who for this kind of music in Italy composing Lambert, and the voice. great lutist, in 1610, was another music to Louis XIV and composed music for the lute and was himself a great

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virtuoso.

Gaultier, of the same period, was another lute player of fame and was renowned for his execution. He, with his cousin Jacques, established a school for lute playing in Paris, which proved a great success.

Galilei, who is said to have formed the basis for the modern vocal solo, composed many airs for single voice with accompaniment on the lute; was also a great musical theorist.

The lute was considered the most difficult instrument to tune, much patience and perfect ear being required. Matheson, (1720) calculated despondently that "if a lute player had lived eighty years, he has probably spent about sixty tuning his instrument." It is even recorded that Mary, Queen of Scots, required persons from London to tune her lute.

Much literature has been published concerning the lute, song and story are full of allusions to the "trembling lute" the "whispering lute" and the "warbling lute."

The lute disputes with the organ the honor of first having compositions written for it.

POWERFUL THO' HUMBLE

I am cold and senseless. I came from the depths of the earth. When new I am bright and pleasing. When I grow old I am beaten, cast aside and reborn to use again. For centuries I have preserved the works of art, knowledge, and history; I have heralded broadcast the works of man, created wars, overturned kingdoms, and elected crowns. Mightier than the sword am I. Had I never been born the world would still be clothed in darkness and ignorance, seas remain unknown, wealths unused and learning undreamed. Wonderful institutions of learning have been created through my efforts, lives broadened and homes made happy. My greatest ambition is realized when I can teach the young, comfort the old and spread learning through out the world. I assist you to learn of the happenings of your neighbors, the doings of the city and the wars of yesterday. My use extends from the smallest hamlet to the farthest corners of the earth. Yet, I am little known, seldom seen, and quite small and insignificant. But, you will seek my lasting impression on the morrow—for I am the printer's humble type.—Inland Printer.

"I say, Shilleto that blackguard Ponsonby has threatened to kick me the first time he meets me. If I should come across him in society what would you recommend me to do?" "Sit down."

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"We will never bring disgrace to this our city, by any act of dishonesty or cowardice, nor ever desert our suffering comrades in the ranks; we will fight for the ideals and sacred things of the city, both alone and with many; we will reverence and obey the city's laws and do our best to incite a like respect in those above us who are prone to amul or set them at naught; we will strive unceasingly to quicken the public's sense of civic duty; thus in all these ways we will transmit this city not only not less, but greater, and more beautiful than it was transmitted to us."

NORTH GRAND PRE NOTES.

The Misses Kate and Harriet Palmeter spent New Year's with their parents here. Mr. Harold Palmeter spent the week-end at his home.

Mr. Ernest Eagles was home for the New Year's week-end. Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Palmeter, of Yarmouth, spent New Year's with the former's parents. Mrs. Palmeter will remain for a short visit.

An appeal comes from starving China as follows: "China helpless; appalling famine; entreat Canadian people's help."

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GRAND PRE & HORTONVILLE.

Dr. and Mrs. J. N. Fuller, of Berwick, have been spending a few days in Hortonville, guests of Dr. Fuller's son, Frank E. Fuller.

Mr. W. P. Eaton, who is spending the winter in Halifax, was in Grand Pre on Wednesday, Dec. 29th.

The Presbyterians held a Concert and Christmas tree, in the Old Church, on Dec. 28th. It was greatly enjoyed by all who attended.

Miss Vera Friggins, of Canning, spent the week-end with her friend, Miss Annie Whitman.

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