

In contradistinction to the brain of the business man who is the happy possessor of one only idea, viz., "the Almighty Dollar"—the brain of the artist constitutes a veritable avalanche of ideas; but let it be understood that it is not given to everyone to be an artist, therefore very few brains are organized to grasp and appreciate the artistic idea.

Can it be said with truth that Beethoven, Mozart, Lulli, Gluck and the more modern Wagner, Franck, and a host of other musicians were devoid of ideas? Is it not true that the composer of a symphonic poem has ideas bordering at times on the sublime? According to my comprehension, the ideas contained in the brain of the artist entitle him to be numbered among the company of the elect.

If the multitude do not comprehend them, the cause lies in their inability to grasp and appreciate the ultra-refinement of the artist's ideas. Moreover, it has been physiologically proved that the vibration caused by sound develops in the musician qualities of expression and qualities of sentiment that are not given to all to express. Music is not caused by extreme sensibility, but is the result of strong, vigorous ideas normally matured or undeveloped according to the organization of the brain from which they emanate.

It is another self-evident fact that those who do not understand the artist or musician invariably attempt to deny the evidence, yet no one can deny the emotion experienced at the exposition of the mass of ideas portrayed on the canvas of the artist painter, and if the dead canvas can portray ideas which induce sensations and emotions, how much more easily may vibration be made to react on the listener.

C. J. CARBONI.

Surely Interpretation Involves Ideas

YOU ask my opinion as to whether "musicians are entitled to the expression of ideas." This is rather a peculiar question, because, why should not musicians be entitled, or allowed to express any ideas they may have as well as other people? And, furthermore, who is to prevent them? As to whether their ideas are worth expressing, of course, is quite another matter. But assuming they have ideas, I can see no earthly reason why the laws of Canada are to act against their (the musicians) freedom of speech, any more than to other classes of individuals, provided their expressed opinions do not conflict with duty and responsibility, and are sincere.

There may be some people who imagine that the musician lives in a world of his own, or rather in a world of tone and fancy, and that his professional duties require him to deal almost entirely with sentiment, so-called feeling, or unrestrained emotion and abandon. But this is not so, because much music demands the highest quality of the mind, and is lofty in effect, and noble in sentiment and intellectuality.

For instance, take the music of but two masters, Bach and Beethoven. Will any one say that the ideas presented in their imperishable creations, can be thoroughly understood and interpreted by a musician unless he be mentally equipped with intellectual insight and appreciation, and can unfold the hidden meanings and complexities concealed therein?

The training of a really first-class musician requires to be most thorough and broad in its scope, and his intellectual vision should be, and in most cases is, just as brilliant and illuminated as that of his brothers in any other art or profession. In addition, the properly qualified musician not only has to possess a high order of cultivated intelligence gathered from study, wide reading, observation and experience, but he requires to be sensitive, sympathetic, courageous, and keenly alive to the necessity of getting into the heart of things.

In doing so, he must have ideas, and these "ideas" enable him to interpret what he sees and feels, for "the art of interpretation" is but another name for "the art of thinking."

W. O. FORSYTH.

Not Merely a Matter of Soul

TO the intelligent man or woman living in this age of advanced thought, it seems unnecessary to even suggest that musicians are not entitled to give expression to their ideas on anything but those connected closely with emotion and feeling. The usual saying that "music is the language of the soul" does not necessarily mean that intelligence is left out and only emotion remains.

The composer or creative musician through the power of thought gives to the world his or her ideas in the form of compositions; such works could never be created unless emotion was controlled by thought and worked out with the theoretical knowledge gained through years of study in many branches of art and literature as well as music.

At present I have before me a copy of Macdowell's piano sonata, the "Eroica"—sometimes entitled "From the Realm of King Arthur," the work being a musical setting of King Arthur's story, proving a trip into the realm of literature by the composer. Space will not permit mention of the multitude of compositions written under the inspiration received in the world of art and literature.

The demands upon the musicians of the present day for a broad culture and knowledge of a many-sided character, can be readily understood by the non-musician, when it is taken into consideration that the interpretation of the works, not only of the great masters, but of compositions of modern composers, requires a knowledge of literature, painting, sculpture, sciences, etc. Each day, as it passes, brings to the musician, whether composer, performer or teacher, questions regarding his own works or those of others, which necessitate a thorough knowledge of many things outside of music.

To the music-loving people, a closer relationship with musicians, who could help them to appreciate more fully the beauties of the music to which they listen by the understanding of the principles of musical composition, would add

the pleasure of intellect to that of emotion; and at the same time a better knowledge of the broad range of ideas necessary to the equipment of a successful musician.

PETER C. KENNEDY.

Brain Not Merely a Music Box

YOUR letter of the 10th inst. is before me. Replying to your query regarding the mental calibre of members of the musical profession (of which I have the honour of being a member) I will say, that I do not agree with the assertion of the art critic whom you mentioned, that "Artists do not need brains, especially musicians."

Application, concentration, dramatic power and expression, courage and perseverance are just as necessary qualifications for a musician and singer as are feeling or emotion; and surely none of these qualities are very much in evidence in a brainless devotee of art. Because a man or woman devotes most of his time to any particular form of art, it does not necessarily follow that he have no other talent. A lady once said to my good wife (and I trust you will pardon this personal reference): "What would Mr. McDonald do if he lost his voice?" to which my wife replied: "Well, he wouldn't lose his brains, and he would probably be just as successful in some other line of business as he has been in his present vocation."

Ideas are simply thoughts expressed in concrete form; and the musicians who give to the world such masterpieces as are found in the musical literature of the ages are monuments to the fact, that all great minds are not found altogether on the prosaic and practical side of life.

I have to catch a train now, so will have to stop with this brief answer to your question.

H. RUTHVEN McDONALD.

Brevity the Soul of Wit

Toronto, October 13, 1917.

OF course artists need brains (some more than others!), just as "an ambitious art critic" and Sir William Van Horne also need brains, and apparently need them pretty badly or they would not have made such a singularly foolish statement.

Yours sincerely,

HEALEY WILLAN.

Editor's Note: One of Van Horne's favourite sayings was that no artist needs to think.

A Good Song is a Thought Product

MANY people—in my estimation—make a misleading and sweeping assertion, when they state, that musicians and painters do not need brains and "are not entitled to the expression of ideas." This is a fallacy! Take any of our eminent composers, the genius Beethoven, for instance. He was imbued with the divine spark; he wrote with inspiration, expression and soul, yet, he was a plodder, as is manifested in the marvellous development of a wealth of ideas, all of which was the result of the work of a stupendous brain filled with the ideal, and a soul that carried him to majestic, musical heights. In Landon Ronald's, "Four songs of innocence," a copy of which, through the kindness of the composer, I have recently received, I was moved to laughter on playing the second number of the group, entitled, "Infant Joy," where the accompaniment is truly descriptive of the prattling of a very young, wee tot, trying to give expression to something in its baby fashion. Evidently, the composer had some such idea when he gave this simple and effective musical setting to the sweet child verses of William Blake. Surely the great masters of the ancient and modern schools have been endowed with brain power far surpassing that of the ordinary individual and from which thoughts and ideas—often divinely inspired—flow in golden streams of musical promptings. It is a common illusion among people who claim to be intellectual, that musicians are extremely limited in their ideas, and exist in some sort of dreamland. On the contrary, music is a broad, beautiful, spiritual, and idealistic world, and is more uplifting and far-reaching than that of any other art. The thousands of men and women therein, by the exercise of their musical intellect, bring sunshine, joy, hope and gladness to the suffering hearts of humanity.

MARIE C. STRONG.

A Philosophic View

IF it is meant that imagination and emotion constitute the principal appeal of art, and play a greater part in it than calculating reasoning, an old truism has been re-stated. If, however, the implication is that the acquirement of the basic knowledge underlying every branch of art, and its ready and judicious application (be it in creative or interpretative work), as well as the critical apprehension and presentation of aesthetic products in their different styles, may be accomplished without considerable intelligence—a similar statement could scarcely be regarded otherwise than as an alarming symptom of some mentality sadly unhinged. Or, if it is conceded that Art is a mirror of life, and if modern Art is supposed to reflect the fullness of modern life in all its complexity (inclusive of the purely intellectual realm and its various aspects and currents), a wide range of information, broadminded views and keen, individual judgment seem to be indispensable assets of an artist even if he (from want of special cultivation) should lack the ability or routine to express his ideas in literary form.

LUIGI VON KUNITS.

[An able contribution by Dr. Albert Ham to this symposium has been crowded out of this issue and will appear in our next.—The Editor.]