

Mozart and the Orchestra.

SCARCELY an instrument in the orchestra escaped Mozart's attention. A born violinist, he wrote *concerti* for violin and orchestra which, though without the emotional element of Beethoven and Spohr, are greatly prized. To the tenor violin, which had been deemed worthy only of filling up *tutti* passages, he gave a voice and place of its own in the orchestra. The clarinet was raised to great importance by him, and forthwith took place as a favorite solo instrument. In nearly all his scores it received especial attention; while the fresh, beautiful, and exceedingly masterful work, the quintet in A major for clarinet and strings, and the fine clarinet concerto, which he composed for Stadler, have imparted to the instrument an all-age reputation which can never be impaired. Then his sparkling genius spent itself in writing for that fine reed instrument, the basset horn, the splendid properties of which he deemed more suitable than even the clarinet for his "Requiem." For the oboe Mozart did much, according it a prominence which it had never reached with any previous composer. His Opus 108 has a rare oboe part, and in the Mass "No. 12" is some fine if difficult music for it.

The Rudiments of Music.

BY RAFAEL JOSEFFY.

THERE is but one proper way to teach the piano or any other instrument—the pupil must be taught the rudiments of music. When these have been mastered, she must be taught the *technique* of her instrument; and if it is the piano or violin, the muscles and joints of her hands and fingers must be made strong and supple by playing scales and exercises designed to accomplish that end; and she must, at the same time, by means of similar exercises, be also taught to read music rapidly and accurately.

When this has been accomplished she should render herself thoroughly familiar with the works of the masters; not by learning them from her instructor, but by studying them for herself; by seeking diligently and patiently for the composer's meaning, playing each doubtful passage over and over again in every variety of interpretation, and striving most earnestly to satisfy herself as to which is the most in harmony with the composer's spirit.

When at last she has arrived at what seems a satisfactory conclusion, she should listen to various renditions of the same works by skilled artists, comparing her interpretation of it with theirs, and comparing the arguments in favor of each.

Wagner's Nerve.

WAGNER, the composer, had the nerves of an acrobat. Once he was climbing a precipitous mountain in company with a young friend. When some distance up and walking along a narrow ledge, the companion, who was following, called out that he was growing giddy. Wagner turned around on the ledge of the rock, caught his friend and passed him between the rock and himself to the front. His biographer, Ferdinand Praeger, relates an incident of a visit to Wagner at his Swiss home. The two men sat one morning on an ottoman in the drawing-room, talking over the events of the years. Suddenly Wagner, who was sixty years old, rose and stood on his head upon the ottoman. At that moment Wagner's wife entered. Her surprise and alarm caused her to run to her husband, exclaiming: "Ah! Richard! Richard!" Quickly recovering himself, he assured her that he was sane, and wished to show that he could stand on his head at sixty, which was more than Ferdinand could do. Perhaps Wagner wrote some of his music while standing on his head. It certainly reverses many old-time ideas of composition.

For the Sake of Art or Personal Vanity—Which?

HERBERT SPENCER justly remarks: "It is a curious fact that among mental as among bodily acquisitions, the ornamental comes before the useful—the knowledge which conduces to personal well-being has been postponed to that which brings applause."

This seems strange, and yet, it is true.

When we consider the millions of dollars that are expended annually in pianos and organs, in musical instruction and foreign languages, to the utter neglect of really useful and practical knowledge, such as "The Science of Life," we wonder at the inconsistency of our boasted civilization.

Fashion, that tyrannical goddess, at whose shrine the whole world worships, has declared that no young lady's education is complete without some knowledge of the piano. (The reader must bear in mind that every pupil, however young or small, is styled a young lady. What a pity we have so few girls and boys!) The natural result is, that a majority of these "young ladies" take music lessons without regard to talent or inclination, and consider the practising as a mere drudgery. Content with performing a few easy and flashy pieces, they consider all further study superfluous. Classical music is generally regarded as mere exercise, because

they have no comprehension of the beauty of melody or harmony. Who is to blame for this? It is hard to decide. A music teacher is engaged—usually a young lady—whose qualifications consist in playing a few brilliant pieces on the piano and singing popular ballads or sentimental love songs. It is the same old story. Everything is for display; no matter how empty the brain may be, the world must think you accomplished. The fact is, it must pay. If a conscientious teacher of experience is engaged, he has to come down to the standard of popular taste, however earnestly he may labor to cultivate a higher appreciation of music among his pupils. One thing seems to be defective in the average American young lady—this is what the Germans call *der Schonheitsinn* (the sense of the beautiful in music and art). True, when we look back just twenty-five years and compare the results gained in that time with those of former years, we cannot but congratulate ourselves on the great progress of musical culture. Another great drawback to pupils is the want of supervision of their practice. Pupils generally regard the practice of technical studies as exceedingly troublesome, and will take every advantage to neglect the practice of them. The constant craving for novelties is strongly engrafted in the American nation. It manifests itself in music as well as in dress, and while it greatly benefits the music trade it does much harm to the pupils and to music as an art. The pupil has hardly mastered a piece before another is commenced, which in turn is superseded, and so on until she has enough to set up a small music store, and yet she is not able to play half a dozen pieces correctly. Who is to blame? Sometimes the teachers, but oftener the parents and pupils themselves.

The average American has an eminently practical mind. "Will it pay?" is the first consideration; and for every outlay, be it in money, brains, or labor of any kind, he expects quick returns. It is the same in the mercantile, political, or social realms, and this is the reason why we have not more artists in this country. Rubinstein said truly: "The country is yet too rich to produce good artists." This incessant craving for acquisition of wealth has destroyed the finest talents. Let us hope for a better state. Already the American prima donnas have superseded the European in many a great city, and the prospect looks promising for a rich harvest in musical celebrities.—*American Art Journal*.

Any piece does credit to a player that is well played.—*Cserny*.