

Our Musical Society.

INSTRUCTION, ADVICE AND SUGGESTIONS

BY

John Slatter, Bandmaster 48th Highlanders, Toronto,
late 1st Life Guards Band, London, Eng.

Any of our friends desiring information or advice on musical matters should write briefly, on one side of the paper only, stating clearly what their difficulty is, or the point on which they wish to be enlightened. Letters should be addressed, Editor UPS & DOWNS, 214 Farley Ave., Toronto. Write the word "music" on the top left hand corner of the envelope.

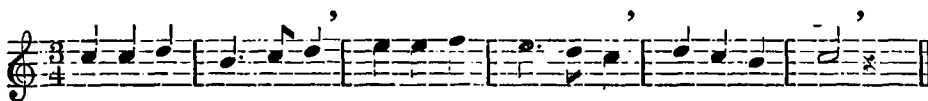
PHRASING AND EXPRESSION IN MUSIC.

THE musical term "phrasing" means the proper rendering of music with reference to its melodic form; or in words better understood, it means a melody that is played or sung with sufficient expression to form an agreeable and intelligent "tone picture." To accomplish this, the student ought to pay the strictest attention to the various modulations of shade as indicated in the music, and thus bring out the true idea and meaning of the composer.

Musical authorities agree that singers are ahead of instrumentalists in this respect, not because they excel in musical knowledge, but rather from the fact that in singing a melody, the words, if pronounced properly, must naturally cover the notes they are written for; whereas the instrumentalist, having no words to guide him, depends entirely upon his own individual conception of what the composer desires.

As an example, let me illustrate the tune of "God Save the Queen." It will serve to show clearly how differently the average singer and player interprets this melody. I make no reference here to the quality of tone of voice or player, for I am well aware that the voice of the average singer is about as good (or as bad) as the tone of the average player. But I certainly do appreciate the singer's gift of expression, which, if imitated and followed intelligently by the instrumentalist, would help him to advance in the art of phrasing. The following example, shows how the time is written and phrased. Proper respiration is marked by a comma sign at the end of every second bar.

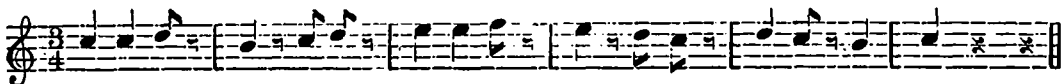
No. 1.



The words of "God Save the Queen" fit the "air" admirably and almost forces the singer to "phrase" it with majestic feeling of expression, taking breath naturally at the end of the second, fourth and sixth bars, and giving full value to the words. The result is a delightful rendering.

It is the reverse with the majority of instrumentalists, who seem to respire when and where they please, ignoring the proper value of notes and their equivalents, rest signs, and play it in the following style:

No. 2.



I suppose a great many of my readers will exclaim, "Impossible! they could never think of playing the melody with such bad taste." Well, boys, I reply and affirm that nine out of ten bandmen in Canadian bands will not do very much better than what I have here illustrated; and, in my opinion, it all comes from the desire of most pupils to excel in melodious playing before they have mastered simple scales, and practised studies on "respiration

and phrasing," which is to be found in all methods and instruction books of any note.

Should the musical student be unable to obtain proper professional instruction by a competent teacher, do the next best thing and devote a regular time each day to the conscientious study of some particular exercise on "Phrasing and Expression in Music." I intend giving each month a progressive lesson for those who are rather advanced in instrumental playing, which should prove acceptable to all brass and reed players.

RESPIRATION.

A musical "phrase," or sentence, cannot be expressed correctly unless the performer can render the subject melody without a perceptible break, and that is only accomplished by respiring at the right place.

This seems to the ordinary musical student a very simple matter to overcome, but of all the various technicalities exercised in the playing of a melody, none is more difficult to overcome than that of proper respiration.

The player ought to take sufficient breath to enable him to play several bars, till a "phrase," or part of a melody, is finished; or if no rests offer him an opportunity, his taste should tell him where he might respire without breaking the melody, and then it should be done quickly and without noise.

Performers on band instruments should inflate their chests well before beginning, and play several bars before taking breath again, no matter how many rests there may be in the music. A great many players are in the habit of respiring at every rest, and as parts of music, especially marches and dances, often consist of alternate quarter notes and rests, it is perfectly painful to see a player gasp at every rest and take breath in a part of sixteen bars perhaps from twenty-four to thirty times.

Another fault is that of puffing the cheeks out when playing.

All standard methods and instruction books contain numerous examples on the art of proper respiration, and I would advise all pupils to give this important subject the closest attention if they wish to advance in music.

CHOICE OF MOUTHPIECES.

I strongly advise all brass and reed instrument players to be extremely careful in the selection of a mouthpiece, for it is the medium

by which the tone is produced and modified, allowing the "embouchure" to guide the column of air which is forced into the instrument, enabling the performer to choose the quality of tone desired.

For brass instruments there are two kinds of mouthpieces used, one for instruments of the trumpet family, such as the cornet, trumpet and trombones, and the other for those of the euphonious kind, consisting of French horn, alto horn, baritone, euphonium and bass.

The mouthpiece generally used by artists on

instruments of the trumpet specie is made with thin rim and shallow cup, which helps the performer to produce that dry, martial and brilliant tone, so much admired in those instruments. The other "euphonious" kind of mouthpiece is made with much deeper cup (conical shape) and large rim. But even the above rules are not an absolute guide, for some players seem to defy all ordinary laws of adjustment by performing with a mouthpiece that authorities

claim is an essential part of another instrument.

The model of mouthpiece that is used almost exclusively by the leading musicians of London and the continent is the celebrated "Courtois" make. Some American firms endeavour to make the genuine article from copy, but in my opinion it is a distinct failure. The "genuine" Courtois mouthpiece for all instruments can only be procured through London or Paris, unless it is by some responsible agents who have a reputable connection with that firm.

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THE "BARNARDO BOYS" DIAMOND JUBILEE GIFT.

WITH the subjoined list the Barnardo Boys' Jubilee Donation Fund closes. As will be seen from a letter to Dr. Barnardo, published in fac-simile on another page, forty-two boys have adopted Arthur Acland's idea of celebrating Her Majesty's great Jubilee by sending their old friend a "special donation" to aid in the good work. In addition to the forty-two, whose names are appended to the letter written by Arthur Acland, there were two other subscribers to the Jubilee Fund, Mr. Frank Hodgins, of Toronto, who sent \$10, and Alice Webb, one of Dr. Barnardo's girls, who donated \$5. This leaves nearly \$115 subscribed by forty-two, or an average of practically \$3.00 per subscriber.

We are sure that Dr. Barnardo will highly appreciate this evidence of gratitude and affection towards himself and loyalty to Her Majesty on the part of a few of his old boys.

When he called to leave us the letter he had written, Arthur Acland seemed somewhat downcast and expressed himself as much disappointed that there was not a sum of \$2,000 to send to Dr. Barnardo. As we pointed out to this true and faithful friend, if every one of our lads were an Arthur Acland, the Jubilee donations to Dr. Barnardo from his Canadian boys would amount to over thirty thousand dollars. If only every lad had given \$1, one-fifth of the amount with which Acland started the fund, we should have had to report no less a sum than seven thousand dollars.

"The many mites do make a mighty heap" is a new rendering of the old Scotch adage, and we do hope that every one of our lads will remember this during the present year. So much can be done to help Dr. Barnardo in these days of ever-increasing demands upon his resources, if every lad will only do something. We could off-hand name twenty lads—and there are dozens more of the same class—who in the year gave from \$5 to \$20 to Dr. Barnardo's work; on the other hand we can think of hundreds who do not send one cent in the year to help others to enjoy the advantages which have been the making of themselves. While we did not let our hopes carry us as far as Arthur Acland's expectations, it is a disappointment to us that a greater number of those who have "received help" did not make use of such an excellent opportunity to "continue witnessing." We hope before the year closes—yes, before the summer gives way to autumn—they will have enabled us to announce a supplementary Jubilee Fund of even larger proportions than that which is now closed. The following donations were received after our last issue:—

Art. Tomkins, \$8.00; Alf. E. Hinds, \$2.00; Geo. Allum, \$1.00; Fras. C. Fishley, \$1.00; Chas. Coles, \$5.00; Alf. J. Watkins, \$2.31; Hy. Brookes, \$1.00; John Breakey, \$1.75; Me. McGrath, 9.00; Hy. McLoughlin, \$2.00; Ch. W. Leach, \$1.00; Art. Todd, \$1.00; Thos. Murray, \$1.00; Alb. E. Lovey, \$0.75; Wm. Knight, \$3.00; Wm. Evans, \$4.30 George Allum, \$2.83. Previously acknowledged. \$82.00. Total, \$128.04.