

THE BAND CONCERTS

Further Letters on Subject From Mr. Robertson and D. Arnold Fox

To the Editor of the Times-Star:—
Sir—My letter on the above subject in your issue of Tuesday seems to have started something, since three correspondents this evening found it worthy of reply.

I was very glad indeed to read Frank Waddington's letter, recognizing in him one of the best informed men in the city on the subject of music. I would like to say to him, however, that I certainly was familiar with thepotpourri of operatic airs played by his band last Monday evening, and pleased was I to hear it, and only wished that there might have been more. And furthermore, I am somewhat conversant with Wagnerian music, after several years residence in New York, where I seldom missed a performance of "The Nibelung Ring" or "Parsifal" or "Tristan and Isolde," than which there surely is nothing more magnificent. Now that the war is over may we hear some of these marvelous compositions. Indeed Mr. Waddington, I have heard many times, entire programmes of classical music, for instance, by the Boston Symphony Orchestra, but I am well aware that that would not go here. As another correspondent tonight says "we don't understand such compositions." That is just the point that I strove to make, and that is what I meant when I said that "the Bands should be educators." I fear "A Music Lover" is a misnomer for the person who so signs his letter, as apparently his standard is not very high. The pity is that this advocate of the so-called music of the proletariat, should have no oppor-

tunity to be educated to what is real music, so that he might learn to love it. "A Returned Bandman" has the right idea. For great music we must pay a great price, which of course the city is not prepared to do.

In conclusion we all must understand the amount of time and the many rehearsals that the bandsmen give to their work, but I for one would enjoy rather more of the "high-brow" than we have been getting, and while I know of many who feel as I do still, alas, I fear we are in the minority, at least in this part of the world.

Very truly,
MORTIMER ROBERTSON.
44 King Square,
June 18, 1919.

To the Editor of the Times:—
Sir—I was interested to see Mr. Robertson's letter re Band Music in Monday's Times and while I feel that he was rather severe in his strictures and omit-

ted to give any credit to the bands for the manner of performance which has steadily improved, yet I certainly think that his remarks are timely and the complaint of the triviality of some of the programmes is more or less well founded. The matter, however, is not improved by his exaggeration of that which he deplores and while he and many of us may wish to hear more frequent performances of the great (or near great) masters, yet I think that we should give our bands due credit for meritorious tonal renderings of the music performed, without making invidious distinctions, and if I mistake not, their repertoire contains overtures such as Semiramide, Poet and Peasant, Zampa, etc., and many excellent marches ("Crawley" I have not heard of.)

Two facts should be borne in mind in considering this matter. First that our bands have been laboring under disadvantages during the last few years, owing to many of their best players being

absent overseas, and here surely it would be in place to mention that New Brunswick and St. John in particular should remember with pride the splendid bands, such as the 104th, 118th and others composed of St. John men for the most part, which went overseas and earned for themselves resounding credit to their native province, comparing favorably, from all reports, with many of the army bands over there.

Secondly, and this is a point which I think Mr. Robertson has overlooked—that the instrumentation of many of the masters (and "near" masters) including many of the composers whom he men-

tions is somewhat elaborate and calls for the use of instruments which the bands may not carry. It might certainly be possible to adapt some of this music for instrumental limitations of local bands but much of the composers' original effect would be lost owing to the appropriate tone color not being there. But I should certainly think that such a compromise as, say, Grund (whom Mr. Robertson mentions) might have frequent representation on our programmes. To mention only four operas of his composition, viz., "Queen of Sheba," "Lonce and Juliet," "Faust" and "Virella," these contain a veritable library of brilliant and melodious band music (including, of course, the ballet music of each opera. We must also remember, as Mr. Robertson is aware, that music—indeed any art—in St. John is a plant of tender growth and we should not run the risk of "quenching" the "smoking flag" or breaking the bruised reed. Probably our bandmasters, considering the average taste and believing in the doctrine of the greatest good for the greatest number, arrange their programmes accordingly.

I fear that if a programme consisting of the music of Richard Strauss, Puccini and Caccini Salas (to mention only three others of Mr. Robertson's composers) were to be performed in King Square the crowds would melt like the proverbial snow in summer and Mr. Robertson would find his position akin to that of the poet as described in the first stanza of Gray's "Elegy." What I would like to see would be a compromise, the programme being divided into two parts—one purely popular and the other devoted to music of a classical or more recondite character. This plan is followed at the promenade concerts at Queen's Hall, London, and elsewhere and works admirably. Everybody is satisfied and the "goose hangs high."

I am glad that Mr. Robertson has opened the question as it does need ventilating and I am sure that our bands and bands are enterprising and musically enough to enlarge the scope of their repertoires, but I feel that while

asking them to do this we should at the same time recognize their meritorious work and give them credit for their activities in the past, especially in the valuable work undertaken in the past year or two by the City Cornet Band in forming a juvenile band and instructing its members in the rudiments of music and sight reading. Apologizing for, I fear, the lengthy intrusion on your valuable space, I am, dear sir,

Faithfully yours,
D. ARNOLD FOX.

TONIGHT'S BAND CONCERT.
The Temple Band will occupy the King Square bandstand this evening. Under the leadership of Bandmaster F. W. McMichael, the following programme will be rendered:

O Canada.
March—Second to None.....Hume
Overture—Pretziosa.....Skaggs
Serenade—Capitol's Chorus.....Miller
Selection—Songs of Scotland.....Hayes
Popular waltz—Begonia Rose.....Gumod
Waltz—Rich and Rare.....Gumod
March (by request)—Song of the Brave.....Zehle
Waltz—Till We Meet Again.....Whiting
Operatic Selection—Bohemian Girl.....Zehle
God Save the King.

The Bohemian Girl selection was to be played last week but was postponed on account of the electric lights on the stand not being connected.

GIVES \$100,000 FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Augusta, Me., June 19.—The will of former Gov. William T. Haines of Waterville, which was filed here Monday for probate, leaves the bulk of his estate, estimated to be worth about \$500,000, although no inventory was filed, to his wife and children. Provision was made that after the death of Mrs. Haines \$100,000 is bequeathed to the city of Waterville to be held in trust and known as the "Haines charity" fund. The fund is to be administered by the Wat-

erville municipal officers, but not by the poor department of the city. The income is to be used annually for the relief of destitute women and children who are not paupers.

SMOKE MACDONALD'S INDEX

The Town Planning Commission met yesterday afternoon in the mayor's office and decided to submit a counter proposition to the plans for laying out a small sub-division on Seely street. The mayor, Commissioner Jones, W. F. Burditt, A. H. Wetmore and Messrs. Stockford and Marsh were present.

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