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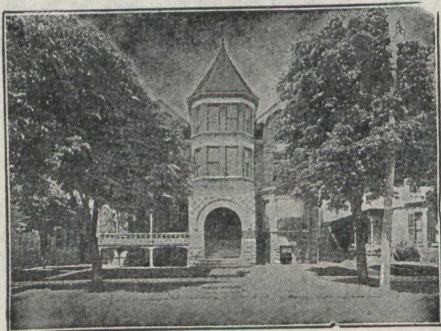
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three in London and one in Birmingham. He was received with enthusiasm, and the press notices of his work were complimentary. He deserves the distinction. Boris is an artist, and a uniformly temperamental player. He will be heard in a series of recitals again this year with his brother Jan and Mme. Leginska and Mr. Frank Warner, pianists. The Hambourg family have done a great deal in this country to stimulate interest in good music.



Boris Hambourg, Cellist, who gave a series of recitals in London, Eng., this summer.

How I Became an Opera Fan

(Concluded from page 12.)

Oberon Overture by Weber. I had heard the Pittsburgh Orchestra under Emil Paur play this piece once, and I liked it, but there was no part of it so simple that I could carry it away in my mind after hearing it only once. Playing it myself at home made all the difference in the world. I liked it so well that I took the trouble to get a book about Weber.

Then I tried the Fifth Symphony of Beethoven, again at the suggestion of my friend. I got the whole four movements, and at the same time, I came across some programme notes written by Philip Hale, the music critic of the Boston "Herald," and I read them carefully. They were very complete. They told all about the creation of the "Fifth" and its relation to the other great symphonies which Beethoven wrote. When I sat down to play that symphony my mind had a picture of it, which I assimilated with the keenest enjoyment. It was the same with the Pastoral Symphony and the others—I know several of them quite well now. When the Boston Symphony Orchestra played the "Fifth" in Massey Hall last season my appreciation of it was embellished to a degree which I hadn't thought to be possible. I read more of Beethoven, not in books, but from the rolls, and while I found the lesser compositions did not make the same impression on me as the masterwork, my interest never flagged.

Then I got Grieg—the Peer Gynt Suite—the Norwegian Bridal March, and after I learned them on my piano I went to hear the big orchestras play them. Before the Montreal Opera Company came last year, I got all the rolls I could of Rigoletto, Aida, Thais and Carmen. The performances themselves, when I heard them visualized and synchronized my preconceived idea. The mystery was swept away. I became a grand opera fan.

There is one respect in which the player-piano furnishes a test for composers which I want to mention. It gives me a far different view-point on their collected works from the one I would obtain if I had to spend four or five years learning to play them with my hands. I can make quick and direct comparisons. Take Puccini, for instance. If you try his Madame Butterfly music and compare it with La Boheme, again and again you will find, what they call in harmony, the same progressions, that is, Mr. Puccini repeats himself so often that you cannot help but notice it. Each composer has his style by which he may be recognized, and I find that those whose compositions have stood the test of years are those who showed originality. Beethoven is greatest of all.

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