

## ENCOURAGING IRISH MUSIC

### A PRACTICAL METHOD

Roughly speaking there are two kinds of music known and practiced in Ireland today—our own and other people's.

Strange to say it is the other people's music that needs no further assistance or encouragement amongst us. Royal and other academies, schools of music, special Feisanna, and practically every convent, school and college in the country see to it that foreign or "modern" music which ever you wish to call it, is suitably looked after. So much is this the case, and so carefully is a knowledge of Irish music excluded from the curriculum of a present day musical education that the very use of the description "musician" with or without the qualifying "cultured," "refined" or "accomplished" connotes in the vast majority of cases in Ireland a person who knows nothing of Irish music, and what is worse, wishes to know nothing.

Thus it comes to pass that in any effort that may be made to encourage or revive interest in our native music the very persons from whom no assistance may be expected are our educated musicians—certainly the vast majority of them. That is not the mere statement of one prejudiced in favor of his own music and against the modern variety. It is a statement of fact as one sees it. If it be not true how comes it that in spite of the thousands of well-trained, capable, educated musicians our country has produced in the past hundred or hundred and fifty years our own music has been allowed to languish and decay and that our own instruments, designed and fitted to express it, have practically passed into desuetude? The harpers have gone. The pipers are fast going. Our fiddlers and our country singers are being encouraged to forget their musical methods and to educate themselves to please modern ears. To all of which may be added the certainty that during those years hundreds and thousands of old airs, marches and dance tunes have faded into oblivion for want of a recorder. But, it may be objected, where would we be today for airs but for Bunting and Petrie and Joyce? The objection answers itself, they were only three men, three men in a century. Only three men to contrast with the thousands of others who did nothing!

No! let us expect nothing from the "cultured" musicians around us today. They did nothing in the past. With a few noble exceptions they will do nothing now. Their pride or prejudice, their whole training or tradition are against. Whatever we wish to see done to keep what is left to us of our heritage we must do ourselves.

And let us remember that the mere noting down of airs will not preserve our music. In spite of all our learned friends tell us we—more especially those of us who happen to be pipers or fiddlers or singers—cannot blind ourselves to the fact that there is something in Irish music which defies notation, something intangible, indescribable which no signs we have yet designed can commit to paper, something which denies itself to all but those who approach it with love and sympathy, which seems to deny itself above all to those who approach it from the heights, condescendingly, grudgingly, patronizingly. And this is a thing which our "great Irish artists," vocalists, pianists, violinists will not believe. Tell them that they cannot, absolutely cannot, sing or play Irish music! They are astounded! None the less it is so. They may question our judgment but we, country singers, pipers, fiddlers, know that what we say is true. They cannot sing or play Irish music. We have heard them, heard them all, and we know. They sing or they play the cold notes, tunelessly, correctly, in proper order, but the spirit, the music, escapes them. That is what we have inherited from our fathers who made it, and if they want it they must seek it as we have sought it. Paper does not hold it. Hear what Dr. James MacDonnell, principal organizer of the Gathering of the Harpers in Belfast in 1782, says in a letter to Bunting in or about 1840:

"Endeavor to show how it happens that other musicians although expert and learned in that art never are able to play a Scotch or Irish air with any effect by any mode yet discovered of committing them to writing. Just as we see that no person can speak any living language merely by book knowledge, I never heard an Irish air played properly by a person who did not hear it played or sung by an Irish person, or by one like you taught in that manner." ("Annals of the Irish Harpers" by Mrs. Milligan-Fox.)

That was true in 1840. Have our musicians or our schools of music become more Irish since then? Have they since then developed the habit of going for Irish music to those who preserve it—the country singers, the pipers, the fiddlers? If they have, how comes it that a Darley, or a Hardebeck, or a Grattan Flood stands out such a glaring exception to the general body? If they have, how comes it that those to whom none can deny the right to know and to say what is Irish music have to confess that those most highly lauded as Irish musicians and Irish artists are often those who know least of Irish music?

But there is one body which from its very inception saw that the true way to encourage Irish music was to encourage those who still possessed it. To gather them together. To applaud them. To incite others to learn from them. To assist those of them who needed assistance. At every Feis and social gathering held under the auspices of the Gaelic League the Irish musician, be he singer or piper or fiddler, has found a welcome and an honored place. He has found that there are others who know, what he has always known, that he possesses something of priceless value, something which not "all the King's horses and all the King's men" could recover were he to fall to pass it on; and the knowledge has made him strong. It has brought him out, unafraid, from the background to which he has been so long relegated, and it has nerved him and those who think with him to insist on a hearing for Irish music in its own country.

At the Oireachtas, the annual Festival of the Gaelic League, which will be held this year in Dublin in the first week of July, Irish music gets a unique hearing. Unique because no other music is heard—if we except the kindred music of Scotland or Wales or Brittany. A splendid program of competitions has been mapped out. Every one of these should use a copy of the program (a card to the Secretaries at 25 Parnell Square, Dublin, will bring it, or the nearest Gaelic Leaguer will supply it) and every one of them who can should arrange to be in Dublin that week. Every additional competitor, every sympathetic listener means added strength, new help to the cause of the revival of our own music. Everyone who wishes can learn something. One's very presence at competition or concert is an encouragement and to encourage and spread our own music by every means in our power should be the object of every one who loves it.

—A PLAIN PIPER.

The Oireachtas Committee, 25 Parnell Square, Dublin. 2-5, 1912.

**What State Names Mean.**  
Maine takes its name from the province of Maine, in France, and was so called as a compliment to Henrietta, the queen of Charles I, who was its owner, says "Boy Life."  
New Hampshire was originally called Laconia.  
Vermont is French—"Vert mont"—signifying "green mountains."  
Massachusetts is an Indian word, signifying "country about the great hills."  
Rhode Island probably gets its name because of its fancied resemblance to the Island of Rhodes, in the Mediterranean Sea.  
The real name of Connecticut is "Quo-neh-ta-cut." It is a Mohican name, signifying "long river."  
New York was so named as a compliment to the Duke of York, whose brother, Charles II, granted him that territory.  
New Jersey was named for Sir George Carter, who was at that time the governor of the Isle of Jersey, in the British Channel.  
Pennsylvania, as is generally known, takes its name from William Penn, the "sylvan" part of it meaning "woods." Literally, it is "Penn's woods."  
Delaware derives its name from Thomas West, Lord de la Ware.  
Maryland was named in honor of Henrietta Maria, queen of Charles I.  
Virginia got its name from Queen Elizabeth, the "Virgin Queen."  
Kentucky is derived from the Indian word "Kain-tuckee," signifying the "land of the head of the river."  
Alabama comes from a Greek word, and signifies land of rest.  
Three of our Indian interpretations have been given to the word Arkansas, the best being that it signifies "smoke waters," the French prefix "ark," meaning "bow."  
Louisiana was so named in honor of Louis XVI.  
Mississippi is a Natchez word that means "father of waters."  
Tennessee, according to some writers, is from Tenassa, an Indian Chief, others have it that it means "river of the big bend."  
Ohio has several meanings fitted to it. Some say that it is a Suanee word, meaning "the beautiful river." Others refer to the Wyandotte word

"Ohezza," which signifies "something great."  
Indiana means "land of Indians."  
Illinois is supposed to be derived from an Indian word which was intended to refer to a superior class of men.  
Wisconsin is an Indian word, meaning "wild, rushing waters."  
Michigan is an Indian word, meaning "great lake."  
The name of Kansas is based on the same as Arkansas.  
Iowa is named from an Indian tribe—the Kiowas. The Kiowas were so called by the Illinois Indians because they were "across the river."  
The name of California is a matter of much dispute. Some writers say that it first appeared in a Spanish romance of 1530, the heroine being an Amazonian named "California."  
Colorado is a Spanish word, applied to that portion of the Rocky Mountains on account of its many colored peaks.  
Nebraska means "shallow waters."  
Nevada is a Spanish word, signifying "snow covered mountains."

**Fifty-six Thousand Nuns Here.**  
Including postulantes there are in the United States today more than fifty-six thousand Catholic nuns. They conduct seven hundred academies for girls, two hundred and eighty-five orphan asylums, one hundred homes for the aged, three hundred hospitals, and several hundred insane and foundling asylums, protectories, reformatories, parish schools, etc., in the country. The first body of nuns to establish themselves in America, according to the historical work, "The Catholic Church in the United States" (Catholic Publishing Co., N. Y.), were the English Carmelites, a small band of whom came here from Holland in 1790, and by invitation of Dr. Neale, afterwards Archbishop of Baltimore, settled in that city.

**Fit For Something Better.**  
Out on a rather isolated farm, a visitor, a woman, was expressing her admiration of the bright face and broad brow of the oldest boy of the household.  
"He doesn't look like a country boy," she said. "Surely you don't intend that he shall be a farmer. He is fit for something better than the drudgery of clod turning."  
"I know he is," agreed the mother. "It is the grief of my life that he has to hoe and plow on this old farm instead of being educated for one of the professions."  
"I wish you wouldn't talk in that way before the boy," interposed the father, a worried frown on his sun-tanned forehead. "He is already discontented here; you will drive him from home. I am doing the best for him I am able to do."  
"You are right," returned the husband of the woman visitor. "Unless a boy shows especial talent in some other direction, he should be encouraged to stay on the farm. I was born in the country, and I would have a cleaner conscience and a stronger body today, if not a fatter purse, if I had stayed there. Still, it is a fact that greater inducements should be offered the boy to remain on the farm. He should be made to feel that he has a definite, responsible part in the success of his father's farm—that his

opportunities for making money and enjoying life are as great there as they would be in a city. Don't belittle farm life to him. Show him that it is a great business—an art—a science. Let him have all the school advantages you can afford. Give him books, magazines and plenty of wholesome play and sympathetic comradeship. There is no doubt that life on a farm is a little lonely. Every phase of life and work has its disadvantages. But the comforts and attractions of rural life are increasing rapidly. Good roads, improved schools, better mail service, telephone systems and more scientific and interesting methods of cultivation—are all helping to do away with the isolation of the farm, while clubs, cheap and good papers and more frequent social gatherings are remedying the proverbial dullness of rural life.

**Fool That Drops the Match.**  
It has been said that anywhere The biggest fool afloat Is he who makes a rocking chair Of some one else's boat; But equal with him in the race, The eggs of woe to hatch Is, of unknown or known disgrace The fool that drops the match. What isn't to him, in his haste A fragrant weed to try, The folds of woman's pride and taste Hang desperately nigh? What if a precious life recede With flame-enhanced dispatch? He did not do the shameful deed; He only dropped a match.

**What is't to him if stores of wealth In flame may disappear Or friends that walked in joy and health May nevermore come near? What if explosions upward spring, A hundred lives to smother? He didn't do much of anything; He only dropped a match.**

**Incendiary—guilty one (As yet not doing time.)**  
You'll learn the lesson ere you're done  
That carelessness is crime.  
But when your future home you view,  
And lift its red hot latch,  
No matter then how often you  
May drop the lighted match!  
—Firemen's Herald.

**Death of a North Dakotan.**  
Grand Forks, N. D., May 18.—William O'Keefe, aged 85, who became well known throughout the northwest nearly 20 years ago when in the North Dakota legislature he expressed himself as being unable to understand two things, "Why the Red river flowed north and why an Irishman voted the Republican ticket," died at Minot.

**Walsh county, today.** He leaves a family of children and 52 grandchildren. William O'Keefe, Jr., a son, resides in Winnipeg.

**What He Wanted.**  
The tramp appeared at the door of a house where an automobile was standing at the front gate.  
"Will you help me, ma'am?" he asked.  
"I don't believe in feeding tramps," said the woman.  
"I don't want any food, ma'am."  
"What do you want, then?"  
"I only want to know if you'll allow your chauffeur to run me over to the next town. There's nothing doin' here!"—Yonkers Statesman.

**Just One Drawback.**  
"Hill work?" replied the demonstrator, after Stiggins had inspected the new car carefully. "Hill work? Why, that's our strong point, Mr. Stiggins. This car can climb a tree."  
"Ha! hum!" demurred Stiggins. "Then I guess I'll look elsewhere. I never saw a car yet that climbed trees that was any good afterward."  
—Harper's Weekly.

**No Samples.**  
A traveling salesman, wishing to have some fun with an old negro sitting on a soap box in a small store in

Virginia, asked if Smith's store was on the right or left hand side of the road. The old negro looked up and asked: "Is you a salesman?" "Yes," he replied, "I am selling brains." The old man with an air of disgust answered: "You is the first salesman I ever seed who doesn't carry any samples."—Mack's National Monthly.

**Just Before the Battle.**  
"Have you spoken of our love to your mother yet?"  
"Not yet. Mother has noticed that I've been queer of late, but she thinks it's indigestion."

**Believe in Yourself.**  
If you convince yourself that you are doomed to a life of drudgery, misery, and want, what or who can help you? Determine never to do this.

**The Wise Lion.**  
Paul Rainey, while showing privately in New York the wonderful cinematograph pictures of the African lion hunts, told an amusing story.  
"A man," he said, "sat before his tent, when a magnificent lion stiffened for the spring, leaped and missed the man, missed him by jumping three feet too high. It then slunk back in the forest, thoroughly ashamed.  
"The next day the man came un-

expectedly on the lion by a stream. It had un-pended a log of wood and was practicing low jumps."

**A Reminder.**  
Lady—I guess you're gettin' a good thing out o' lending the rich Smith boy, ain't ye, doctor?  
Doctor—Well, yes; I get a pretty good fee. Why?  
Lady—Well, I hope you won't forget that my Willie threw the brick that hit 'im.—Scribner's Magazine.

**Needed the Reminder.**  
Old Gent—"Here, you boy, what are you doing out there fishing? Don't you know you ought to be at school?"  
Boy—"There, now I knew I had forgotten something!"

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