

Modern Piano Merely Copy of Old Dulcimer

Even the handsome pianos in our modern living and music rooms were not always as we know them today. The story of the development of the piano, like that connected with everything else we use, is a story of humble beginnings and continuous improvements.

The history of musical instruments shows us that the piano is very probably a modern development of an instrument known as the dulcimer. This was originally nothing more than a flat piece of wood, on which were fastened two converging strips of wood, across which strings were stretched and tuned to a natural scale. Sound was produced by hitting the strings with two hammers, one in each hand of the player.

As a separate musical instrument the dulcimer has probably been changed less than any other. Two pieces of wood have been added to produce a sound box for the body and keys with which to tune the strings; otherwise it is still in practically its original form.

It is easily seen how the piano was developed from the dulcimer. The only difference in the principle of the two is the fact that the piano is larger, and its strings are struck by keys instead of hammers. The modern piano is really nothing more or less than a keyed dulcimer.

Wanted No Witnesses to Theatrical Flight

In Sir James Barrie's play "Peter Pan," Tinker Bell gets up on her stage wings, hovers about the room and flies out of an open window. The playwright, watching one of his rehearsals, expressed a desire to try the mechanism by which this flight is achieved. So attendants attached the wires to the distinguished gentleman and prepared to hoist him in the air.

The amusing part of the story followed. Sir James, a veteran in the world of the theater, was suddenly struck by a terrible and overwhelming stage-fright. He commanded that every one leave the boards, and had the front curtain put down and the pass doors securely closed.

Then, alone in the room between the backdrop, the curtain and the wings, he was lifted up, maneuvered over Tinker Bell's route, and, in all his disheveled dignity, soared out the window unperceived.

Johnson Fond of Books

According to that greatest of all biographers, Boswell, Doctor Johnson, upon entering a library, "ran eagerly to one side of the room, intent on poring over the backs of books." Because of this custom a contemporary once called him "odd," to which accusation Johnson replied: "Sir, the reason is very plain. Knowledge is of two kinds. We know the subject ourselves, or we know where we can find information upon it. When we inquire into any subject, the first thing we have to do is to know what books have treated of it. This leads us to look at catalogues and the backs of books in libraries." No wonder that such a man knew so well how and where to tap the sources of knowledge and give the world a great and unique dictionary.—From "Private Book Collectors."

Famous Mountain Range

The Smoky mountains are a southwestern division of the Appalachian mountains, branching from the Blue ridge in south Virginia and extending southwestward near the Tennessee and North Carolina boundary, penetrating a short distance into north Georgia. On the west they are separated from the Cumberland plateau by the great eastern valley of the Tennessee, and on the east they are connected with the Blue ridge by an intricate system of cross ranges forming the rugged remnants of a lofty plateau culminating in the Black mountains. Nearly all the eastern head streams of the Tennessee rise on the inclosed plateau and break through the Unaka range. Defined the latter forms a sharply defined ridge between Tennessee and North Carolina.

His Comeback

Speaking of "club husbands," two met at lunch the other day, on the eve of a woman's club reception. One remarked: "Well, I suppose I'll see you tonight all dolled up like a sheik in your dress suit?"

"You will not," he retorted. "but I suppose your wife will make you don the glad raiment, though," and he grinned.

"No, my wife doesn't have to dress me. I know how, without her telling me. But say, how is it you are going at all, if you're so blooming independent? It can't possibly be that your wife has made you."

"Humph."—Salem News.

Kidd Unjustly Condemned

Information has recently been brought to light which would indicate that Capt. William Kidd really was not as great a pirate as he was painted. It is said that a letter from Lord Bellomont has been brought forth which would have exonerated him if it had been admitted to evidence at the time of his trial. His enemies, however, would not permit its use. Also the forged French passes under which the Moorish vessel which he captured was sailing have been found in the archives of the British public record office. He was not allowed to submit these in evidence.

Bag of Tricks

The "bag of tricks" story is the fable of the fox and the cat. The fox was commiserating the cat because she had only one shift in case of danger, while he had a thousand tricks to evade it. Being set upon by a pack of hounds the fox was caught while puss ran up a tree and escaped. A man who boasts of a whole "bag of tricks" has numerous expedients to draw upon; his last trick expedient or "trump card," held in reserve for only great emergencies is called "the bottom of the bag."

His Little All

"When I came to town 20 years ago," said a prosperous man of simple substance, "all my earthly possessions were wrapped up in a bandanna handkerchief."

"And now you own 300 acres of land and that factory on the edge of town?"

"Yes."

"May I ask what you carried in the bandanna handkerchief?"

"Six thousand dollars in cash and bonds."

Price of Gray's Elegy

When Thomas Gray's "Elegy" was first printed in 1751, copies were sold for a shilling. These first editions have now become so rare that a copy recently sold in London for nearly \$5,000. The record price for a first edition was reached in 1924, when a purchaser paid more than \$7,000. The original manuscript of the "Elegy," together with the "Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton," is in the Eton College library.

CHARLES L. CURRY, SR., DEAD

Charles L. Curry, sr., died Tuesday afternoon at his home, 1524 North Twenty-sixth street, after a protracted illness. He is survived by his mother, one son, Charles L. Curry, jr., of Chicago, two grandchildren and other relatives. The funeral will be held at 2 o'clock, Friday, May 20 from Zion Baptist church.

The N. A. A. C. P. will meet at the Bethel Baptist church, Twenty-ninth and T Sunday afternoon at 4 o'clock. Dr. John A. Singleton will speak on "Our Economic and Industrial Situation."

THE COLOR LINE IN ART

By ALEXANDER HOGUE
(In The Dallas News)

The most unique thing that has ever happened in Dallas' art history is the showing in the Grand Central exhibition at the Scottish Rite cathedral of a canvas by H. O. Tanner, internationally known American Negro artist and poet.

Before I go further I wish to say that I am the most Southern of the Southern born. My people were slave owners in Louisiana and Mississippi on one side of the family, and Virginians on the other. Now, I can speak freely.

Henry Owassa Tanner was born in 1859 at Pittsburgh, Pa. He began with his parents a series of moves about the country which finally landed him in Atlanta. After a time he went back to Pennsylvania to hold an exhibition of his work in Philadelphia, but sales did not materialize and he was left in debt for his frames. Then it was that a patron bought the entire collection and with this money as a stake Tanner set sail for Rome, January 4, 1891. At 32 he had given up ever making anything of his art in this country, but he soon became known in Europe, and after the fame of his religious subjects had spread to America he returned to live and work here, feeling that recognition was assured by previous acclaim. He was right, for the climax of his struggle was capped by his election as associate national academician.

This brief sketch gives no idea of the hardships and privations endured by Tanner in his struggle for recognition; hardships and privations that may account for his marvelous feeling for that intangible something in spiritual bliss.

This is simply to show that art knows no color line and that by refusing to admit this we miss some of the very finest productions in the arts.

Of the three finest actors in some 270 plays in New York, one was a Negro—Paul Robeson in "Emperor Jones," the very epitome of artistic expression!

In eastern cities thousands have been thrilled by the inspiring tenor, Roland Hayes, who is also a sensation in Europe. Julius Bledsoe, baritone singer and actor, is from Waco, Texas. We should be ashamed that hundreds of notables both black and white, are "formerly of Texas." Poor old prophet!

And then don't forget Alexandre Dumas, noted French-Negro author of the past.

Three years ago the American Museum of Natural History gave an exhibition of native African art which was a revelation of the pent-

up artistic soul of the colored race. By encouraging its release we would reap untold benefit!

When I saw George Wharton Edwards' rainy day, "Arch of Constantine," the marvel of Tanner's poetic word-picture struck forcefully—

"The rain streams down like harpstrings from the sky.
The wind, that world-old harpist, standeth by—
And ever as it sings it low refrain
He plays upon the harpstrings of the rain."

Not one word could be altered or replaced. As perfect a gem as Joyce Kilmer's "Trees."

Being a near pauper in this world's goods, I must be content to enjoy for a brief two weeks Tanner's "Etaples Fisherfolk," but if I were rich it would remain in Dallas forever.

COLLEGE STUDENTS AWARDED PRIZES

Atlanta, Ga.—Miss Elsie B. Stewart, of Berea college, Kentucky, A. L. Stevenson, of Duke university, Durham, N. C., and Bruce O. Power, of Southern Methodist university, Dallas, have been adjudged the winners in the south-wide theme contest among college students, conducted by the Commission on Inter-racial Cooperation, with headquarters here. Checks for the prizes, which were respectively \$75, \$50, and \$25, have been forwarded to the presidents of the three institutions represented, for presentation to the winners. The winning papers were on the subject of "Justice in Race Relations," and dealt with education, health, housing, sanitation, protection of life and property, and other phases of Negro welfare. Thirty-three colleges in fifteen states were represented in the competition, which is conducted annually as part of the commission's educational program. There were more than fifty contestants, a number of them being colored students. The judges were R. B. Eleazer and Mrs. Maud Henderson, of the Interracial Commission, and Dr. Willis J. King, of Gammon Theological seminary, Atlanta.

"OPPORTUNITY" PRIZES ARE AWARDED

New York, N. Y.—On Saturday night at a dinner at the Fifth Avenue restaurant in New York, the annual literary and art awards offered by "Opportunity", Journal of Negro Life, Charles S. Johnson, editor, were made known. The dinner, presided over by Professor John Dewey of Columbia University, was a brilliant and distinguished white and colored gathering. Speeches were made by Paul Green, winner of this year's Pulitzer prize for his play, "In Abraham's Bosom"; Harry Hansen of The New York World, Mrs. Edith Isaacs, editor of Theatre Arts Monthly; John Macy, and Alain Locke, editors of The New Negro. Musical numbers were rendered by Mrs. Nell Hunter, soprano of Durham, N. C., and Mr. T. Henry Johnson, tenor, a graduate of New England Conservatory. Among a host of distinguished attendants were John Macy, who presided at last year's dinner, James Weldon Johnson, Walter White, Maxwell Bodenheim, poet and novelist; Professor Robert Kerlin, Henry Goddard Leach, editor of The Forum; William Pickens, W. C. Handy, the composer; Alice Dunbar-Nelson, Carl Van Vechten and Jessie Fauset, novelist.

Opportunity is published monthly by the National Urban League of which Eugene Kinckle Jones is executive secretary. This is the third year in which prizes to foster Negro art and literature have been donated under its auspices, the first year through the generous contribution of Mrs. Henry Goddard Leach, the last two years through that of Mrs. Casper Holstein, a Negro merchant from the Virgin Islands, who to each contest, donated one thousand dollars. The special Buckner awards given for the first time this year are the gifts of George W. Buckner, a Negro banker, of the People's Finance corporation of St. Louis, Mo.

The awardees in the several fields were: Plays, first prize—Georgia Douglas Johnson, Washington; second prize—Eulalie Spence, Brooklyn; third prize—divided between William Jackson, Montclair, and Eulalie Spence. Honorable mention, Edmond Randolph.

Personal Experience Sketches—first prize, divided between Shad Jones of Columbus, Ohio, and Isabella Yeiser, Philadelphia; second prize, divided between Frank Horne, Brooklyn, and Nellie Bright, Philadelphia; honorable mention, Sidney Peterson, Brooklyn; Ruth E. Bowles, Cincinnati; John Matheus, Institute, West Va.

Short Stories—first and second prizes divided between Eugene Gor-

don, Boston, and Cecil Blue, Charlotte, N. C.; two third prizes awarded Eugene Gordon and John P. Davis. Buckner awards for conspicuous promise—Dorothy West, New York City, and Emily May Harper of Nashville.

Essays—first prize, "Ted," second prize, James H. Young, Philadelphia; third prize divided between Frank Horne and Sterling A. Brown, Jefferson City, Mo.; honorable mention, Willis N. Higgins, New York City and Brenda Moryck, Washington.

Poetry—to Arna Bontemps of New York City, the special Alexander Pushkin poetry award; Holstein prizes in poetry were awarded, first prize, Sterling H. Brown; second prize, Helen Johnson; third prize, Jonathan H. Brooks, of Lexington, Miss.; and fourth prize to Helene Johnson of Boston, Mass.

Music—Hall Johnson, New York, first prize for composition for two to six instruments; Florence Price, Little Rock, composition for two to six instruments; Hall Johnson, vocal compositions for solo, and chorus; Andrew Lindsay, Brooklyn, and Tourgee DuBoise, Talladega, Ala., for piano composition in smaller form; J. Bruce, arrangement for Negro spirituals.

The judges in the different sections for this year were:

Poetry—Joseph Auslander, William Stanley Braithwaite, Carl Sandburg, Robert T. Kerlin, Maxwell Bodenheim, Ridgley Torrence and Countee Cullen.

Essays—Henry Goddard Leach, Benjamin Brawley and Christopher Morley.

Music—William Grant Still, Olga Samaroff and Daniel Gregory Mason. Personal Experience Sketches—Mary White Ovington, Eugene Kinckle Jones and L. Hollingsworth Wood.

Short Stories—Theodore Dreiser, Wilbur Daniel Steele, Eric Walrod, Zona Gale, Irita Van Doren and Harry Hansen.

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