

# UNCLE SAM TO RECORD INDIAN MUSIC

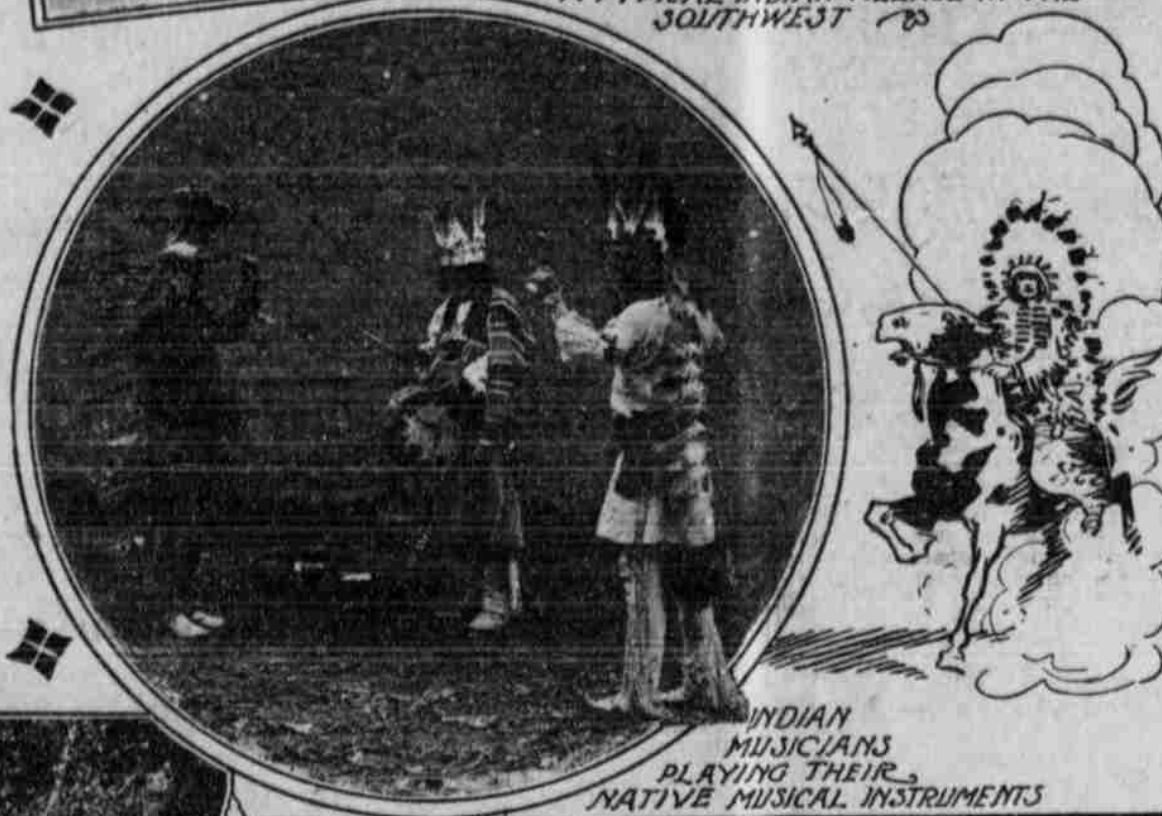
**T**HE United States government has recently undertaken to do something that a great many people have been declaring for years past ought to be done. This is to record and perpetuate the tribal music of the American Indians. All over the world people of every nationality have of late years been striving to perpetuate the folk songs of the different races that inhabit the globe, because it has come to be recognized that these primitive songs which have seldom been written but have simply been handed down from one generation to another constitute an invaluable link with the past.

In the case of our Indians, however, in greater degree perhaps than with any other primitive people, is there need for quick work if the old songs and ancient music is to be chronicled for the benefit of future generations who will know the Indian only from books and pictures. The Indian music alike to the folk songs of European nations, which have been brought to the fore in recent years, affords most interesting insights on the peoples in whose lives it has so long played a part and what is yet more important many of the old Indian songs have a historical significance or at least expression to traditions so interesting and poetic and beautiful that it would be nothing short of a calamity were they to be lost.

Aside, however, from the fact that the Indians of North America is a vanishing race and that their music is passing with them there is yet another incentive to urge energetic work now that this musical research has been undertaken in earnest. This extra spur lies in the fact that



A TYPICAL INDIAN VILLAGE IN THE SOUTHWEST



INDIAN MUSICIANS PLAYING THEIR NATIVE MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS



A TYPICAL INDIAN VILLAGE

there is a tremendous wealth of Indian music to be studied and chronicled in permanent form,—each individual tribe having had from time immemorial its distinctive songs and chants. A man who is attempting to compile a complete pictorial record of the Indians has already spent twenty years in the work and it is likely that as much time will be required if there is to be mirrored for the benefit of future generations the distinctive music of all the various tribes.

Private individuals, musicians or scientists, have from time to time in the past made effort in a small way to perpetuate American Indian music and while they deserve credit for what they have accomplished it is an undertaking which through its sheer magnitude, if for no other reason, needs the resources of the national government. That it is pre-eminently a government function is likewise attested by the fact that it has promise of success only when prosecuted through the organized channels of intercourse with the Indians,—channels which enable federal officials to get into the confidence of the more intellectual men of all the various tribes in a degree that would scarcely be possible except in the case of an individual who lived for many years among the Indians whose secrets he sought.

The governmental study and perpetuation of Indian music is being conducted under the auspices of the Smithsonian Institution and National Museum at Washington. The bureau of Ethnology is the particular branch of this great seat of research which has the Indian music investigation in charge. Probably the most interesting phase of the whole undertaking is that which has to do with the activities of Miss Frances Densmore. Miss Densmore, who is an accomplished student of music, has spent much time among the Chippewas and other tribes whose music is at once notable and representative and has recorded as many as two hundred songs belonging to a single tribe.

Oddly enough the phonograph has been the chief means of capturing the songs of the forest. There is no system of written music among most of the tribes and the phonograph was hit upon as the only possible means of providing the means of studying the music carefully and leisurely. As may be surmised it was anything but an easy task to induce some of the more superstitious of the red men to sing into the strange machine or to induce them to even permit the recording apparatus to be set up within earshot of their camp fires when there was in progress those ceremonial rites and dances which call up the musical lore of the savages.

Finally, after much perseverance, however, at Indian agencies and elsewhere, the music hunters have succeeded in making a creditable beginning in securing the priceless phonograph records of Indian music. In the case of one or two tribes the song collection of "canned music" is practically complete. After records of Indian songs or music are secured they are transcribed in piano score and studied scientifically. Meanwhile the collection of records will be kept on file for the benefit of the musical students of future generations who will find it a priceless boon to hear the Indian music as originally rendered.

The researches which have been made show that Indian music is as complex as is the tribal life of the original Americans. An accompaniment of song is provided for every public ceremony as well as for every important act in the career of an individual. The music of each ceremony has its peculiar rhythm, as have also the classes of songs which pertain to individual acts such as fasting and prayer, hunting, courtship, the playing of games and the facing or crying of death. An Indian or a person thoroughly versed in Indian

musical lore can determine the class of a song by means of the rhythm of the music.

From a technical musical standpoint, the Indian music is very similar to the form of our own music. The compass of the songs varies from one to three octaves and some of the songs have no words, although this does not seem to impair their definite meaning. There is much chorus singing among the Indians and in some tribes there are choirs of picked singers who are paid for their services when they appear at any formal ceremonies. It may surprise many readers to learn that some of the Indian communities are so keen for music that they even hold musical contests. A favorite form of competition seeks to determine which singer or group of singers can make the best showing in reproducing a song with accuracy after having heard it but once.

The Indian songs are the property of clans, societies and individuals and the rights of ownership are rigidly enforced. In many instances the privilege of singing any individually-owned song must be purchased from the composer and in the case of the songs of clans not only is the right to sing the melodies restricted to members of the clan but each clan has special officers to insure the exact transmission and rendition of their songs, a fine being imposed upon any member who makes a mistake in singing. Indian women have composed many of the best of the Indian songs, including lullabies, spinning and

grinding songs and the songs of inspiration and encouragement intended to be sung to the warriors setting out for battle.

It is usually difficult for a listener of another race to catch an Indian song owing to the conflicting noise due, in a great part, to the beating of the drums. There is usually a difference in time, the drum beats being designed to govern bodily movements and mark the steps of the ceremonial dancers, whereas the song voices the emotion of the appeal. The drums may be beaten in 2-4 time and the song be in 3-4 time or the beat be in 5-8 time against a melody in 2-4 time, or the entire song may be sung to a rapid tremolo beating of the drum. The officials who have been making a study of Indian music are enthusiastic over its possibilities. They declare that not only does the field afford rich opportunities for the study of the growth of musical form, but the Indian songs themselves offer to the present-day composer a wealth of melodic and rhythmic movements constituting a source of inspiration equal to that which has been supplied by the folk songs of Europe and vastly more serviceable in the development of a distinctive American "school" of music.

## Scales That Would Weigh a Thought

Sir William Ramsay, the distinguished English scientist, has invented a pair of scales delicate enough, literally, to weigh a thought. Their record so far is one seven-millionth of an ounce, which is considerably lighter than most thoughts usually are. The scales are kept under Sir William's own laboratory in a small subterranean chamber.

The room is kept in semi-darkness. So delicate are these wonderful scales that their balance is disturbed by the alteration of temperature caused by the turning on of an electric light at the other end of the room. The operator has to leave them for an hour in darkness—after he has tipped from the roof, so that his footfall should not set up any vibration—and then read them swiftly, before any change in the temperature has had time to affect them.

Hanging by one end of the beam of the scales by a strand of silica fibre, so slender that it is scarcely possible to see it is a tray. Upon this is placed a minute glass tube. Imprisoned in the tube is a whiff of xenon, a gas discovered by Sir William Ramsay. The movement of the scales when the tube is dropped upon them is so slight that it cannot be detected at all by the eye. But the movement is made to swing from side to side

a tiny mirror, upon which a beam of light is focussed. The result is that a shifting point of light is thrown upon a graduated black scale six feet away. The weight of the tube, with the gas in it, is then recorded by the movement of this pin-point of light on the scale.

Then comes the interesting test. The gas is released from the tube, which is weighed again. It is now found to weigh a two hundred and fifty-thousandth of a milligramme, or a seven thousand millionth of an ounce, less than it did when the gas was in it. Therefore, the weight of this whiff of gas was a seven thousand millionth of an ounce.

The smallest object that can be picked up with the most delicate forceps is a piece of aluminum wire far thinner than a human hair, a twenty-fifth of an inch in length, which weighs a fourteen hundred thousandth of an ounce. It can scarcely be seen, and it is difficult to detect whether it is resting on the scales or not. A section of aluminum wire weighing an eighty-four hundred thousandth of an ounce can be prepared. But it is only visible in a microscope. For this reason weights of less than a fourteen hundred thousandth of an ounce have to be registered in gases.

## PROMINENT PEOPLE

### SECRETARY TO KING GEORGE



Forty years in one job is not a bad record, yet this can be claimed by Lord Knollys, King George's private secretary, whose retirement is now imminent. He began his duties with the late king when Prince of Wales and has been the secretary of his son and successor. He originally intended to give up his arduous duties at the death of the late king, and it was well understood that he merely stayed on in order to "train in" Sir Arthur Bigge, upon whose shoulders the responsibilities of the royal secretaryship will now fall.

Such a post requires not only hard work, but a keen knowledge of the world, combined with tact, judgment, decision and memory. It has been said of Lord Knollys that no one could hope to undertake his task with a tinge of the success which now attaches to it.

The royal correspondence alone would frighten the average man.

About 500 letters a day are addressed to the king, and the majority of these are attended to by Lord Knollys, assisted by the under secretaries. No correspondence is more varied than that received by the king. It is a peculiarity of the English court that no matter on what subject you address the occupant of the throne, you almost invariably get a reply.

However, Lord Knollys is far from being merely a letter-writing machine, for this constitutes quite a small part of his work. He has to keep the king informed of all the engagements, to arrange his journeys, to keep him posted in all that is going on in the outer world, and to have at his finger ends the important news of the day.

Apart from his secretarial duties Lord Knollys was an intimate personal friend of the late king, and perhaps no one appreciated the dead monarch's real generosity and kindness of heart as did his private secretary.

### MILLIONAIRE'S WIFE BROKE

Mrs. Theodore Perry Shonts, mother of a duchess and wife of an American millionaire, recently found herself in Paris unable to leave her apartment, which she must vacate at once, according to the lease, on account of not having money to pay the usual charges made when a tenant quits.

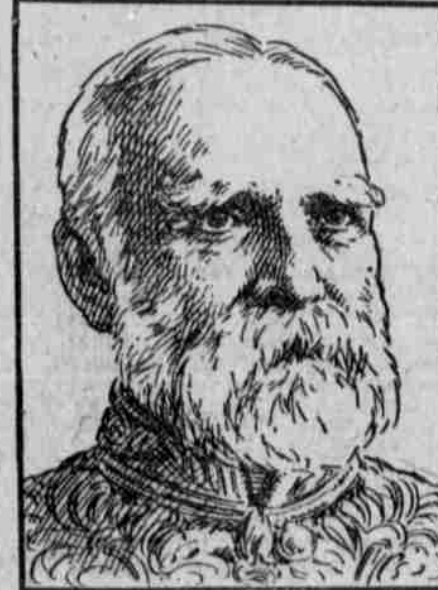
Mrs. Shonts rented an apartment on the Avenue Hoche several years ago at an annual rental of \$3,500, exclusive of taxes and other charges which would run the figures much higher. Obeying an urgent, imperative summons from her husband to return to America, she gave notice that she would not renew the lease when the time expired.

The difficulty with her husband caused him to stop sending the usual remittances and when a bill for \$400 was presented by the landlord to pay for damages done to the apartment during the term of the lease, Mrs. Shonts found herself without money and unable to pay the amount. H. G. Archibald, her attorney, taking compassion upon Mrs. Shonts in her predicament, advanced the necessary money and drew on Theodore Shonts to reimburse himself. His draft was returned unpaid, with the notation by Shonts that he sent money to his family when he wished, and "did not want any interference from outside parties."

For some time the Shonts have been estranged, due, it is alleged, to Mrs. Shonts' desire to mix with European nobility and to live abroad. Since it became known that Mr. Shonts had stopped supplying his wife with means it was rumored that she had threatened to sue for divorce. Mrs. Shonts denies the latter allegation.



### A WIRY LITTLE AMBASSADOR



James Bryce, ambassador of Great Britain to the United States, is one of the youngest old men in official circles in Washington. He is past 70, and yet he is as active, physically and mentally, as though he were 20 years younger. In the winter when other men go about with throats muffled up and overcoats buttoned snugly about them, Ambassador Bryce is frequently seen walking briskly down Connecticut avenue with no wrap outside his frock coat. Cold has no terrors for him and he stands the heat equally as well. Some time ago he had an appointment with Secretary Knox at the state department about noon, and at that hour the thermometer hovered about 100 and mounting higher. But on the stroke of the hour in bustling Mr. Bryce, looking cool as a cucumber, ready for business and apparently not worried over the oppressive temperature that wilted people generally. Mr. Bryce is just as active mentally as he is physically and he is interested in everything. No subject is too large or too small to attract his notice and in this manner he has collected a tremendous fund of information upon every conceivable topic.

### CHOSEN RULER OF THE ELKS

John P. Sullivan of New Orleans was chosen grand exalted ruler of the Order of Elks at Atlantic City, N. J. He is a member of New Orleans lodge No. 30. Shortly after he joined the lodge he was elected esteemed lecturing knight. While holding that office he gained the name of "Thanatopsis" Sullivan, because of his magnificent voice and his mode of delivering Bryan's poem.

The third year of his membership Sullivan was elected exalted ruler of the lodge, and on the night of his installation he declared that it was his ambition to get a new home for No. 30. There was not a dollar in the exchequer and the membership was about 700. At the end of Sullivan's second year as exalted ruler of the lodge New Orleans lodge had a home that is second to none in the country, and a membership in excess of 1,700.

Sullivan is a man of magnificent physique, standing six feet three inches in his stocking feet, and weighs 250. He was a West Point cadet, but left the military academy to study law. When the Spanish-American war broke out, Sullivan, who was lieutenant colonel of the Washington Field Artillery, volunteered with his command to go to the front. When the war was over he resumed his law practice at New Orleans.

