Dudley Buck—His Life and Work

How a Boy Destined for the Law Triumphed Over His Father's Prejudices and Became a Great Musician and Composer and Made a Deep Impress on His Day by His Devotion to His Art.

Dudley Buck. Entered this world March 10, 1839. Left it October 6, 1909.

IT IS with a feeling of genuine regret that the musical editor of The Bee must begin the duties of the musical season by chronicling the death of the beloved and lovable American composer, Dudley Buck. After a busy and long life of work and fame and honor Dudley Buck, with the quietness of the falling autumn leaves, gently and without warning, fell asleep.

Wherever church music is known throughout the length and breadth of this United States the name of Dudley Buck is known and treasured. It may not be generally known how very much of an American Dudley Buck was. He had a lineage which was of the highest. Away back about Mayflower times the founder of the Buck family in American history left the shores of England and sailed for this country, settling at Hartford, Conn.

In the veins of Dudley Buck there flowed the blood of Winthrops, and Saltonstalls, Dudleys and Adamses. The composer was named after old Governor Dudley of the Plymouth colony. His grandfather was a lawyer of renown and in his law office there was at one time, engaged in reading law, the famous Daniel Webster.

Dudley Buck's father was a prominent shipping merchant and the principal owner of a line of steamboats which plied between Hartford and New York; and it is interesting to note that it was Dudley Buck's father's steamboat which towed the "Monitor" to Fortress Monroe before its ever memorable duel with the "Merrimac," that episode which marked a great epoch in the world's history, which was pregnant with meaning in the development of the United States, and incidentally furnished inspiration for many impassioned similes and illustrations in the flamboyant orations of a generation gone by.

John Jose Greene Hassard, the editor of the New American Encyclopedia, sometime editor of the Catholic World, and at one time musical and literary critic of the New York Tribune, compares the boyhood of Dudley Buck with that of the great French musician Hector Berlioz, in something like the following words: "The French composer was intended for a doctor, and although his parents were willing that he should amuse himself a little with music, they looked upon Art as a highly objectionable career. Berlioz taught himself to play on an old flageolet, which he found in an odd corner of the house; and afterwards discovering some ancient books, Rameau's "Treatise on Harmony," he spent many a night in the secret study of Thoroughbass; when his father, unable to bear the shrieking flageolet any longer, made him a present of a new flute as a palliative, the lad was already something of a performer.

Dudley Buck also borrowed a work on Thoroughness (or as we would now say on Harmony, of which thoroughbass or figured bass is a part.)' This he secured from one of the clerks in his father's employ and at its intricacies he went to work. He also managed to negotiate the loan of a flute, and he practised on that so diligently—his place of practice being up in a cherry tree—that when he did really get possession of a flute, all his own, in his thirteenth year, he was able to play quite creditably. Later he got a melodeon (for pianos were not sold at $1 a week then in New England, and Music and Art were not honored with capital letters), and on this melodeon he learned, without any instruction, to play the accompaniments to some of the Haydn and some of the Mozart masses, and likewise the choruses of Handel's best known oratorios.

He was 16 before his father overcame his determination not to buy a piano, for the young man to play upon, as he had remarked, "If I had a daughter there would be some sense in it." This is quite indicative of the attitude toward the musical profession on the part of those serious and solid people.

But all honor to the parents of Dudley Buck, for when they saw the trend and talent of the diligent and earnest youth they determined that if he were to be the musician there should be nothing left undone to make him a good one. To the parents of Dudley Buck the musical world is indebted today for that splendid determination. He made a great and good musician, as they had hoped. And the first to show any special aptitude for music in the Buck family in its entire history!

Time and space are insufficient to go into the period of his European experiences and study; let it be said in passing that he worked for years in Europe from 1858 to 1862, returning to this country in December of the latter year. Under the masterly guidance of Hauptmann and Richter he studied harmony and composition; under Plaidy and Moscheles he studied the art of piano playing; and orchestration he pursued under Rietz, who had been the close friend of Mendelssohn and the latter's successor as conductor of the Gewandhaus concerts. In Leipzig he had as a fellow student, at the then famous Conservatory, the man who afterward was known to the musical world as Sir Arthur Sullivan. He went to Dresden to study Bach under the great organ teacher Schneider, and to his great delight in a short time Rietz was appointed to the post of conductor of the Royal opera and Symphony concerts in Dresden. Through this fortuitous circumstance he was able to keep up two great studies with two great masters at the same time.

Last month, as the writer of this music column of The Omaha Bee visited again and again the Royal opera and talked of Dudley Buck with the proprietor of the Hotel Weber, Herr Binder, it did not seem possible that the first article in The Bee from the musical editor would be in relation to the death of that dear old man. Dudley Buck loved Dresden; when a student he had the opportunity to study the stage and the orchestra and the opera, as he had entree behind the scenes as well as in front of them. And he loved to go back there to Dresden. Herr Binder spoke with the deepest affection of the genial musician who had been staying at his comfortable old hotel all winter and told of having recently received letters from Dudley Buck in Paris, where he was staying at the Hotel Gibraltar.

So much for digression. After spending a year in Paris, where he studied in addition to other branches the practice of organ construction, he returned to the United States in 1862.

Dudley Buck went to Chicago and stayed there until after the great disaster of the Chicago fire, in which he lost his house, his music room, where his organ recitals were a feature of Chicago musical life, his library and some valuable manuscripts. He had been organist at St. James church for several years. From Chicago he went to Boston, where he was organist at the great music hall, at St. Paul's church and later at Shawmut Congregational church. In 1874 Dudley Buck was assistant conductor of Theodore Thomas' orchestra of New York, a fact not generally known, and musical director of St. Ann's church, Manhattan, remaining until 1877.

Dudley Buck was then organist and conductor of music at Holy Trinity church, Brooklyn, where he ended twenty-five years' service—a quarter of a century in one church—in 1902. After that he went to the Brooklyn tabernacle.

There was much in the newspapers at the time of Dudley Buck's departure from the Brooklyn Holy Trinity church, and the inference was that the clergyman or clergymen in charge wished to curtail the musical part of the service. At any rate Mr. Buck resigned, and a writer in the Brooklyn Eagle at that time stated that it was a "strange coincidence that Dudley Buck should have resigned so soon after Guilmant, the noted organist at Holy Trinity in Paris, handed in his resignation, because of a serious disagreement with the rector of that church."

It seems pathetic to read, after twenty-five years of honorable art work, these words from a great man: "I have resigned because I was musically discontented, and because of some musical limitations. There is no friction or feeling. I believe I enjoy the friendship of all in the church, and the vestry, during my long years of service, has been most kind and generous." He missed only two Sundays in the period of activity.

Dudley Buck's contribution to musical literature is too well known and too extended to enumerate in this place at this time. He was a unique figure in the musical history of America. His position is unquestioned as being in the highest ranks of our composers, and "one of the first American composers to obtain general recognition," says Mr. Lahee in his book, "The Organ and Its Masters."

And so "full of years and honors" Dudley Buck has passed onward to mount the heights, and we are left to mourn a while in the valley at eventide. But in the memory of his music we will find that "at eventide it shall be light."

THOMAS J. KELLY.

Musical Notes.

Madame Gadski, the destinguished soprano, one of the few great singers, will delight local music-lovers next Thursday night with the following program, which has been sent to this office by Miss Hopper, local manager:

Part One.—(Old English and French songs)—My Mother Bids Me Bind My Hair, Hayden; When the Roses Bloom, Reichardt; Minnet d'Exaudet, Venez Agreable Paintemps, eighteenth century; Phillis Hath Such Charming Graces, Young; The Lass with the Delicate Air, Arne; Piano Solo: a, At Evening; b, Whins; c, Soaring, Schumann, Mr. Edwin Schneider.

Part Two.—Ungeduld, Schubert; The Message, Brahms; With a Water Lily, Grieg; The Swan Bent Low, MacDowell; Bird Raptures, Edwin Schneider; Zuerignung, Richard Strauss. Piano Solo: Contique d'Amour, Liszt, Mr. Edwin Schnieder.

Part Three.—Traume, Wagner; Liebestod, from Tristan and Isolde, Wagner. Mr. Edwin Schneider at the piano.

Monday Evening—First rehearsal of Mendelssohn choir, assembly hall Edwin Creighton institute. Ladies, 7:45 p. m. Gentlemen, 8:15 p. m.

Tuesday Evening—First rehearsal of May Music Festival society, under Mr. J. H. Simms, its new conductor, Schmoller & Mueller auditorium, 8 p. m.

Counterfeit Coin of Great Value.

The unusual occurrence of a counterfeit coin bringing far more than the value it was originally intended to represent by its maker took place last week when a spurious Spanish doubloon of Charles IV of spain, dated 1801, was sold for $60 at a sale of old coins at the Collectors' club in Philadelphia.

The coin was of excellent workmanship and there was really no striking difference between it and the genuine, but instead of being struck in gold it was composed of platinum of the purest quality, which had been gilded.

The intrinsic value of the Spanish doubloon counterfeit weighs 420 grains, which at the prevailing market rate of 96 cents a pennyweight for platinum would give this piece an intrinsic value of $17.69.—Philadelphia Inquirer.

Waiving a Precedent.

The judge looked down at the condemned man.

"Prisoner," he said, "I am going to set aside precedent and tradition, and instead of sentencing you to be hanged on Friday I'll make it 'Monday.'"

The prisoner seemed greatly gratified.

"Thank you kindly, judge," he said. "It's very good of you. You see I come of a superstitious fam'ly, an' none of us ever believed in startin' any important business on a Friday. But Monday will do first rate."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Measure for Measure.

The milkman presented a bill for $1.

"All right," said the customer, tendering some change.

"This is only 75 cents," the milkman demurred.

"That's one view of the matter, yes," rejoined the customer, "but while three of your quarts make a gallon, three of my quarters are going to make a dollar, and don't you forget it."

Naturally, this led to an argument too long for detailed record.—Philadelphia Ledger.

SINGERS BURN THE MONEY

Fortunes Won at the Footlights Vanish Through Many Exits.

SPECULATION TAKES LARGE ROLL

Some Also Are Prudent and Lay By a Competence—Mme. Patti the Richest of All the Prima Donnas.

Mme. Melba's reported loss of fortune is attributed to the great expenses of her way of living rather than to speculation, the usual means by which operatic savings disappear. She had a house in Park lane, London, which she built without regard to cost, and a home in Paris. In recent years she has associated with titled aristocracy of England, and that costs money even in the case of a famous prima donna.

There she has not sung so frequently as in former years, although her expenses continued to increase, notably after the marriage of her son to the daughter of an English general, a marriage that soon ended in the divorce courts. How much Mme. Melba's expenditures on the British aristocracy helped her was shown by the alacrity with which society established her rival at Covent Garden.

It has always been said that Alfred Rothschild, who did the same for Adelina Patti, had invested Mme. Melba's earnings for her in the most advantageous way. Her father, a contractor in Melbourne, is rich, so Mme. Melba will never know want. Her career was different from that of most singers in that she never knew poverty.

Nilsson's Ample Fortune.

Mme. Patti is perhaps the richest of the singers, although Christine Nilsson, who sold her Boston real estate several years ago and invested the proceeds in Sweeden, has an ample fortune. It was surprising to learn years ago that Edouard de Reszke, who received more than twice as much as any other basso during the supremacy of his brother, was so much in need of money that he had begun to teach in London. It was not unusual for Edouard de Reszke to sing five times a week at the Metropolitan, and as he never received less than $700, his earnings were large. He used to threaten Mr. Grau with lawyers when that astute manager tried to limit his appearance to a normal number.

Now he has been in financial difficulties in spite of his economical way of life in New York, while Pol Plancon, the other basso of the company during the Grau days, is a man of sufficient wealth to live with comfort in France for the rest of his days. He was a bachelor, while Edouard de Reszke was the father of five daughters. M. de Reszke lost money in unfortunate business speculation and in the attempt to farm in Poland.

It was during the Russo-Japanese war that his misfortunes in this particular began. His best servants were drafted for the army and his best horses taken without compensation by the Russian government, which is none to considerate of its Polish subjects. The result was that he had to go to London to teach after Oscar Hammerstein cancelled his tentative contract with the Manhattan.

Jean de Reszke might have had little or nothing when he retired, as keeping up a racing stable and entertaining Russian grand dukes are expensive pastimes. He came out all right, however, as his wife has some fortune, and for ten months of the year he earns $250 a day teaching.

Mme. Lehmann, who is said to have willed all her fortune to the Society for the Prevention of Crulty to Animals in Berlin, made her substantial fortune here, although she has not been in this country for seven years. She must earn between $10,000 and $15,000 a year by her appearances in Germany. After she came to sing in this country her success at the Metropolitan led her to break her contract with the Royal Opera house in Berlin. She lost nothing by being expelled from the opera houses in the Cartel Verein, however, for her earnings in America during one season exceeded what she could have made in ten years at the Royal Opera house in Berlin.

She saved her money, invested in real estate, never speculated, and has always lived with the greatest simplicity. So she can well afford to give all the proceeds of her concerts nowadays to charity. This is her practice.

Emma Calve got ahead of her relatives by buying a fat annuity, so she will not be one of the prima donnas to be eaten alive by her poor relatives. Lilli Lehmann said that to her knowledge Lola Beeth, whose career ended much earlier than it should have done, largely because she was worried to death about financial matters, used to support an entire village of relatives in Poland.

Mme. Nordica did not get into the list of the high-priced prima donnas until much later than many of the other singers. During the later years of her career her earnings were large.

Mme. Gadski's four years outside the operatic barriers must have decreased her earnings, although she is a popular singer in concert, and there were never any signs that she felt it necessary to decrease the number of her automobiles or the hospitality of her home. Olive Fremstad's earnings practically began when she came to the Metropolitan opera house and her contract there made by Heinrich Conreid called for forty representations at $1,000 each. This was one of the Conreid contracts that it was found impossible to carry out, so Miss Fremstadt consented to take half the number of her guaranteed appearances in concert, and it is not probable that she lost anything through that change.

Mme. Sembrich's Start.

Mme. Sembrich, who has had a long career and was at the top of the ladder from the start, laid the foundation of her fortune when Henry E. Abbey paid her $150,000 and her expenses during her first tour of this country. Since that time she has been one of the highest paid of the prima donnas and has sung every season but one. She has invested her money and is the pricipal owner of a factory in Germany that turns out thousands of postal cards and other prints that are exported to all parts of he world.

Emma Eames repaid the money advanced for her musical education and stayed off the stage altogether for several seasons, but she had been so well paid for the two or three seasons preceding her retirement that she will always be beyond the need of singing again unless she wants to. And she declares that she does not want to.

It is not the singers who receive the highest salaries, haggle and scrap with the managers over every penny and squeeze out the last drop that and with the largest amount of money. Sofia Scalchi, the contralto, was never one of the high-priced singers of the opera house, but she managed to save enough to live in comfort in Turin and educate for the bar her son, who is a successful attorney now.

Victor Maurel, who has always received the largest salaries paid in Europe, began to teach so soon as he had lost his voice. That used to be the way of all the singers, as Mme. Marimon, Etelka Gerster and others of their day proved. Clara Louise Kellogg saved ample money for her needs, and now passes her time in comfort at her Connecticut home and in Europe. Minnie Hauck, first of the Carmens to make a furor in New York, has her summer home in Lucerne and usually spends her winters traveling in Egypt or the Orient.

Miss Farrar Lives Economically.

Geraldine Farrar paid $80,000 last season to her former benefactor, and that probably used up a large part of her earnings for the year. She lives economically, takes her meals in the public cafe of the hotel in which she lives and shows no tendency to extravagance.

Mary Gardner also settled some similar indebtedness last winter, and she is probably beginning just now to earn enough to save money, her salaries in Paris before she came to this country having been very small in comparison to the $1,200 that Oscar Hammerstein pays her.

Probably the largest outlay that the great singers have is for their personal ecstumes, and there are few of them that do not have big bills with the Paris dressmakers.

Sig. Caruso's earnings are enormous since he sings with the Metropolitan opera company, and his contract calls for approximately $100,000 every year. Yet he has recently complained bitterly of the large amount he was compelled to disburse on his family and more remote relatives.

It is a characteristic of the high priced singers to be always waiting for the time when they have paid off all their outstanding obligations and are going to start in to save money. Somehow this time never seems to arrive until after their voices have begun to go and they are compelled to crowd all the available possible engagements into the short time left to them.

Rearing Large Families.

Contraltos never receive as much as the sopranos, but both Mmes. Hooper and Schumann-Heink have lived prudently enough to save their money, invest it in real estate and buy homes in which they are rearing large families. Another singer who has accumulated a comfortable fortune is Sig. Scotti, who has not only been prudent in his expenditures, but well advised in his investments.

Andreas Dippel never had a salary like Caruso's, but he was always very well paid and had put aside a comfortable fortune by the time he stepped into a salary of $30,000 a year as conductor of the Metropolitan.

Angelo Masini, the great Italian tenor, who came into European importance first in 1876 when he created Rhadames in the production of Verdi's "Aida" in Paris, went back to St. Petersburg to sing two years ago, although he was well over 60. The reason was the entire loss of his large fortune, which he had intrusted to a friend for investment, only to see it fade away within a few months. Italo Campanini, who earned a fortune here, lost it in unsuccessful operatic speculation, largely through his production of "Otello" here, and Siegmund Mierzurnskzi, who died the other day in Paris, spent all his money in his way of living and was all penniless when his voice suddenly failed him. Yet for a while he was the highest paid tenor in Europe.

Emelio di Marchi had almost the same experience, and for the years from 1893 to 1900 received enormous sums in South America and Spain, where he sang with Hercia Darclee. He got $2,000 a night when he was here with Colonel Mapleson in 1896. Nowadays, however, he is singing in obscure companies at an obscure salary.

Had His Brother for Valet.

Francesco Tamagno probably left a fortune, as his compensation had been large the world over and his enonomies were remarkable. He had his brother for a valet, used to try to sell the two orchestra seats that went to him by his contracts on the nights he sang, and was threatened with suit by a hotel for the damage he did to the bath room when he cooked macaroni there. He never lost any of his money through extravagant living.

The actresses of an older generation seem to have been much more fortunate in their investments than some of those who succeeded them. Maggie Mitchell has lived for more than twenty years in retirement on the fortune she made and kept while an actress. Lotta Crabtree is just as rich, and Henrietta Chapman, who died on her New Jersey farm the other day, has kept her fortune.

Mrs. Barney Williams, who died in her home on the upper west side a few years ago, left the fortune that belonged to her and her husband. Mary Anderson had, when she retired from the stage to marry a rich New Yorker, most of the thousands she had earned during her career.

Fanny Davenport used to be accounted the richest of American actresses, but she left nothing. Richard Mansfield's fortune was much less than it was supposed to be. Joseph Jefferson left behind him an estate said to be almost $500,000. Helena Modjeska had scarcely anything but a few personal trinkets to leave behind, with the exception of her estate in California. Most of that had been sold, moreover, long before her death.

Hortense Rhea died in absolute poverty, and both Mrs. D. P. Powers and Charlotte Thompson were successful stars for years, although their careers closed in very humble financial circumstances.—Boston Herald.

Rules of the Air.

A committee is engaged in formulating rules for the aerial speedway. Its work has not been made public, but the members do not deny that the following essential regulations will be adopted:

Aviators to turn to the right when this can be done without turning turtle; otherwise, to duck.

No balloonist without plenty of sand shall make an ascension.

Wind not permitted to blow while aviators are aloft, or aviators to blow after they have come down.

Heavier-than-air machines obligated to dodge balloons or be responsible for the puncture and pay for the gas.

Birds alighting on gas bags to be ruled off as foul.

No aviator to engage in a church steeple chase.

Machines taking fire while in flight shall drop in a damp spot.

Cows and farmers to be dragged at anchor ropes at their own risk only.

Wireless messages intercepted by accident to be regarded as confidential.

Discussion as to merits of different makes of machines forbidden at a less altitude than 1,000 feet.

People who shoot at balloons, biplanes, monoplanes or just aeroplanes, to be put on a blacklist, and their names published.

The mischance of being caught in a storm and struck by lightning not be to held as reflecting upon the skill of the aviator.—Philadelphia Ledger.