

Stevenson's "A Child's Garden of Verse."

"In winter I get up at night
And dress by yellow candle-light.
In summer quite the other way,
I have to go to bed by day."

As encores she sang "There, Little Girl, Don't Cry!" and "Little Boy Blue." You remember how delightfully Mrs. Katherine Fiske sang them down at Crots several summers ago?

Then Mr. Rogers sang "Deep in a Rose's Glowing Heart," and "One Spring Morning," and closed the program with that wonderful serenade that we all know, "Good Night, Good Night Beloved, I Come to be Near Thee." This man seems to have written most of the songs one cares for.

A little of his history. He comes of a good stock. The Swickley Valley is full of Nevins, bankers, merchants, editors, all men who have made their mark and all big fellows who could carry this frolicsome youth about like a baby. They call him "the Boy." He sang from the time he could talk and played from the time he could reach the keyboard. In school he was paterfamilially stupid, out of school he was as happy as a young animal. He had no sister, so he was a girl-boy. He wrote music when he was thirteen. When he was fifteen he went to Boston and Benjamin F. Lange told him he had genius. His father sent him abroad to study under Von Bombe. When he felt that the boy was losing his head he called him home. It was time to take life seriously; a Nevins could not waste his life over the piano. Then followed those three miserable years at the Western university of Pennsylvania; years of failure and irksome duties and hope deferred. But it was during those months of yearning that he wrote "One Spring Morning," "A Love Song," "O, That We Two Were Maying," and "Doris." The songs were on everyone's lips and his father visited. The boy went abroad again to study under Von Buelox. His history since that time belongs to musical biographies.

His home coming was a bit droll, the descent of this irrepresable youth with his wife and two children and his dogs and an Italian valet upon this solid, substantial, well-reputed family. It was a little like Magda's home-coming. It was there I met him. The first hour was taken up with talks of his life abroad; of his home in Florence, his concerts in Paris, Berlin, Vienna; of the scores of unpublished compositions, some of which will be brought out this year; of his summer up among the Tuscan hills when he shipped a grand piano up to Montepiano and wrote most of *Maggio in Toscana* in the donkey stable; he used for a music room; of all that free and glorious life of production and art. And he who told me of these triumphs, of these ecstasies of creation was a smiling boy perched upon the arm of a leather reading chair.

Finally I asked him what it felt like to be a child of genius in Pittsburg.

"O those were great old days, except for the failure at school. I never come back without feeling the chagrin of them now. I picked up language quick enough abroad, but here it was hopeless. I have caught up a little in history and literature of late years, but it's all superficial. In reality I know very little. But as to the old days. The greatest pleasure in them was singing. I had a voice then. Eight of my uncles, the big fellows, you know, formed an octet; and they used to go around the little towns giving concerts for charity and they starred me. O yes, I was a star when I was eight and used to be billed in big letters from Altoona to Morgantown. O the bliss of seeing my name on the bills! the letters were never big enough.

I was as careful of my throat as a budding tenor. They used to stand me on a table on the stage and sing my accompaniment. And the applause! No prima donna's heart ever beat faster. Ah, there is nothing like it now! I was a convenient prima donna, for I could sing either contralto or soprano and my repertoire included all the plaintive ditties you ever heard. I can feel it all now."

The sprightly youth sprang from the arm of the chair and catching up a newspaper crumpled it up like a fan and holding it modestly in front of him, struck the apogetic prima donna attitude and dolefully warbled forth "But A-A-Alice where art thou?"

A laugh, and the newspaper was sent whirring across the room and the youth threw himself at full length in the arm-chair.

"Well, it never occurred to me that I couldn't go on singing 'Marguerite' forever, or that I shouldn't grow up to be a full-fledged prima donna. When I was thirteen my voice changed. Changed? O feeble word! it evaporated, went completely, leaving me only the sorry squeal with which I have just honored you. I was inconsolable. My means of musical expression was gone. I was a sad cry-baby of a boy, and I used to weep for hours. And then I wrote that serenade, you know, Good Night, Good Night, Beloved."

Yes, good friends, he wrote it when he was thirteen, that tender, adolescent melody which Romeo might have sung to Juliet. It was the morning song of genius, the song in which he wooed Our High Lady of Art:

"Thine eyes are stars of morning,
Thy lips are blood-red flowers!"

Is it any wonder that even that most haughty Lady was not cold to such youth and rapture, that she smiled and came?

As I was trying to make him understand that even in the far west, which he seemed to regard with a shiver much as the Ancients regarded Britain, his songs were known and had brought joy into the lives of men, I incidentally told him of how I used to sing a little boy to sleep with his "Little Boy Blue" when the summer stars were peeping, and how the laddie cried for it when I was gone. Perhaps I spoke sadly without meaning to, for there are lakes and rivers and many a league of frozen prairie between me and that little boy now. Very quietly and gravely he rose and went to the piano. Without a word of reply he sang it through softly in the twilight.

And there I shall leave Ethelbert Nevins. I can tell you nothing more characteristic of him as an artist and a man than that simple action. Someone he had never seen before, would never see again, was sad for a moment; and he knew and cared. That is the essential essence of his genius; that exquisite sensitiveness, that fine susceptibility to the moods of others, to every external thing. That is why he can interpret a poet's song better than the poet himself; that is why he can put the glory and melancholy of a Tuscan summer into sound; that is the all-divining intuition.

The man is but two-and-thirty; before him is the vast unachieved, the infinite unconquered. He may never write symphonies; he may never contribute anything of vital importance to the literature of the piano. But as long as the heart in him beats, it will sing. He is merely a troubadour. Since Goring Thomas' death—and nothing will ever compensate the world for that untimely tragedy—we have had no man so thoroughly possessed of lyric inspiration. Before him there is song—long—song. Perhaps fifty glorious singing years. But I cannot realize that he is a great man. I shall always see him as I saw him last, bowing his goodnight, this joyous troubadour with the smile of a boy and the slender shoulders of a girl; "until we meet again."

"It was Harlequin, Harlequin, Harlequin,
Son of the Rainbow, he!"

PITTSBURG, PA.

CLUBS.

ANNIE L. MILLER, EDITOR.

NOTICE—Will secretaries corresponding with THE COURIER please forward a copy of their year book for file in this office.—EDITOR.

At the last meeting of the Fortnightly Mrs. E. H. Barbour presented the result of a search for the drama and music of Holland. Mrs. Barbour said in part that since she had learned of the supremacy of the Dutch in engineering, dyke building, as statesmen, reformers, warriors, citizens, artists and educators it is somewhat disappointing to find that in the fine arts of music and the drama they are almost without expression. A Dutch school of music does not exist; and with the exception of a short time in the middle ages, when in the dry beginning of music they showed some ability in the development of counterpoint, the Dutch have not contributed to the musical knowledge of the world. Three months' diligent search has failed to discover even a national air, though we read that "all the steeples of Holland have chimed bells which give an aerial concert every hour of the day and night the tunes being national airs or from German, or Italian operas." The airs from almost every other nation are familiar to us, but who can recall a Dutch air? Even among the characteristic lullabies of the various nations we can find nothing to represent the Netherlander's. Yet when one reflects on the awful unpronounceable wonders of the Dutch language with all its misplaced and superfluous consonants, we are inclined to grant them full absolution for having no national airs and lullabies. Many writers claim an early supremacy for music among the Dutch but I cannot make it seem worthy of much mention. It was simply an intellectual comprehension of the mathematical rudiments of music. It requires more of an effort to be grateful to one who has furnished us with the necessary principles for the development of an art, than it does to recognize an obligation to one who, in charming our ears with an exquisite strain, shows us the possibilities of the art in its fullest perfection. These Netherland masters were entirely absorbed in developing the technical construction and left out the emotional possibilities. The Dutch school of music is generally divided into four epochs which extend over nearly 200 years which are distinguished by the name of the foremost musician in each epoch. Thus the epoch of Dufay, of Okeghern, of Josquin des Pres and Willaert. As early as 895 Huckbald, a Benedictine monk, was the first to formulate rules for harmony. But his ideas were crude and the result disagreeable to the modern ear. His chief trait was the use of parallel fourths and fifths. Harmony was not positively invented by him, but he was the writer of the first treatise on the subject. This field, thus opened up was industriously cultivated and by the time the era of the Netherland school began, was productive of a rich harvest. The employment of four lines and spaces in the staff was the invention of Guido of Arezzo who died in 1050. With the formation of rules for measure by Franco of Cologne who flourished 1200 A. D. with harmony and measure governed by rules, systematic composition became for the first time a possibility. Naturally the development of this art was the work of the monks and their vehicle was the plain chant of the church. Guido trained his chorists

so successfully that they began adding ornaments to their melodies which soon grew so ornate that it was necessary for one singer to entone the melody while another added the ornamental part. These parts were called disjuncts and in them was found the beginning of counterpoint and such it was termed early in the 14th century. In the hands of the great master of the Netherland school this counterpoint was developed to its highest perfection. In fact counterpoint is a synonym for the Netherland school, and if you retain that fact you have the sum and substance of this paper and the rest is simply arabesque.

It is sufficient to assert of the first period, that of Dufay, that it was an era of pure mechanics in music. Dufay was a tenor singer in the Sistine chapel although hailing from Hainault. According to the authorities he lived in several centuries and died in several places, so that his works are spoken of as remarkable monuments of the composition of those early times, and with the memory of several remarkable monuments fresh in my mind I am willing to admit that it is a very fitting term. Biographies of the various composers would only vary by changes of names—their lives were all the same. They were all chapel masters composing canons, motets and masses, but towards the end of the fourth period, secular music began to be developed. Of course folk songs had existed in the Netherlands as elsewhere from time immemorial, and their melodies were frequently employed in the masses. Okeghern, who gave his name to the second period, has been called the patriarch of music, being the inventor of the canon and in general of artificial counterpoint. Indeed their music was overloaded with artificialities. They had borrowed from the French the practice of employing folk songs and even profane chansons in their masses, and of course they made use of them without any idea of profanity. The masses were named by the title of the melodies of the tenor, so that we read of the mass of "The Red Noes," or "He Has a Pale Face."

Josquin des Pres of the 3rd epoch really possessed some artistic ability. Luther was very fond of his music and his reputation while living was unsurpassed. Willaert, the leader of the 4th period, was the founder of the celebrated Venetian school of music from which sprang so many distinguished composers, theorists and singers. He is also the father of the Madrigal. Orlando di Lasso is the mightiest of all the Netherland masters, and considered by good judges as great a genius as Palestrina. In his youth he was kidnapped three times on account of his fine voice, but survived to compose 2,000 works, a number of which have been published in modern form. Ludwig, the mad king of Bavaria, Wagner's patron, erected a bronze statue of Lasso in Munich. After his death the brilliancy of the Netherland school was at an end and its glory transferred to Italy, but during this period covering nearly two centuries, the Netherlands furnished all the courts of Europe not only with singers but with composers and performers of instrument music. They founded the first musical conservatory of the world in Naples, also another in Venice, and the renowned school of Rome owed its existence to their influence and example. But with the Reformation all this comes to an end, and