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AMERICANA GERMANICA

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EARLY MUSIC IN PHILADELPHIA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO GERMAN MUSIC.

INTRODUCTION.

The early immigration of Germans to Philadelphia increased to such an extent, that before the middle of the eighteenth century the English colonists became alarmed for fear that Pennsylvania might be alienated from the English crown, and be dominated by the German immigrants. Indeed, throughout the eighteenth century the greater part of the German immigrants landed at Philadelphia, and from there were distributed into other States. We should naturally expect with so great a population of Germans in Philadelphia and the surrounding country, that these people would continually extend their influence, and constantly spread abroad their ideas of art, religion, music and literature.

Let us consider for a moment the condition of the Germans who landed in this country. In 1683, moved by William Penn's alluring proclamations of the glorious new world, as well as by the fact that freedom of conscience was granted in Pennsylvania to all, a band of German immigrants arrived in Philadelphia and founded Germantown. With the exception of the noble Francis Daniel Pastorius, there were no highly cultured men or women among them. These people were of the middle class, and were more interested in weaving and agriculture and domestic avocation, than in the cultivation of the fine arts. The conditions in Germany were not conducive to culture.

The country was just recovering from the Thirty Years' War, and the strength of the people was being expended in building up the homes, and improving the land made desolate during the fierce struggle. At this time, too, the German people

had little liberty, but rather were under the thumb of absolutism, which was at that time the great force in European countries. It was not an epoch favorable to the cultivation of the fine arts. There was no great literature, no great art, no great music. There was, however, a strong religious spirit, which is often the result of hardship and suffering. It is in the field of religion, too, that we find the best music during the seventeenth century, although it was not original in style, but simply a continuation of Luther's music.¹ The hymn writers of that time, both Catholic and Protestant, are not to be despised, and we need mention but a few whose songs have lived even to the present day: as Paul Fleming (1609-1640) and Paul Gerhardt (1606-1676) Protestant; Friedrich Spœe (1591-1635) and Johann Scheffer (1624-1677), Catholics. It can be said, then, with some degree of surety, that the performance of music by the early German settlers in Philadelphia was confined, in the province of music, to hymns.

In this department the Germans hold an important position; not only was their church music an essential part of their services, but the number of hymn-writers and the many editions of German hymn books published in Philadelphia testify to the love which these new settlers had for church music.

It is only necessary to mention a few of these hymn-writers to recall to mind the extreme productiveness of this style of literature and music. Among the most important hymn-writers were F. D. Pastorius, of Germantown; Johann Kelpuis, of the Wissahickon; Conrad Beissel, of Ephrata, and Count von Zinzendorf, the Moravian.²

¹ Louis Elson, *National Music in America*, p. 18.

² Cf. for further information on this subject: J. H. T. Dubbs, *Early German Hymnology of Pennsylvania*; Hausmann, *German American Hymnology 1683-1800*, in *Americana Germanica* 1898, Vol. II, No. 3, p. 11.

CHAPTER I.

CHURCH MUSIC AND THE MANNER OF ITS PERFORMANCE.

It has already been mentioned that there were many German hymn-writers in Philadelphia in the early eighteenth century, and it is now in place to consider what was the quality of the music in the German churches at that period, and whether musical instruments of any kind were used in the Philadelphia churches.

For the first record it is necessary to go a little beyond Philadelphia to the Hermits of the Wissahickon. To this people undoubtedly belongs the honor of first using instrumental music in religious services. Of their voyage across the Atlantic, Kelpuis says:

“We had also prayer meetings and sang hymns of praise and joy, several of us accompanying on instruments that we had brought from London.”³

Evidently the instruments which they brought with them were not satisfactory or were regarded as inadequate for the worship of God, as Kelpuis in a letter to friends in London asked that two clarichords with additional strings might be sent.⁴

Again the Hermits at the consecration of the new Swedish church—Gloria Dei—July 2, 1700, act as choristers and furnish instrumental music.⁵

The first German minister ordained in this country was Justus Falckner, who was consecrated by the Swedish Lutherans. In a letter to Rev. Heinrich Muhlen, of Holstein (1701), Falckner shows that, even at that early day, music was considered an important adjunct of the church service. He says:

³ Sachse, *German Pietists*, p. 22; *Seidensticker, Geschichtsblaetter*, p. 100.

⁴ Seidensticker, *Geschichtsblaetter*, p. 100.

⁵ Sachse, *German Pietists*, p. 144 (hereafter quoted as G. P.).

"In short there are Germans here, and perhaps the majority, who despise God's Word and all outward good order; who blaspheme the sacraments and frightfully and publicly give scandal. . . .

"I will here take occasion to mention that many others besides myself, who know the ways of the land, maintain that music would contribute much towards a good Christian service. It would not only attract and civilize the wild Indians, but it would do much good in spreading the Gospel truths among the sects and others by attracting them. Instrumental music is especially serviceable here. Thus a well-sounding organ would perhaps prove of great profit, to say nothing of the fact that the Indians would come running from far and near to listen to such unknown melody, and upon that account might become willing to accept our language and teaching, and remain with people who had such agreeable things; for they are said to come ever so far to listen to one who plays even a reed-pipe (*rohrpfeiffē*): such an extraordinary love have they for any melodious and ringing sound. Now as the melancholy, saturnine stingy Quaker spirit has abolished (*relegiert*) all such music, it would indeed be a novelty here, and tend to attract many of the young people away from the Quakers and sects to attend services where such music was found, even against the wishes of their parents. This would afford a good opportunity to show them the truth and their error.

"If such an organ-instrument (*Orgel-werck*) were placed in the Swedish church . . . it would prove of great service to this church.

"If there were music in the church, the young people would consider church-going a recreation.

"The Lord of Hosts . . . would be praised and honored with cymbal and organ.

"And it may be assumed that even a small organ-instrument and music in this place would be acceptable to God, and prove far more useful than many hundreds in Europe, where there is already a superfluity of such things.

"There are in Europe masters enough who would build such instruments, and a fine one can be secured for 300 or 400 thalers. Then if an experienced organist and musician could be found, and a curious one, who would undertake so far a journey, he would be very welcome here. In case this could not be, if we only had an organ, some one or other might be found who had knowledge thereof."⁶

⁶*Cf. The Missive of Justus Falckner of Germantown, Concerning the Religious Condition of Pa. in the Year 1701. Translated by J. F. Sachse. Found also in Pa. Mag. of Hist., 1897.*

The writer of this missive was somewhat of a poet himself, and composed several fine hymns, some of which are in use at the present day.⁷

Whether the appeal for musical instruments was of avail, we know not, but in the *Journal of Rev. Andreas Sandel* for July 20, 1702, is mentioned one Jonas, organist of Gloria Dei church. Again, on November 24, 1703, when Falckner was ordained in this church, Sachse says:

“The service was opened with a voluntary on the little organ in the gallery by Jonas the organist, supplemented with instrumental music by the Mystics on the viol, hautboy, trumpets (*Posaunen*) and kettle drums (*Pauken*)”⁸

The first church organ in Philadelphia, then, was placed in a Swedish Lutheran church largely by means of a German. Although the merit for this achievement must be divided between the Germans and Swedes, in one department of music—the singing of hymns—the Swedes probably were pre-eminent. In 1696 Charles, King of Sweden, sent to the church at Wicacoa, one hundred hymn books,⁹ while in 1712 another lot, consisting of “360 hymn books of three sorts” were shipped.¹⁰ The Swedes were strict, too, in their regulations of the church services, especially of singing. In 1702, Rev. Andreas Sandel imposes a fine “for untimely singing, six schillings.”¹¹ Especially interesting is the account concerning the attempt of Pastor Andreas Heselius, of Christina, Delaware, to reform church singing in 1713. Acrelius says:

⁷ Sasche, *Justus Falckner*, pp. 20-21.

⁸ *Justus Falckner*, p. 64; also G. P., pp. 354-5. Sachse believes this organ was one brought over by Kelpius.

⁹ Israel Acrelius, *A History of New Sweden*, trans. by Wm. Reynolds, in *Memoirs of Pa. Hist. Soc.*, Vol. XI, pp. 197, 366 (hereafter quoted as Acrelius).

¹⁰ Acrelius, p. 367; also *Andreas Sandel's Diary*, in *Pa. Mag. Hist.* 1906, p. 446.

¹¹ Acrelius, p. 217.

"He had special regard to propriety in church-singing, in which there was often such discord, as though they intended to call their cows to the church. In opposition to which it was represented that as all those who possessed the gift of praising God with a pleasing voice in psalms and hymns should not stand mute, so, on the other hand, those who were unfitted for this should not with their harsh voices, hinder others and make confusion, but, by softly singing after the others, train themselves to correct singing. During the singing, he went around the church and aided where they failed."¹²

It is very probable that in Philadelphia, this same instruction in church singing prevailed, since Hesselius was for some time Provost, and had a right to command, and also, because Samuel Hesselius, his brother, occupied the pulpit at Wicacoa and could more easily be coerced—if necessary—to establish this method of instruction.

In the other churches of Philadelphia, organs seem to have been introduced at a relatively late date. On September 2, 1728, a committee having been appointed at Christ Church "to treat with Mr. Lod. C. Sprogel,¹³ about an organ lately arrived here. report that they had done the same, and that he insisted on £200 for said organ; and that they had procured men of the best skill this place could afford to erect the said organ in a convenient house in town, to make trial thereof; which, being done, it is said the organ proves good in its kind, and large enough for our church."¹⁴ Upon this recommendation the organ was purchased. In the Moravian church, corner of Race and Broad streets, there were two organs in 1743,¹⁵ one of which was sold in 1796, and a new one built by David Tannenberger.¹⁶ In this same year

¹² Acrelius, p. 276.

¹³ Ludovic Christian Sproegel was one of the "Hermits of the Wissahickon."

¹⁴ Quoted from the *Minutes of the Vestry of Christ Church*, by Benj. Borr, *History of Christ Church*, p. 61.

¹⁵ Madeira, *Annals of Music in Philadelphia*, p. 24.

¹⁶ Madeira, *Annals of Music in Philadelphia*, p. 24 (hereafter quoted as Madeira).

(1743) the Moravians in Germantown had an organ costing £60, but in 1744 both church and organ reverted to the German Reformed Church.¹⁷ The Catholic church had an organ in 1750.¹⁸ These are the earliest known organs in use in Philadelphia churches. From this time on, the other churches in the city gradually established them as an aid to their services.

One writer, who came to this country from Germany, evidently had no knowledge of these organs when he said:

"I came to this country with the first organ [1750] which now stands in a High German Lutheran church in the city of Philadelphia, and which was built in Heilbronn."¹⁹

In the face of the evidence already produced, it is needless to say that this statement is a little off color, to say the least.

There were then in Philadelphia several organs before 1755, and it is reasonable to assume that in the Moravian church, that "wind" and "string" instruments were used, since we find this true at the colony in Bethlehem.²⁰ The testimony of travellers of that time or of members of other churches is of some interest and importance. The first witness is William Black, secretary of the commission appointed by the Governor of Virginia to unite with commissions from Maryland and Pennsylvania for the purpose of treating with the Indians. In the year 1744, he resided in Philadelphia, during which time he kept a journal of interest and importance. June 8 he writes:

¹⁷ Minutes and Letters of the Coetus of the German Reformed Church, p. 29.

¹⁸ Madeira, p. 24.

¹⁹ *Gottlieb Mittelberger's Journey to Penn. in the Year 1750; translated by Carl T. Eben*, p. 114.

²⁰ Wm. Reichel, *Something about Trombones*, p. 4 ff. See also the statement concerning Justus Falckner's ordination as quoted above, where musical instruments of this character were used.

"We went to the Moravian Meeting, where I had the pleasure to hear an Excellent Comment on that Passage in Scripture Relating to the Prodigal Son, and after *some very Agreeable Church Musick*, half an hour after 9 they broke up." ²¹

This testimony is not without its value, as this gentleman was evidently somewhat of a musician himself, since under the same date in his diary we find:

"I Rose from my Bed and pass'd two hours in writting, the rest of the time till Breakfast, I spent with my Fiddle and Flute." ²²

Concerning the music in the Moravian church we have other evidence, at a later date. John Adams remarks in his diary for October 23, 1774:

"The singing here [Methodist meeting] is very sweet and soft indeed; the first *music* I have heard in any society *except* the Moravians, and once at church with the organ." ²³

He also remarks September 4, 1774, upon "the organ and a new choir of singers at Christ Church, which were very musical." ²⁴

Franklin, in 1755, speaks of hearing Moravian music at Bethlehem, and praises it generously.²⁵ A year earlier Acrelius, who visited the same place, gives a more detailed account in the following words:

"It was finally agreed that we should sit below [in the auditorium of the church], as the music sounded better there. The organ had the accompaniment of violins and flutes. The musicians were back in the gallery, so that none of them were seen." One of the ministers "read some verses of a German hymn book, after which they were sung with excellent music." ²⁶

²¹ *Penn. Mag. of History*, Vol. II, p. 43.

²² *Penn. Mag. of Hist.* Vol. II, p. 40.

²³ *John Adams Works*, Vol. II, pp. 401 and 364.

²⁴ *John Adams Works*, Vol. II, pp. 401 and 364.

²⁵ Franklin, *Autobiography*, p. 325 [Lippincott, Phila., 1868].

²⁶ Acrelius, p. 413.

Their style of music and manner of performing it must have been exceptionally good, as compared with the music of other churches, to have impressel so favorably such men, who, we may be sure, were quite different. There is the sturdy pastor Acrelius, understanding church music and the manner of its performance; the cordial, genial Ben Franklin, who knew something about music from living in London; the somewhat cold but highly cultured, John Adams, with his Puritan traditions; then the gentleman from Virginia, William Black, who most probably partook of the nature of the warm, sunny-tempered Southerners, himself somewhat of a musician. Could we ask for witnesses more unlike?

To the Moravian church undoubtedly belongs the palm for music during the eighteenth century; but there was music, and good music, in some other churches as well. We have already mentioned the music in Christ Church and the Methodist Church. Concerning the music in the German Lutheran Church, we have the testimony of Daniel Fisher, who writes in his *Diary* for May 25, 1755:

"Went to the Lutheran Church, a neat Brick Building where there is a good organ²⁷ to which I heard them sing Psalms, agreeably enough."²⁸

Again he says:

"The Lutheran Church has an organ, and a good one."²⁹

There were organs then in the churches, to a great extent, before 1750. The question now arises were there men who could repair these instruments if they got out of order? By the end of the fourth decade, there were several men who could not only repair an organ, but also build one. Of these men Gustavus Hesselius is the most important, as he was the first spinet

²⁷ The organ Mittelberger brought from Heilbronn; see above.

²⁸ *Penn. Mag. of Hist.*, Vol. XVII, p. 267.

²⁹ *Penn. Mag. of Hist.*, Vol. XVII, p. 272.

builder in America, having produced specimens as early as 1743,³⁰ and probably the first organ builder in Pennsylvania. It is claimed that he was the first organ builder in America, and in support of that claim an organ is mentioned as built by him for the Moravian Church at Bethlehem, Pa., in 1746.³¹ The fact is lost sight of that a Boston man, Edward Bromfield, generally regarded as the first organ builder, constructed an instrument in 1745,³² although Hesselius was undoubtedly the first man who built many church organs.

Still another claimant appears for this title—no less a man than the Englishman, Doctor Christopher Witt (1675-1765), another hermit of the Wissahickon. Doctor Witt possessed a large pipe-organ presumably made by him alone, but possibly aided by other Hermits. It was built at least while he was living with the Settlement on the Wissahickon, and as he left that society shortly after the death of Kelpuis,³³ which took place about 1708,³⁴ the evidence is in his favor. This organ at his death was valued at £40.³⁵

Hesselius was not only a musician, but a painter as well. He died in 1755.³⁶ Connected with Hesselius in 1746 was John G. Klemm, a native of Dresden, Germany. Three years later David Tannenberger arrived in Philadelphia, a man whom many of his contemporaries conceded to be the greatest organ builder in America, but, as is usually the case, there is another claimant for this high honor, as will be seen later.

David Tanneberger was born March 21, 1728, in Berthesdorf, Saxony. He was evidently an all-round musician, and could play, sing—he possessed a good voice—build, or repair an organ

³⁰ *Penn. Mag. of Hist.*, XVI, p. 473 (note).

³¹ *Penn. Mag. of Hist.*, Vol. XXIX, p. 131 ff; also Reichel, p. 4.

³² L. Elson, *History of American Music*, p. 43.

³³ *German Pietists*, pp. 403, 412.

³⁴ *German Pietists*, p. 192.

³⁵ *German Pietists*, p. 418 (note).

³⁶ *Penn. Mag. of Hist.*, Vol. XII, p. 503 (note).

as occasion presented itself. It is known that he built at least fourteen organs during his stay in Pennsylvania, while no record of the number of spinets, which he made and sold for £22.10s, has been discovered. He died May 19, 1804, stricken by paralysis while tuning an organ at York, Pa.³⁷

As to Tannenberger's reputation as an organ builder, we have the testimony of a man who probably knew Tannenberger :

"Tannenberg belongs to history as *the* organ builder of his day and one of renown. He too, was of the German school. Fancy stops were not generally in vogue, except the trumpet in the great organ, and the *vox humana* in the swell, of which latter there was but one in the city, and that was in Christ Church, and to my young ear, a good imitation of the human voice.

"There are several of Tannenberger's organs yet in breathing existence [1857]. Lancaster, Litiz, and Nazareth still hold his memory in audible and respectful tones; and much of his work is worthy of imitation. His diapsons were particularly dignified, whilst his upper work, 12th, 15th, and sesquialtera, gave brilliancy to the whole."³⁸

This testimony of Abraham Ritter, an organist of good standing in the Moravian Church, gives some idea of the excellence of the work and of the reputation which Tannenberger still had in the nineteenth century.

We have already spoken of Gottlieb Mittelberger and his organ, and, although we cannot depend upon his statements, there may be some truth in his somewhat exaggerated account of the dedication of his organ. It is at least interesting, and shows that the people as a whole were certainly not prejudiced against music. He says :

"After this work had been set up and tuned it was consecrated with great rejoicing and delivered to the Christian St. Michael's Church for the praise and service of God.

"The crowd of hearers was indescribably large; many people

³⁷ *Penn. Mag. of Hist.*, Vol. XXII, p. 231 ff.

³⁸ Abraham Ritter, *Hist. of the Moravian Church in Phila.* (1857), p. 59 ff. note.

came from a great distance, 10, 20, 30, 40 and even 50 hours' journey, to see and hear this organ. The number of hearers, who stood inside and outside the church, both German and English, were estimated at several thousands. I was appointed school-master and organist. As I became more and more known in Pennsylvania, and the people learned that I had brought fine and good instruments with me, many English and German families came 10, 20 and 30 hours' journey to hear them and the organ, and they were greatly surprised because they had never in all their lives seen or heard an organ or any of those instruments.³⁹

"At the present time [1754] there are 6 organs in Pennsylvania—the first is in Philadelphia, the 2nd in Germantown, the 3rd in Providence, the 4th in New Hanover, the 5th in Dulpehocken, all of them came to this country during the four years of my sojourn there."⁴⁰

This statement concerning the number of organs in Philadelphia cannot be true, as we have shown above that there were several. In his list of the organs in Pennsylvania, he neglects to mention the one made for the Moravian Church at Bethlehem in 1746.⁴¹ The number of people which he claims was present at the dedication is probably exaggerated, and, as Mittelberger was the chief performer, we can pardon him this slip of the pen. It is probable, however, that there was a large number of people present, as there would be at any new event entering into their narrow lives—especially as there was no charge for admission.

In 1762 a new organ was built in Philadelphia by Philip Feyring for St. Paul's Church. He is the other claimant to the honor of being the greatest organ builder of his day.⁴² One of the newspapers was evidently partial to him, since it gives this notice:

³⁹ This statement is utterly false, as it will be shown later that there were musical instruments in Philadelphia long before this time, and even concerts in 1740.

⁴⁰ Mittelberger's *Journey to Penn.*, p. 114.

⁴¹ Cf. above, p. .

⁴² Cf. above, p. .

“The New Organ, which is putting up in St. Paul’s Church in this City, will be in such Forwardness as to be used in Divine Service on Christmas Day. It is of a new Construction, and made by Mr. Philip Fyring,⁴³ Musical Instrument-Maker, in this City, who may, with Justice, be said to be the best Hand at that ingenious Business on the Continent.”⁴⁴

The organ was evidently in use on Christmas Day and must have proven satisfactory, as it called forth a poem lauding both Feyring and his organ.

We have this biographical reference to him in a contemporary newspaper:

“Mr. Feyring is a German by Birth, but has for some years past, practic’d the making of Musical Instruments (particularly Spinets and Harpsichords) in this City, with great Repute.”⁴⁵

How many instruments were sold by these organmakers it would be difficult to say, although undoubtedly parlor organs were found in many houses. There are advertisements of two organs for sale among a list of household goods before the end of 1750: A “small” organ belonging to Benj. Morgan, 1748,⁴⁶ and a “large” one, the property of the late Peter Kook, in 1750.⁴⁷

Religious music in this half century was flourishing, and was considered a valuable adjunct of the church service, not only in German churches, but also in the Swedish and English churches. The composition of hymns up to this time seems to have been confined to the Germans.

⁴³ Spelled also Feyring.

⁴⁴ *Pa. Gazette*, Dec. 23, 1762.

⁴⁵ *Pa. Gaz.*, Dec. 30, 1762.

⁴⁶ *Pa. Journal*, July 7, 1748.

⁴⁷ *Pa. Journal*, Jan. 2, 1750.

CHAPTER II.

SECULAR MUSIC.

From the preceding chapter it has been clearly seen, that the Germans in Philadelphia, and indeed in the whole State, were strongly religious, and were celebrated for their church music and instrument makers, especially for their organ builders.

Were all the people in Philadelphia as religious as the Germans and Quakers seem to have been, and were there no public amusements? This is an important question, and one not easily answered, especially during the first half of the eighteenth century. It may be thought that this question is not related to German music, but indirectly it is, so that it may be shown whether or not the people of Philadelphia were ready to welcome music, whether they were in a state of mind favorable for the introduction of any amusements. It is necessary to establish these facts before we can clearly understand the reasons and cause for the introduction of German concert music into America.

We know, that in Philadelphia during the eighteenth century, there were men of every creed and religion, of every walk of life, of many different nationalities, and we may be sure that in such a conglomeration of men and ideas there would be some to whom amusements would be necessary—even amusements which strait-laced people would condemn. The information there is upon this subject supports the opinion, that there were amusements even in the early part of the eighteenth century. Foremost among the pleasures in which the inhabitants of Philadelphia indulged, was dancing, and we have reference to this art at an early period. In a book written in 1710 is the following statement :

“Among the rest of my Friends, I must not forget the facetious

Mr. Staples, Dancing-Master, who was the first Stranger of Philadelphia that did me the Honour of a Visit."⁴⁸

As early as 1716 we find this record:

"At the Yearly Meeting of the Friends, members were advised against 'going to or being in any way concerned in plays, games, lotteries, music and dancing.'"⁴⁹

Throughout the first half of the eighteenth century dancing was evidently held in due respect by a certain element of the population. In 1728 it forms a part of the curriculum of a boarding school.⁵⁰ In 1730 dancing is taught by Thomas Ball's sister.⁵¹ The first really fashionable ball was probably that given by Governor Gordon, in 1726, in honor of the Prince of Wales' birthday.⁵² To some extent, too, music and dancing were surely a part of the marriage festivities, as the following item shows:

"We hear that Tuesday night last, a young Dutchman was married to an old Dutchwoman, who was known to have money. They had a fiddle at the Wedding. . . . She danc'd till it was late."⁵³

We find ministers of different denominations complaining of the irreligion of some of the inhabitants. As one writer remarks:

"We live in an age, when 'tis counted almost a scandal to be a Christian. Religion is stil'd Preciseness and Hyprocrisy, and a strict Conformity to Truth and Virtue is imputed to be the Effect of Melancholly, a Distemper'd Imagination. We daily hear the

⁴⁸ Hart, *American History told by Contemporaries II*, p. 77, quoted from "*The Voyage, Shiprack and Miraculous Escape of Richard Castleman, Gent.*," appended to "*The Voyages and Adventures of Capt. Robert Boyle*," London, 1726, 4th Ed. 1786, p. 331.

⁴⁹ Scharf & Wescott, *History of Phila.*, Vol. II, p. 863.

⁵⁰ *American Weekly Mercury*, March 5-14, 1727½.

⁵¹ *Pa. Gazette*, March 5-13, 1729-30.

⁵² Scharf & Wescott, *Hist. of Phila.*, Vol. I, p. 203.

⁵³ *Pa. Gaz.*, March 15 to 22, 1738-9.

greatest Mysteries of our Faith Ridicul'd and Banter'd, the Clergy Despis'd, Expos'd and Degraded; and that even by Men, who have not yet Publickly Renounc'd Christianity; but such as would be thought to have clearer Heads, and more refin'd Conceptions of Things than their Brethren, those Men to their Shame stand Pelting Religion at a distance, with little Scoffs and Jests, when there is a more Fair and Honourable way of deciding the Matter, by rational and undeniable Arguments."⁵⁴

In opposition to this we have the testimony of Benjamin Franklin, who writes:

"Our people, having no publick amusements to divert their attention from study, became better acquainted with books."⁵⁵

So, too, a correspondent in the *Weekly Mercury* writes:

"Here are no Masquerades, Plays, Balls, Midnight Revellings, or Assemblies to Debauch the Mind or promote Intrigue."⁵⁶

When, however, we read an advertisement in the same paper about a month later like the following, we may be permitted to doubt somewhat the statements of the last two men.

"The Art of Dancing Carefully Taught (as it is now Practic'd at Court) by Samuel Perpoint, at his *School*. . . . where for the Recreation of all Gentlemen and Ladies: There will be *Country Dances every Thursday Evening*; likewise he teaches small Sword."⁵⁷

From this time on, we notice the advertisements of various dancing masters, who, often were school masters at the same time. Not only did these Philadelphians enjoy dancing, but they were partial to late suppers and card playing as well,—playing cards was a staple article of importation after 1736.⁵⁸ Another favor-

⁵⁴ *American Weekly Mercury*, June 19-26, 1729 [a correspondent].

⁵⁵ *Autobiography*, p. 207.

⁵⁶ *American Weekly Mercury*, June 19-26, 1729.

⁵⁷ *American Weekly Mercury*, July 31 to August 7, 1729.

⁵⁸ *American Weekly Mercury*, February 8, 1736 [first advertised].

ite amusement, we may be sure, was playing on the Jew's harp, for after 1733, this instrument frequently is advertised.⁵⁹ The Jew's harp must have been considered a harmless instrument by all sects, for as early as 1675 in one State of Puritan New England it is stated that a law was enacted, "that no one should play on any kind of music except the drum, the trumpet and the jew-sharp."⁶⁰

Besides the amusements already mentioned, the Philadelphians had an opportunity to see a rope-dancer in 1724,⁶¹ "Punch and Joan his Wife,"⁶² "Magick Lanthorn" exhibition,⁶³ "Camera Obscura and Microscope,"⁶⁴ a musical clock with a man and woman appearing as mountebanks.⁶⁵

Music was evidently popular at society meetings, banquets, etc. Perhaps there was nothing more than singing, but possibly a violin and spinet helped to while away the time. For instance, in 1731 at the celebration of "St. David's Day," by the "Society of Ancient Britons," the evening ended with "Musick, Mirth and Friendship."⁶⁶

In the two items which will be given now, may be detected, perhaps, the incipient germs of musical criticism, or at least the idea, which most people probably had of what a professor of music should know and be able to do:

"Elocution is not unlike Musick; there is scarce a Soul so rustick as not to admire both in their Excellency, altho' the Masters of those Sciences may lose their proper Share of the Praise. He that

⁵⁹ *American Weekly Mercury*, March 2, 1733 [first advertised].

⁶⁰ Perkins & Dwight, *History of Haendel & Haydn Society*, p. 17 (note).

⁶¹ Scharf & Wescott, Vol. II, p. 863.

⁶² *Pa. Gaz.*, Dec. 30, 1742.

⁶³ *Pa. Gaz.*, Jan. 27, 1743.

⁶⁴ *Pa. Gaz.*, July 2, 1744.

⁶⁵ *Pa. Gaz.*, May 31, 1744.

⁶⁶ *Pa. Gaz.*, Feb. 23 to March 4, 1730-31.

⁶⁷ *American Weekly Mercury*, Aug. 7-14, 1729.

having laid before him the several Parts of a Musical Instrument, can Unite them in their Places, and tune them to Harmony, merits the appellation of a Master in Musick and should be distinguished as such, as he that disposes Words into grammatical sentences, and eloquent Periods, is a Master of Language.”⁶⁷

This quotation may argue for the popularity and respect in which music was held at that time by at least some of the people. We find in this crude statement, that music was thought worthy of a position by the side of elocution, which has always held a high place in the minds of every people, and so we may be safe in believing that music had a place, and an important place, in Philadelphia, in the early history of that city.

Another correspondent states that:

“Women, like Instruments of Musick, require to be long used before their Sweetness or Discord are certainly discovered.”⁶⁸

Unless the writer of the above knew something about music, and unless music was an object of interest or pleasure, so that this comparison would be appreciated, he would not likely have ventured to use such a simile.

In 1733 there is a record of a “ball”⁶⁹ while, in the next year under the heading “London news,” there is a notice concerning the marriage of the Princess Royal to the Prince of Orange, which gives the following information:

“A fine anthem compos’d by Mr. Handell was perform’d by a great Number of Voices and Instruments.”⁷⁰

This latter item proves nothing except that the name of Handel was introduced into the colonies at an early date, and may have remained in the memories of some of the people, since he was connected with such an important event. This may possibly

⁶⁸ *American Weekly Mercury*, Sept. 10-17, 1730.

⁶⁹ *American Weekly Mercury*, Nov. 11, 1733.

⁷⁰ *American Weekly Mercury*, May 23, 1734.

have helped to increase the popularity which his works, later in the century, attained in America.

It has been seen that there was music and dancing at this time, and it is now interesting to learn what kind of musical instruments were used. It has been shown already, that there were Jew's harps,⁷¹ that Kelpuis had clavichords,⁷² and assuredly there were some virginals, although probably few. In the fourth decade the various instrument makers mentioned above,⁷³ probably had quite a number of customers.

In 1729 Andrew Bradford, proprietor of the *American Weekly Mercury*, advertises:

"A well-strung Virginal to be sold; being in good Order. Enquire of Printer hereof."⁷⁴

Dr. Christopher Witt, referred to before,⁷⁵ was a capable player on the virginal,⁷⁶ which at his death was estimated at £1, 15s.;⁷⁷ while a virginal belonging to the "Hermits" reverted to the widow of Magister Zimmerman.⁷⁸

The people who owned instruments of this kind had an opportunity to learn to play, since in 1730 a woman—the first music teacher in Philadelphia—makes an announcement in the newspaper as follows:

[Thomas Ball's] "Wife teaches Writing and French. Likewise Singing, Playing on the Spinnet, Dancing and all sorts of Needle-Work are taught by his Sister lately arrived from London."⁷⁹

⁷¹ *Vide* above, p. .

⁷² *Vide* above, p. .

⁷³ *Vide* above, p. .

⁷⁴ *American Weekly Mercury*, March 4-13, 1728-9.

⁷⁵ See above.

⁷⁶ *German Pietists*, p. 412.

⁷⁷ *German Pietists*, p. 418 (note).

⁷⁸ *Justus Falckner*, p. 64 (note).

⁷⁹ *Pa. Gaz.*, July 2-9, 1730.

What class of music she and her pupils played, it would be hard to say, but it did not cause anyone to start a music store, and it is not until 1739 that any great musical works are advertised at the office of the man of many parts, Benjamin Franklin. The following pieces were to be obtained there: "Corelli's Sonatas, Geminiani's Concertos, Ditto's Solos."⁸⁰

Besides spinets and virginals there were probably violins, German flutes, trumpets, drums, a few viols, etc. For instance, in 1749 Anthony Lamb, of New York, advertises among other things: "German Flutes,"⁸¹ while other men advertise, in 1750, "Hunting pipes,"⁸² and "fiddle strings,"⁸³ From 1744 on numerous advertisements of drums appear.

Before 1740 there is no record of any kind of musical organization, but in this year there was such a society. During this year the evangelist, Whitefield, visited Philadelphia and made a strong impression upon people of all beliefs. One of his disciples caused this to be printed:

"Since Mr. Whitefields' Preaching here, the Dancing school, Assembly, and Concert Room have been shut up, as inconsistent with the Doctrine of the Gospel: And though the Gentlemen concern'd, caus'd the Door to be broke open again, we are inform'd that no Company came the last Assembly night."⁸⁴

One of the members, however, denied the charge that dances were inconsistent with the doctrine of the gospel, and affirmed that the hall was closed up by William Seward, an "Attendant and intimate Companion" of Whitefield's. This same writer speaks of "Members of the Concert" and the rooms belonging to them. He also says that the members "met the Night after according to Custom; and the Thursday following the Company

⁸⁰ *Pa. Gaz.*, June 15-22, 1738-9.

⁸¹ *Pa. Gaz.*, Jan. 31, 1749.

⁸² *Pa. Journal*, Jan. 9, 1750.

⁸³ *Pa. Jour.* and also *Pa. Gaz.*, May 24, 1750.

⁸⁴ *Pa. Gazette*, May 1, 1740.

met to Dance as they used to do; but the Assembly being only for the Winter Season is now discontinued of Course and the Concert being for the whole Year still goes on as usual.”⁸⁵

This is interesting, as it is the first record of concerts, and also, because these *concerts*, continued the *whole* year, not merely during the winter months as nowadays. There were “Members of the Concert,” too, who rented or owned rooms. There must then have been some kind of a club or society, which gave these performances.

These concerts must either have been kept up for years, or new series instituted year by year, since our friend William Black (already quoted) says in his diary of 1744, June 5:

“At 8 O’Clock went to hear a Concert of Musick; the Performers was some Town’s Gentlemen, and did Us the Honour of an Invitation, we staid till past 11, and I left the Company to go home to my lodgings.”⁸⁶

It is important to observe, that William Black says he had the “Honour” to be invited to a concert. One might say that this word was simply a common expression. It probably was, and still is; but we believe a man would hardly write such an expression in his diary, unless he really thought he was honored. It seems probable that this concert and those of 1740 must have been very exclusive and were not public entertainments, which anyone might attend.

There was exhibited this same year (1744) a curiosity, which would attract a large crowd of people. This was no less than:

“The Unparalleled Musical Clock, made by that great Master of Machinery, David Lockwood. It excels all others in the Beauty of its Structure and plays the choicest Airs from the most celebrated Operas with the greatest Nicety and Exactness. It performs with beautiful graces, ingeniously and variously intermixed,

⁸⁵ *Pa. Gaz.*, May 8, 1740.

⁸⁶ *Penn. Mag. of Hist.*, Vol. I, p. 416.

the French Horn Pieces, perform'd upon the Organ, German and Common Flute, Flageolet, etc., Sonata's, Concerto's, Marches, Minuets, Jiggs and Scots Airs, composed by Corelli, Alberoni, Mr. Handel and other great and eminent Masters of Musick."⁸⁷

This is the first public record we have, that works of such famous composers were played, and they must have become familiar, in a short time to a great number of the inhabitants.

It will be remembered that Miss Ball's capabilities in the province of music were confined to but two branches, voice and spinet. In 1749, however, appears a truly musical genius, if we may judge by the number of instruments which he played. This man was, as we learn from the following:

"John Beals, Musick Master from London [who] at his House in Fourth Street, near Chestnut Street, joining to Mr. Linton's, collar maker, teaches the Violin, Hautboy, German Flute, Common Flute and Dulcimer by Note.

"Said Beals will likewise attend young ladies, or others, that may desire it, at their houses. He likewise provides musick for balls or other entertainments."⁸⁸

Here was an opportunity for the inhabitants of the Quaker City to improve their time by learning music, and as the variety of instruments from which they might choose, was large, no doubt some of them became proficient musicians.

This same year saw the beginnings of drama and opera in Philadelphia, given by the English actors, Murray and Kean.⁸⁹ These dramatic performances were soon discontinued on account of the opposition of the public. From now until the latter part of the fifth decade of the eighteenth century there were desultory attempts to give dramas, but not until 1759 did the theatre prove successful and become permanent.

There was then in this decade an incipient appreciation of

⁸⁷ *Pa. Gaz.*, July 12, 1744.

⁸⁸ *Pa. Gaz.*, March 21, 1749.

⁸⁹ Madeira, *Annals of Music*, p. 29.

drama to which some music was oftentimes joined. What other music was there at this time? In 1750-4 Mittelberger says:

"The cultivation of music is rather rare as yet. . . . Some Englishmen give occasional concerts in private houses with a spinet or harpsichord."⁹⁰

Mittelberger's statement concerning the cultivation of music is not quite true. Music undoubtedly was studied a great deal more than Mittelberger seems to think. If his statement that occasional private concerts were given by Englishmen is true, this was probably the kind of concert William Black attended in 1749,⁹¹ and may have been similar to the concerts of 1740.⁹²

During the first half of the eighteenth century Philadelphia was not so utterly devoid of musical culture as some of our historians of music would have us believe. The music was not entirely church music, and although musical culture was not so important a factor in the life of the people as at the present day, still music was beginning to make itself felt among intelligent people, and interest in it and appreciation of it were gradually growing.

R. R. DRUMMOND,
University of Pennsylvania.

⁹⁰ *Mittelbergers Journey*, p. 114 ff.

⁹¹ Cf. above, p. . .

⁹² Cf. above, p. . .

THE GERMAN AMERICAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
AND THE GERMAN AMERICAN ANNALS.

At the Whitsuntide Festival at Washington Park, Philadelphia, on June 8, 1908, Mr. Theodore Sutro, of New York, in his most excellent address, divided mankind into three classes: Pessimists, Conservatives and Optimists. He declared the Conservatives the most tiresome class, as they always wish to leave everything as it was and is; the Pessimists are the worst class, because they always find everything wrong; whatever is done, is not enough—they only talk and criticise, but never do anything themselves. They always say what ought to have been done and what ought to be done; they put up visionary ideals, but never do anything to bring about those things desired. Much better is the third class, the Optimists, who do things and act, and bring forth things as the conditions demand and wait till they bring about other things when new times and conditions demand. Mr. Sutro spoke of these three classes in reference to the German endeavors in America.

I can readily endorse Mr. Sutro's words in reference to the German American Historical Society and the German American Annals.

Of course, things could be better; this German American Historical Society which tries in its Annals to bring before the whole of the American world all those matters in which Germans and German influence have worked upon the political and social status of America, ought to have ten thousand members, instead, of less than one thousand; and if the Pessimists wish to have matters made better, let them become members of the German American Historical Society—of which our great President, Theodore Roosevelt, is an honorary member, who in a letter addressed to the president of the German American Historical

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