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**MUSIC NOTES.**

*It's a Long, Long Way to Tipperary.*

As I left Memorial this evening I heard a boy's voice break forth into *Tipperary*. On it came, from King Hall down to Archdale and was joined by other voices. Upon arriving at Founders Hall and my own room I was again attracted by the song. This time a girl's voice in the corridor. Then another voice from a room. And on down the hall, another. Last week in Philadelphia, I happened into the music department of Wanamaker's store. It is no exaggeration to say that the copies of *Tipperary* stood, piled one upon the other, five feet high. The show window of Presser, one of the largest publishing houses in the country, was lined on all sides with the *Tipperary* song. None of the usual classics displayed. None of the season's novelties. Only *Tipperary*.

Granted that the world (the English speaking world) is singing *Tipperary*. Let us not accept that without a spirit of interest and inquiry why it is so. Some things are inexplicable—and the popularity of certain songs is one of them. But in the case of this song, I believe a moment's thought will help us to account for its immense vogue, and also make us more intelligent in our estimation of so-called *popular songs*.

We must know in the first place that *Tipperary* is a marching song of the British soldiers. Those who know English musicians and the ideal of English music can fancy English musicians regretting that the taste of their own British soldier is so low! It is to them perhaps a little degrading that their soldiers should prefer a music-hall song to a more imposing song structure, such as the *Marseillaise* or *Wacht am Rhein*.

Personally, I think *Tipperary* is a little masterpiece in its way.

Its tune—cheery, fascinating, even funny—is so natural that four simple chords make up the entire accompaniment. Some persons may contend that it is harmonically poor and weak for this very reason. Others, like myself, listen in wonder to the result obtained with such simple means. Those of you who can play a simple cadence, that is, the four primary chords in any key have as much harmony at your command as had the composer of *Tipperary*. Think of that! Can you make so good a song? Schubert used scarcely more harmony than these four simple chords in those songs of his which the world proclaims as the greatest ever written. Why cannot we with the same means at our command do something equally as good? If so-called "musical culture" consists of technical understanding and grasp, there is no

reason why we should not. But alas! it is not musical culture that makes a song like *Tipperary*. It is too bad to have to record that culture in music often neglects why psychologists call "the human equation," and of course, in music, as in literature or any other art, that is the only thing that matters.

It must be born in mind that there is such a thing as an uncultured musician as well as a cultured musician; and that the finest product of the cultured musician pales besides that of the uncultured musician if it lacks this *human element*. In other words if it cannot be made the vehicle of the emotions of the multitude, a song may be, it appears, theoretically correct and psychologically wrong. The composer who lacks the psychological something which attracts the sympathy of his hearers in general, is a failure, no matter how theoretically perfect his work may be. On the other hand a highly cultured musician gets a certain amount of pleasure from fine style and great skill even though the human appeal is small.

Of course, you know that the English have no rag-time songs. And that this song is, therefore very unlike the present-day English popular song. It is evidently the immediate product of the American war-song, and rag-time song. However that may be, I am certain that men like Mozart and Schubert would delight in this song. With all its rollicking humor there is no touch of vulgarity. Its rhythmic design is far more clever than the usual rag-time song; its sentiment is wholesome; and how perfectly the composer has caught the musical equivalent of the phrase "long, long way to Tipperary!"

I venture to think it a piece of good luck that when war broke out, this song, an ideal marching tune for the British soldier, was in the air. It is the embodiment of the careless, jocular spirit in which the British soldier *sheathes his nerves* and which is so incomprehensible and distressing to continental seriousness. J. L. R.

**SCIENCE CLUB.**

The Joseph Moore Science Club held its regular meeting on Wednesday evening, January 27th. There being no business to come before the club, Mr. Downing, who had charge of the meeting continued his discussion of the theory of electrolytic dissociation. Reviewing the main points of Arrhenius' theory, he then took up the electron theory of matter and showed how it correlated with the previous theory in explaining the facts of electrolysis. In conclusion, he compared this theory with the older one of Clausius.

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