

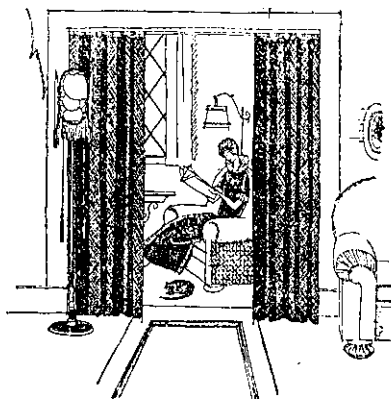
The Dangers of Over-education

It is not advisable to *over-educate* musically. Too much analysis provokes criticism, and criticism in an audience spoils the atmosphere, it stifles pure enjoyment; the object of music is to give beauty to one's inner life, stimulate emotions that will uplift the thoughts of its hearers.

Modern music does not appeal greatly to Mr. Cherniavsky, because he is used to the Old Masters, and composers of to-day speak in a different language. He is, however, an admirer of three young British composers, Arnold Bax, John Ireland, and Benjamin Dale, all of whom are brilliantly gifted men. The English, he considers, make good composers, because they are mathematicians. Scientific musicians are not good performers. A performer needs to be emotional, and British music is best played by Europeans, who provide the necessary colour to make the compositions a success. In fact, no composer, with perhaps the exception of Rachmaninoff, who is a wonderful artist, should play his own works. He is too intimate with them, dissects them too much, and usually plays them too quickly. The English perform modern French compositions better than French people, because in this case the coolness of the English intellect is necessary to counteract the emotional element that is strong in the music.

A concert artist, Mr. Cherniavsky maintains, must, like his audience, not be too analytical or dogmatic in mind. He must be sensitive to the unspoken de-

mands of the audience, and play his programme so that it will appeal to them. Only in this way can he bring the music home to them and so attain his ideal of giving his message. If he thinks only of himself and of what he wants to do he leaves the audience cold. He must



play the music as he feels it at the time. He cannot have a set style for each piece, nor can he hope to play it as the composer meant; he can only express his own ideas as induced by the composer's music. Expression marks in a Beethoven composition do not really show *just* how Beethoven meant it to be done. It is useless to say Bach must be played in a certain style. After all, in the days when most of the Old Masters wrote, there probably was not such a high standard of per-

formance as there is now; such as Liszt and Paganini were unrivalled at the time, and therefore appeared gigantic figures in the musical world. There may be several artists as great, and some now greater. To-day the average artist is better informed musically than of old. He has more facilities for learning, and studies technique more thoroughly. It must be remembered that we are changing from generation to generation. All our ideas on Art are changing. We cannot abide by the old standards, or no progress would be made. We are different now, and we play differently, so that we cannot, indeed need not, hope to play old compositions as they were played in the days of the older composers. One often hears of an artist who is growing old, "Oh! he has gone back!" Artists do not go back as a rule. It is the taste of the public which has gone forward.

Art in Russia

Referring to Russia, Mr. Cherniavsky's native country, he said that the present Government has made no difference to Art; it is still the first thing in Russia. Artists never starve there; they are well treated and cared for, although, of course, they are not paid in money. The schools of music are very busy, and opera houses and concert halls always well filled. So long as one does not oppose the Government in a country one is left alone. If one opposes the Government, one is deported—from New Zealand to another country; from Russia—to the next world, for there is nowhere else that will harbour unfortunate offenders. —R.S.

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