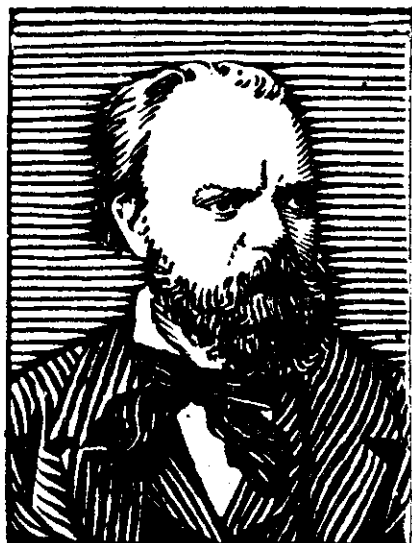


BACKGROUND TO THE CZECHS

(continued from page 19)

cultural life. The wealth of one of Europe's richest provinces, and with it the power of patronage, was transferred to reliable hands. The re-established Catholic Church and the whole educational system, branded as wicked and seditious the previous phase of national achievement. Czech intellectual leaders



DVORAK

Czech composers gave full expression to growing national feeling

maintained for a time a precarious culture in exile, but in Bohemia itself Czech literature died, and the Czech language sank to the status of a peasant dialect.

Folk Art

Among the peasantry there remained a reservoir of native culture, which interacted with importations from abroad. In the field of architecture, for instance, the court, the church and the new nobility built extensively, employing architects from Austria, Italy and Spain. This wave of building put more and more work into the hands of Czech craftsmen, with the result that the peasants themselves were stimulated to create in their own native tradition. Folk art flourished, particularly ceramic, strongly influenced by the arts and crafts of the Italian Renaissance. Apart from the plastic arts and decoration, the baroque roof lines of village houses showed the strength of Italian influence on peasant life. Moreover, Czech Baroque turned out to be something different from contemporary trends abroad. After 1620, as before it, Bohemia drew deeply from the cultural tradition of the west, without becoming merely derivative. And similarly in the field of music. The Czechs are a deeply musical people, as the 18th Century English traveller Burney tells with such emphasis. Music, with the native language, was of the texture of national life. Hussite hymns had summed up the essence of Czech nationalism. Then, with the Jesuit conversion, there came the music of the Catholic church. Italian music was performed regularly in all Czech and Moravian churches, and in the homes of the aristocracy. Thus to the indomitable native musicality of the Czechs there was added a powerful and

sustained stimulus from abroad; and it was from these two sources that the Czech "pre-classical" composers drew. True, as the result of political disaster, there was for a time little future in Bohemia for the creative musician. But Czechs in the great capitals of Europe—often with names rendered into Italian or German—helped to build the great movement that culminated in Mozart and Beethoven. Indeed, Mozart was hailed in Prague while still ignored in Vienna, and *Don Giovanni* was accordingly specially written to present to a Bohemian audience.

National Revival

In short, though Germanisation after 1620 was in some ways extraordinarily successful, the roots of Czech nationalism were not destroyed, and in the favouring atmosphere of the early 19th Century a powerful growth took place. There was in itself nothing surprising in this. The same impulse was felt by peoples throughout Europe who lacked the full political expression of their ideals: from Greece to Ireland and from Finland to Italy the same forces operated. What was remarkable, however, was the form taken by Bohemian nationalism. In a word, it was democratic and liberal, not merely as a talking point against oppression, but as a consistently held article of faith, embedded in religion as well as in politics.

The main lines of national revival followed a familiar pattern, based on pride in all things Bohemian. Scholars learnt the language from peasants and with help from the languages of other Slavonic peoples, built Czech once more into a literary instrument. Czech writers were able to share in European trends, and expressed a romantic, at times Byronic, tendency which seems to have been quite foreign to their didactic and less imaginative forebears. As the movement gathered strength, to speak Czech became a badge of honour, not of helotry. Nobles became the pupils of their stable hands, armed themselves with Jungmann's great dictionary, and stammered through unfamiliar phrases in public places. In art, too, there was a strong impulse. Though, with the exception of sculpture, Czech plastic arts were never outstanding outside the field of folk art, the Romantic Age produced its artists in the persons of Joseph Manes, and later Kosarek. Manes, with the composer Smetana, turned romantic art in Bohemia away from German influence and academic convention to find genuine sources of inspiration in his own countryside. Czech composers turned to the peasant in whose songs and dances were the natural spontaneity, the rich melody and rhythm of a deeply musical and optimistic people. If they did not compose music of the soul, it was nevertheless of the heart. Smetana, Dvořák (more cosmopolitan but still genuinely Czech in feeling and spontaneity), and others less well known outside Bohemia, gave the Czechs through their music the full expression of their nascent national feeling.

Youth Movement

To this revival in literature, art and music, there was added in 1862 the beginnings of a youth movement of enor-

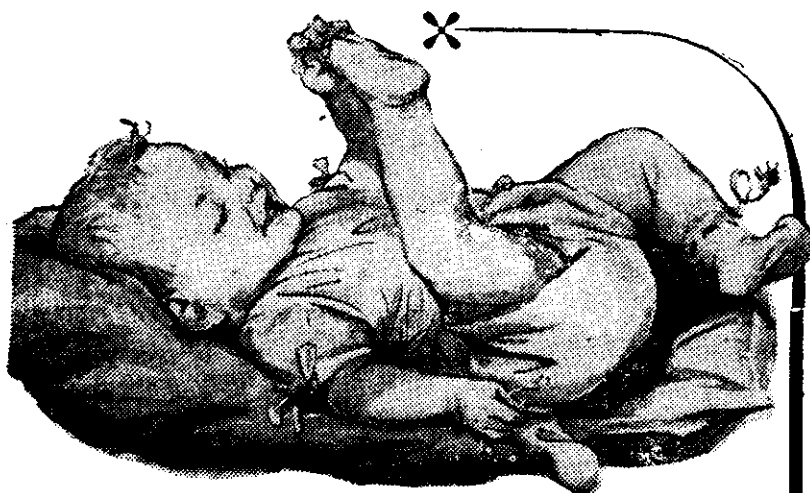
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Pianoforte Recital DOROTHY DOWNING

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Box Plan Opens at D.I.C., Lambton Quay, Wednesday, March 24.



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Contented feet?

REMEMBER: Contented feet

mean contented living and as you spend about two thirds of your life on them they deserve your care and attention.

- FOOT RULES**
- (1) Wash your feet every day; keep the toenails cut short and straight across.
 - (2) Change your stockings and socks as often as possible.
 - (3) Rest your feet whenever you can.
 - (4) See that your footwear fits correctly. Shoes must be snug round the heel, but wide enough and long enough to avoid cramping when walking. Short toes are a cause of serious foot trouble—watch children's shoes especially.
 - (5) Your footwear should fit the occasion—sturdy shoes for outdoors, light shoes or slippers for relaxation.
 - (6) Keep high heels for party occasions.

**As you depend on your feet,
so they depend on you.**