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TUNES FOR THE TIMES

"Chamber Music Won't Make A
Fighting Nation"

"**B**RAHMS, Beethoven and the other great composers belong to the period of boiled shirts, slippers and peace time. Britannia has proclaimed her will to victory. Let her music show it!" writes Gault MacGowan in "Everybody's Weekly" (London). He continues:

When the British besieged America's sway in the grip of revolutionaries, the Marseillaise was born—the stirring song of a marching people that has inspired generations of Frenchmen with the unconquerable spirit of Napoleon.

When the British besieged America's Baltimore, and citizen soldiery defied the batteries of the British Fleet, was born "The Star-Spangled Banner."

Yet now, when the enemy stands on Britain's doorstep, the rarest of tunes in our ears are the stirring strains of "Land of Hope and Glory," "The British Grenadiers," and "Rule Britannia." Why?

Poets record such parsimony of martial music as appropriate to defeat. Victory is made from martial tunes and marches. They are the secret weapons of death in the last watch.

Grim Exhilaration

What songs does the soldier sing as he waits for the attack at dawn; as he marches to battle; as in the grim exhilaration of the fight he empties drum after drum of ammunition into the enemies of his country?

Kipling has told us and written the songs for us—Elgar's great music for the day of danger—every bandmaster in the British army has a portfolio of tunes that have sustained the thin red line on the barren hills of Northern India, in the steaming Burmese jungles and on the African veldt.

But alas! Our musical education must be continued to-day by highbrows as we sit in A.R.P. post, Anderson shelter, in the line of battle—on that black Friday when the Nazis were burning Boulogne, the BBC opened the working day for us with the Hungarian Rhapsody!

An odd thing happens in time of war. When a regiment goes to the front it packs up all its band instruments and turns its bandmen into stretcher bearers.

This looks a safe and sane arrangement for an age of mechanised warfare. But what happens? No sooner does the regiment get a period of rest from fighting than the officers start a subscription to buy some instruments locally. And if they don't—the men start writing to the newspapers for gifts of mouth-organs, harmonicas, saxophones—anything to make a noise and keep them cheerful.

I have been in some of the heaviest air-raids that ever happened—prior to this war. And what did we find? That those who didn't turn to whisky to keep their courage up, turned on the gramophone: "Tipperary" and "Pack Up Your Troubles."

When the Titanic Sank

Don't you remember how when the Titanic went down years ago—the sinking passengers stood up and sang: "Nearer My God to Thee?" If there had been a BBC announcer there he would undoubtedly have called on the orchestra to play "Finlandia." Life and death are simple things. They call for simple songs and hymns that the people know.

If there are intellectuals who are preventing the BBC from giving the public the music it deserves, then they should be transferred to a place where they can quickly discover what it feels like to hear the "Valse Triste" in a bombardment.

We have heard a great deal about Fifth Columns. There is a Fifth Column that assails the senses with languorous, insipid and depressing music at moments when we should be enlivened, cheered and inspired.

GOOD NEWS FOR FARMERS

An interior view in the factory just established by Horlick's Proprietary, Ltd., at Tokomaru, in the Manawatu. This new industry will use large quantities of milk and other New Zealand farm products

