

# MUSIC OF THE WEEK

*There is no art without life,  
There is no life without growth,  
There is no growth without change,  
There is no change without contro-  
versy.—Frank Rutter.*

**A**LEXANDER KIPNIS gave his first New Zealand concert in the Wellington Town Hall last Saturday. I had never before heard such supreme artistry from any male singer. Has anybody indeed, ever heard such artistic "mezzo voce" work—such graduations of tone and such glorious breath control? Kipnis, in my opinion at least, is the greatest male singer yet to visit the Southern Hemisphere. This may appear to be a sweeping statement, but those fortunate enough to hear this artist in person will appreciate its justice. Schubert's "Gute Nacht," a beautiful song, was but one of the evening's many gems. In the "Mephistopheles Serenade" we had real characterisation. It did not need the stage effects or the costuming to make the audience visualise the character of the music—Kipnis did it with voice and expression alone.

Again in the popular Moussorgsky "Song of the Flea" there was the same great artistry. If space permitted I would like to detail critically each item Kipnis performed, but sufficient it is for me to say that every number was sheer delight.

It is easy to understand why Toscanini is so affectionately fond of Kipnis. Both these men live in the sphere of sublime artistry.

Every true musician should go to see and hear Kipnis. In his music is the real "presence," because he sings from his soul.

I am sorry the hall was not packed to the doors. Judged by the number of musical societies and teachers of music in the Capital City, not a seat should have been vacant. It only leads me to suppose that Wellington's "lovers of music" are not playing the game with their art. Students alone should have filled the hall. Perhaps all who are students do not study? To miss seeing and hearing Kipnis would be a misfortune for any true musician.

A tribute must also be paid to Noel Newson, the Christchurch pianist, who played all the accompaniments flawlessly. Mr. Newson is a comparatively young man, but he is rapidly making a name for himself in the musical world. I could detect no flaws in his work on Saturday night.

**THE** first artist I heard last week was Ernest Jenner, pianist, from the Christchurch main National station. Mr. Jenner played Theme and Variations by Glazounoff excellently, even if, occasionally, the touch seemed a little on the "hard" side. The performer has real technical capabilities and plays with clarity. The Glazounoff variations are not very often played, and, even if they present few great difficulties, they are at least interesting.

**ON** Monday I heard a relay of the Wellington Harmonic Society conducted by Mr. Temple White and broadcast from the Wellington Town Hall Concert Chamber. The singers displayed some reasonably good vocal quality, but faulty intonation marred what might otherwise have been a fine performance. This was particularly noticeable in the part song I heard for women's voices.

In mixed dual numbers, the sopranos appeared to dominate the male voices at times, and as balance is one of the most essential features of concerted singing, I could not help feeling a little disappointed. A musical friend of mine, in whose judgment I have confidence, stated that he did not notice any outstanding weakness in the balance of the choir when he was in the hall. This only goes to show how sensitive the microphone really is, as I understand it was in an excellent position to pick up all the voices with equal volume. Artists should always remember that the slightest inconsistency in a broadcast performance is noticed by listeners much more easily

than by those in a hall. This should warn artists against careless work. The microphone is the supreme test of accurate performance.

**AT** the same concert I again heard Allan Loveday. This boy is indeed talented, and should be sent to a really first-class teacher on the continent or in England. He will quickly get into bad habits if he is not given an early opportunity to go away. Master Loveday is a definite case to point the advisability of sending a really promising student overseas as soon as possible. In contrast to my usual conviction about child prodigies, I feel that those who are looking after this boy's interests would be well advised to act quickly. I bring up this point again, because I noticed Allan introducing some faulty intonation into his higher position work. If he were not to rush things so much, he would do better.

The solo pianist was W. Dearden-Jackson, whom I have written about previously in this column. Later in the week, Mr. Jackson presented a bassoon recital from 2YA—and I enjoyed the latter performance better, even if one of the items played was not first-class music. In piano work, Mr. Jackson uses the sustaining pedal extensively and it does not help his playing from a broadcasting point of view. There is little, however, to be desired from an interpretative point of view.

**A** MISS IRENE PETTY was entertaining in a short group of French songs, presented during the week. The songs were of no great importance, but I like Miss Petty's style. Her voice is small, and she has a tendency to neglect the end of her phrases, but there is something fascinating about French songs of the Bergerette style.

**THERE** is not a great deal to say about Colin Horsley's playing of Beethoven's C Sharp Minor Sonata except that he played it very well indeed for such a young musician. In fact, I have had to listen to many weaker performances of the same work by mature artists. I only hope Colin Horsley will also have the advantage of good teachers when he leaves the Dominion.

**IDA** LOCKWOOD, a new violinist, gave a brief recital on the same programme. Miss Lockwood has a nice warm tone, and gave an interesting performance. She played Corelli Theme with Variations by Tartini, arranged by Kreisler. It went fairly well, but was not played with much decision. I have listened to Kreisler play this number, and he uses "spiccato" bowing for the first variation—Miss Lockwood did not.

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