

THE ZITHERPLAYER



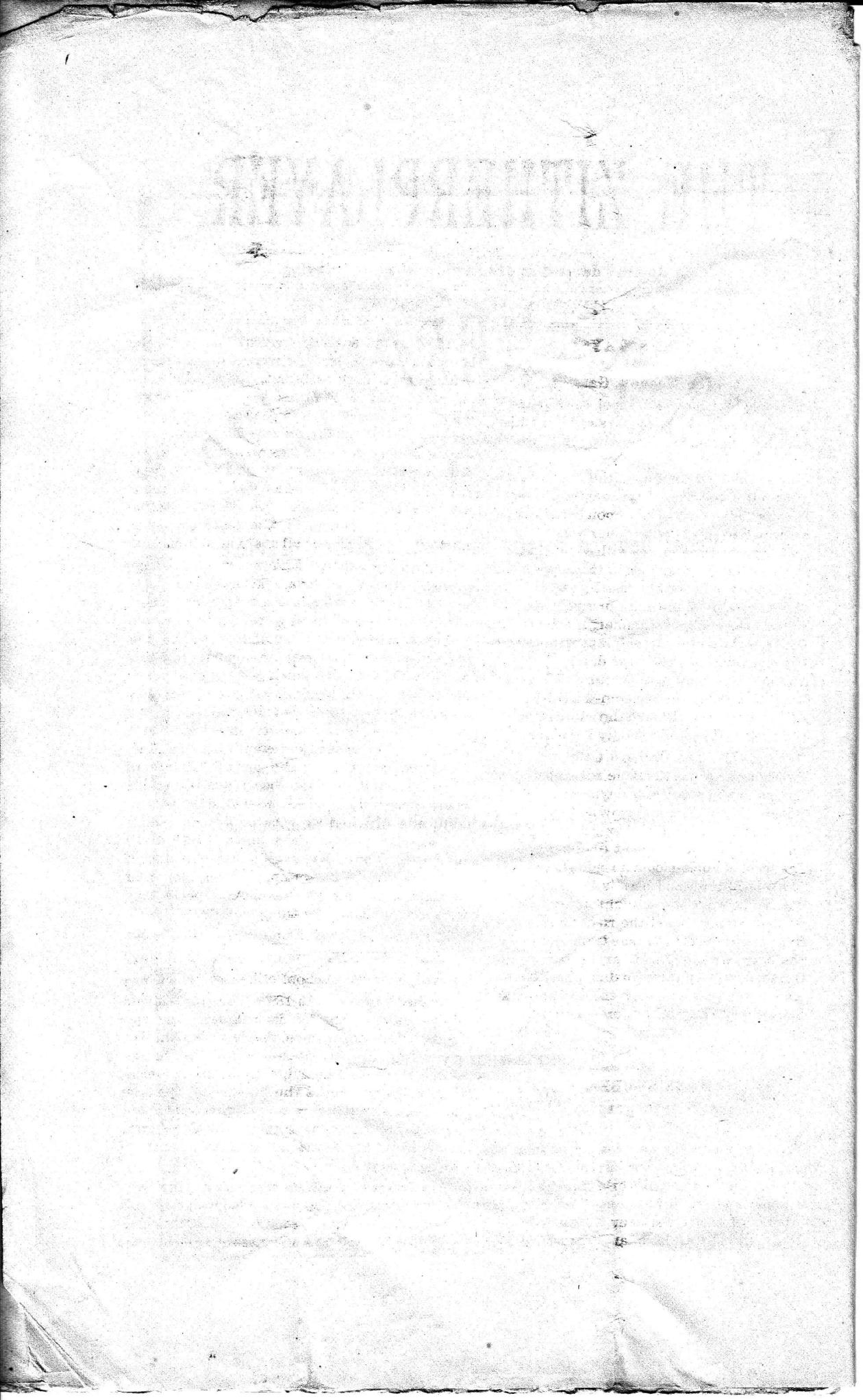
A Journal devoted to the interest of Zither playing.

O. G. Eckstein, Editor.

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VOL. I.

WASHINGTON, D. C., AUGUST 1, 1885.

NO. 8.

THE BROKEN TRYST.

I.—The Meadow Gate.

The apple-branches in the cool south wind
Weighted with snowy bloom sway to and fro,
And slanting sunshine trembling through the
trees

Weaves golden strands upon the orchard path.
Adown the well-worn way a maiden comes,
The first faint flush of love upon her cheek;
Anticipation shines within her eyes
And happiness she speaks with silent lips.
She breathes the fragrance of the apple bloom,
She hears the melody of rustling leaves,
The song of birds, the murmuring of bees,
She sees the sunlight shimmering o'er the path.
She feels the sweet contentment of the scene
The revelation of the vernal day.

And at the meadow-gate she turns and looks
Backward along the blossom-shaded lane.
And as she passes through the meadow-gate,
Whispers: "The world is only happiness."

II.—The Orchard Gate.

Two hours. Along the same remembered way
The maiden now her way retracing comes
With down-cast face and slow and weary steps.
The flush has faded from her fair young face,
The pain of disappointment dims her eyes.
The scent of apple-bloom no more is sweet,
The song of birds and bees is dissonant,
She does not see the sunlight on her way
Nor hear the rythm of the rustling leaves,
But at the orchard-gate she turns and looks:
She only sees a long and barren path
O'ershadowed by a mass of dull white bloom,
And as she passes through the orchard-gate
She sighs; "The world is only weariness."

E. M. T.

July 20th, 1885.

HANS GRUBER.

A Brief Biography.

We here present to our readers a man who, though going in years, has already won honor and glory in the musical world through his compositions, and as virtuoso and teacher, Hans Gruber of Stuttgart, Germany.

Hans Gruber was born at Regensburg Sept.,

14, 1850, his father being a machine builder. He attended the schools of his native town, and soon evincing great musical talent, he devoted considerable attention to Zither playing. When his school work was completed he was left to decide his own profession, and his love for music gaining the victory, he according went to the Royal Music School of Würzburg (1863-1866) from which institution he graduated in three years, with the highest honors. His favorite instrument was the Zither, to the development of which he has employed all his time and means.

His journey with the Zither virtuoso J. Lucas through Germany, Austria, Italy and Switzerland gained him many friends and the public generally acknowledged him as a celebrated virtuoso and every where, before the highest persons the two artists gained the greatest honors. But this life of travel did not furnish Gruber the necessary advantages in bringing out his talents successfully, and he therefore determined in the year 1875 to settle permanently in Stuttgart as a teacher. He was very successful from the first, his talents making him the general favorite of the public, and he soon began publishing his many compositions, which were highly esteemed by all authorities by reason of their beauty and superior quality. Since January 1879 these compositions have appeared under the title of "Solon Album für Zither spieler," and in order to make his compositions more popular they were also published for the pianoforte.

The want of good Zither instruction books having made itself felt, since no good "E. tuning" existed, he wrote a school of his own, which was published by himself in 1877. This work is one of the best, not only for its clearness, but also for its artistic importance, the Duke Maximilian becoming so deeply interested in it that he presented him with a medal, to show his appreciation, and Albert Hahn the founder of the tone Art speaks very highly of the Zither school and especially of the artistic arrangement of the work, which is so often found failing in the majority of the instructors.

As director of the club founded by him, Mr. Gruber, deserves the acknowledgment of all lovers of good music. The principle of this club is to promote only the best class of Zither music,

and a trio, composed of himself and two of his pupils, and a ladies trio have shown conclusively what can be done with the Zither by following this great principle. In 1879 this club changed its name to the "Hans Gruber Verein."

In the year 1879 the Union of German Zither Societies was founded, and the Stuttgart club participated as the founding society, Mr. Gruber being its delegate. In 1878 he was again present at the Congress at Nürnberg as a delegate and there gained the highest appreciation in the acknowledgement of his "E Stimmung," (tuning) by the technical commission. His highest honors were however gained as virtuoso. One of the leading papers in commenting upon the concert of the Congress says as follows:

"It is difficult to judge the light and shadow of the many beautiful selections that were presented to us. But we can state, that of all the performances that of Mr. Gruber, director of the Stuttgart club deserves the best praise for his excellent Concert Fantasie."

Mr. Gruber has placed himself upon the pinnacle of fame by his perseverance and hard work, and now occupies the highest rank in his profession, and well deserves the appreciation and esteem of all Zither players. May he yet live long, to promote the cause of the Zither.

PROGRAM OF THE VIII ZITHER UNION.

Program of the VIII Congress of the Association of German Zither Clubs to be held August 28, 29, 30 and 31, in Dresden, Germany.

Friday, August 28—Reception of the delegates and visitors by members of the association of Dresden.—Evening at six o'clock, meeting of the officers or council—eight o'clock, official reception and general entertainment.

Saturday, August 29—Morning 8:30, meeting of the Congress.—10:30 ensemble rehearsal—afternoon, excursion to Meissen and reception by resident members.

Sunday, August 30—8:30 A. M., Ensemble rehearsal—11:30, banquet Cafe on the Brühl Terrace—2:30 P. M., excursion to Loschwitz by steamer—Evening at 8, first grand concert.

Monday 31—8:30 A. M., second meeting of the Congress—11 o'clock, ensemble rehearsal—3 P. M., general rehearsal—7 o'clock, second concert of the Union,—farewell commers.

While on our recent trip East, we intended to visit a number of Zither players in New York, Philadelphia, etc., but owing to our limited stay we were forced to postpone such visits until the coming winter, when we will hope to test their hospitality to the utmost.

A letter from Ed. Lang, in reply to an anonymous criticism of his compositions which appeared in the *Zeitschrift*, has been received. It will appear in our next issue.

A HUMOROUS STORY OF ZITHER PLAYING.

(A modern incurable and contagious disease.)

With a wonderful amount of diligence, study and great exertion, which can never be fully appreciated, learned men have successfully combated with those diseases usually called "epidemics" since the beginning of this century. Notwithstanding how elating the results have been to the Philanthropist, the pure joy and pleasure is darkened by the circumstance that these men of science and learning have not taken steps to suppress certain social epidemics, although a work of this character, if successful, would better pay the workman. Very far from attempting to do what these graduated and learned men have until the present day neglected, we sincerely believe to be sure of the everlasting gratitude of fellow sufferers, when we satisfactorily show to the searching mind of deeper thinkers than we profess to be, this modern contagion which is always growing larger and more dangerous. We refer to the modern method of Zither playing, and the excesses to which it is being carried.

In former times, not so long ago, everybody knew the Zither as a cordial instrument, grown together with the minds of serene mountaineers. Played by a skillful hand, sometimes resembling the mysterious murmuring of the Acolian Harp, the Zither spoke in fervent tones to our hearts by those beautiful songs, which awoke a love of the mountains, smell of firs and the murmuring noise of the pine trees. Being so rarely heard in large cities, it was always welcome to everyone.

Suddenly this harmless instrument became the fashion, the causes for which we could not ascertain. Like locusts, a swarm of beginners, in whose hearts no mercy could be found, fell upon the human society. They chirped more unmelodiously than the locust, they darkened the sun of cordial family life, and at last made Zither playing a kind of disease or social epidemic. We have now undertaken to paint the Zither playing in this disagreeable form; if the novelty of the subject, and our small amount of practice in observation do not completely represent this social epidemic, the human zeal which we have endeavored to show may be considered our apology.

The fashionable disease of Zither playing seeks its victims without mercy in the highest and lowest strata of the human race. In nearly every one of the larger families of the present day, (in Germany) there is a person stricken with his disease, and for a sensitive individual it is only necessary to make a journey through Tyrol or Steiermark, and we can vouch for it, that the evil will also break out in the said individual. A little preceding acquaintance with violin playing, undigested instruction in striking the Piano, and several lessons in playing the Guitar, in connection with a little knowledge of notes, may be of the most dangerous consequences to the patient. When the evil has developed a little farther, the patient will go to Kundl etc., and will for a large sum of money, purchase an instrument, will cut his fingernails, engage a celebrated teacher and proceed to search for little tables with deep draws for resonance.

Energetic natures will at first entirely withdraw from the busy life of the world and its associations, take double lessons, camp out on the Zither day and night, and cannot be induced to keep quiet until they can produce to sisters, mothers and other forbearing souls, one of those pieces bearing the lovely title of "D Lauterbacherin," "Auf der Alm," "D Schwagerin," "D Giessmühl am Rhein" which differ only in the title but sound alike. After 24 lessons the patient knows so many "landlers," and he then enters into a new country by commencing more complicated pieces with critical "Doppelgriffen," and breaks, in his first attempt to unlock the mysteries of the "Schleifen," the thumb nail of the left hand. By this time he has occasioned his relatives and friends many fears as to his sanity, and especially when in one of his apoplectic fits to learn the "tremolo," he makes his first triller; but after having mastered this to his satisfaction he manages to break several steel strings to learn the next step, and eventually triumphs over the "Flageolet." Going further from this stand-point, the patient will either become a virtuoso, which class does not belong within the bounds of this article, or remain a sicolist. In the latter case there will be a crisis. When the patient finds himself alone, he will then stop to have his exertions on the Zither accompanied by an experienced person having the same disposition. A similarly tuned Pylades is soon found. In the majority of cases this is a string tested veteran who has already played corns on his fingers, and who at times shows a disposition for some outlandish dress, one which is generally termed "Steriche," with a preponderance of green hats, and who can also imbibe an incredible quantity

of beer. If the said corned gentleman succeeds in whipping into our Orestes, the mysteries of the duet, then the two worthies will prepare a surprise for a friendly family in order to assassinate them with two edge "Schnadahupfeln" and "Alpenlider." On these occasions the man with the corns secretly tunes the instruments in an adjoining room, and the two proceed to terrify the lady of the house by scratching the mahogany tables with their instruments. The good impression of the first production is usually weakened by many unforeseen circumstances; our Neophyte plays wrong when it is absolutely necessary to play right, brings the bass accompaniment into the utmost confusion, then is brought again into the right path by his corned and beer drinking companion, and at last avers that he knew the piece very well at home, a fact which is within the border of possibility, but which as a general rule never satisfies the friends. In order to save the honor of the profession, the corned Pylades will produce an enormous number of "Ländler," during the delivery of which no person in the room is allowed to stir, on pain of being informed to keep quiet by the fanatics. This becomes very dangerous, when it desires to be, without any preceding practice whatever, accompanied on the piano. We do not remember a single instance in which the patient succeeded in tuning the unruly instrument in harmony with the piano, notwithstanding the fact that he has already struck the a., an incredible number of times, and also the tuning fork at the table, his head, teeth and all other such objects capable of being represented to the mind. The consequence being that the difference of opinion amounts to about a quarter of a tone, enough to make a person endowed with an average degree of hearing mad, and to instantly clear the room. Without heeding the danger of being considered by our readers, as malignant and bitter characters, we state that we always feel the greatest satisfaction in seeing the productions of the zitherophile pushed into the background. If the accompanying person is a virtuoso he will—thank God—overtune the Zither, and if the said person is a smatterer he will look with anxiety for his accord, and not finding it, he will endeavor to build himself a homestead on the pedal, and then also overtune the Zither; at any rate, it will be overtuned.

It will be less ludicrous when the popular repertoire, in whose narrow borders the beginners are moving, becomes the cause of bringing several persons together who have not as much music in their souls or voices as a boot, which at least accompanies the wearer in

screaching, to accompany the instrument with a decided unmusical chorus. This will no doubt loosen the rocks that keep our mountains erect. It is the entire absence of a great sum of money, not the fear of losing it, that prevents us from proposing the bet, that in every grade of society, before which a Zither freshman produces his ear-tearing selections of popular songs "Good bye my lover, good bye" "Sweet Violets," etc, several gentlemen will jump up with the great criminal design of giving the necessary words to the so called accompaniment. Even men whose social and political characters leave room for hardly anything else, are not ashamed to acknowledge that they have voices of sweetness and durability, and they generally request absent girls to leave their windows open on a certain evening, to ask imaginary captains leave of absence, and to assure the neighbors that "Auf der Alm a Freud is." If such an assassination occurs after supper, these gentlemen will put their thumbs to their arm pits, and after having made all hearing beings unhappy, four footed not excepted, return to their homes with the firm belief that they have "gejodelt" perfectly.

The question is, whether a person stricken with this disease can be radically cured. This is impossible for us to answer at the present time. It is stated that such cases have happened when the patient becomes married and a number of children appear to show him the proper ways of life and give his thinking mind a decidedly positive direction. We firmly believe that a person who has once become cured will by visiting the concerts of the great masters, re-lapse into their former state of illness.

The disease of Streich Zither is an evil which appears more rarely. The "Streich Zither" (often called stomach fiddle) is an instrument which requires a great amount of gymnastic exercises. We place this instrument on the table, put the round part to our stomach, seize the neck on which are several strings with the left hand which will then be about two and one-half feet from our stomach, and move the bow on the strings. This movement requires an unusual amount of skill and therefore is so rarely met with.

We will condescend to give the reader who is no doubt terrified at reading of this modern, fashionable, contagious, and nearly incurable disease, an instance in which a remarkable cure was effected. A young lady from the better circles had become stricken with this terrible disease, which had been contracted by her acquaintance with a Captain of Hussars who was a virtuoso on the instrument. This lady was pretty

and interesting and blessed with such a roguish look, which was used to such advantage that all the beaux fairly, worshiped her, and true connoisseurs would always look at her beautiful hands which were ten times prettier than her pretty face. These were a pair of hands, kept so well, so fine and tender, and with such rosy finger nails that one was tempted to invent a new number of gloves with which to honor them. With these fairy hands the poor Zither stricken being in her first paroxysm, seized on a masterpiece of Kiendl, and rummaged through it without heading the pains caused by the severe pressure of the strings. But on these dear hands she discovered a number of bruises the other morning, and found one of the rosy finger nails broken. Three weeks and four cups of "Glycerine Cream" were needed to restore the fingers to their former softness. From playing the Zither she was radically cured, the disease having gone out at the finger tips.

Friends take warning. Diseases can be cured. Let not these difficulties overcome your natural pride and enthusiasm. Don't become sciolists. Practice enough and you will all become virtuosos.

ENFLUENCE OF MUSIC UPON REPTILES.

By G. R.

It is a well known fact that music has a great effect on animals, and this interesting fact has been made the subject of many learned discussions. It is not necessary to go deeply into the scientific results obtained by so many great men as Vogt, Jäger, Brehm, Senz and others, nor do I intend going further into the subject than to give several interesting observations which have come under my notice during the past few years.—Snakes as a rule are the most susceptible to the charms of music. Several years ago while in Berlin, two Hindoos and a young Indian boy of about fifteen years of age came to the Capitol of Germany. These Indians were then considered to be the best snake charmers then living, and they had brought with them six or eight asps, or as they are better known, Cobra de Capello, (Naja tripudianis,) (the most venomous reptiles of the world, and natives of the East Indies,) and two large snakes also very venomous and a number of small snakes.

These snake charmers had performed before the Prince of Wales when he was in India, and were invited by an enterprising captain of the English navy to make a journey through Europe to show the snakes to the public. The snake charmers, showed their species in the Walthalla

of Berlin and met with a brilliant success, but not on the first evening when the reptiles were allowed to wander freely over the stage, to the demoralization of the entire audience. The two charmers made their appearance and took the Capra de Capellos out of the baskets, the audience in the meanwhile looking on in breathless silence, the only manifestation of fear being apparent in the action of several ladies who were compelled to leave upon the too near approach of one of the largest snakes in the vicinity of their private box. The Indian then placed a small black snake (a very lively one, by the way) upon the stage. At this time many suspicious persons in the gallery shouted, Eel, eel! Eel, eel! How much do you want for it? These shouts interrupted the exhibition for a time, but they soon ceased, when the Indian boy performed several tricks with the reptiles, and left them in a bunch on the stage. A musical instrument was then produced, on which he then began to play, not so artistically as many of our modern Piano, Guitar, Violin and Zither performers however; after a short time had elapsed the snakes began to move, some crawling up to the charmer, while others rolled themselves together, and raising their heads commenced swaying in tact with the tunes of the flute. In a short time, the whole family of snakes were in motion, following the cadences of the music, these motions resembling the evolutions of a dancing couple, and was indeed called by the Hindoos, the dance of the snakes. The Hindoo played on, and the large snakes soon made their appearance and joined their companions in the dance. The actions of these reptiles superinduced by the simple tones of a flute, with my past observations, convinced me that the influence of music upon the human race, is of no comparison, and not one fraction as great as that upon all the species of reptiles.

A lady having expressed the desire to speak with the charmers, the manager invited her into their room, which was in a back building about fifty paces from the theater, so that they could go directly upon the stage. The lady, finding no chair in the room, seated herself on a large basket and conversed with the Hindoos in English, and among other things said she was not in the least afraid of snakes, and expressed a desire to hear the Hindoos play on the flute. The eldest complied with the wish as a natural result, and in a short while the lady became as pale as a table cloth, and with a cry jumped from the basket.—She had been sitting upon the basket containing the snakes, which, roused by the sounds of the music had begun moving, probably with the idea of repeating their performance of the same

evening, and thus terrified the lady. Many experiments were made with these snakes, but as they do not fall within the scope of this article, I shall forego the pleasure of relating them.

In Switzerland there is the following tradition: In one part of Switzerland there were at one time many snakes, and the peasants could do nothing against the reptiles. One day a man appeared at the village, and volunteered to drive out all the snakes. The peasants had no faith in the alleged snake charmer, but nevertheless followed him to a certain place, where he mounted a large stone, and began playing on a small silver pipe. A short time only elapsed before numbers of snakes crawled out of holes, crevices and bushes, and assembled around him.—The peasants were terrified at this unusual spectacle and ran home for dear life. The conjurer was afterwards found dead, but no snakes were ever again seen in the neighborhood.

This story resembles somewhat the well known tradition of the rat hunter of Hameln. In the middle of the thirteenth century, the city of Hameln in Germany was infested or stricken with a rat-plague, and when the authorities who had done all in their power to rid the city of the terribly curse, could do nothing further, a man in a very strange garb made his appearance, and promised to drive out all the rats for the sum of two hundred marks. The magistrates agreed to do this, and on one dark night the rat charmer began performing on a little flute which he always carried with him, and soon a perfect regiments of rats poured out of the city and were led by the rat catcher into the river. There was great joy in the city, but the magistrates glad to get rid of the fellow, refused to pay the money promised, telling the conjurer that he should beglad to leave the city unmolested, since they, the magistrates, could burn him as a magician. The rat catcher left the place, saying that he would revenge himself speedily. It was on the day of St Peter and Paul, when the inhabitants were all in the church, leaving only the children at home, that the rat catcher appeared clad in red, and playing on his flute. All the children flocked together and followed the conjurer, betwitched by the strains of his instrument. The conjurer led the children out of the town, to a neighboring mountain which opened on his appearance and received them all. If any of my readers will visit Hameln they can still see the picture of a red man cut into the stone at a house near the place where the conjurer passed with the children.

To be Continued.

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MONTHLY.

O. G. ECKSTEIN, Editor.

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FRANZ WALDECKER & CO.,

PUBLISHERS AND PRINTERS,

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We will esteem it a kindness if all Zither players, teachers, directors of clubs, and others, will send us all items of musical interest, that transpire in their immediate vicinity, such as personals, club reports, concert reports, and short or lengthy contributions that may interest the musical fraternity in general. Every reader should make it his special object to spread the love for our instrument.

The humorous story of Zither playing in this issue is partly taken from the Harmonie of 1882. We hope our readers, will appreciate the fever and the difficulties in the path of the Zither player.

* * *

The Centralblatt in its last issue in correcting its mistake relative to the publication of Mr. A. Biehfeld's arrangements in the bass key is guilty of a useless expenditure of sarcasm. Such petty triflings should be stopped. It certainly is not in the interest of Zither playing.

* * *

A correspondent writes that the Zitherplayer is an excellent journal, but that it makes him feel silly when he reads the communications of Zitherplayers in which they describe the instrument in such terms as "the charming Zither" "our dear instrument" etc. He says it sounds kitterish and over sentimental. May be he is right. Our thoughts might be as well expressed without the use of the above quoted and superfluous adjectives.

* * *

Now that the extreme heat has set in for good, the various clubs have discontinued operations until the atmosphere in the neighborhood of the club room shall have again returned, to its normal condition. Concerts, rehearsals and entertainments have been suspended, and club news comes in very slowly and far between. We hope that our correspondents have not forgotten us in their own discomforts, and that they will

keep us posted as far as Zither news is concerned. The Zither Player must exist, whether we melt or not, and Washington is not the coolest place in the world either. We hope to make the Zitherplayer as attractive and interesting to our readers during the heated term as it has been during the past months, and even more so, for all our readers will join with us in saying, that the little journal has improved with nearly every issue.

* * *

We desire to enter on a subject in our columns again this month which deserves special mention and to which we feel our readers will lend earnest attention. We refer to the great injury done the cause of Zither playing by the numbers of incompetent teachers of the instrument, and the vast army of pupils they succeed in securing by the tempting bait of low prices for tuition. If these pupils would exercise their thinking powers to even a slight degree, they would discover in a short time the evil of attempting to build a life-work upon such a weak and trembling foundation. Many thoughtless people in commencing a study of this kind first seek out the different professors whose trashy advertisements fill the leading journals—the less knowledge they possess, the more willing are they to promise impossibilities—and in most cases persons of judgment might observe at a casual glance that so much in the way of guarantee could scarcely be a fair sample of the wisdom of any good teacher. Our advice to those who desire to become Zither players of any merit is to seek by way of recommendation those teachers who may best be relied upon for thorough methods, and whose reputations have been made by the successful pupils who are proud to call them their instructors, aside from their own brilliant execution and well tested knowledge. To undertake to learn to play the instrument by engaging the services of an ignorant person who simply possesses a smattering of the art, and is glad to teach *all he knows* for the small sum of 25 cts., or thereabouts per lesson is a grievous error, and one to be avoided. By so doing one is liable to acquire, in lieu of the rudiments, grave faults which in some cases no after cultivation can ever conquer. Limited space forbids our entering at length into this earnest subject, but acting upon the principle that "a word to the wise is sufficient," we trust our suggestions may prove of some weight in the community of would-be Zitherplayers, and rouse them to a sense of necessity far prompt and concerted action from all those interested in the art of Zither playing to make it one of the greatest and most sublime attractions of the near future.

PERSONALS.

Mr. F. Waldecker arrived in Bremen July 1st, unaffected by the usual sea sickness. He is now in Munchen with the Tiefenbrunner firm, as their guest.

Mr. Henry F. Walliser of Philadelphia, Pa., has been in Chicago Ill., for the past few weeks making the acquaintance of many of the prominent Zither players of that city.

Mr. S. T. Kostitch of Leadville, Col., has been very energetic in the interest of good music in his city, and especially for the Zither. He was one of the prime movers in organizing a club there.

Mr. Adolph Maurer of Chicago, the well known writer on musical subjects, now in Germany will take part in the Zither congress in Dresden this year. His excellent arrangement, Symphony V. Haydn, has been placed on the program of the yearly concert of the Congress.

Mr. Julius Maedel, director of the Washington Zither club, was unable to make the contemplated tour to New York and vicinity last month on account of pressing law business, much to his regret as he had hoped to be able to meet some of the leaders of other organizations while there.

Prof. John Good, the efficient Zither teacher of Cincinnati, Ohio, has been very successful with the instrument, and his work is beginning to bear fruit, judging from the number of excellent scholars he now has. Mr. Good is much pleased with the Zitherplayer and its contents, and recommends it to his pupils as a work from which many valuable points can be obtained. We thank him for his kindly interest.

Miss Kitty Berger, the renowned Zither virtuoso gave one of her concerts in London June 10th. 1885, before a large and select audience. The papers sent us speak well of her performance,—a success due to the masterly and artistic manner of her execution and her technique—and especially praise her rendition of Haydn's Menuett, and "Grossvaterchen" by Grassmann. Her own compositions "La Gondoliera" and "L Adien" were also well received as were all the selections on the program, the applause showing to what extent the fair player had captivated the large audience. Miss Berger is a disciple of Philip Grassmann, and has played before many of the noble families of Europe, notably among which was the Queen at Windsor. She will leave London about the first week in September for her American tour accompanied by Mr. C. Ott, an accomplished Zitherist.

MUSICAL.

Liszt, who is in his seventy-fourth year, is florid, smooth shaven, very tall, and has long white hair.

Mr. Conreid, the New York German manager, has received Millocker's latest opera, the "Vice Admiral," and will soon have it in shape for American production.

In transmission by cable the facts regarding Audran's new opera got sadly mixed up. The work is called "La Belle Fermiere," and the book is by Farnie. It will soon be put on at the Comedy theater, London.

Although it has been repeatedly asserted that Myron W. Whitney was done with opera when he left the Ideal Opera Company, it is now said that he and Mathilde Phillips will be members of the Thurber-Thomas opera organization.

Auber wrote 44 operas, Bellini, 16; Coccia, 40; Coppola, 17; Donizetti, 66; Halevy, 32; Mercadante, about 60; Meyerbeer, 15; Mozart, 16; Puccini, about 100; Petrella, 24; Ricci (Federico,) 19, four of them being written conjointly with his brother Luigi; Ricci (Luigi,) 28; and Rossini, 30. Verdi has written 26 and Gounod 13.

Sir Arthur Sullivan appears to be amused at the criticism so commonly heard upon his successive efforts in the comic opera line. "Very good, you know, but not up to the last one." In speaking of this characteristic of the criticisms of the public the composer said, recently: "I guess the reason for this is that the public always remember the last opera best because the airs are still fresh. By the way, I sometimes realize now that people think my reputation as a musician was made by my comic operas. The fact is that my success in music was mainly in oratorios and symphonies and serious work of that nature."

The new management of the Casino, New York, elated by the success of "Nanon," are rewarding their artists by introducing a code of discipline as elaborate as that of West Point.—Every night on entering their dressingrooms the people are sure to find some new rule posted up. First of all the chorus were banished from the green-room; then not allowed to stand in the wings, only one exception being made; again, warning was given that any one using a word or line not in his or her part was to be fined. Frank Wilson has grown rather tired of this, so he issued a bogus notice on Monday night which ran as follows: "Ladies and gentlemen of the chorus will, in case of fire, remain seated in their dressing-rooms until the principals are safely out of the building."

MOZART'S CHILDHOOD.

"There can be but one Mozart." How often have these words been repeated by all who are familiar with the music of this immortal master, the prince of melody! Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born at Salzburg, Austria, January 27th, 1750. His musical career began in his infancy. His remarkable genius, together with his serious face, caused the fear that he would not live to grow up. His sister, Mari- anne, had considerable musical talent, and while her father was giving her lessons, Wolfgang would employ himself in picking out thirds. He soon received instruction with her on the clavier. He was a sweet, tractable child, applying himself to whatever was set before him to learn; but soon everything was given up for music. At the age of six he composed a concerto for the piano, so difficult that his father could not play it, and Wolfgang was obliged to show him how it should go. Wolfgang then began to study the violin, and one day, when some musicians were practising together at his father's house, he begged that he might join them. His father requested him to play very softly so as not to disturb the others; but he played so beautifully that the second violin, whom he accompanied, soon ceased and left Wolfgang to finish alone. The child was of a sunny and loving disposition, and would often say: "Next to God comes Papa." He wished that he could "put his papa under a glass case, so that he could never escape from home," and once, when away from home, he "sends his mamma a hundred million kisses Mariane's nose and mouth."

In 1762 his father took Wolfgang and his sister to Vienna, where they were enthusiastically received. The children were petted by the whole court, and Wolfgang hugged and kissed the Empress Maria Theresa and the little Princesses before leaving.

Mozart's Greatest Opera.

In October, 1787, after his return to Vienna, Mozart produced his greatest opera, "Don Giovanni." As late as the night before the performance the overture had not been copied.—Mozart wrote on until late into the night, and his wife could only keep him awake by telling him the old fairy tales, such as he loved when a child; at times he would break from laughter to tears, until, growing more and more weary, he fell asleep. At seven the next morning, he arose and finished the score, the ink in some parts being scarcely dry when the copies

were placed on the musicians desks. The musicians had to play the overture at sight, but its beauties aroused the greatest enthusiasm both in the players and the audience. Mozart superintended all the rehearsals, and inspired the singers with his own ideas and feelings. He taught the hero to dance a minuet, and when one of the singers failed to conquer his score, Mozart altered it on the spot. At last the emperor bestowed a court position on Mozart, but the salary was so meager—it was less than \$500,—that it was of little help to him, while his duty, to compose dance-music for the court, was humiliating. Well could he reply, when asked his income by the tax-gatherer, "Too much for what I do; too little for what I could do." *Agatha Tunis, in "From Bach to Wagner," St. Nicholas for July.*

MISCELLANEOUS.

The Centralblatt will publish a humorous supplement with their issue of Nov. or Dec., of this year.

A new Zither Club was formed in Hamburg April 15th, 1882, under the name Zitherbund Einigkeit, with a large number of active and passive members.

Mr. Ahrens the well known Zither teacher has resigned as an honorary member of the Hamburg Zither Club owing to the trouble between Messrs Pugh and Wachtler.

In the extraordinary meeting of the Hamburg Zither club in 1873, Mr. Hausen was elected Director and still remains in that position which he has filled with credit to himself and to the club, to the present day.

The music teacher, Bernhard Fritz of Regensburg has published fifteen original compositions for the Zither, under the title of "Mein Zitherbuch" which are very easy. The work is good and the price very low.

The Centralblatt has succeeded in obtaining a number of note books belonging to the late Max Albert through Mr. J. Engel. These contain many valuable notes on music, literature, etc., which the Centralblatt intend to classify and publish in a short time.

At a general meeting of the Munchen Zither club may 13, it was ascertained that 72 names were on the rolls as members, Mr. H. Thouer is the Director and Mr. H. Schmidt the President. The treasurer of the club reported that 1600 marks were in the treasury. This is one of the most flourishing clubs in the world.

Mr. Jos. Goerlich has resigned his office as President of the Union of German Zither clubs, because of his poor health, the duties of the office requiring an amount of labor which in his present condition he was unable to perform. Mr. P. L. Lang, the 2nd President fills the position temporarily.

Mr. John Pugh after five years study and experimenting has constructed a Zither, which it is thought will surpass all those now in use. The instrument, is intended too almost equal the piano in force and fullness. It is stated with great satisfaction that Mr. Pugh will string this instrument with 39 instead of 42 strings.

On account of the bitter quarrel which has lately broken out between Pugh and Wachtler, both members of the Hamburg Zither Club, a general meeting was called on June 11th, and notwithstanding the fact that the constitution required the Secretary to notify all of the members, the President considered it unnecessary to invite Mr. Pugh, and the results easily explain this omission. A motion was made to expel Mr. Pugh as an honorary member of the club, and the following day, the expelled member received a notification of his expulsion but no reasons were assigned. The Zither teacher Mr. Ahrens disgusted with this extraordinary proceeding immediately sent in his resignation as a member of the club. Want of space precludes the possibility of giving the reasons for this unusual proceeding, but we will endeavor to publish the same in our next issue.

CORRESPONDENCE AND CLUB REPORTS.

A club has been recently organized in Leadville Col., with the following instruments: Four discant Zithers, piano, cornet, with damper to reduce sound, and first and second violins. No doubt the members will acquit themselves well, but it is difficult to obtain music for such a combination.

The regular semi-annual business meeting of the Capital Zither Club was held July 5th, 1885 and the following officers were elected to serve for the ensuing six months:

- Mr. J. A. Maedel, President and Director.
- " H. Rupprecht, Vice President and Librarian.
- " O. G. Eckstein, Secretary.
- " H. Feldhaus, Treasurer.

The reports of the officers showed the club to be in a flourishing condition. The club should be congratulated on its success the past winter while yet in its infancy, and it is hoped that

when the two months vacation has passed the members will work with redoubled vigor and continue their good work of the past season.

Denver Col., July 25th, 1885.

Editor "Zither Player:"

I am sorry to inform you of Prof. Henry Steinbach's departure for the East last week; he contemplates visiting the principal cities of the country with a view of giving concerts, and no doubt will visit your city later in the season.— Prof. Steinbach appeared in public here on several different occasions after his concert at the Tabor Grand Opera House; he was also tendered a benefit on the evening of July 5th, at the East Turner Hall from which he realized a very handsome sum. Mr. Heber, Mrs. and Mr. Martin's of our quartette are sojourning among the Rocky Mountains to while away the hot summer months, and no doubt during the delightful evenings, such as one can only find among the snow capped peaks of the Rockies, are adding much pleasure to the numerous guests in their neighborhood by the sweet tones of our Instrument; thus you see the Zither has found its way from the level of tide water to the peaks of the Rocky Mountains.

Notwithstanding the untimely season of the year for concerts and musicals there is hardly a week passes but what I am not asked to assist in making up a programme for some entertainment, and your correspondent is about the only one left in the city at present to remind our public that we still live, which I did on the evening of July 2nd, at a summer nights musicale given the Emmanuel Church Choir at Lincoln Hall. The selection on this occasion being "Ein Abend auf der Alm," Fantasie by Gutman, which called forth an irresistible encore and was answered to with the ever pleasing selection issued as a supplement to The Zitherplayer some time previous, "Ein Kuss." I will here state that both of the above mentioned selections were played with Piano accompaniment, and must say had a very pleasing effect. This however is due to the elegant and expressive manner in which the Piano was played by one of Denvers most charming young ladies, Miss Adelle Lawerre, and allow me through your valuable Journal to extend to her my heartfelt thanks for the kind assistance rendered. I am also indebted to prof. Henry Steinbach for the present of a handsome gold Zither-ring.

Yours truly,
Geo. R. Kröning.

A VISIT TO NEW YORK AND BROOKLYN.

On Sunday July 5th, while the thermometer was on the verge of 95° in the shade, we wended our weary way through a sultry street in Brooklyn, N. Y., convinced that we would be fully compensated for the exertion on arriving at our destination, or in other words, the residence of the well-known Zitherplayer, John Arnold. Owing to the fact that we were bearing the trademark of a Washington firm in the character of the shoes in which we trod the cobble-stones of Broadway, ere long caused us to groan in spirit, and we hied us to one of those sometimes welcome vehicles, cycloptstreet-cars, of which New York and Brooklyn boast so many varieties to be only distinguished as to course per compass by their many colored hues. Upon reaching the domicile of Professor Arnold, we were cordially received by his amiable wife and ushered into his presence, finding him busily occupied with a newly purchased printing press and surrounded on all side by music boxes, instruments, half written compositions and sheet music. He is a man of large proportions, and appeared to be a good-natured happy-go-easy fellow, taking the world as it comes, satisfied to be with his music and his pupils, and greeted us with a warmth of welcome that was only equalled by the temperature of the day. At this visit we were not only so fortunate as to find the Professor but also his brother, an expert guitar player, and his son, August, who is a regular chip of the old block and really an excellent performer on the Zither. The Professor was kind enough to render several of his own compositions which are not yet published, and with his brother and son entertained us delightfully until dinner was announced. The son is only about eleven years of age and bids fair to follow in the footsteps of his talented father. The Zither club organized by Professor Arnold, which gave so creditable an exhibition last season, is composed, with one exception of young persons under the age of sixteen years, and he states that they do better than other clubs composed of adults, that they learn better and can be taught more. In this connection we would mildly suggest that the deductions are largely due to the fact that these young persons have not arrived at the altitude attained by so many would-be musicians who are thoroughly convinced that they "know it all," at a time when strict and earnest study is necessary, and thus preclude the possibility of ever becoming adepts in the art of Zither-playing by such sublime self-satisfaction Professor Arnold has written many new

compositions which deserve recognition. They are not similar to the majority of his popular arrangements but if possible are of a higher order of merit, and will shortly be published, possibly by our own firm.

Our next visit was to Mr. E. G. Egge an expert Zither player, and the well known manufacturer of Zither jewelry. Mr. Egge has a splendid business house, and we were surprised to find when ushered into his sanctum, so young a man at its head. His business of manufacturing jewelry is one of excellent appointments, and of such a character as to make it impossible for many others to compete with him in the manufacture of Zither jewelry, such as charms scarf pins, etc., in variety, durability, beauty and cheapness.— His latest designs of Zither pins and badges are beautiful and are to be recommended to clubs desiring emblems of fraternity. We spent a delightful morning with Mr. Egge, and on Wednesday July 8th visited the Hoboken Zither club, of which he is the most energetic member. This club is but a small one, and composed of only far advanced players, the members being of the opinion that six good players can create more enjoyment for themselves, and also be able to improve their musical talents to better advantage than by having a larger body of inexperienced players, many of whom must necessarily be superfluous. They have decided musical talent and play well together, and we will no doubt in the course of time, judging from their ambition and their love for the instrument, hear much of them in their own Jersey home, which by the way, they no longer consider to be out of the Union, and also in New York and vicinity. Their amiable leader thoroughly understands the natures of the individual members, and there is no wonder that under his charge, they have become a happy young family, the head of which appears to be our old friend and well wisher,

Mr. George Bender, the inventor of several improvements on the Zither, the last of which is his "Double Resonance Zither" of which we shall write at some future date. Mr. Bender is a pleasant gentleman of about 55 years, and entertained us right royally. He is an expert Guitarist, and has a personal acquaintance with many of our most prominent composers and Zitherists having travelled throughout the whole of Europe as a member of a concert organization, using the guitar however as his principal instrument. He has few peers in this or other countries in his fund of information relative to the wants of the Zither and its literature, and his discussion bearing upon these subjects was not only entertaining, but also very instructive, and his practical demonstrations showing to our perfect satis-

faction that his inventions are of superior merit.

His reminiscences were instructive and enjoyable, our one regret being that we were forced so soon to leave our entertaining host and return to our friends in the city of churches where we were quartered during the Sangerfest.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

The long drawn triumph of the victorious Roman Marshallled in its imperial state along the Appian way, entering the wall-girdled city and climbing to the pillared poticoes of the Capitoline hill; the entrance of the conquering German legions into the vanquished city of the Franks; the annual pilgrimage to Mecca or to the sacred grotto of our Lady of Lourdes, all these passed in rapid review through the editorial mind and were photographed upon the editorial retina when he looked forward to the arrival within the sacred metes and bounds of the "city of Brotherly love."

A pilgrim from the rush and fret and fume and dust of Gotham, in the Quaker City he would rest and recuperate his weary frame; drawing from the sacred atmosphere of the City Hall that mystic and recondite piety which enabled William Penn in a bygone age to cheat the too confiding Indian of his broad acres, and chaffer with the painted dames of the English court for the whiteslaves with which to till the stolen meads.

The Philadelphia Zither club having heard of our approaching procession made ample and kindly preparations to celebrate the entry of the procession aforesaid, and doubtless if these extraordinary happenings had occurred in "the good old times" which fools and poets love to talk about, the keys of Philadelphia would doubtless have been presented to us upon a crimson velvet cushion, while fifty maidens spread flowers in our festive path and a few hundred plebs would, doubtless, have passed in their cheeks in the wild rush of the populace to witness our triumphal entry owing to the faulty arrangements of the halberdiers.

The committee of three appointed by the club waited long and patiently at the railroad Depot, watching plaintively, and finally with that righteous anger permitted by the Scripture, the numerous incoming trains. Unfortunately the procession had mislaid its return ticket home, and sending no explanatory telegram the patient committee of welcome turned their faces homeward doubtless much chagrined at their recalcitrant visitor. Arriving later we meandered peacefully up to Mr. Jacobi's residence on 4th, street where our host met us with a hearty hand-shake which nearly dislocated the articulations of our dexter paw. A long correspondence and our intimate acquaintance with his excellent work for the Zither had made us friends as though of years standing, and we were agreeably surprised to find in a young man of thirty the Jacobi of whom we had heard so much and often, and who has done, moreover, so very much to popularize

the Zither in America. Although a man of few words and very modest and retiring withal, Mr. Jacobi is very emphatic when necessary and every member of the club would go through fire and water to please him.

Our arrival brought the committee's indignation-meeting to an end and joining them round the festive board. While awaiting the advent of the club, many old relics and curiosities were exhibited and amongst them an antique and very primitive Zither, very similar, doubtless, to that on which old Petzmayer first performed. The members of the club to the number of thirty sauntered in which was a great surprise, as we had hardly expected to find so large a membership in the club of the city. After much pleasant social converse in which the hearty manner of our welcome soon made us all as comfortable and kindly as though we had known each other for years, the musical repertoire of the evening was commenced.

An interesting program was presented for our benefit, and we were gratified by the superb rendition:

The "Introductory" composed by Mr. Jacobi was executed by the whole club, comprising fifteen discant zithers, three violin zithers, and four guitars, in perfect time and with great expression bringing out with marked emphasis the peculiar genius with which Mr. Jacobi leads his well trained compeers, holding them well in hand, and achieving results which none but a Maestro could even hope for. This Introduction is a beautiful composition, in which he uses the violin Zither to excellent advantage, employing very deep tones, a fact noticeable in all his compositions, thereby making the instrument act as cello to an orchestra. This in our opinion is a decided improvement over the majority of our German composers. A "Souvenir de spa" by Servais was played by Mr. F. Meyer with a touch and feeling which are seldom equalled, while the "Alone" by Waldecker by Mr. Deeg, showed a brilliant execution and touch, and a perfect mastery over the instrument. Special mention should be made of J. Faltermayer's, execution of the beautiful violin Zither solo, "Fraum der Rose," which was delivered in really artistic style, and cannot be too much praised. The Rosen Waltzer by Jacobi, considered to be the master piece of the popular composer, was the most appreciated of all the numbers comprising the excellently arranged program, and when published, the piece will no doubt be in great demand. While every piece rendered deserves commendation, especially those of the clubs numbers, want of space makes it necessary to curtail our praises, yet we can safely say, "we never heard the Zither played as it was by the Philadelphia Zither club."

We regretted that our stay with our new found friends was of so short a duration, but the God speed must be said and filled with the remembrances of an evening which only a lover of Zither music can appreciate, we grasped the wreath which was presented to us by the club in honor of our deceased father, and having promised to be present at the next concert of the club, were soon on the way to our own city of magnificent distances.

(The names of the members of the club will be published in our next issue.)

London, Eng., June 22nd, 1885.

The London Zither club gave a very successful concert on June 22nd, and have requested us to publish the program :

1. Duet, "Vereinsgruss," Marsch.....Fl. Ringler
Herren Ringler und Stoll.
2. Duet for Zither and Streichzither, "Arie u. Miserere" aus der Opera "Troubadeur",.....Verdi
Herren Ringler und Stoll.
3. Duet, "Hochzeits-Reigen," Walzer...Grasmann
Herren Ringler und Stoll.
4. Duet, "Serenade,".....Umlauf
Herren, Gabel und Von Oamsenfels.
5. Duet f. Züher & St'chzither, "Menuet"....Mozart
Herren C. Schulz und Von Gamsenfels.
6. Duet, "Glockenspiel,".....
Hurren Hellberg and Von Gamsenfels.
7. Solo, "Melancolie,".....Grasmann
Herren Fl. Ringler.
8. Duet, "Auf Wohlhlaulsfittigen,".....Umlauf
Herrren Ringler and Stoll.
9. Solo, "Depesche aus London," Concert-
FantasieRingler
Herren Ringler.
10. Solo, "Souvenir de Faust,"Gounod
Herren Curt. Schulz.
11. Duet, "Gruss aus dem Pusterehal,"
MarschRingler
Herren Ringler and Stoll.
12. Solo, "Ein Frühlingsmorgentraum,"... ..Umlauf
Herren Lange.
13. Duet, "Im Kreise der Freunde," Polka..Ringler
Herren Ringler and Stoll.
14. Solo, "Nur Dir Allein,".....Umlauf
Herren Hellberg.
15. Solo and Duets by several members of the "London Zither Club."

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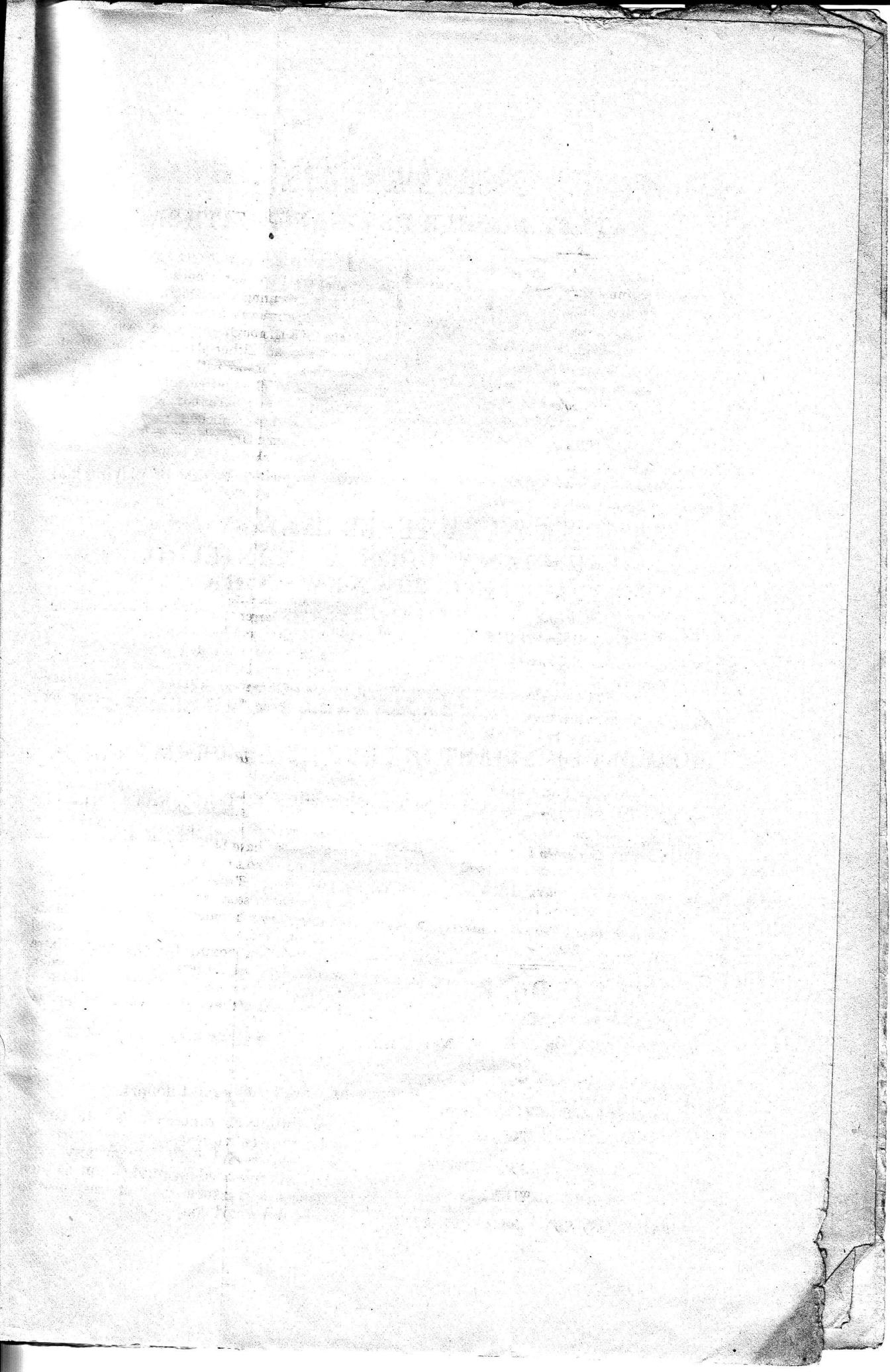
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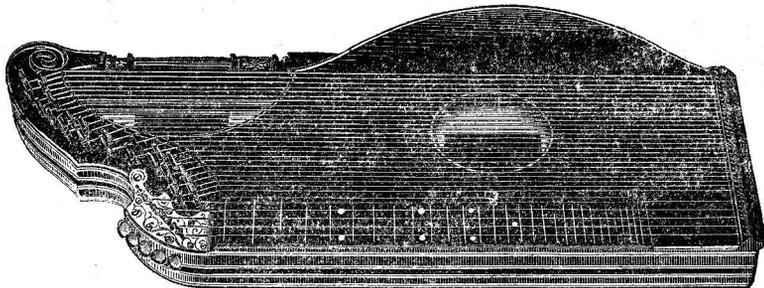
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