

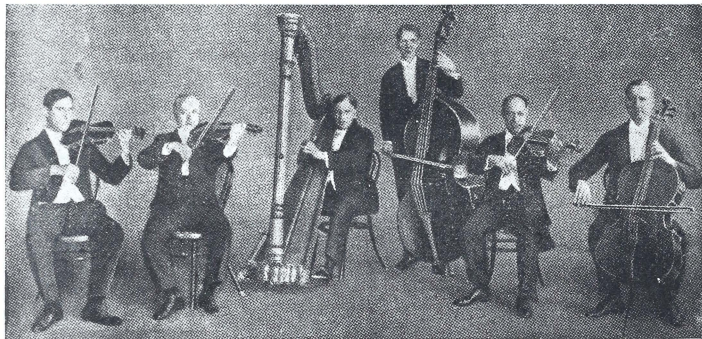
MUSIC APPRECIATION SECTION

The Symphony Orchestra

By BERT PAUL OSBON *

(Continued from the May number)

VI. THE INSTRUMENTS OF THE STRING SECTION



First Violin

Second Violin

Harp

Double-bass

Viola

Violoncello

WE have learned about each of the four sections of the instruments of the symphony orchestra. Now we are ready to learn at least a little about each of the instruments of these different groups.

First let us examine each instrument in the most important section—the string section. In doing so we shall use the illustration of the instruments of the string section which appeared in the January number of *The Young Citizen*.

The Violin

The violin has four strings and is played by a bow. It is the most important instrument of the symphony orchestra and has to do the most playing.

* Formerly Supervisor of Public School Music, Mount Lebanon, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

If you will refer to the September, 1938, and the October, 1938, issue of *The Young Citizen*, you will find a history of the development of the violin. It is suggested that you read those articles again if possible.

The invention of the violin offered great opportunities to music composers. Violin solos were first written in the seventeenth century. One of the greatest players of the violin was Paganini (born 1782, died 1840) who showed the tremendous technical possibilities of the instrument by playing the most difficult compositions.

At the present time the standard of violin playing is very high. The players of this instrument in a symphony orches-

tra must be exceedingly skillful performers.

The violins of the symphony orchestra are divided into two groups—first violins and second violins. The players in each group use the same kind of instrument, but play different music. Notice the pictures of the first violin and the second in the illustration on page 202.

The Viola

Look carefully at the picture of the viola (pronounced vee-o-la) on page 202. This instrument has the same shape and appearance as the violin. It has four strings and is played by a bow.

If you place a violin and a viola side by side you will find that the viola is larger than the violin. It is one-fifth larger. Therefore the viola can play tones lower than those of the violin.

The tone of the viola is a little heavier than that of the violin—"more gloomy" as it is often described. It is not so useful as the violin as a solo instrument because it cannot play in so many different ways—"colors"—as the violin. In the music of the orchestra it plays tenor or alto, and thus is one of the most valuable instruments for filling in the harmony.

The Violoncello

Notice the picture of the violoncello (pronounced vee-o-lohn-chel-lo) in the illustration on page 202. This is a large instrument and the player must always sit while playing it.

It has four strings and is played by a bow. This instrument is often called the 'cello (pronounced chel-lo). It plays tenor or nigh bass (baritone) in the orchestra.

The 'cello is better liked as a solo instrument than the viola and its tone has more possibilities.

So far as can be discovered, Amati (born in 1540, died in 1600) was the first maker of the violoncello. He also made violas, as well as violins.

The 'cello has a characteristic and very beautiful quality of tone. It is an excellent instrument for a boy or a girl to learn to play.

The Double-bass

By looking at the picture of the double-bass on page 202 you will notice what a large instrument it is. It is often called the contrabass or string bass. It usually has four strings and is played by a bow. The player must always stand while playing it.

The tone of the double-bass is much heavier and the instrument itself is much more clumsy to handle than the other members of the group. Therefore it is almost never used as a solo instrument. It is excellent, however, to play a deep bass part in the orchestra.

The boy or girl who wishes to learn to play a double-bass in the school orchestra should have large, strong hands.

The Harp

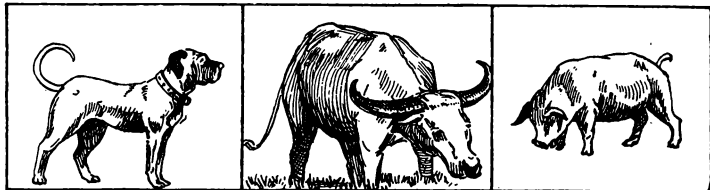
The harp is one of the oldest musical instruments (dating back over six thousand years), yet it became one of the regular members of the symphony orchestra less than three-quarters of a century ago.

Now look at the picture of the harp on page 202. Notice the position of the harp player, who always sits while playing.

The harp is pictured in Egyptian wall-paintings of three thousand years ago. It was also used by the ancient Greeks, and by the Hebrews in Bible times. In medieval centuries it was used in Europe,

(Please turn to page 218.)

SOME ANIMAL RIDDLES

(Answers to riddles on page 192)

I. A dog

II. A carabao

III. A pig

THE OLD WALL

(Continued from page 201)

the plot of ground enclosed by these walls, more events of Philippine history have occurred than in all the rest of the Islands put together. Immediately before his execution, Rizal was confined in one of the cells of Fort Santiago.

When one thinks of all the fighting and bloodshed which have taken place within this enclosure, or of the schemes of politicians and church officials which have been planned within it, or of the grandeur and pomp of official displays within these walls, there comes the realization that it would be hard to find elsewhere a spot of the same size which is of more interest. There are things of historical value here which can be found nowhere else on earth.

Although the old wall is no longer of any great value in the defense of Manila, yet there is nothing in the city which offers a more picturesque sight. As shown in the illustration of a corner of the wall (page 200) the old stones in many places are covered with moss and occasional small shrubbery. How quaint the picture of the old

WHY ROSA FELT GLAD

(Continued from page 195)

How glad Rosa was that she had given the peseta to her teacher.

"Perhaps that poor little girl would have gone hungry if you had not returned her peseta," said the teacher. "I am glad, Rosa, that you are an honest girl."

"So am I," thought Rosa all the rest of the day.

watch-tower on one corner of the wall (page 201). Spanish sentries have stood there on guard in centuries past. And what an artistic scene is presented in the view through one of the old gates (page 201).

The old wall of Manila should never be destroyed, for nothing in the city or in the entire Philippines is of greater interest to the tourist. These walls are more conspicuous than anything else Manila has to offer.

Over the fort at the head of the old wall—Fort Santiago—three flags have floated: the Spanish flag, the British flag, and the flag of the United States. The

(Turn to page 219.)

SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

(Continued from page 203)

especially in Ireland and Wales. The harp was a favorite instrument in Ireland, and even at the present time is an Irish emblem.

The player of the harp uses both hands to pluck the 47 strings. (The number of strings may vary.)

The harp is used in the symphony orchestra usually for playing accompaniments or passages characteristic of the instrument.

The piano—more correctly called the pianoforte—is never used in the symphony orchestra as an orchestral instrument. Sometimes a pianist plays a solo on a piano, and the entire orchestra plays the accompaniment.

Next month we shall discuss each of the instruments of the wood-wind section.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Into how many sections are the instruments of the orchestra divided?

2. Can you name the sections?

3. Which is the most important section?

4. Can you name the instruments of the string section?

(Turn to page 222.)