

MUSIC APPRECIATION SECTION

GREAT COMPOSERS OF MUSIC

By BERT PAUL OSBON*

IV. MOZART, THE BOY PRODIGY



Mozart

WHAT, you ask, is a boy prodigy? I will tell you. When a very young boy is able to do some difficult thing so well that he astonishes many people by his ability, that boy is called a prodigy. The great composer Mozart (pronounced *mot-sart*), when a boy, was a musical prodigy, for when this wonder-child was only three years old he could play chords on the harpsichord—the forerunner of the piano—and at the age of five he wrote music. When he was ten years old he was considered by many people to be the greatest musician in the world at that time.

Now let us hear about this marvelous musician and composer, who, as a boy, was considered a musical wonder-child. This boy's name was Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. He was born in Salzburg, Austria in 1756. (Find Salzburg on the map of Central Europe.) His father was a musician, and one of the kindest and most loving of fathers. He was

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good to his little son Wolfgang and Wolfgang's little sister Anna, whom her brother affectionately called Nannerl. Never were two children happier.

When Wolfgang was three years old, his father was amazed and delighted when he saw the little boy stand by the harpsichord and pick out chords for himself. Soon Father Mozart began to give Wolfgang lessons. The little boy learned so fast that in a short time he was able to play a minuet after practicing it only half an hour.

At the age of five years the boy actually began to compose music for himself, and wrote a minuet which the writer has seen. One day Father Mozart found his little son writing away on some music very busily indeed. The elder Mozart asked the child what he was writing. "I am writing a concerto; it is nearly finished," said the wonderful boy.

When Wolfgang was six, his father decided to take Nannerl and her brother to the great city of Munich, and have them play together on the harpsichord before the king. The king and all who heard



The Boy Mozart

the children play were astonished and delighted. Father Mozart was so pleased at the success of his children, especially the little boy, that he decided to take them to Vienna, where the emperor and empress lived. The Empress Maria Theresa—a woman famous in history—ordered that the children should come to the palace and play for her.

Most boys and girls would be frightened in a beautiful palace. But little Wolfgang was not afraid. He asked for a

famous composer of music, and when he came, the little Mozart said to him, "Sir, I am going to play one of your concertos. You must turn the pages of music for me." A concerto (pronounced con-chair-to), as perhaps you know, is a difficult composition for a solo

instrument with an accompaniment by the orchestra. Only a very skillful musician can perform a concerto. But this wonderful boy played the difficult music perfectly. One of the illustrations of this article is a copy of a famous painting showing the boy Mozart and his sister Nannerl playing before the empress.

When Mozart went home from Vienna, he carried with him as a present a violin of which he was very proud, indeed. This is the violin shown in the

picture at the beginning of this article. The instrument was a very fine one, and was made by one of the master violin-makers.

Mozart took his violin home with him, and soon after, a famous violinist came to make the family a visit. To the amazement of all, little Wolfgang asked permission to play his violin with his father and the famous violinist. Father Mozart never supposed for a minute that his young son could play the difficult music *on the violin*.

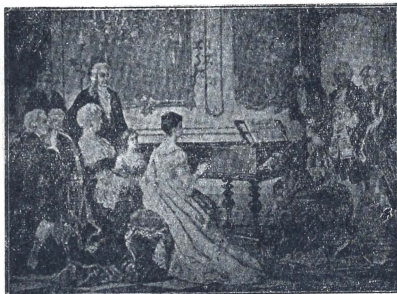
Imagine the father's surprise and delight when the marvellous boy played his part on the violin without a single mistake.

Wolfgang and his sister Nannerl visited many great cities where they played so wonderfully in public that people could not do enough to honor them. Their

fortune seemed assured. The little family traveled from palace to palace, giving concerts for kings and queens. They went to London and to Paris, a great journey for those times. Audiences exclaimed over the musical ability of the pretty children. They could scarcely believe that the little boy composed, as well as played much of the music on the program.

Always exquisitely dressed in a court costume of velvet and silk, little Wolf-

(Please turn to page 189.)



Mozart and his Sister Playing before the Empress

It was fun to watch the boat sail, he thought, but would it not be more fun to know why it sailed? The more he thought of it, the more he wondered. Why not separate its parts and then assemble them afterwards? He remembered, then, what had happened when he took his father's watch and unscrewed the parts. His father had given him a scolding (his father never used the rod, but he had a way of gaining the respect and love of his children) because the watch had to be sent to the watch-repairer. But the temptation to examine the mechanism which made the boat run was too great. Besides, it was his boat anyway.

And so he went home and locked himself in his room. After loosening screws, what had been a boat was now a little pile of useless-looking gadgets. What interested him most was the small petroleum tank. He tipped it from one side to the other, its wick lighted, doing the motion of a ship in a rough sea. Suddenly, there was a blinding flash, followed by a loud explosion. He felt something hot creeping all over his body. His clothes were on fire. The suddenness of it all made him lose his mind, and he didn't know what to do. He ran about, but the flames grew more and more and the pain became unbearable. He shouted for help.

And then above the searing pain, or perhaps because of it—he couldn't tell which—he seemed to hear Mrs. Arceo's voice, vague and uncertain, telling him not to run about, but to lie down and roll over and over, until the flames died down. Instinctively, he followed his teacher's instructions which seemed only half-understood and so far away. In a short time the fire was put out.

In the meanwhile, neighbors had come

DAILY HEALTH ACTIVITIES FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

By FLORA PONCE

Check each of the following activities that you perform every day:

1. I drink a glass of milk every morning.
2. I brush my teeth after every meal.
3. I take a bath once a day.
4. I eat a balance diet.
5. I play out of doors.
6. I wash my hands before eating.
7. I drink about eight glasses of pure water every day.
8. I sleep at least ten hours a day.
9. I sleep with my windows open.

running in answer to his cries. His burns were quickly administered to. He heard snatches of conversation going about. He heard someone say how brave he was and how lucky it was for Alfredo to know exactly what to do on such a situation.

But Alfredo did not give the credit to himself. Deep in his heart he knew that it was Mrs. Arceo who had saved him, and that if he had listened attentively to her lecture on Fire Prevention, he would have been saved the pain of a burn and a possible general conflagration.

MOZART

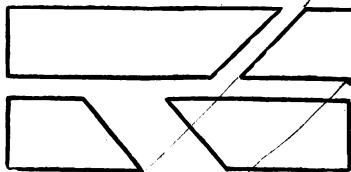
(Continued from page 185)

gang and his sister Nannerl were like two children in a fairy tale, bowing before the queen to be rewarded for their marvelous music. They were happy children, for music was a pleasure to them.

This boy prodigy could play another instrument besides the violin and the

(Please turn to page 190.)

WORK AND PLAY SECTION



THE THUMB GOLF

By ANGEL V. CAMPOY

TOM THUMB golf can be played by two or four players. Each player must be provided with a marble and a flat paddle made of wood or bamboo as large and as wide as a foot ruler.

Make five holes (just large enough for a marble to fall in) in the ground about half a meter apart. Half a meter from the first hole draw the starting line. With his paddle a player drives his marble from the starting line to the first hole. If he succeeds in putting his marble in the hole with the first stroke, he drives his marble to the next hole, and so on. If with the first stroke he fails to put his marble in the hole, the next player starts driving his marble into the first hole and continues to drive as long as he succeeds in driving his marble in each successive hole with a single drive. Otherwise, he must give his opponent the chance to drive. Each player then takes his turn in driving his marble into the holes.

A player must drive his marble in all the five holes from the first hole to the fifth and back from the fifth hole to the first before he makes a score. While making his drives, a player must take care to keep his marble as far as

THE "T" PUZZLE

By BONIFACIO V. VALERA *

Cut out the patterns shown on the left on a piece of soft wood or card board, and arrange them so they will form the letter "T".

(Answer on page 193)

* Uson Elementary School, Dimasalang, Masbate.

possible from his opponent's marble so that he will not get "struck out."

A "struck-out" is a hit made by one player on the marble of his opponent, using his own marble to score the hit. If he succeeds in making the hit, he is given one free drive, and the player whose marble has been struck out will have to go back to the starting line and begin driving into the first hole again. Any player is free to make an attempt to hit his opponent's marble to make him start driving from the starting line again, provided that he attempts to do so when his turn comes. A player must know how to make careful aims and to avoid his opponent's hits in order to make the score.

This game is more interesting when played in teams of two players each. The team making most scores wins the game.

MOZART . . .

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harpichord. When he was only a boy, he learned to play a great church organ. An organist was so amazed when he heard the boy play on his organ that he wrote Mozart's name on the instrument as a remembrance of this "wonder god."