

1916

## UA68/9/1 Musical Festival Review

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Review of sixth annual May music festival of the Bowling Green Oratorio Society by unidentified author. Review is written on Press Department of Kentucky Federation of Womens Clubs stationery. Names listed on stationery include: Mrs. J.G. Crabbe and Mrs. Eugene Walker of Richmond, KY and Mrs. James Mitchell of Bowling Green. Original is housed in WKU University Archives UA68/9/1 Box 5, Folder 18. Transcription follows.

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The sixth annual May Music Festival of the Bowling Green Oratorio Society opened last evening with a presentation of Voltaire's "Zaïre". This Society, organized in 1909, has presented with increasing success "The Last Judgment", "The Creation", "Celi", "The Light of the World" and "The Crimes of Humanity"; but the production of "Zaïre" ~~was~~ the crowning glory of all former successes. The music lovers of Bowling Green who for six years have thronged the great Auditorium for this eagerly anticipated annual event secured never more entire-sincere in their ~~praise~~ approbation than at last evening's concert.

The faithful chorus of one-hundred-and-seventy-five picked voices which has practiced so conscientiously at the weekly rehearsals since last September deserve especial credit for the artistic and finished rendition of the choruses and ensemble numbers. The fire and spirit which characterized "I will Rise up against Thee" and "The Lord Stretched forth His Hand" are worthy of especial commendation altho all the choruses from the majestic opening bars of "Blessed is the Man" to the

2) Exultant closing chords of the "Hallelujah Chorus" displayed careful training and conscientious work. The entire chorus, a bit exhausted from the long rehearsals and steady practice felt amply repaid for their work when an encouraging smile from their beloved director greeted them at the successful rendition of an exceptionally difficult passage.

One of the most exciting aspects of the Annual May Music Festival is the arrival of the orchestra. It is indeed a rare treat for the local music lovers to have the opportunity of hearing ~~the~~ noted a group of artists as the fifth orchestra men who occupied the stage last evening. Wishing Green feels quite a proprietary interest in the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra since they have contributed so much to the success of our Music Festivals in the past. The work of this orchestra is always highly artistic but special credit is due them for their excellent work last evening as they were compelled to ~~read~~ play from hand written manuscripts, the printed score being unavailable during rehearsals. They showed great patience when the little unavoidable mistakes which had crept into the hastily written manuscript caused a delay or called forth a bit of kindly criticism.

The greatest interest of our music festival always centers about the ~~artist~~ soloists and the artists which Prof. Stralun secured for this festival more than fulfilled the expectations of the enthusiastic audience. The rich harmonies of the

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 quartette "Go by Peace" displayed how well matched were the solo voices and how perfectly they were blended and balanced. "Our own Miss Beale," as we love to think of her, appeared to greater advantage than ever before altho she has frequently charmed Bowling Green audiences. The lyrical sweetness of her high notes ~~expressed to great~~ ~~was~~ enhanced the beauty of "I will extol Thee O Lord." A warm and cordial welcome always awaits the return of Mrs. Crane who will ever remain a favorite with Bowling Green audiences. Her voice, always so rich and pleasing, enhanced by a charming personality and stage presence, seemed to have acquired greater fulness and resonance since last we had the pleasure of hearing her.

Since first the selection of the male soloists for this festival was announced, all musical Bowling Green has eagerly anticipated the arrival of these two artists so widely known and so highly recommended, but up to this time not so well known locally. Judgment was suspended only for the first few numbers, for ~~both these artists were most~~ ~~delightfully received~~ ~~and~~ the music lovers of Bowling Green immediately stamped both these artists with

④ approval and received them most enthusiastically. It is our sincere hope that we made as good an impression upon them as they did upon us for we hope that this their first visit will be but the beginning of many more such inspiring occasions.

The vibrant and resonant tones of Mr. Sample and his powerful and dramatic stage appearance ~~made~~ made a tremendous appeal to the hearts and minds of his hearers. Mr. Sample also endeared himself to his audience by his charming personality and by the fact that he is a native of Utah. It was perhaps unfortunate that the greater part of the <sup>aud</sup> who work in "Abraham" consisted of recitatives, which offered but limited opportunity to the soloist to display any great variety of talent. All ~~the~~ <sup>Mr. Sample's</sup> recitatives were dramatic, clear-cut and impressive, but the audience enjoyed most "Put thy Heart before the Lord" as this aria enabled his hearers to appreciate ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> native beauty and sweetness of <sup>Mr. Sample's</sup> tone in addition to its powerful and vibrant qualities.

The most difficult role of the entire oratorio was entrusted to the young American baritone, Cecil Tanning and his portrayal of this exacting role was one of the most completely satisfying things that musical B. Orling Green has ever experienced. The first few notes of

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 Mr. Fanning's voice, rich, warm and pulsating with youth, commanded instant attention and continued to hold the audience spell bound the remainder of the evening. The flexible voice of this remarkable young artist, guided by an unerring dramatic instinct alternately amazed his hearers with exaltation, despair, and resignation as the mood of the singer fluctuated. It is a difficult task to select for special distinction any of Mr. Fanning's solos, but we were most charmed with the richness of "Let There Be No Strife" and the compelling dramatic quality of "Let All The Men Come In".

Bowling Green is greatly indebted to the Western Kentucky State Normal School, and to Prof. Stralund for affording us so many opportunities of hearing the best of music and for impressing the best of drama, but she is most grateful to this institution for bringing to us Prof. Stralund, who has made these enjoyable occasions possible with untiring ~~unremitting~~ effort and unceasing devotion to his profession.

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Mr. Stratum has tried each year to make every music festival a little better than its predecessor, and this year his efforts are most assuredly crowned with success. After the Oratorio was selected this year and the rehearsals had progressed for some time, it was discovered that the printed orchestration of this oratorio was unavailable. It was then too late to change to another oratorio and under such adverse circumstances the usual director would most certainly have abandoned the idea of presenting anything; but not so Prof. Stratum. With undoubted courage and persistence, he set about writing the entire orchestration of the oratorio himself. Always a busy man, with working hours full up every day in the week, this seemed an impossible task; but he worked away faithfully, doggedly and persistently late into the night and very early ~~in~~ in the morning, sometimes working all night long until the gigantic task was completed. Under the double nervous strain of training the chorus, preparing programs, corresponding with the soloists and orchestra, writing the score and rehearsing, Prof. Stratum maintained both joviality and sense of humor which have so endeared him to the hearts of his chorus. Bowling Green is very proud of this great musician and rejoices ~~in~~ in the fact that ~~the year~~ the great



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Musician is also our very dear kind-hearted friend. The  
 universally initiated of Bowling Green are most grateful  
 to Prof. Strahm for educating them along musical lines; but  
 the music lovers of Bowling Green will always owe him  
 a debt which they can never repay for awakening and  
 revivifying their latent and hitherto dormant musical  
 life and for affording them every spring time an  
 experience of <sup>supreme</sup> satisfaction.

The sixth annual May Music Festival of the Bowling Green Oratorio Society opened last evening with a presentation of Molique's "Abraham." This society, organized in 1909, has presented with increasing success "The Last Judgment," "The Creation," "Eli," "The Light of the World" and "The Chimes of Normandy," but the production of "Abraham" ~~was~~ is the crowning glory of all former successes. The music lovers of Bowling Green who for six years have thronged the great auditorium for this eagerly anticipated annual event seemed ever more enthusiastic in their ~~praise~~ approbation than at last evening's concert.

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One of the most exciting events of the annual May Music Festival is the arrival of the orchestra. It is indeed a rare treat for the local music lovers to have the opportunity of hearing so noted a group of artists as the fifty orchestra men who occupied the stage last evening. Bowling Green feels quite a proprietary interest in the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra since they have contributed so much to the success of our Music Festivals in the past. The work of this orchestra is always highly artistic but especial credit is due them for this excellent work last evening as they were compelled to ~~read~~ play from hand written manuscripts, the printed orchestration being unavailable during rehearsals they showed great patience when the little unavoidable mistakes which had crept into the hastily written manuscript caused a delay or called forth a bit of kindly criticism.

The greatest interest of any music festival always centers about the ~~artists~~ soloists and the artists which Prof. Strahm secured for this festival more than fulfilled the expectations of the enthusiastic audience. The rich harmonies of the [3] quartette "Go In Peace" displayed how well matched were the solo voices and how perfectly they were blended and balanced. "Our Own Miss Beach" as we love to think of her, appeared to greater advantage than ever before altho she has frequently charmed Bowling Green audiences. The lyrical sweetness of her high notes ~~appeared to great was~~ balanced the beauty of "I Will Extol Thee My God." A warm and cordial welcome awaits the return of Mrs. Crume who will ever remain a favorite with Bowling Green audiences. Her voice, always so rich and pleasing, enhanced by a charming personality and stage presence, seemed to have acquired greater fulness [sic] and resonance since last we had the pleasure of hearing her.

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charming personality and by the fact that ^ altho he has lived and studied abroad he is a native Kentuckian. It was perhaps unfortunate that the greater part of the ^ tenor solo work in "Abraham" consisted of recitatives, which offered but limited opportunity to the soloist to display any great variety of talent. All ~~the~~ Mr. Sample's recitatives were dramatic, clear-cut and impressive, but the audience enjoyed most "Pour Out Thy Heart Before The Lord" as this aria enabled his hearers to appreciate ~~the Mr. Sample's~~ ^ the native beauty and sweetness of ^ Mr. Sample's tone in addition to its powerful and vibrant qualities.

The most difficult not of the entire Oratorio was entrusted to the young American Baritone, Cecil Fanning and his portrayal of this exacting role was one of the most completely satisfying things that musical Bowling Green has ever experienced. The first few notes of [5] Mr. Fanning's voice, rich, warm and pulsating with youth commanded instant attention and continued to hold the audience spell bound the remainder of the evening. The flexible voice of this remarkable young artist, guided by an unerring dramatic instinct alternately swayed his hearers with exaltation, despair and resignation as the word of the singer fluctuated. It is a difficult task to select for especial distinction any of Mr. Fanning's solos, but we were most charmed with ~~his~~ the richness of "It There Be No Strife" and the compelling dramatic quality of "Let All The Men Come Up."

Bowling Green is greatly indebted to the Western Kentucky State Normal School ^ and to Prof. Cherry for affording us so many opportunities of hearing the best of music and for witnessing the best of drama, but she is most grateful to this institution for bringing to us Prof. Strahm, who has made these enjoyable occasions possible. With untiring ~~unceasing~~ effort and unceasing devotion to his profession, [6] Mr. Strahm has toiled each year to make every music festival a little better than its predecessor, and this year his efforts are most assuredly crowned with success. After the Oratorio was selected this year an the and the rehearsals had progressed for some time, it was discovered that the printed orchestrations of this Oratorio was unavailable. It was then too late to change to another Oratorio and under such adverse circumstances the usual director would most certainly have abandoned the idea of presenting anything, but not so Prof. Strahm. With undaunted courage and persistence [sic], he set about writing the entire orchestration of the Oratorio himself. Always a busy man, with working hours full on every day in the weeks, this seemed an impossible task; but he worked away faithfully, doggedly and persistently late into the night and very easily ~~into~~ in the morning, sometimes working all night long until the gigantic task was completed. Under the double nervous strain of training the chorus, preparing programs, corresponding with the soloists and orchestra, writing the score and teaching, Prof. Strahm maintained that joviality and sense of humor which have so endeared him to the hearts of his chorus. Bowling Green is very proud of this great musician and rejoices ~~to~~ in the fact that ~~the-grea~~ the great musician is also our very dear kind-hearted friend. The musically uninitiated of Bowling Green are most grateful to Prof. Strahm for educating them along musical lines; but the music lovers of Bowling Green will always owe him a debt which they can never repay for awakening and revivifying their latent and hitherto dormant musical life and for affording them every spring time an experience of ^ supreme soul-satisfaction.