

*The Ragtime Review*

# Christensen's RAGTIME REVIEW

EDITED AND PUBLISHED BY  
AXEL CHRISTENSEN  
THE "CZAR OF RAGTIME"

362  
969



Vol. 1

DECEMBER, 1914

No. 1

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# Christensen's

## RAG-TIME REVIEW

DEVOTED TO RAGTIME AND POPULAR MUSIC  
*Covering the Field of Vaudeville and Picture Piano Playing*

Vol. 1

CHICAGO, ILL., DECEMBER, 1914

No. 1

### THE POPULARITY OF RAGTIME.

From time to time we are asked the question: "How much longer is this phenomenal popularity of ragtime music going to continue?" In answer to this query we give our opinion, which is based upon eleven years of close contact with the situation, namely, that the popularity of ragtime is going to continue right along, and instead of being on the wane, as a few prejudiced persons would like to believe, this popularity is increasing steadily from year to year.

A proof of this may be seen in the fact that many members of the teaching profession are gradually beginning to recognize the demand for instruction in ragtime piano playing and are qualifying themselves to take care of this demand.

Ten years ago Mr. Christensen, the pioneer teacher of ragtime piano playing, was alone in the field, and was the subject of much criticism and censure on the part of prejudiced and skeptical persons. Today his system of ragtime piano playing is being sought after by pianists all over this country, among whom are some of those same skeptics, who ridiculed the idea in the beginning.

Ragtime will always be popular—anywhere, everywhere—except, perhaps, at a funeral.

Ragtime has come to stay. All classes of people, as well as musicians, are obliged to admit this fact, because it's true.

Good ragtime music has become a standard article, and if the matter was put to a popular vote, it would far out-rank classical music by mere force of numbers, because nine-tenths of the people prefer ragtime and popular music.

Life would indeed be a dull proposition, if it were not for music, and the kind of music best adapted to make pleasant our hours of recreation is ragtime with its sparkling, pulsating rhythm that wins every listener.

Any person who is able to play *real* ragtime possess a capital that will yield the highest possible interest—if not in real money, then in the form of daily enjoyment. Such a talent no one can take from the owner; it is something that lasts a lifetime.

Of course, all this time we are writing about real, genuine ragtime—not the "boiler shop" variety, where the player tries to see how many keys he can pound down at once, without bothering to notice whether the notes happen to har-



BERNARD BRIN, "Ragtime Wizard of the Northwest," as he appeared in the Golden Potlatch Parade, at Seattle, Wash.

monize or not and without any mercy or consideration for the ill-fated piano which will presently have to go into dry dock for repairs. No, we would not have you think for a moment that the real ragtime is anything like that.

Real ragtime must be played with a firm, strong, legato touch and the time must be absolutely even and correct. These two features are also greatly desired in classical music, (or any kind of music for that matter) and yet these two important features are most often found lacking in the average piano student who has taken the orthodox musical course. Therefore, if in learning real ragtime, the pupil also learns to play with a correct touch and in proper time, is it reasonable to suppose that the study of ragtime would in any way spoil a pupil for playing classical music? On the contrary, in real ragtime, the pupil learns many things that are essential and helpful in playing classical music and not a single thing that could possibly be hurtful in any way.

Ragtime is not as hard to play as many suppose, and the reason so many persons try for years to play ragtime and then give up in disgust is because they go about it in the wrong way.

What is the fate of the average music student who takes the orthodox course in music (not ragtime or popular music)? Father spends lots of money on his daughter's musical education,—hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars—and daughter studies hard and faithfully and learns to play well. Just about this time, along comes an ordinary man and marries her, and there's the end of a musical career, nine times out of ten.

The lady in question begins then to neglect her practice on account of the more important household duties, and ten years later, when her daughter is old enough to take lessons the same story is repeated: Father has to cough up for an expensive musical education, because mother doesn't remember enough about her's to teach the daughter—man comes along, marries daughter, etc., etc.

In most of such cases, ragtime would have been appreciated a great deal more, would have taken less time and much less money. Moral: Learn to play ragtime first—it doesn't take very long—then go ahead and study the other as long as you like.

#### SISTER SUSIE'S SEWING SHIRTS FOR SOLDIERS.

This is the title of a song from the English publishers, Francis, Day and Hunter, which is now being sung with great success by Al Jolson, the world-renowned singer, who no doubt draws a bigger salary than any other popular song singer.

T. B. Harms & Francis, Day & Hunter, the American music publishing firm, which is the American representative for the above English house has announced that Al Jolson has the exclusive stage rights for America to the comic song, "Sister Susie's Sewing Shirts for Soldiers."

Mr. Jolson is using the number in his show, "Dancing Around" at the Winter Garden. The song was not generally known to have been restricted to Mr. Jolson, prior to the announcement. It has been sung on the theater stage, also in cabarets, without the required permission.

#### CAN YOU IMAGINE THIS?

The following anecdote appeared in one of the publications of the Stark Music Co., of St. Louis.

##### A FIERCE TRAGEDY—IN ONE ACT.

Scene—A Fashionable Theater. Enter Mrs. Van Clausenberg and party—late, of course.

Mrs. Van C.—What is the orchestra playing; it is the grandest thing I have ever heard. It is positively inspiring.

Young America (in the seat behind)—Why that is the Cascades, by Joplin.

Mrs. Van C.—Well, that is one on me. I thought I had heard all of the great music, but that is the most thrilling piece that I have ever heard. I suppose Joplin is a Pole who has been educated in Paris.

Young Am.—Not so you could notice it. He's a young Negro from Texarkana, and the piece they are playing is a rag.

(*Sensation—Puturbation—Trepidation—and Seven Other Kinds of Emotion.*)

(Mrs. Van C. fumbling for the smelling salts.)

—Young man of the Van Clausenberg party rising—Is Dr. Pillsbury in the house?

Mrs. Van C.—There—Never mind; I am better now. *The idea.* The very word ragtime rasps my finer sensibilities. (Rising)—I'm going home and I'll never come to this theater again. I just can't stand trashy music.



A Group of Ragtime Studios



Electric Display, Lyda Theatre, Chicago

**RAGTIME RECITAL AND DANCE IN CHICAGO.**

The first piano recital and dance, given by the pupils and teachers of the "Christensen" schools in Chicago, will take place on Monday, December 14, at Oakley Hall, Madison St. near Oakley Boulevard. There will be a similar affair at the same hall every month during the remainder of the season.

The dance recitals given last year were a splendid success and did much to promote interest in ragtime piano playing.

Edw. J. Mellinger of St. Louis started the ball rolling early last year by giving a recital-dance at Kleekamp's Hall in St. Louis, during the week that the "Czar of Ragtime" was appearing at the Hippodrome in St. Louis and it was such a stupendous success that now the managers of schools throughout the country are taking up the movement and making the recital-dance a regular feature every month.

Several of the bright pupils are placed on the recital program every month, and as they must first pass an examination before the manager of the school before being admitted to the program, the fact that they are permitted to play at the recitals is an honor sought after by all ambitious pupils; it is the schools stamp of approval and gives them prestige among the other pupils and their friends. In this manner it pro-

motes diligence in practice and a friendly rivalry among the students, which is good for everybody concerned. Occasionally a ragtime contest is given where prizes are offered for the pupil making the best showing.

After the recital, the chairs are removed and everybody enjoys a couple of hours with the tango, hesitation, fox-trot and "what not," until the orchestra plays "Home, Sweet Home."

There is no stiffness, no formality and everybody is made to feel at home. For the occasion at least, everybody is "just plain folks," out for a good time, and the atmosphere of the old-fashioned country dance, with its cheer and good fellowship, prevails.

The admission charged is nominal, just enough to cover actual expenses—25 cents—and this includes wardrobe and everything.

The "Czar of Ragtime" will be on the program.

**WHY RAGTIME IS THE TRUE MUSIC OF "HUSTLERS."**

The new and tremendous vogue in London of popular "ragtime" music—which originated in the United States about twenty years ago and steadily gained in public favor ever since—has inspired that grave and weighty newspaper, the *London Times*, to justify, even to applaud, "ragtime" in the following whole-hearted manner:

"There is no doubt that there is at present one class of creative and executive artists whom the public of the United States is disposed to idolize and enrich—namely, the composers and singers of 'ragtime.' Can the world also respect them? Character and vigor earn respect all the world over, even when the character is unpleasant and the vigor misdirected.

"Now of the character of 'ragtime' there can be no doubt—it is absolutely characteristic of its inventors—from nowhere but the United States could such music have sprung; it is the music of the hustler, of the feverishly active speculator; of the 'skyscraper' and the 'grain elevator.' Nor can there be any doubt about its vigor—vigor which is, perhaps, empty sometimes and meaningless, but, in the hands of competent interpreters, brimming over with life.

"Here, perhaps, then, for those who have ears to hear are the seeds from which a national art may ultimately spring. Much dross will have to be cleared away in the process, much vulgarity and senselessness will have to give place to a saner, a finer ideal.

"What then is 'ragtime'? Mr. Louis Hirsch, a well known composer of such music, has recently declared that 'the essence of 'ragtime' is the mixture of two rhythms.' Mr. Frank Kidson, in 'Grove's Dictionary of Music,' defines 'ragtime' as 'broken rhythm,' and it may be added that in American slang to 'rag' a melody is to syncopate a normally regular tune.

"'Ragtime,' then, may be said to be a strongly syncopated melody superimposed on a strictly regular accompaniment, and it is the combination of these two rhythms that gives 'ragtime' its character.

"Nor must the words of 'ragtime' songs be forgotten; they must not be contemptuously dismissed as meaningless rubbish. They may be anything as literature—indeed, they often cannot be said to be either sense or grammar—but for all that they are an interesting study in the fitting of a verbal to a musical pattern. No one in his senses tries to hear the words of a 'ragtime' song with a view to understanding their mean-

ing; but anyone can hear enough of them to see how the metres and rhyme-schemes emphasize and increase the rhythm of the music."

### CAN HE MAKE IT?

CONTRIBUTED BY EDW. J. MELLINGER.

Mr. O'Brien interviewing a fifty year old German who has inquired about music lessons, etc.

(Mr. O'Brien)—You see the lessons are etc., etc., etc.

(German)—Well I'll tell you how I came to call. In all my life I was an ardent admirer of



beautiful women and strange to say I was never married, but I am and have been going out and keeping steady company three times a week with a dear girl about my age for twenty years and am about ready to marry her, but to keep her pleased I have in the last few years learned rowing, and how to two-step and waltz, and all those gay things, and now I want to spring a new one on her. Can I learn to play Ragtime by next Thursday?

### THE AGE OF RAGTIME.

"Literally 'everybody's ragging it now,'" says the *Chicago Saturday Evening Telegraph*. Ragtime crazy, the world from center to circumference swings its shoulders in the air and syncopates its pedal extremities to the swiftly swaying, now slowly moving, inspiring tempo of broken-measure melodies. Even old England—sleepy, ultra-conservative, antedeluvian England—is oscillating from Land's End to John O'Groat's House in rhythmic sympathy with the gently rising and falling undulations of the latest ragtime ditty.

Every kind of man, every tribe and sect wherever a fun-loving people exists, has taken up the American idea and is discussing or practicing to their heart's delight the so-called coon song. An institution originally considered indigenous to the soil of the American Southland has become

a cosmic epidemic, a world-wide passion, a universal pastime.

There was a time not beyond the recollection even of children today when ragtime was frowned upon as something quite unworthy a real music-loving people; and long-haired, sad-visaged composers and other maestros of the divine art issued long dissertations against its use. But that time has passed to the limbo, where the woodbine twineeth not, and that prejudice has gone with hundreds of others that had their origin in blind opposition. Today ragtime is not only approved by the mass of the people, but also by many of the most distinguished ultra-musical folk, by great composers, by distinguished operatic stars, by directors of symphony orchestras, and quite generally throughout the rank and file of good musicians. It is pointed out by the learned advocacy of this more cheerful era of melody that ragtime is nothing but syncopation, and that syncopation in a more or less degree has been found in the compositions of the most profound masters of music through all time. Those who still frown or pretend to frown upon the popularity of melodies in which so-called ragtime is employed cease to be taken seriously.

### GEE, BUT I'M CRAZY FOR RAG.

Some wise professor says ragtime's injurious,  
Bad for the nerves and the brain,  
Making the heart hit a pace that is furious,  
Driving the pulses insane;  
Still, when the band plays a tune syncopatedly,  
After it gally I tag,  
All of my blood goes to rushing elatedly,  
Gee, but I'm crazy for rag!

"Rag," says the "Prof.," "is a form of insanity,"  
(So, for that matter, is Youth),  
Neither one suffers from dreary inanity,  
Both are ALIVE—that's the truth!  
So I'm for rag—when the feet itch to prance to it—  
Jig time with never a sag—  
Come on, Mirandy, let's get up and dance to it—  
Gee, but I'm crazy for rag!  
—Berton Braley, in the "Cleveland Press."

### POPULAR MUSIC.

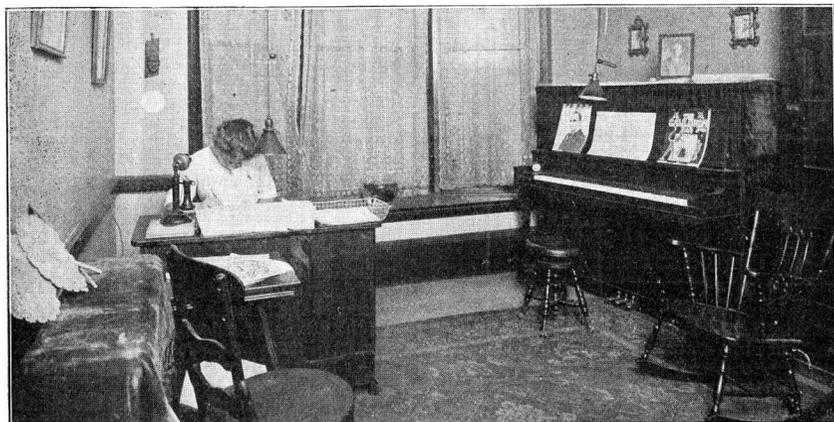
Bert E. Williams, A. A. G. O., in the September issue of the *Musical Observer* has views on popular music that are well worth reading. He says: "Today the mere mention of 'popular music' brings a growl from the throats of many famous piano teachers. A few years ago the transcriptions of Liszt, now regarded as legitimate, were also looked on askance, but all that is changed.

"Stop and ask these teachers, 'Now, just what is your objection to popular music?' and they commence to talk technical terms that leave the average person as much in darkness as he was at the start, and help cover the fact that these teachers themselves do not know just what is wrong and condemn it on general principles.

"There are just three elements in music, namely: rhythm, melody and harmony. Every savage beats a drum—pure rhythm. In the earliest times, men sang—plain-song or melody. Later, instruments and voices were combined in groups sounding different pitches at the same time—harmony.

"There is a bit of the savage in the best of us, and when we hear a verile rhythm, our feet almost instinctively keep time. That is all 'popular music' is—just plain, strong rhythm, coupled with a light melody that pleases on first hearing.

"Our 'rag-time' is a misplacing of the accent, called syncopation, and is to be found in Bach,



A well arranged Ragtime Studio

Haendel, Beethoven, and the works of practically all our great masters."

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.**

Editor RAGTIME REVIEW:

I would like to know how to arrange a program for a vaudeville act. I play both ragtime and classical music. How long should such an act run? E. M. F.

You should open with a good showy and difficult rag number, something on the order of the "Cauldron" Rag, or the "Entertainers" Rag; follow this with a heavy classical number and close with a medley of popular songs, played in various styles of ragtime. For an encore play another well-known melody, first in straight rag and then in *arpeggio* rag, playing the melody in the bass with ragtime variations and runs for the right hand.

A beginner in vaudeville should not attempt to stay on the stage longer than eight or nine minutes. If the people in the audience want you they will show it, but, unless they want you *badly* don't come back.

Editor RAGTIME REVIEW:

How much do the booking agencies charge to place you on the stage?

ANDREW LARSON.

The legal charge is 5 per cent of your salary, which is taken out every week by the managers of the various theaters and sent by them to the booking agencies.

It is sometimes advisable to do business with a "10 per cent man," which is an agent who looks out for your interests, arranges contracts for you with the booking agencies, and transacts your booking business while you are on the road. He charges 5 per cent, which amount you send him personally every week, and is in addition to the regular 5 per cent agency commission.

Editor RAGTIME REVIEW:

Is it better to practice an hour all at once, or would a half hour in the morning and a half hour in the evening be a better way.

AMANDA BROWN.

There might be a slight advantage in practicing a half our at two different times, but it's "safer"

to practice the whole hour in the morning if your time can be arranged. Then you will very likely to go to the piano later in the day, anyhow, and whatever you do in the afternoon is then pure "velvet."

**ANOTHER MUSICAL INVENTION.**

A new player-piano, which however does not sound at all like a piano has recently been invented and patented by a German inventor, Mr. Anton Keller, of West New York, N. J. This instrument, resembles an upright piano and is capable of producing violin, 'cello, and bass tones, but no piano tone. The instrument has piano keys and pedals and a double row of boxes in the interior. These boxes are made of sounding-board wood and are fitted with violin strings. It can be played either by hand the same as an ordinary piano, or with the pedals, like a player-piano, and the inventor claims for it that it will produce perfect tones of violin, 'cello and bass.

**IT'S A LONG WAY TO TIPPERARY.**

This song has taken the whole world by storm, it seems. The English soldiers sing it when on the march, the music halls of London feature it at all times and in this country from coast to coast you will hear it everywhere.

A corking good number and right up to the minute.

You can learn by mail, if there's no Christensen School in your city

LEARN RAG TIME



Let me teach YOU Ragtime Piano Playing by mail. You learn quickly—easily in 20 lessons. *Even if you can't play a note I'll teach you to play any piece in real Ragtime.* "Money-back" Guarantee.

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**Axel Christensen (Czar of Ragtime) Director**  
Christensen School of Popular Music  
Rm. M Christensen Bldg., CHICAGO, ILL.





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On failure to receive the RAGTIME REVIEW regularly subscribers should notify the office promptly.

Advertising rate card will be sent on application.

Changes in advertisements must be ordered by the 10th of the month.

All cuts made for advertisers are charged to their accounts.

In presenting this, our first issue of the RAGTIME REVIEW, we hope that you will scan its pages with leniency in your heart, because the succeeding issues are going to be better—ever so much better.

While we have had printers' ink on our fingers before this, our previous experience was as editor of a machinery magazine, and while it must be admitted that from the mechanical to the musical is a far cry (some unkind person is going to remark that it isn't so far from the boiler shop to ragtime) still we are going to do our best. Anyway, we never enjoyed the machinery paper, while our very heart is in our present work.

The idea of publishing the RAGTIME REVIEW has long been with us, but the final determination to get busy was reached while we were on our last vaudeville tour, namely in our dressing room of the Empress Theater in Portland, Ore. About all we did at that time was to order some subscription blanks and have the "force" back in Chicago start sending them out, but the paid subscriptions began coming in so fast that there was no backing out—and so it started.

Practically all the matter in this issue was written in the dressing rooms of vaudeville theaters at San Francisco, Sacramento, Los Angeles, Salt Lake, Denver, etc., or on the train. A large part of the last few weeks was spent in pacifying subscribers who were writing in to know why they had not yet received the magazine, and when we arrived home a couple of weeks ago, a thousand other matters that had been saved up during our absence were dumped on our editorial desk, which further kept our attention divided and rendered us less capable of doing our best work.

So we had to let the first issue go through as best it might—here it is—and on the above defense we rest our case.

You can't afford to miss an issue. Subscribe now for the RAGTIME REVIEW.

"The secret of success," old Mr. Barnum, the famous circus man, used to say, "is to give the people what they want."

Most people, after they reach the age when they begin to form their own opinions and think for themselves, prefer Ragtime and popular music above any other, but music teachers, as a rule, have been slow to follow Mr. Barnum's advice in giving what was wanted.

Until a few years ago, it was practically impossible to take a regular course in playing popular music, because no such course existed. Although the demand for just such a course was tremendous, no steps were taken to provide for this demand, because the musical profession catered to the "classic few" and ignored the fact that the people, or most of them, wanted Ragtime. Even now, many teachers of classical music make it their business to condemn Ragtime and popular music every chance they get.

This, however, does not affect the situation in the least. You may as well try to drag a man by the hair to a grand opera performance, when he doesn't want to go, as to try and convince him that ragtime is distasteful when he knows, (and his own ears tell him so) that ragtime is bright, snappy and sparkling with pulsating melody.

We are all too busy making a living and trying to squeeze all the enjoyment we can out of life to spend very much time on anything that does not bring quick and adequate returns, either in the form of profit or pleasure. No one, who has to work for a living can afford to give up his hours of recreation to study music in the old way, step by step, unless he has a passionate love for scales and exercises. It takes too long.

The beauty about learning to play Ragtime and popular music, is that you don't have to bother with scales, or tedious exercises and gratifying results begin to show in only a few weeks!

Too many teachers allow their own dislike for Ragtime (which, by the way, is an acquired dislike, because it isn't natural) to blind their own business principles. They won't teach Ragtime and thereby lose lots of pupils who would patronize them if they would modify their views.

It isn't reasonable to expect a person who merely wants music for pleasure and relaxation, to continue very long at the dry, tiresome rudimentary work that is required as the foundation of an education in classical music.

You wouldn't think of building the same foundation for a pleasant little cottage, that would be necessary for a hotel or office building; neither do you have to go through the same amount of rudimentary work in order to play ragtime, that would be necessary for a thorough classical course in music.

#### PADEREWSKI CAN PLAY RAGTIME.

A report from Paris, to the *Louisville Times* sometime ago, stated that the beautiful Swiss chateau of M. and Mme. Paderewski, always the center of charming hospitality, was the scene of one of liveliest and most brilliant gatherings that ever took place at the home of the famous pianist. One of the diversions was the playing of ragtime by men and women whose names are known all over the civilized globe. They even went so far as to render Brahms and other masterpieces in ragtime, to the uproarious delight of all present, including the host who, indeed participated in the fun and demonstrated that as a ragtime player, he too, was to be reckoned with.

# In Love's Paradise.

Words by  
NOAH G. HENLEY.

Music by  
EDW. J. MELLINGER.

Piano introduction in 4/4 time, featuring a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). Dynamics include *f* and *p*.

VAMP.

Vamp piano accompaniment consisting of a single melodic line in the right hand and a chordal bass line in the left hand. The key signature has one flat.

All the world's bright and gay, love, since you named the day Life to  
Down the vis - ta of years, love, your smiling face cheers, As I

Vocal line and piano accompaniment for the first verse. The vocal line is in the right hand, and the piano accompaniment is in the left hand. The key signature has one flat.

me is but a beau-teous ros - y dream, Not in e - ter - ni - ty could there  
dream of all the joy that waits for me, And in sun - shine and rain, glad - ness,

Vocal line and piano accompaniment for the second verse. The vocal line is in the right hand, and the piano accompaniment is in the left hand. The key signature has one flat.

ev - er more be Soul more filled with joy, I owe it all to you; When your  
pleasure or pain, To our Par - a - dise a frag - rance rare you'll bring; And the

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Additional copies of this song may be obtained at 15c each; may be obtained from Edw. J. Mellinger, Odeon Bldg., St. Louis, Mo.

sweet face is near then it's Par - a - dise, dear, All things  
light in your eyes, bright as heav'n's sun - lit skies Mag - ic

earthly van - ish and a gold - en glow *rit.* Seems to shine on us there like a  
pow - er, charming in - flu - ence and guide; Oh! be true to me, dear, ev - er

vis - ion so fair, That's Par - a - dise, Love's Par - a - dise, to me, my dear;  
lov - ing, sin - cere, You're queen of Par - a - dise, Love's Par - a - dise, my dear;

REFRAIN. Slower.  
*With expression.*

To love, to kiss to press you dear - ie, to my heart is Par - a - dise to

*a tempo p ff*

*In loves 3.*

me; 'Tis then I of - fer you the great and true de - vo - tion

that my soul has felt for you, dear; Such to me is hap - pi - ness so full my

spir - it thrills with ec - sta - sy, Oh! my heart's light and free when your

fair face I see in love's bright Par - a - dise

*a tempo*

In loves 3.

# The Minnesota Rag

AXEL CHRISTENSEN

The musical score for "The Minnesota Rag" is presented in five systems, each consisting of a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/4. The first system features a melodic line in the treble clef with eighth and sixteenth notes, and a bass line with chords and eighth notes. The second system continues the melodic pattern in the treble and provides a steady harmonic accompaniment in the bass. The third system introduces a more complex melodic line with some triplets and rests. The fourth system maintains the melodic flow with some syncopation. The fifth system concludes with a first ending (marked '1') and a second ending (marked '2'), both leading to a final cadence. The notation includes various musical symbols such as accidentals, slurs, and dynamic markings.

The first system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 2/4 time signature. It contains a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, including some beamed eighth notes and a triplet of eighth notes. The lower staff is in bass clef and contains a bass line primarily composed of eighth notes and chords, providing a steady accompaniment.

The second system continues the piece. The upper staff features a melodic line with eighth notes and a triplet of eighth notes. The lower staff continues with a bass line of eighth notes and chords, maintaining the rhythmic foundation.

The third system shows the continuation of the melody and bass line. The upper staff has a melodic line with eighth notes and a triplet. The lower staff provides accompaniment with eighth notes and chords.

The fourth system concludes a phrase. The upper staff has a melodic line that ends with a quarter rest. The lower staff has a bass line that also ends with a quarter rest, indicating the end of a measure.

TRIO

The Trio section begins with a new key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 2/4 time signature. The upper staff features a complex melodic line with many beamed sixteenth notes and chords. The lower staff continues with a bass line of eighth notes and chords.

The Minnesota Rag

The first system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and contains a series of chords and eighth-note patterns. The lower staff is in bass clef and features a steady eighth-note accompaniment with occasional chords.

The second system of musical notation includes two staves. The upper staff has a melodic line with a first ending bracket labeled '1' and a second ending bracket labeled '2'. The lower staff continues the bass accompaniment with some syncopated rhythms.

The third system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff features a more active melodic line with many sixteenth notes. The lower staff provides a rhythmic foundation with chords and eighth notes.

The fourth system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff continues the melodic development with various intervals and rhythms. The lower staff maintains the accompaniment with some chordal textures.

The fifth system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff has a melodic line that concludes with a final cadence. The lower staff provides a final accompaniment with chords and a few eighth notes.

The Minnesota Rag 8

**RAGTIME OPERA IS COMING.**

*Contributed by J. Forrest Thompson.*

According to the *Louisville Courier Journal*, it is the opinion of Mlle. Lakme Matzene that within a few short years all of our favorite operas will be offered in ragtime. Mlle Lakme Matzene is the prima donna sopranno with Ralph Dunbar's Salon Singers, in vaudeville this season. The popularity of such an innovation is no doubt already assured, as the Salon Singers are giving a "Rag" version of the Miserere from "Il Trovatore" for an encore and it is voted a big hit. Miss Matzene is an operatic prima donna of wide experience, but she does not hold ragtime beneath the dignity of a classic artiste.

**IF LONGFELLOW WROTE NOW.**

Listen, kiddoes, and you shall hear  
Of the ragtime ride of Paul Revere.  
It was some ride;  
He did a glide  
'Way out to Lexington,  
From Boston town  
He tangoed down,  
And there was heaps of fun.

He put the foe right on the blink;  
They had to do the kitchen sink  
In double time.  
Oh, it was prime!  
The farmers didn't lag.  
They soon got hep  
And how they'd step  
That revolution rag!

# A Course in Vaudeville Piano Playing

By AXEL CHRISTENSEN.

Arrangements by John S. Meck.

Every month we will publish an installment of a course in vaudeville and picture show piano playing. By studying these instructions carefully, any person, with a fair knowledge of piano to start with, can qualify as a pianist for vaudeville theaters and moving picture houses. The following subjects will be taken up in this course: Sight reading, elementary harmony, playing from violin parts (leader sheets), playing from bass parts, transposing, modulating, vaudeville cue, what to play and how to play it, together with practical information about the work that is usually only obtained after years of experience.—Editor.

**INTRODUCTION.**

In order to give the pupil the best practical work in reading vaudeville music, which music generally comes to the pianist in the form of manuscript, more or less poorly written, the exercises contained in this course are printed in manuscript form.

This will answer the question which might arise in the minds of some as to why manuscript music is used (which necessitates the "zinc etching" process), when it would have been cheaper as well as much neater to use the regular "lithograph" process in printing the music.

The writer realizes that no matter how well the student may master the lessons in this course, if the exercises are printed in the regular manner, the moment the said student has to play in a vaudeville theater from the regular "leader sheets," he or she might have trouble for a time.

On account of the strangeness in appearance, the *written* leader sheets would tend to confuse the pianist if *printed* music had been used during the course of instruction. This fact might even cause a person to lose a good position through nervousness or lack of confidence.

This course in vaudeville piano playing has been arranged most carefully, and it has been the aim of the author to make it as brief as possible—eliminating everything not absolutely necessary to the rapid progress of the student.

**SIGHT READING.**

The first and most essential requirement of a good vaudeville pianist is the ability to play quickly and accurately at *sight* any and all music placed before him.

All other virtues and accomplishments he may have, but if he cannot read music readily and fluently he will never become a good vaudeville or orchestra pianist.

Sight reading is an accomplishment—not a gift—and can be learned by anyone willing to devote a part of his practice hour to it.

First of all, it will be necessary for the student to learn to play *without looking at his instrument*.

In reading music for the first time, if a pianist glances from the music to his instrument, from time to time, he is liable not only to lose time and rhythm (stammer and stumble), but very often to lose his place altogether.

Also, frequently the pianist must constantly watch the performer he is playing for, which allows no time to watch his fingers.

Therefore, to bring about this result, three things are necessary: First, for the fingers to know the keyboard; second, to translate instantly the sighting of a note into playing the same; and, third, to grasp at once the nature of a musical thought, or phrase.

It is assumed that the pupil has mastered the elements of music and "knows the notes."

Note that the keyboard is composed of white and black keys. The white keys are all alike, but the black keys are placed in groups of two and three.

Form a clear mental picture of the keyboard.

You know that "C" lies to the left of the two black keys and "F" lies to the left of the three black keys.

Now, *without looking at the keyboard*, place your hands on the keys and let your fingers steal over the black keys, lightly touching them.

Locate, by sense of touch *alone*, a group of two black keys. Strike "C" without looking at the keyboard.

Locate all the different "Cs" on the board with the thumb and play them.

Similarly locate the three black keys and play all the "Fs" with the thumb.

Do the same with the left hand.

Now, "D" lies between the two black keys and "G" lies between the first two of the three black keys.

Locate these keys with each hand and play as above.

Proceed in like manner with "B," "E" and "A," always starting with the hands in the lap and *never* looking at the keyboard.

After the first few days, play some simple five-finger exercise, first commencing on "C," then on "G," then on the other keys in the above order, first with each hand separately, later with both hands together.

At least fifteen minutes each day should be devoted to this study.

Play examples 1, 2 3 and 4 once through looking at the keyboard occasionally, and thereafter *without looking* at the board.

Practice these exercises slowly, carefully and *often*. You may have to play each one over forty or fifty times before you are able to play it well *without looking* at your fingers.

Practice example 5.

Now, whenever you have a few minutes to spare, make it a point to practice playing strange music, popular songs, two-steps, etc., without looking at the piano. Only play each piece over once at a sitting, so as to develop sight reading. It is better to work on strange music; and, no matter how awful

it sounds at first, persist and you will soon be able to play anything readily without watching the keyboard at all.

Further exercises for practicing sight reading will be given next month.

#### THE SCALE.

In order to play from "Leader Sheets" or Violin parts (which are handed to the vaudeville pianist in manuscript form) and to be able to add the proper harmony with the left hand, it is not necessary for the player to have a thorough knowledge of harmony, but a knowledge of intervals, the principal chords and their inversions, together with

### Ex. 1. Slow

Right Hand Only.

### Ex. 2. Slow 2

### Ex. 3.

Left hand only 3

EX. 4. *Slow and marked*

Musical notation for Exercise 4, featuring a bass clef, C major key signature, and 2/4 time signature. The piece is marked "Slow and marked" and includes dynamics like "F" and "allargamento".

Both Hands (The left-hand plays one octave lower.)

EX. 5. *Valse modto.*

Musical notation for Exercise 5, featuring a treble clef, D major key signature, and 3/4 time signature. The piece is marked "Valse modto." and includes the dynamic "mf".

2-2

C major **EX. A.**

Musical notation for C major scale exercise (Ex. A) showing intervals: whole step, whole, half, whole, whole, whole, half.

A minor **EX. B.**

Musical notation for A minor scale exercise (Ex. B) showing intervals: whole step, half, whole, whole, half, step and 1/2, half.

a familiarity with all the major and minor scales up to four sharps and five flats is necessary.

We will therefore now study the major and minor scales.

The student will please bear in mind that the

following lessons in elementary harmony are very important and will be very careful about their study.

The major scale consists of five whole tones and two half tones. In the major scale the half tones always occur between the third and fourth steps

*Steps of the Scale (Key of "C")*

EX. 13.

Tonic Super-tonic mediant Sub-dominant Dominant Sub-mediant Leading Tone Tonic

*Normal Intervals*

EX. 14

Perfect Major Major Perfect Perfect major major Perfect Major.

Prime Second Third Fourth Fifth Sixth Seventh Octave Ninth

*Augmented Intervals*

EX. 15

Seconds Thirds Fourths Fifths

Sixths Seventh Octave Ninth

*Minor Intervals*

EX. 16.

Seconds Thirds Sixths Seventh.

*Diminished Intervals*

EX. 17.

Second Thirds Sixth Seventh

*Diminished Intervals*

EX. 18.

and between the seventh and eighth steps. (See example A.)

In the "Harmonic" minor scale the half tones occur between the second and third step, between the fifth and sixth step, and between the seventh and eighth steps, while between the sixth and seventh step we have one and one-half tones. (See example B.)

The minor scale which is most nearly related to any major scale has the same signature as the major scale, and begins a minor third lower than that of its relative major. Thus "A Minor" is the relative minor to "C Major," "D Minor" is the relative minor to "F Major," "E Minor" is the relative minor to "G Major," etc. (Examples A and B.)

Having the same signature, the tones of the relative scales are therefore just alike and the peculiar nature of the minor scale is simply due to its beginning the same series of tones in a different place, that is, on the sixth degree of the major scale. However, for the purpose of erecting chords on the minor scale, the seventh step of the minor scale is raised half a tone, which explains the reason for having a tone and a half between the sixth and seventh steps. (Example B.)

In the "Melodic" minor scale, which is used in scale practice, the sixth and seventh degrees of the scale are raised in ascending and lowered in descending, but for our purpose it will not be necessary to study the "Melodic" minor scale.

*Harmonic Intervals*

Ex. 19.

Sixth sixth Third Fifths Seventh seconds Fourth Octave

*Melodic Intervals*

Ex. 20

Sixth sixth Third Fifths Seventh seconds Fourth Octave

*Exercise*

EX 21 Key of "C"  
 p4 a4 m3 min 3 dim 8 a 8 etc.

Key of G

Key of F

Key of A

## NAMING THE STEPS OF THE SCALE.

The first step of the scale, called the Tonic, being the key note, is the most important note in the scale. Second in importance is the fifth step of the scale, which is called the Dominant, and next in importance is the fourth step which is called the Sub-dominant. It is on these three steps that the principal chords are built, namely Tonic, Dominant and Sub-dominant.

The second step of the scale is called the Super-tonic, the third step is called the Mediant, the sixth step is called the Sub-mediante, and the seventh step of the scale is called the Leading Note. These have been given you in order of their importance. In the regular order they are as follows (See example 13):

- 1—Tonic.
- 2—Super-tonic.
- 3—Mediant.
- 4—Sub-dominant.
- 5—Dominant.
- 6—Sub-mediante.
- 7—Leading Note.

EXERCISE—Write out (on a sheet of music manuscript paper) the following major scales, and also their relative minors in the same manner as example given: C, F, B flat, A flat, D flat, G, D, A, E, and B.

## INTERVALS.

The difference in pitch which separates two tones is called an "Interval." Intervals are always counted from the lower note upward as the major scale goes and are determined by the number of steps of the scale included by the two notes. Thus in the scale of C, C to D would be called a "second," C to E would be called a "third," C to F would be called a "fourth," C to G would be called a "fifth," C to A would be called a "sixth," C to B would be called a "seventh" and C to the next C above would be called an "octave." (See example 14.)

These intervals are divided into two classes, "Perfect" and "Major." The fourth, fifth and octave from the Tonic of any Major scale are called "Perfect," while the second, third, sixth and seventh from the tonic are called "Major." (Example 14.)

A Perfect Interval when extended by a sharp or a natural becomes "Augmented" and when contracted by a natural or flat becomes "Diminished." For example: In the key of C, C to G is a perfect fifth (example 14), while C to G sharp would be an augmented fifth (example 15), and the interval C to G flat would be a diminished fifth (example 18).

A major interval when extended by an accidental is called Augmented, just the same as the Perfect Intervals, but when it is lowered a half tone it becomes minor (not diminished). Thus, C to E would be a major third, C to E sharp would be an "augmented third" (example 15), and C to E flat would be a minor third.

EXERCISES: Name each interval in example 21.

Write (on a sheet of music manuscript paper) the diminished octave, minor second, minor third, perfect fourth, augmented fifth, minor sixth and minor seventh upon each of the following notes: E, A, B flat, G, C, and F.

Erect the major third, minor third, perfect fourth, perfect fifth, major second, major sixth, perfect octave, major seventh and augmented fifth of the following tones: D, D flat, A flat, E flat, C sharp and B.

NOTE: If the two tones of an interval are sounded together the interval is called "Harmonic;" if sounded in succession it is a "Melodic" interval. (See examples 19 and 20.)

(To be continued)

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## RAGTIME.

*A Few Remarks in its Favor.*

BY AXEL CHRISTENSEN.

Congreve has said: "Music hath charms to soothe the savage breast, to soften rocks or bend a knotted oak." While these words doubtless had their origination long before the advent of our popular ragtime, it seems to me that they can be as justly applied to ragtime as to any other class of music. Of course, if the statement was applied to some of the ragtime music, which it occasionally is our ill fortune to endure, it might be well to add to the above words, when speaking of its "power," that it can wreck a freight train or lift a mortgage without any effort. It is, however, only the real, genuine ragtime—artistic syncopation—that I wish to consider in this article.

Ragtime when properly played is always liked and appreciated except in a few instances where certain persons refuse to give up their prejudiced ideas on the subject. One of the most common arguments used by these individuals against ragtime is that it spoils a person's time in music, or, in other words, a person once having played ragtime is incapable of rendering other music in correct and proper time. The thorough study of the principles and construction of real ragtime is the greatest aid to playing correct time in any class of music that one can find, for in ragtime, correct is the important factor to be considered.

In the theater a ragtime piece is always sure to awaken into life the sleepest kind of an audience, and the general appreciation is easily noticed by the universal drumming of fingers and moving of heads to time with the music.

The field for teaching ragtime and popular music is practically unlimited. Thousands of music teachers existing today make their living from teaching the "one-tenth" who favor classical music, but the other nine-tenths of the public want ragtime.

Thousands of openings are waiting for good teachers who will teach ragtime—not narrow-minded persons, hampered by old-time prejudices and worn out ethics, but real, live, wide-awake teachers, who realize that to keep abreast of these advancing times, one must keep abreast and not lay back, content to live and work in the achievements of the past.

To play good ragtime and popular music, it is not necessary to know everything that goes to make up a thorough musical education. If your musical ambition does not go beyond personal enjoyment and the entertainment of your friends and the folks at home the greater part of the usual course of teaching can be omitted and good results obtained in a comparatively short time.

A complete musical education is undoubtedly a fine thing—to those who live to complete it—and is well appreciated in the sphere to which it belongs, but in a crowd of people, made up of all classes, it will be noticed that the pianist who can effectively play a good ragtime selection does not need to have a pedigree extending through the high-priced musical colleges or a lot of diplomas and medals.

People care more for what you can do than for what you know, and if you can play ragtime in a brilliant and captivating manner, you are

*(Continued on page 22)*

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(Continued from page 20)

going to be more popular than if you knew all about harmony, counterpoint, etc., and couldn't play ragtime.

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**T**HIS magazine will contain every month a number of new and snappy rags, songs and popular music for the piano—in fact, the music you will receive in this manner is alone worth several times the subscription price.

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The above are only some of the features that will be contained in this magazine—we haven't space to tell you more here—but we can assure you that it will be of vital interest and importance to every person who plays the piano and loves popular music. It will contain nothing dry—nothing classic—only that happy, pulsating “rag” and the songs and melodies that make for happiness and delight.

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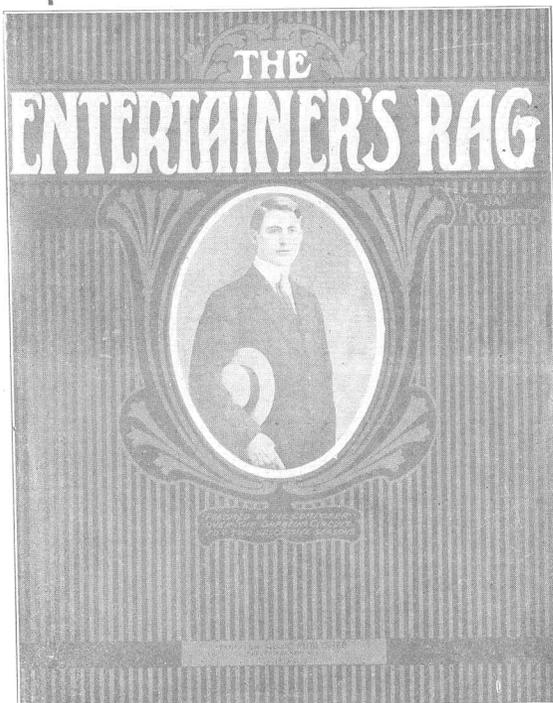
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