

REVIEW

In the spring of 1923 I ran across a book in the Sacramento Public Library, the name of which I have forgotten, on the relation of the physics of sound to musical theory, and containing a discussion of the merits of just intonation and of equal temperament. That was the beginning of my present work.

The following five years were a period of gestation. At different times I invented types of notation for 12 just tones to the 2/1, and wrote music for each to be played on unfretted string instruments.

The first draft of Exposition of Monophony was completed in 1928. It made the 11th overtone the limit of the source of its intervals, presented the theory of resolutions here included, and contained a similar classification of intervals.

The same year I made the fingerboard of the viola. It was attached by a violin maker in New Orleans in 1930. That year Exposition of Monophony was rewritten, giving a more thoro explanation of the ideas.

The year previous I had composed many songs for voice and piano, with none of which I was wholly satisfied. Then came the determination to allow the spoken words of lyrics to govern the melody and rhythm of the music. There was no conscious influence in the conclusion except, possibly, the knowledge that the ancient Greeks had used some such manner of song.

The completion of the instrument was the needed incentive. The first song in the intervals of Monophony, "The Long-Departed Lover," by Li Po, was written in December, 1930. The composition of the 16 others has extended over two years and a half.

51

In 1931 I obtained the artistic assistance of Rudolphine Radil of Oakland in interpreting the songs. The first public demonstration followed in February, 1932, in San Francisco, under sponsorship of the New Music Society of California. The same month a public demonstration was given in Oakland.

Exposition of Monophony was rewritten in 1931, and again in 1932. The 1931 draft admitted undertones as the source of intervals. This was ~~the result of~~ *hastened thru* reading Henry Cowell's "New Musical Resources", published in 1930. It also expounded the principles of song presented herein. The 1932 draft contained a history of intervals.

The keyboard was designed in April, 1932, and the model described completed in December. I was urged to this project by Mildred Couper, composer in quarter-tones, who made helpful suggestions.

Two public demonstrations were given in Pasadena in the early months of 1933, with Calista Rogers intoning the lyrics, in a series of concerts initiated by her. A demonstration at about that time was made for the high school music teachers of the city of Los Angeles.

My early work was not influenced by personal contacts; the later period was, casually. Several books have helped mold the work, particularly Helmholtz' Sensations of Tone.

This month the exposition was again rewritten. It was given thoughtful criticism by Bertha McCord Knisely, music editor of Los Angeles Saturday Night. It is principally a condensation of the previous one. It contains new details, the history is more authoritative and complete, but the fundamental ideas are unaltered.

H.P. -- June, 1933.