

The Builders of Violins

By HOMER B. KING

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IT WAS eight years ago in New York, on Pier No. 4, I first saw Litchinsky. He was sitting on an upturned box, playing a violin while waiting to load for the other side; a strong-faced, slender-bodied toy, in a man's years, dressed in Uncle Sam's khaki.

During my first talk with him he told me he was American born, of Austrian parents, by trade a carpenter, at heart a maker of violins, who, since childhood, had longed to build an instrument that would sing the joy of his soul.

"Oh," he exclaimed, "if I could only put into it the greatness of my happiness, the song that continuously sings and dances within me—but I've failed. Always I think that within the next will live a soul bubbling with mirth, but always creeps in the note of sadness—and I put it away and build another."

A year later I, with several phylidians, was detailed to accompany home a shipload of our sick heroes, and Litchinsky was one of them. He was propped up on his cot, and instantly his eyes arrested me, and he smiled his same old smile.

"Hello, doctor!" he called. "To-day we journeyed from our happy land, so we travel happy. I am so happy," he continued, as I, trying to smile, held his hand. "I want so much to get back to my violins. You see, with these steel legs I can't go back to my carpenter work, therefore I can spend all my time putting music into my pieces of wood."

That he had come out of the war's hell with his soul still flaming, his creed of joy, filled me with a surprise which he saw, for he said:

"That back there is nothing—already I have forgotten its awfulness. It is only for a moment that sorrow has triumphed—happiness will beat it

back."

"Where is your violin?" I asked. "I gave it away, because the last time I played it there in the hospital it would not dance—it only cried and cried, and with it the men wept, and I grew angry, for I was going home and it should have spoken my joy—so I threw it aside, saying, 'I will build me another that will not sing such notes.'"

Yesterday, in his little room adjoining his smaller workshop, I found him smiling, though a mere shadow of his former self—but his eyes were changed. In them lived and burned all the sorrows of a world—sorrow his heart would not let him speak, yet under them lay his soul, crushed.

He bobbed with me to his shop where lay his last soul-built instrument; a jewel in shape and beauty. Worshippingly he gazed upon it, caressing it as tenderly as a mother yearning over her first-born.

"Twice before I failed," he said softly, "and each was greater than before. Each wept and moaned in sorrow, and I sold them. But this time I have not failed! See the wood, grown in sunny Italy! Not yet has it sounded!" His voice fell to a whisper.

"But I know, as though it had spoken, the song of joy it will sing. My heart already hears its glorious notes, its melody of purest happiness, that will set the world to swaying in an ecstasy of delight!"

Before I left I prevailed upon him to let me bring a few friends. You know how we gathered in his little shop, how he tenderly lifted the instrument from its bed of cotton, and 'You must have seen by the expression of his eyes that he seemed to be looking into another world; that his smile was infinitely tender. Then you saw the bow touch the strings, heard a glorious sound pour forth, filling not only the little room but all outside.

To me the walls vanished and I heard the marching of soldiers, the thunder of tramping horses, the roaring of motors, the purring of machine guns, the shrieks, groans, yells, prayers, curses of maddened and tortured men. In all its horror, war

screeled from the wondrous instrument. Then came the saddest notes the ear of man ever heard; it was the prayers, moanings, sorrowings of a world of mothers, sweethearts, fathers, friends, a world stricken. Suddenly it stopped, and we, with hearts leaping to suffocation, watched him, the maker of it all, look in wonderment at the instrument that so tenderly deceived him.

Over and over he turned it, seemingly unable to recognize it. Bewildered, he looked at its box and back, and I saw death chilling his features. Then he smiled, and death, overtaking, froze it. Yet his eyes lived and glowed with a fire kept alive by the great God, and again he played. This time the notes sang in a volume of unearthly rejoicing, and beneath were the wondrous dancing notes he had sought so long.

Under its magic rhythm the world must have moved and sung. Higher it rose to an ecstasy of all things glorious. At last, from a world unseen by other eyes than his, he was sending forth his message of peace and happiness. Gradually the bow traveled slower and slower. Softer and farther away sounded the notes until their melody seemed to float to us, a breath from beyond, and, looking into his eyes, I knew he was dead.

Incapable of movement, we watched him topple, saw the instrument fall, heard it crash against the sharp end of an iron mold, saw the jagged hole, and with him, its master, it passed.

Why Blondes Are Dying Out
An authority on cultural anthropology says that in the great urban centers of Great Britain the tall blonds are dying out and are being replaced by short, dark-haired and brown-eyed people. The Nordic blond seems to thrive best in the country, and the dark peoples do best in the cities. The anthropologist predicts that, if England continues to become more and more urban, Alpine and Mediterranean folk will predominate, as they did centuries ago—YOUTH'S COMPANION.

English Writer Tells "Tall" Fish Stories

The winter garden of the Savoy hotel, London, was the scene of a double tragedy a few weeks ago. For many years two goldfish, named Zerk and Eva, made their home in the fountain there. Guests from all parts of the world admired them, for the fish were famous on account of their tricks.

As soon as a cork was put in the water, Ernest would leap over it in a flash of gold, and sometimes would turn a somersault in the air. One day, however, a thoughtless guest flicked some cigar ash into the fountain, and the fish were poisoned.

Another notable goldfish died recently. His name was Peter, and for fourteen years he lived in the garden fountain of St. Andrew-by-the-Wardrobe, London.

Legends of long-lived fish are numerous. One of the most interesting concerns the "Holy Trout of Kilgaree." This fish lived for many years in a well in the west of Ireland. Tradition says that, when French troops landed there more than a century ago, they ran short of food, and certain soldiers decided to have the trout tried for dinner. When they put him on the pan, the trout disappeared up the chimney and found his way back to the well, where he lived for many years.—LONDON TIT-BITS.

Tramp's Quiet Remark Made Big Impression

I remember once two or three of us children had climbed up a high chestnut tree near the gate of our home (reminiscent of Sir William Osler in "Stories of Old Ireland and Myself"). A broken-down old tramp was passing painfully along the road, but he stopped when he heard our laughter, said at last detected where we were above him.

"Ah, children," said he, "I would like to be up there with you!"

We laughed still more at the idea of this old man climbing a tree. And

one of us said: "What on earth, old man, do you want to come up here, for?"

To which he replied:

"Wouldn't I be nearer to heaven?"

And away he moved on his weary tramp of the roads. But we were very quiet for a bit after what he said.

Testing Gold

To test gold, dig the point of a knife into it, and if it powders it is not gold. Gold is richly yellow, but tell it from pyrites when in very minute flecks; turn it so that the light catches it from various directions. Gold will not alter in shade, but pyrites does. A drop of nitric acid will cause a fuming on pyrites, but does not affect gold.

You must pan creek sands and gravel to find gold. It may be seen on the surface, but generally the heaviest deposits of placer gold are on and close to bed rock, which may be a few feet or many feet deep. Gold placers are best found in a head of a creek, which allows it to be deposited, or on the upper side of a reef or ledge crossing the stream. Sometimes it is a dry deposit, up where the stream formerly flowed, and is called a "bar" placer.—VICTOR SHAW, in Adventure Magazine.

Isn't Nature Wonderful?

Lucas Malet—We are all, whether old or young, very actually the age morning declares us to be, and too often unthinkingly discloses." But with the subsequent difference that, whereas the old grow younger as the day goes on, losing some of their staidness, the young grow older, losing some of their freshness.—BOSTON TRANSCRIPT.

NOTICE OF MORTGAGE SALE

Default having been made in the conditions of a certain mortgage made and executed by Bernard Schlaff, Felix J. Feldman, Timothy P. Sullivan and Frederick J. B. Sevald to George Brown and Edward Brown of the Township of Southfield, Oakland County, Michigan, dated the 14th day of April A. D. 1920 and recorded in the office of the Register of Deeds for the County of Oakland on the 14th day of April A. D. 1920 in Liber 272 of Mortgages on page 212, which said mortgage was thereafter assigned by Edward Brown and Vileta Brown, widow and survivor of George Brown, deceased, and also guardian for Norman Brown, Charlotte Brown and Mildred Brown, minor heirs of George Brown, deceased, to the Redford State Savings Bank, a Banking Corporation of Redford, Michigan, on the 8th day of February A. D. 1923 and recorded in the office of the Register of Deeds for the County of Oakland in Liber 287 of Mortgages, page 695, on the 3rd day of March A. D. 1923, and afterwards assigned by the Redford State Savings Bank, a Banking Corporation,

to Edward Brown of Detroit, Michigan, and Vileta Brown, widow and survivor of George Brown, deceased, and also guardian for Norman Brown, Charlotte Brown and Mildred Brown, minor heirs of George Brown, deceased, by assignment dated the 7th day of July A. D. 1925 and recorded in the office of the Register of Deeds for the County of Oakland in Liber 379 of Mortgages, on pages 5 and 6, on the 9th day of September A. D. 1925, and by reason of said default, the power of sale contained in said mortgage having become operative, on which mortgage there is claimed to be due at the date of this notice, for principal the sum of \$8,000.00, interest \$513.33, and an attorney fee of \$25.00 as provided in said mortgage, and no proceeding at law having been instituted to recover the money secured by said mortgage, or any part thereof.

Notice is hereby given that by virtue of the power of sale contained in said mortgage and the statute in such case made and provided, the said mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, at public vendue, to the highest bidder, at the Eastern or Saginaw Street entrance to the Court House in the City of Pontiac, Oakland County, Michigan, that being the place where the Circuit Court for the County of Oakland is held, on Saturday, the 19th day of December A. D. 1925, at nine o'clock in the forenoon Central Standard time, the description of which premises contained in said mortgage, is as follows:

Lands, premises and property situated in the Township of Southfield, County of Oakland and State of Michigan, described as follows, to-wit: The West one-half of the Southwest one-quarter of Section 17, Township one North of Range ten East, excepting the Northernly 13 1-3 acres thereof; also the East half of the East half of the Southeast quarter of Section 18, Town one North, Range ten East, excepting the Northernly 6 2-3 acres thereof; the premises hereby above described and covered by this mortgage containing in all 100 acres of land, more or less.

Dated September 14th, A. D. 1925.

Edward Brown,

Vileta Brown, widow and

survivor of George Brown,

deceased, and also guardian

for Norman Brown, Charlotte

Brown and Mildred Brown,

minor heirs of George Brown,

deceased Assignees.

Patton and McGee,

Attorneys for Assignees

First National Bank Bldg.,

Pontiac, Michigan. Sep 18-Dec 11

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HARRY S. WOLFE

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