

Herbert L. Clarke

# **How I became a cornetist**

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## Herbert L. Clarke

**Herbert Lincoln Clarke** (1867-1945) was a legend in his own time. He is easily the best known cornetist of all times. From his meager beginnings of practicing on an old Ophicleide and joining the Queen's Own Rifle Regimental Band in Toronto just so he could have a cornet (a Courtois) he could call his own to practice, one would never suspect such a career lay ahead of him.

Herbert L. Clarke traveled over 800,000 miles with such musical organizations as Gilmore's Band, Innes' Band, Victor Herbert's Band, John Philip Sousa' Band, and many under his direction. He performed over 6,000 cornet solos- including 473 in one season. Clarke made 34 tours visiting 14 different countries.

Clarke made more phonograph records than any other cornet player and appeared as soloist at all the great "World's Fairs" - including the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, the 1895 Atlanta Exposition, 1900 World's Fair in Paris, the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo in 1901, the Glasgow, Scotland Exposition of 1901, the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair, and the Panama Exposition in San Francisco in 1915.

He was a past president of ABA and a composer of cornet solos, ensembles, and studies.



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## **Beginning of a Series of Autobiographical Sketches by HERBERT L. CLARK, Noted Bandmaster and Cornet Virtuoso**

### **FIRST SERIES**

In response to a request from "sanctum" headquarters to contribute to these columns an article that might interest the cornet clientele of this valuable magazine I have chosen to submit a rewriting of an old series of articles entitled: "How I Became a Cornet Player." They appeared more than ten years ago in Fillmore's Musical Messenger, a publication that since then has been absorbed by the Jacobs' magazines. This choosing is also in the nature of a response to many requests from musicians in all parts of the English speaking and reading world, asking if a reprinting of that old series were possible.

There are many who at times have raised the question as to just what nationality I belong, although why I do not know. in reply to all such, I am proud to state that by birth and parentage it so happened that I am an American- "Yankee", if you like- as I was born in New England at Woburn, Massachusetts, a suburb of Boston, and this (at least to me) remarkably eventful happening occurred on September 12, 1867. My parents were lineal descendants from the first settlers who came over from old England on the sailing vessel "Lion," which landed at Plymouth, Massachusetts, in 1634. And thus it is that I happen to be all American, with the same Revolutionary spirit coursing through my veins that stirred my forefathers to fight for their liberty and homes in order to make future provisions and protection for whoever came after them. I certainly am one of those who came afterwards-after all the toil and turbulence and suffering that has made this country what it is today. How little do we of the present generation really appreciate what has been done for us by the brave, thinking men and women of the past!

The happenstance of my nationality having been settled, as the second starting point in this series permit me to say that I am an enthusiast in music, especially in band music, always was and always shall be: and yet with all my long professional experience as a cornetist I am still an amateur-that is, one who loves the cornet and tries to improve himself in its playing each day. Even now I am as much interested in the instrument as I was at the beginning; I still believe that the cornet is "king" of all wind instruments, and that when properly played is the most brilliant and satisfactory of all solo instruments- not only to the player himself, but to his listeners as well. Understand, please that I do not mean to cast a slur on other wind instruments, such as the flute, clarinet, saxophone, trombone or baritone. These instruments are a musical delight when properly played, and all of us should raise our hats to the true virtuoso on any one of them, because each is just as necessary to the music profession as is the cornetist.

We know that many celebrities in music have risen to distinction without having given much thought to the end in view. Such ones, however, probably possessed an instinctive feeling of fineness in doing things that led them to conquer self by overcoming wrong habits in their daily practice, together with a certain amount of natural ambition, and these, when combined with tenacity of purpose and carefulness in work, usually will bring results in any line of endeavor. Nevertheless, everyone who

has made a sure and solid success in anything started from the bottom of the ladder and gradually worked up by their efforts, expecting perseverance and systematic application in overcoming obstacles at the very beginning. I often used to think and ponder over an old motto which has helped me greatly during my life-"Well Begun Is Half Done."

That old saying regarding poets does not hold good with cornetists , for there is no such thing as a "born" cornet player, each is "made" by and for himself, and each must actually work. The Almighty never had any special favorites upon whom to confer degrees, and even the celebrities all had to make a start. Many an aspiring young player is often told by his friends that he is a "born cornetist." This is a mistake, for after a while he really begins to believe it himself and stops his regular practice routine. As a result his career does not last very long, and after perhaps a few years of disappointment and discouragement he adopts some other line of work to make a living.

Natural aptitude and other qualifications of course count for a great deal if rightly utilized. Here is a little story of more or less 'chestnutty' flavor that in a way seems to fit: Some ill advised friend once told an impressionable young man of about twenty that he (the young man) had a wonderful lip for the cornet (whatever that meant), and advised him to study the instrument. From that time on the young chap constantly broadcast to admiring friends and the world in general the remarkable fact of his "wonderful lip" and consulted several teachers, but that's as far as he got, for actual work began and ended with the "consulting," The wonder of his lip continued to the "burden of his song" for some sixty-odd years and his last dying words are said to have been: "I had a wonderful lip for the cornet.- Strange that he never obtained a cornet and utilized that "lip!"

The most of us undoubtedly try to do the best that we can at all times, but sometimes fail because of conditions. If one definitely realizes just what line of work he intends to follow for a livelihood and makes music his objective, then he should give the music exactly the same attention and application that is given to his schooling-the grammar and high school or even college, according to the extent of his ambition. Quite mistakenly, and many times regardless of disclosed aptitude and pronounced inclination, parents all too often map out the lives of children according to their own ideas. Many parents have in this way compelled their children to enter into uncongenial occupations, laid down and mapped out as they willed and not as the children might wish. Unfortunately for the world, such arbitrary parental ruling has made many criminals, not to mention the failures. I believe that every child is born into this life for some definite and good purpose and that later on instinct will more surely map out his way than will the arbitrary "must" of the parents, if education and environment are right. It is a profound problem which demands the deepest study on the part of the parents.

During my boyhood I was educated to become an architect, because of certain talents displayed as a youngster. I studied it from the very bottom up, and the application of its teaching has helped me wonderfully as a guide in correcting my cornet playing. In the beginning it was necessary to overcome handicaps in the way of mathematical problems and mechanical drawing, and I well remember how hard I worked to correctly draw a perfectly straight line free-hand and without a rule. It

required long practice, but in time I mastered it, and what seemed so difficult at first become easy after a while, Through this I learned that it is being perfect in the elementary work that gives us a firm foundation upon which to base for final perfection.

My father, who, in my opinion, was one of the best men on earth, forbade me to practice the cornet. For one reason, he did not want me to play a wind instrument: for another, he was particularly against permitting me to belong to a band, as he thought that association with band musicians was too rough for a boy. And without intention of being disrespectful or disobedient, for I loved the cornet to such an extent that I could hardly keep myself away from it for a moment. Father did not realize the good side of my musical "11 pals," while I was blind to everything but band music and could see only the bright and good side of a musician's life, striving to do my best and play my parts correctly. My mother once told me that "a thing worth doing at all is worth doing well," and after a time I was allowed to play the cornet under the provision that I behaved myself and kept my school work up to the mark.

In my practice I kept to the elementary, although I could play a lot of tunes when I first started and this even before a perfect scale was played—that is, played without making a mistake of any kind. How often do we think that our work is satisfactory when, after all, we merely blow into the cornet and make a noise without being perfect in every detail! One hundred percent alone is perfection. Ninety-nine percent only proves that one percent is missing in perfection, thus making the whole imperfect by just one per cent; therefore, when in his practice a player does not correct the slightest mistake immediately he logically is practicing to be imperfect.

I have heard many pupils play page after page of the instruction book, missing the notes here and there and making all manner of mistakes without correcting them, then say: - well I played fifteen pages of exercises today." There was no realization that even if only one mistake was made they had not played the fifteen pages, but simply "played at them."

## **SECOND SERIES**

Beyond any question, boyhood associations and surroundings, particularly the closely intimate ones of home relationships, have a strong bearing upon the molding of a man the marking and making of his future career. Therefore, at this point of my autobiographical story it perhaps is as well to briefly outline my immediate family circle, for it had much to do with my career with my love of band music as a boy, and from the very beginning when I entered this world placed me in a musical environment that played a large part in turning me to the musically artistic as a life profession.

My father was William Horatio Clarke, a celebrated organist, a writer, composer and genius, who could play almost every stringed and wind instrument. He was a very quiet man, yet nevertheless was full of fun, a fine entertainer, and very fond of his children. There were five boys in the family, I being the fourth, and as far back as I can remember, our father used to play all kinds of games with us every night before we retired. Four of us were closely connected in so far as ages were concerned; the eldest being my senior by only five years, with the other two falling in between. So we

all had good times together as youngsters, but with no thoughts in those earlier years of ever following music professionally.

## **THE CLARKE FAMILY**

As my brothers will be brought into this story occasionally (all of us growing up in the musical atmosphere created by our good father), and as perhaps pointing out how the playing together of us four brothers for our own amusement and fun in the early days was a factor in shaping my career, I will make the readers acquainted with their individual identity.

The first son was Will, who later became a fine organist and pianist, but who did not make music a profession, as have the other three, and now a successful business man. The second son, Edwin, started music with the violin and later took up the cornet, but completed the study of the violin and has been an orchestra leader for years. He was bandmaster of the Twenty-first Infantry of the Regular Army and served in Cuba throughout the Spanish-American War. Later on he played cornet in Sousa's Band, and after giving up professional playing served for seven years as Mr. Sousa's general manager. The third son, Ernest, is a trombone player of note. He was solo trombonist in Patrick Sarsfield Gilmore's great aggregation up to the time of that famous bandmasters death, and afterwards became associated with the late Victor Herbert. He entered into the orchestral field, and played in the New York Symphony Orchestra under Dr. Walter Damrosch for some fifteen years.

My father, although a really fine organist and pianist, as I have said before, never ceased to be a devoted student of these instruments, practicing for hours daily. When only a mere child, I used to be awakened in the early hours of every morning by hearing him practice such music as the Bach Fugues and other organ and piano compositions, all of high standard and classical nature. My father was so thorough in his study and work that he never was quite satisfied with himself, but was ever striving to become more perfect in his technic,

## **CHILDHOOD DREAMS**

My mind reverts to the childhood days when we moved from my birthplace (Woburn, Massachusetts) to Dayton, Ohio, my father having accepted a position in the latter city as church organist and music director of the public schools. I was then between four and five years of age, and having shown a taste for band music was provided with a drum as my first band instrument, I played fairly well for a kid-walking up and down the yard while drumming, humming tunes to its playing and imagining myself a whole band. Oh, how I did love a band of music! All my youthful dreams were filled with bands and uniforms!

It was about this time that our father became curious to learn how much musical talent we boys had, if any, and to try the thing out he purchased four small-sized violins for us. He began our teaching by showing us the proper way of holding the instrument, how to hold and use the bow and where to place the fingers; then he wrote some simple music in quartet form, giving each boy apart. Of course, we were extremely awkward at first in trying to hold the violin correctly, while at the same time holding the bow in the proper manner to produce a musical tone. However, father



was very patient with us and explained so thoroughly, yet simply, how to "make sounds" that we managed to play our parts together somehow and heard the results. It must have been pretty crude as music, but to me it sounded like a regular orchestra and I was proud of being able to take part in a real ensemble.

When the music was placed before me and the notes explained, what each one meant, and I was shown where and how to properly place the fingers to reproduce in tone the mitten notes-although it was the first time I had ever noticed written music-its reading seemed to come quite naturally to me, for I at once grasped the sense of it, I was then only about five years old, and have read music ever since. It was only natural that, after we had rehearsed and could play his little composition, father was quite proud to see his experiment prove fruitful.

This apparently trivial and seemingly unimportant part of these reminiscences may not be of any great interest to the readers, yet it has been introduced with a definite purpose in view- the accentuation of the value in environment and atmosphere when beginning with music, I wish to impress upon my colleagues the point that, having been brought up within the best of musical environments, perhaps I have had more and greater opportunities than the average boy. Father never would allow us to play harshly or at all coarsely (i.e. vulgarly); he taught us that music was an ART, not a TRADE and being of an extremely sensitive nature himself he could not and would not endure "noise" in music.

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF THOROUGHNESS**

It was this strictness of musical atmosphere which was the foundation of my success later on. I never was permitted to let the slightest mistakes pass uncorrected when practicing, but was taught to correct and conquer even the most simple one immediately, while still but a child, I was instructed in carefulness; carefulness in holding the violin properly, in drawing the bow straight across the strings in order to produce a pure tone, and in placing the fingers correctly and firmly on the strings. It is astounding how many beginners on musical instruments are allowed to become careless, they themselves not realizing what it means or how much work will have to be undone and done over later on in life, To me this negligence in the case of a beginner in music is the same as that of a child who when beginning the study of the multiplication table is permitted to guess of results, such as two times two equals six, or seven times six equals sixteen, and so on. The very first "guess" should be corrected and reasons explained; the child should be made to understand why twice two equals four. I classify all uncorrected errors as "microbes" which, although invisible to the naked eye, are deadly-even more deadly than an animal as big as an elephant. One can run away or hide from or dodge an elephant, but not so with a microbe, These minute organisms multiply rapidly and in large number if not immediately driven out of the system.

That was the method of our father when instructing us boys in playing. He always was gentle; never harsh, but firm. He demonstrated exactly what he wanted us to do by playing it himself on the violin; showed us the artistic side of good, pure music, while making us realize that it was the same as the true sentiment in poetry and fine painting, thus constantly leading us to play in a refined manner as well as in an environment and atmosphere of music-refinement.

## THE BAND FEVER

I did nothing much in music for some years afterwards. I never disclosed talent at all approaching that of the "prodigy" in music, and as I grew into the boy of eight or ten years my pleasures consisted of baseball and other healthy out-of-doors sports. However, my enthusiasm for bands and band music never diminished, and when ever one was heard playing I followed it. Many a mile have I walked beside a band, falling behind occasionally and then running ahead to catch up again, perfectly contented to keep it up all day long and never feeling tired until reaching home.

How many of my readers remember the Presidential Campaign of 1876? I recall the torchlight processions of both political parties prior to the election; the bugle corps, fife and drum corps and bands of all kinds marching with and playing for hundreds of men some carrying banners with campaign slogans; all bearing torches or wearing caps holding torches, and draped in multi-colored capes. I would lie awake nights listening to bands playing with them. In that same year of 1876 we all visited the great centennial Exposition at Philadelphia. We remained for several weeks, yet all that I can remember of that wonderful fair are the bands which I heard.

In the meantime father had moved to, Indianapolis, Indiana, to start in the manufacturing of church organs and to assume the position of organist at the Roberts Park Church, building the organ upon which he played for several years there. I began my schooling in Indianapolis and brought to light a very bad habit of drumming on the desk with my fingers, for which I often was punished. However, I could not seem to check the habit and carried it home with me, to the sorrow of my parents who often scolded me in consequence.

It was a symptom of the band fever which I had had from a child, so it is no wonder that I drifted into band work later on in life, although against my parents wishes. But, boys, I just felt it all through me, and know that there are many of you who feel exactly the same yet don't quite know how to get it out of your system. I never dreamed of being a cornet player then, but simply loved music in every form. It was not until many years afterwards that I really took an interest in my chosen instrument, and realized that by devoting enough time and thought and with proper practice I could become a good player of the cornet. At that time baseball occupied all my spare time, and I really was a good player, too. I got hurt along with the others, once breaking the third finger of my right hand. Of course, boy-fashion, I was rather proud of my accident and never told my mother of the injury, in consequence of which it never received proper attention and bothers me in my technique even today.

Father left Indianapolis in 1878 to accept a call as organist at the Tremont Temple in Boston, Massachusetts and as usual we all went with him, taking up the family residence in Somerville just outside of Boston. We lived there two years, and then come a fresh outbreak of the band fever, all because of my brother Edwin. He organized a little school orchestra of eight or ten boys which used to meet and rehearse weekly at the homes of the different members, and when Ed's turn come to have the orchestra at our home I was allowed to remain up later than usual and listen to it play. I was proud of Ed because he was the leader and played the violin, but that did not help to check the fever.

Later on Ed purchased a cornet, took a few lessons, and shortly afterwards joined the Somerville Brass Band. His teacher, Mr. Boardman, was the bandmaster, and took quite an interest in Ed and his work. Well! perhaps now I was not doubly proud of my brother and especially so when he was in full uniform! On the very first parade he made with the band I marched beside him over the entire route, gratuitously informing the public that "This is my BROTHER playing the cornet!"

### **THIRD SERIES**

In my earlier years, further than listening to my brother Ed when he practiced with his cornet I did not give much serious attention to music. As is the case with most boys, when out of school my time was taken up mostly with baseball or other athletic outdoor sports, yet through the foresight of my father those youthful years were not without their music. Our father always insisted upon us boys attending the high-class concerts and hearing the best music whenever possible, as he deemed such practice to be one of the essentials that was necessary for the foundation of a sound musical education. Thus it happened that although only a boy, and in spite of the outdoor amusements common to actively healthy boy life, rarely ever was there an opportunity missed to attend some fine concert and listen to good singing and playing.

Symphony orchestras were mighty scarce in those days, and I can remember of hearing but two organizations of symphonic nature; one was the Philharmonic Orchestra of New York City, and the other a fine body under the direction of Carl Zerrahn. However, there were several good concert companies to be heard at that time, also a big concert band conducted by Patrick S. Gilmore-the man whose pioneer work in the band held open the way for modern orchestra band work. Those concerts always roused me to a high pitch of enthusiasm, but it was only when I heard Gilmore's Band play for the first time that every part of my being vibrated through and through! Even now it would be impossible for me to explain the feeling roused within me by the playing of his band, neither at that time could I understand why its playing should so thrill me and stir my deeper emotions. Gilmore's Band was then only in its infancy and not widely known, but it became broadly known when in 1879 he took the aggregation to Europe. For that ambitious tour the indefatigable leader gathered together all the greatest instrumental artists and soloists it was possible to secure in this country.

### **ERNEST TAKES UP THE TUBA**

But to come back to my brother Ed and his young orchestra: Ed needed a bass player to help out his instrumentation, but there was no boy available who possessed or could play a string bass. This put an idea into the head of my brother Ernest, who figured it out for himself that if he could learn to play an old F tuba that father had stored in the house along with other instruments of the "ancient and honorable" class, perhaps Ed would permit him to become a member of his orchestra. My father had quite a collection of old fashioned, out-of-date brass instruments that had been handed down to him from his father, who used to play tuba in the old town band of Dedham, Massachusetts. In this collection I remember seeing an old-keyed bugle, a

rotary-valved posthorn made of German silver, a brass cornopean, a baritone orphicleide, and an old F tuba with a rotary change to E flat.

So Ernest dug out the old tuba, went at it in a way that did not belie his first name, and without any help started in to learn the scales. As I have stated before, father was not enthusiastic over having any of his boys learn a brass instrument, consequently Ernest received neither help nor hints from him, yet managed to gain some control of the valves and tone. He procured the bass part of a simple number which he practiced for hours, repeating it rhythmically over and over through many, many hours; even today I can hear his practicing distinctly, running: do-do, fa-fa, sol-sol, do-do-do! By perseverance and diligence he finally reached a point where he was accepted as a member of Ed's orchestra, and for the second time I was proud to have a brother who could play a brass instrument.

I now secretly began to wonder whether it ever would become possible for me to betaken into that orchestra, and so expended a great deal of thought(also secretly) as to the ways and means of becoming able to play some instrument that might be needed. I finally went up to the attic where the old instruments were stored, took down the orphicleide, and tried it to see if I possibly could produce a tone. For the benefit of those of my readers who may not know what an orphicleide is (or rather was, as it now an obsolete instrument which has not been used in any kind of playing ensemble for many years) I will explain, basing on the one I tackled as a fair example. It belonged to the keyed-bugle family of instruments, was made of brass (with keys like those of a saxophone) had a cup mouthpiece similar to those of a modern euphonium or baritone, and all in all had the appearance of a funnel-shaped tuba. Some of the "clappers" were as large in diameter as a teacup, and when fingered made as much noise as a whole drum section because the pads were old and worn out-in short the entire instrument was in a state of decrepitude from not having been played upon for more than two generations.

I did not realize all this, however, my whole realization was centered around the point that I wanted to play some sort of an instrument in Ed's orchestra, so with that as the objective (and, like Ernst, also without help) I worked hard to produce tones and hold them steady, besides learning the fingering. After a time my lips became so swollen and sore I could hardly talk, but I stuck to it and after many about five attempts finally succeeded in making the tones- horrible and unearthly sounds perhaps to others, but to me they were tones. This success filled me with elation so great that I felt that then and there I was fully competent to play in the orchestra, but that evaporated quite quickly when I was tried. Perhaps (although a bit doubtful) my feelings can be imagined when after all my hard work and striving I was turned down flat with the word "rotten!" Being only the "kid" brother, I really was not given a show, but was permitted to sit up nights and listen to the orchestra play once a week, and that helped some.

## **THE CALL TO CANADA**

We had lived for two years in Somerville, Massachusetts, when in 1880 father received a call from Toronto (Canada) to become organist at the Jarvis Street Baptist Church, and the Clarke family moved to that city. I was then twelve years old, but (further than my first "orphicleidal" attempt) had never shown any decided inclination towards music, although distinctly susceptible to its influence. My schooling occupied

the most of my time as our mother insisted that all of her boys should have a good education as basis for a successful career, yet I found time to hear many good concerts given by great artists that visited the city.

In Toronto brother Ernest became ambitious, and as he now did fairly well on the old F tuba, thought it about time to affiliate with some band. He applied for membership in the band of the Queen's Own Rifles Regiment and was accepted, but his old tuba being ages out of date, the bandmaster supplied him with a tenor horn which in time he mastered fairly well. After a while Ed joined the same band as a cornetist, playing on the same stand with the cornet soloist; and then brother Will also became a member playing a valve trombone. I was mighty proud over having three brothers belong to this big regimental band of about sixty men and when they were called out for regimental duties my pride found vent in marching along beside them (on the sidewalk) covering many a mile without sense of fatigue. It was the same pride which made me take delight in keeping my brothers' uniforms, accouterments and instruments (excepting Ed's cornet) constantly brushed and polished to a spick-and-span degree in appearance, while at the same time always wishing for that day to come when I too should be eligible to membership in the band.

## **THE MUSIC GERM AT WORK**

Wishing is not attaining, however, and never having learned to actually play a wind instrument of any kind I could not quite see just how the coveted membership was to be secured, so contented myself with listening to my brothers as they practiced on their instruments at home in different rooms. From hearing Ed play them hour after hour, day in and day out, I soon came to know by ear every exercise in Arban's Cornet Method. Ed, by the way, was the possessor of a silver cornet of which he was very proud and which he revered highly, as formerly it had belonged to and was used by the noted cornetist, "Mat" Arbuckle. Although I greatly admired this instrument I never was allowed to touch it under any conditions but no one ever knew how much in secret I envied Ed in both his playing and possession of that cornet. It now is evident that the "playing germ" was then generating insidiously within me, but I did not realize it until later.

In the following year of 1881 a great band came to Toronto to fulfill a week's engagement, playing concerts in the Horticultural pavilion, at that time the best concert hall in the city. The visiting aggregation was the famous Reeves' American Band of Providence, R.I., its director, David Wallace Reeves, being an able cornetist who was noted for his remarkable triple tongue execution. My father allowed me to attend some of the concerts, and there I listened entranced by what in my mind at the time was the greatest band ever heard by me. I sat in a front seat enraptured and enthralled with the playing of that band. After a few ensembled numbers there came a cornet solo which made me sit up and take notice. Again words fail me in trying to describe my feelings! Never before had I heard anything like it, and even at this present moment it stands out in memory as being the greatest of all incidents in my boyhood life! The cornet soloist was Bowen R. Church, then a young dashing chap and a very remarkable player, His brilliant playing roused the audience to intense enthusiasm, and I went home and dreamed of my first real "herd" in the music profession. The dormant germ had been galvanized into activity!

I can now realize, as my thoughts turn backward while writing this page, that it was the superb playing of Bowen Church which first inspired me and brought with it the realization that a cornet was the instrument for which I really cared and craved. Yet even so I never dreamed it as being at all possible for me to approach anywhere near his proficiency on the instrument. It seems strange, too, that many years after the Toronto episode, I should become the head of the American band, yet following the decease of Bandmaster "Wally' Reeves I occupied that position in 1902; neither did I then think that Bowen R. Church (now also deceased) and myself would become the fast friends which we were for many years.

To become an instrumentalist one first must have an instrument. As I already have said, Ed never would allow me to touch his cornet, while as for attempting to blow it-well the result may be imagined! So for the second time I made an invasion upon the already twice invaded "collection," this time dragging forth the old brass cornopean. Upon taking the thing from its wooden box I discovered that about half of the joints and tubing were loose, and it likewise needed but little blowing to disclose that the instrument was very leaky, so the first thing I did was to plaster up the tubing with beeswax and try to make it half-way playable. Of course, this, as well as any blowing, had to be done secretly when nobody was about, yet I managed to make enough progress to satisfy myself that possibly some time I might qualify as a player on a real instrument.

## **FOURTH SERIES**

Trying to play the old, attic-resurrected cornopean was not an entire waste of time, nor wholly without compensation, inasmuch as I learned to finger two of the regular cornet scales, as well as the chromatic scale for about an octave, and, better than all, I really was blowing a brass instrument, although ancient, of the cornet type. But oh, what a tone! I drew only such woeful, wheezy noises from that old "band derelict" that it made me sore on both myself and the instrument. I stuck to it a while however, trying hard to play by ear some of the elementary exercises from the Arban Method that I heard my brother Ed practice hour after hour on his "real" cornet. Of course, I couldn't play any of the higher notes (middle C being about my limit), so had to struggle incontinently even to play these simple studies when they went above the middle C (as all of them did), while G on the top space was an impossible height for me to scale.

I certainly was "working my passage" when playing that cornopean, which was everything but a cornucopian (horn of plenty) when it came to tone. I actually had to hold the instrument together with my left hand when pressing it hard against my lips to get high tones, otherwise the thing would fall to pieces and then I would have to put the parts together again, stopping up the leaks with beeswax in order to keep the wind from escaping through the joints when I blew hard. I finally became mad and disgusted, reburied the instrument in its old box and gave it all up. All my dreams of becoming a cornet player were shattered, and so I went back to my violin wholly, which I had been playing all along fairly well, as in those early days I seemed to possess some talent for that instrument of the stringed family.

## **AMATEUR ADVANCEMENT**

They elected me as leader, perhaps because of my fathers popularity, as well as my ability in mastering the first violin parts in the J.W. Pepper amateur orchestra publications, which contained simplified parts for all instruments and were easy arrangements. We met for practice every Thursday night at some one of the homes of the boys, each taking turn as "host." I can remember that the older members of the family generally managed to be absent on "rehearsal" nights probably on account of the horrible noises we made when trying to play. We did not mind their going, however, as that left us alone to work with "might and main" for two solid hours (from eight till ten), all of us taking great interest. After rehearsing for two, or three months, and showing some improvement each week, we decided that the time had come for us to be heard in public and announced our preparedness to play for church functions (sociables, festivals and such). We booked quite a number of these affairs during the winter months, gaining considerable of a reputation as a boys orchestra (our average age was thirteen years). As remuneration for our services we generally received supper and "thanks".

The opportunity now come for me to play with the Philharmonic Society Orchestra, an amateur organization of some fifty capable players and a connected chorus of about six hundred voices under the direction of Dr. F.H. Torrington. I was one of the second violinists in the orchestra and learned much in good music that proved valuable in later life. Dr. Torrington was a very able musician who at one time played in the Theodore Thomas Orchestra; also, an excellent organist, having played in the Metropolitan Church in Toronto. He was a remarkable interpreter of classical music, as well as a fine drill master for both orchestra and chorus- thorough in every detail, even to having the bowing marked so that all the violin players would bow exactly alike.

The Philharmonic was a very fine amateur orchestra, and the work was most interesting to me. I became more matured in my musical efforts through playing with men who knew the meaning of each selection, consequently I was very proud to be one of the members. When concerts were given great singers were engaged from New York and Boston as the soloists; also, many first-instrument men from the great orchestras were engaged to play bassoon, oboe, trumpet, horns and other important parts, thus augmenting the orchestra to seventy-five or more men and insuring a more perfect performance.

Perhaps my readers can realize what this experience meant to me, a boy of thirteen -playing the standard overtures and great symphonies, as well as the fascinating orchestrations of such oratorios as The Messiah (Handel), The Creation (Haydn), Samson (Handel), The Golden Legend (Sullivan), St. Paul (Mendelsson), The Redemption (Gounod) and others. The work was extremely difficult for a boy of my age and so I took my parts home for practice, working mighty hard on them in order to do better work at rehearsals and concerts. What with my hours all my spare time was devoted to the violin. Realizing the benefits that were to be derived from opportunities which seemed coming my way, I also began to learn a great lesson in life, namely, always know and feel just when to grasp an opportunity and then hold to it with tenacity,

## SOME IMPORTANT LESSONS

My musical education was now being molded in a proper manner, under the direction of a man who knew I was playing the very best class of music as it should be played, and I never was allowed to be careless in position and appearance even when only sitting and not playing. It was made imperative that not only must I bow and finger the violin correctly, but must first learn to hold the instrument right; that I must always sit facing the directory, and never cross my legs or twine them around those of my chair. I was told that by keeping the feet firmly on the floor one could concentrate and play better, and this suggestion alone later on helped me to conquer what I thought was impossible at onetime, It was fine discipline, all of which proved of great worth to me afterwards. Oh boys, if we were only more careful in the beginning with the smaller things, what a lot of time, energy and effectiveness would be saved! We all must learn by experience, however, which is the greatest teacher of all.

I remember one night at rehearsal seeing Dr. Torrington take up a violin and imitate the awkwardness of one of the members; holding the instrument in the most awkward manner imaginable, and playing a few tones with his body in a badly crouched position, he actually made us see how absolutely silly and ridiculous it was to play in an unnatural posture. We all laughed heartily at the Doctors grotesque posing, which was done in a most kindly way, but after that we were mighty careful how we sat, and played. We had been shown that the first essential for a good orchestra is appearance, after which comes the musical part to back it up. In other words, audiences as a rule never are over-educated musically, therefore, K all the men sit in upright positions, in a business-like manner, and look alert and genteel, the audience never notices the little mistakes that so often occur in music. As Solomon might have put it: A good appearance is rather to be chosen than a great performance -that is, to the majority of listeners.

I seemed to possess a strong instinct for observation and analysis, even as a boy, and the superb concerts given at times by the Philharmonic Orchestra Society offered a glorious opportunity to indulge the instinct- possibly too glorious, as I often so lost myself that I forgot to play my part when listening to the chorus and great soloists singing a massive oratorio and noting the wonderful orchestral effects behind the voices- not offsetting, but up building, accentuating or accompanying them. I would read beforehand the story or plot of the work to be given, gain a general outline of the work and its meaning, then at the performance could close my eyes and listen to the whole thing interpreted in tone-pictures. It was a keen delight first to listen to a section tonally as a whole, then try to separate their many tonal colorings and analyze their grouping and effects; strings (violins, violas, cellos, double basses and harp), woodwinds (flutes, oboes, bassoons and clarinets); brasses (trumpets, horns, trombones and tubas); percussion (tympani, drums, cymbals, triangle and gong)- searching into and dissecting musical sounds and training my ears to distinguish one quality of tone from another.

What a pity that there are not more good amateur orchestras in this country today! Of course, the public school orchestras all over the country are doing a wonderful work, but unfortunately their players are confined wholly to students. I certainly am grateful for all the many advantages that come to me during my youth, also that I never knew what it was to "hang out" nights on the comers as so many boys did. My mother, who was very strict, never would allow me to go out nights except to the orchestra



rehearsals, and not being of a too serious disposition I confess that deep down in my heart I rejoiced that these gave me an opportunity of getting out nights once or twice a week, but I was forced to get all my lessons before I could go. My mother considered that a good education was the best asset for a successful business man, and so my lessons had to be perfect before I could think of recreation of any kind, and she being a school teacher before her marriage was able to help me greatly with my lessons at home.

## **THE CORNET CONQUERS**

In spite of my work in trying to improve myself on the violin and gaining an orchestra experience, I still had a strong liking for the cornet, which was in no way lessened by hearing my brother Ed play his. Listening to his constant practice every day finally "got my goat" musically, so I began devising some means where by I might try Ed's instrument and see if it were possible for me to do anything on a real cornet. He had a new one now, and as I was crazy with the desire to try it, I begged my mother to let me blow it just once one day when Ed was down town. At first I was met by a flat refusal, but she finally consented to let me play it for a few minutes, and I so surprised her by what I did as a beginner that she coaxed Ed to hear me play it.

Ed listened without saying very much, for he was a bit sore to find out that I had been blowing his new cornet: then he realized that possibly he might make some use of me. He recently had organized another small orchestra, and having acquired quite a reputation as a violinist was anxious to lead it himself with that instrument. He finally told me that if I would take good care of his cornet and wash it out each day, and if I made any noticeable improvement in its playing, perhaps he could use me in his orchestra. So at last I began to practice on a real cornet, and perhaps you can imagine how supremely happy I was- but I doubt it.

At the first rehearsal under Ed's directing I was careful not to make any mistakes and so get a "call-down" before the other players, and I left out many notes where the parts were difficult. In such places I did not blow a note, but kept my fingers moving and tried to look wise. "Safety first", even in those days! Strange to say, I could not seem to play soft and keep my tones under the others, so Ed compelled me to use a mute because when I let loose the whole orchestra would be drowned out. I was a mighty busy boy now, what with my schoolwork and the orchestras with which I was playing, but it kept me out of mischief. Even had I so desired and been permitted, I had no time to stand on street corners with a lot of loafers, also, I was happy in being industrious in a good cause.

## **FIFTH SERIES**

I want my readers to realize that at the time when the events occurred of which I am now writing I was only fourteen years old, and although quite a big fellow for my age, was just boy, natural boy-full of fun, never too serious and yet with ambitions far beyond those of the average lad. I was fond of all outdoor sports, good at all of them and in demand every Saturday and on all holidays to play in the games. My good mother, however, always seemed able to find some sort of "jobs" for me to do on Saturday mornings (such as sawing and splitting wood, cutting the grass, cleaning out the cellar), so the boys who wanted me in their games used to come over to my house and help on the work so that I could get through early. I often used the "Tom

Sawyer' methods, and I'll bet that some of those boys worked harder to help me cut than they ever did for their mothers.

I did all my music exercises in spare moments, on rainy days and at any odd intervals, when I was not too busy doing something else, being anything but methodical in those days and played music simply as a pastime, and even then only such exercises as I like best. I was not old enough to realize and appreciate the value of regular drilling on scales and exercises and never dreamed of being a musician. I kept out in the open all that I possibly could, running a mile or two before breakfast every morning. This not only kept me in fine trim for all sports, but looking back now upon my youthful days I consider that my present good health is due to my early exercising in such manner. Longevity is principally due to just such exercising when a boy (if not too strenuous), giving a foundation for the resistance and stamina necessary to withstand the physical wear and tear of the work required of men in after life.

But to resume. Although very strict with me, I was greatly helped and encouraged in my cornet work by my brother Ed and having by this time made actual progress in my playing he told me that on a certain night I might sit in his orchestra which had been engaged for the opening of a new restaurant. I played and I felt very proud when Ed paid me and began to practice the cornet harder than ever. In the meantime, Ed had improved so much on the violin that he was engaged to play with the Grand Opera House Orchestra for the season.

He gave up his cornet playing for the time being, which, of course, gave me more chance to play his instrument. He also resigned from the Queen's Own Regiment Band, as his time was entirely taken up by the theatre work.

## **BRANCHING OUT A BIT**

During the season of 1881 the Philharmonic Society gave a performance of Gounod's oratorio of The Redemption. This necessitated extra trumpet players for the massive "Unfold Ye Portals," chorus, and having heard that I played the cornet a little, Dr. Torrington, the director, selected me as one of the extra trumpeters. One night, in order to show me what I had to do in this number, he called me to a chorus rehearsal only; handing me a trumpet part, he showed me how to count the measures before I come in and began to play. The part looked simple, and the thing seemed easy enough, so I felt confident that I could show them all what I could do, although I did feel rather nervous with those six hundred members of the chorus before me. Well, the time came when the measures were all properly counted and the director gave me the signal to play. At full forte I played the notes as they were written and Great Scott! What a frightful discord I made. I could not understand what was the matter, but it broke up the entire chorus. Dr. Torrington came over to see what was wrong. I told him I had played the notes all right, and that the part must be wrong. He said: "This part is marked trumpet in D.- "Yes, but what does that mean?" I asked.

Then he explained, that, as I was using a cornet in B flat, I must transpose. That was the first time I ever had heard of such a thing as transposition, and it was another new thing to learn. He was very patient, however, and explained that to play the part

so that it would fit the music properly, I must play it three notes higher, or read the part in the key of C and play it in the key of E, four sharps. I was not all familiar with the key of four sharps, in fact don't think I ever had played an exercise in that key, so he suggested that I use the "a" shank, read the part in C and play it in F, one flat, four tones higher, or as we say, a fourth higher.

This was difficult for me, especially as the eyes of the entire chorus were focused on me and all were smiling at my seeming ignorance. So, being only a bashful fourteen-year-old boy I lost my nerve and could not play a single tone-my lips swelling, mouth getting dry and tongue refusing to work. How I wished that the engagement never had been offered me, and that I had stuck to the second violin part. However, I had to play the part just the same and after the number had been played again and again and I found that by playing the notes a fourth higher they fitted in all right, I forgot that the chorus was looking at me and did fairly well for the first time. You can bet I took the part home with me, studied the notes all out, and to take no chances wrote out anew part a fourth higher. At the next rehearsal I was complimented on the results I had achieved.

We had many rehearsals of the oratorio before it was performed and I felt quite sure of myself. When the night came, I was stationed in one of the balconies of the Music Hall with three other trumpeters at the end of the hall opposite, as the parts answered each other, so to speak. It was sometime before my number was due, and I became so interested in the entire grand production that I forgot to come in at the proper time. I was so enthused listening to the great chorus, the augmented orchestra of sixty players, the organ and the great soloists from Boston and New York, that I was held spellbound. Then someone reminded me of my importance in the concert and I plunged in without counting the measures, but from having rehearsed it so many times I knew it by heart and did my best, I missed a lot of notes, however, because I became so excited that my breathing was quickened and that took away all my power. I felt so ashamed that I wanted to sneak home and be alone, but just the same I crouched down in my chair and listened to the end of the concert.

## **A HARD-EARNED THREE DOLLARS**

At the close of the concert I went to the dressing room and received my pay for the performance, which had included about fifteen rehearsals. Of course, I took the money, although I felt I had not half earned it. But, excepting myself, no one seemed to think I had played badly, and even Dr. Torrington himself congratulated me. This amount of three dollars, which at the time seemed a fortune to me, I placed aside with my other earnings towards purchasing a new cornet for myself some day.

The pay received for playing at this concert encouraged me to earn more money, so all through that winter whenever there was a snowstorm I went from house to house shoveling snow from the sidewalks of the neighbors, and made from fifteen to twenty-five cents here and there according to the frontage of the different properties. I always was an impulsive boy who was greatly inclined to be impatient, and soon began to figure up the cost of a first-class cornet, I realized that even with what I had accumulated in the way of money it would take some years to make enough money for the cornet I wanted, and as I wished a good one or none I began to give up the idea of owning my own instrument, It was about this time that my brother Ernest

developed a craze for the slide trombone, a rare instrument in those days. The valve trombone was then being used exclusively in all bands and orchestras (except in the orchestras of the theatres), and there were but two slide players in town, Ern gave up his baritone and purchased a slide instrument from his earnings in the business where he was working. I suppose that he did very well for a boy, but it was awful to hear him practice, picking out the positions on his instrument the best that he could without a teacher. He seemed to think that because he played fairly well, it was unnecessary to again take up the scales and practice them on the trombone, so he simply practiced playing trombone parts out of the band books. That is the trouble with so many of us when young. We neglect to study the real foundation playing of our instruments, such as the major and minor scales, try to play music for beyond our capabilities and then wonder why our progress is so slow. However, I guess that every player commences the same way at first- not taking his instrument seriously, but playing it as a recreation.

## **THE OBSESSING CORNET**

In spite of my resolutions to dismiss from mind all ideas of ever being able to buy a cornet until I was much older, nevertheless the yearning to own one was ever present and would not be dismissed; I wanted to own my cornet, and so have an instrument which could be used whenever I pleased without having to ask permission from someone every time I desired to practice. With only the small amount of money I thus far had saved, however, the prospect of purchasing my own cornet was indeed remote. Nevertheless I constantly pondered over it and tried to reason out somehow by which I might obtain my individual cornet, and at length a happy idea popped into my mind. Knowing that the Government supplied instruments to such members of its Regimental Band that did not own them, and also knowing that if only a little older I possibly could enlist and be supplied with an instrument, I determined to try and break into that band.

Having marched many a mile alongside this band when it was on parade and drills I had no doubt as to my physical endurance, and being of good height and well but for a boy of my age, I knew that I could wear the uniform acceptably; therefore, if I could convince the officers of the regiment that I was not underage limit, there perhaps might be chance for me to make the band goal. The more I thought it over the bolder I became, but how was I to get enough influence with the bandmaster, who was not only a fine musician, but a first-class drillmaster, for him to consider a boy? I dared not ask my older brothers for assistance, as I was only the "kid brother" who so often was told that "you play rotten". I also knew that my father would object so it was out of the question to confide in anyone. I could not get the idea out of my mind that the thing might be accomplished if I went about it the right way, and at length I hit upon a possible course to pursue. The more I thought about it, the more feasible my plan seemed to become, so one night I mustered sufficient courage to try it out.

## **SIXTH SERIES**

The plan I had formed to become attached to the Queens's Own Regimental Band, and thereby "attach" myself to a good cornet at the expense of the Canadian Government, was a simple yet feasible one. My father (at that time organist at the Jarvis Street Baptist Church) had an excellent choir, one of its members being a

tenor singer named Dave Young who also was first trombonist and quartermaster sergeant in the Q.O.R. Band. In my boyish mind I had figured it out that, if I could make a favorable impression upon this singer, his influence as first trombone player and quartermaster sergeant possibly might gain for me the coveted position.

The more I thought about the plan, the stronger become its obsession, and one Saturday night I mustered sufficient courage to try to Put it into execution by going to the choir rehearsal with my father and having a talk with the singer sergeant. We (my father and myself) walked to the rehearsal, but I took good care not to drop any hint of my reasons for going. He seemed to be somewhat surprised at my suddenly awakened interest in church choir work, however, and suggested that perhaps when I had grown a little older I might find it enjoyable to join and sing in his choir.

### **"KNOCKING OFF" AN OPPORTUNITY**

It seemed to me that the choir rehearsal would never end, but, of course, it did, and when it was over I hung to the heels of Sergeant Young until he was ready to depart. Just as he was putting on his overcoat preparatory to leaving, I hurriedly put the fateful question as to whether there was any opportunity for me to play cornet in his band and then waited breathlessly for the answer. It is doubtful if anyone can imagine my feelings when very good naturally he replied: "Why not come to band practice on Monday night? I will introduce you to the band master and ascertain if he is in need of another cornet." I thanked the man and asked him what time I should be there. He told me to come early, and added that as quartermaster sergeant, having charge of all band accessories, he would look up an instrument for me.

I walked back home with my father that night, but cannot recall one word that he said. My feet were on the earth, but my head was in the clouds, yet even in the exuberance of my feelings I was careful not to mention my talk with the sergeant. I knew, of course, that membership in the regimental band meant an enlistment, and also knew that my father would oppose any idea of a boy of my age entering the army, although my older brothers had been members of the same band but now were out of it. I slept but little, if any, that night, but tossed around in the bed until Sunday morning while fervently wishing the day would come, pass quickly and bring Monday. On Sunday morning I went to church with my father and after the service waited around to see Sergeant Young again. In my boyish anxiety I thought that possibly he might have forgotten what he had said to me on Saturday night, and wanted to remind him of it by saying that I would be there early. As a matter of fact, so great was my eagerness to get into the "Queen's Own" that right then I would have gone to the band room and waited for Monday night to come if he had told me to do so.

I was in a fever of excitement all day Monday, and because of my mind being wholly fixed upon the coming night with what it might or might not bring forth, I made so many misses in my lessons that it was necessary for me to remain after school hours and make them up. All through the day, too, I was filled with fears-that perhaps there might not be any opening for another cornet; that perhaps all the cornets belonging to the band might be in use, and other fears which now appear foolish. But more than anything else, in a sense I was afraid to meet the bandmaster, who had the reputation of being a strict disciplinarian and never overlooking faulty playing when it came to rendering band music.

Then come another fear in the thought of an obstacle which might confront me-getting away from home that night! Having to remain after school hours to make up imperfect lessons might easily furnish a reason for mother to keep me in the house for more study, as one of her mottoes was: "Be perfect in all you undertake." My mind certainly did work fast while on my way home from school, As soon as the house was reached I went in with a rush, found my mother, and, throwing my arms about her(I was much taller than she even then), poured out my excuses; and pleas with boyish fervor, almost in one breath I told that my late arrival home was because of having missed lessons that had to be made up, that I had been invited by Sergeant Young to come and hear band practice that night, that the lessons were missed in the excitement of thinking all day about the invitation and please might I go to hear the practice.

I never had told an outright falsehood to my parents, for they always had taught me to be straightforward in everything, so I felt a little guilty at not having been more fully open and above-board with them concerning my ambitions to secure a real cornet and belong to a real band. To my great satisfaction I was given permission to attend the practice, because Dave Young was favorite with my father and was known to be a good man.

## **THE MOMENTOUS TRY-OUT**

I left home early after a hastily eaten supper, and arriving at the band room about seven o'clock found Sergeant Young all alone and running through his inventories. He was quite pleased to see me and found a Courtois cornet, which he handed me to try, I took the instrument but was afraid to try it, so simply held on to it and felt proud even to have it in my hands. The sergeant told me to sit down and wait until the bandmaster came, and with my heart in my throat I sat trembling in a dark corner while watching the bandsmen arrive one by one. The room very soon began to fill up, as there were some sixty-five members in the band -all volunteers who worked at various trades and professions during the day, taking up music as a recreation. Besides this band belonging to a crack regiment, it was considered an honor to belong to such an organization.

Knowing that I was an unusually good-sized boy for my age, it surely was not egotism for me to feel quite a little elated in thinking that I was able to wear a uniform equally as well as the men. However, the feeling of elation vanished almost before it was realized and I was nearly scared blue when the bandmaster entered, which he did just at that moment. As soon as he had removed his overcoat, Sergeant Young went to the bandmaster and told him that he had a young man present who wished to join the band if there was room for another cornet player. After I had been presented to the bandmaster and was introduced as the young son of Dr. William H. Clarke, the organist, my fathers reputation proved sufficient guarantee of my musical ability.

## **A GREAT BANDMASTER**

Just a passing word regarding this bandmaster John Bayley, who was known as a finished musician of high order; he was a remarkable organist, a wonderful piano accompanist and one of the best clarinetists I have ever heard in my life- in short, a

man experienced in every branch of music. In later life I often have remarked to him that at least one-half of my success was due to my early days of playing under him, plus the coaching he gave me on the various arias which occur in the cornet parts of published operatic selections.

Following the introduction, I was assigned a place in the last seat of the cornet section of twelve, where I sat down and waited for the signal to commence our playing. When we did begin I found that my mouth had become so dry it was impossible for me even to start a tone, and considered myself the luckiest fellow in the world at not having been called upon to play before the men as a trial. However, being the son of a great organist saved me from a public dilemma; but had it been otherwise I probably should have fainted with fright, and more than likely would have been sent home minus the cornet with which I had been supplied.

When the band finally began fully to play, I entirely forgot my part in listening to the effect produced by sixty-five men playing, and even though not heard from myself, I again was highly elated at being one of them. I also learned much from that first rehearsal, for Mr. Bayley was indeed strict and would "call" any man who played unmusically even though it was in a volunteer band. It proved a great lesson for me, and among other things I learned to be exceedingly careful in my playing.

After a time, and as I grew accustomed to my new environment, I became more normal, and forgetting my self-consciousness tried to play a few notes, but only when the band was playing forte, being careful not to play in the softer passages. Instead, I simply held the cornet to my lips (moving my fingers but not blowing) and pretended to be playing with the others. I always had been sensitive as a boy, and if Mr., Bayley had talked to me as he did to some of the others when they made mistakes it would have broken my spirit. As it was, I learned to either play soft or leave out my part, for the remaining eleven cornetists easily could do the work without aid from me.

## **MY BEGINNING AS A BANDSMAN**

After the rehearsal was finished Sergeant Young called me aside and proceeded to equip me with all the accoutrements necessary for regimental band work, and then gave me instructions to call at the armory on the following Wednesday and be-sworn in" as a soldier of the Queen of England. I carried the cornet home, together with the regimental regalia, and do not imagine there ever was a prouder boy than I in all the world at that time.

That was my beginning as a bandsman, and although I was only the twelfth cornet player in a band of sixty-five it did not matter a bit to me so long as I was a real member. We played the best of music under the direction of Mr. Bayley, although every man was an amateur, so to speak, and played only for the pleasure he derived from it. We held three rehearsals weekly- Monday, Wednesday and Friday- and I was a bit sorry they did not include Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. I never had enough playing myself, and even in those days did not tire. I always was sorry when band practice was over.

On the following Wednesday I went to the armory and took the "oath of allegiance" binding me to Queen Victoria for service, whom I served honorably for about nine

years(three years for three times). Later on I received my discharge with honors, and am very proud of my discharge papers which I hold to this day. I now began to practice the cornet with enthusiastic zest, as I had my own cornet with which I could do as I pleased, but was mighty careful never to get any dents in it. It was plain brass and I kept it shining like new. Now that my boyish ambition had been satisfied I began to take an increased interest in cornet playing but purely as a pastime, and never realizing that I ever would amount to anything more than a twelfth cornet player.

## **SEVENTH SERIES**

It was astonishing what a mental "boost" a young chap gets when at last a long cherished ambition and yearning has been realized. As told in the last installment of this autobiography, I now possessed a cornet that was my own, or "mine" so long as I remained with the band, and I took mighty good care of it. However, the government's instrument was not in the best of condition when I received it. The valves did not work well and the slides were pretty well corroded, but the instrument being -approximately" mine I at once set about remedying these defects and soon had them bettered. Even though only a boy, I knew that the instrument must have been accumulating dust and dirt in the band storeroom for quite a length of time; this, and the fact that I did not know who was the last fellow before me to use the cornet, made it advisable for me to give it a thorough cleaning, inside and outside.

To do this I poured strong ammonia into the cornet, but phew! The ammonia was so strong that when I blew it through the instrument the overpowering fumes nearly strangled me, and my eyes became blinded for a short time, Perhaps it would be better to leave it to the readers imagination as to what came out with the ammonia; but I there were any microbes lingering in that cornet at the time it came into my possession I certainly had killed them before using it, or rather the ammonia had done so. Anyway, it now surely was clean on the inside but how about the outside! The powerful solution had turned that part of the instrument into a beautiful (?) oxidized blue and I thought it was ruined, but after treating it to a good hot-water bath, followed by a vigorous shining up, that old cornet had the appearance of a new one- a condition in which I kept the instrument during the whole time it was in my possession.

It is not at all difficult for anyone to keep an instrument in first-class condition, if he only will take as good care of it as he does of his body, and yet I know of scores of players who never use water to cleanse the inside of their instrument-at least not for months, sometimes not for years. The genus "hobo" is too lazy and careless to use water for ablutionary purposes, but are there not many instrumental "hoboes" in the music world?

## **BAND DUTY IN FULL REGIMENTALS AND BELOW ZERO**

After attending band rehearsals regularly for several weeks, the strangeness of my new environment wore off and I began to gain confidence in myself, together with a broader sense of freedom. Then by becoming used to my surroundings in the band room and getting acquainted with the members of the band, who were all good fellows, I began to enjoy the rehearsals. Being only a boy no one paid any particular



attention to me, for which I was glad and with my entire being filled and thrilled by the music itself I even forgot my own identity at times. Then came the eventful moment when orders were read for the band to report with the regiment at the armory on a certain day to perform guard duty at the opening of the Canadian Parliament, which came in the afternoon of that same date. Of course I had to be excused from school, but only with the understanding that the lost lessons must be made up on the following day.

In one of the Gilbert-Sullivan operas the captain of the English Heavy Dragoons sings with pride of the time "When I first put this uniform on," and probably I experienced the same sort of emotion when at last the opportunity came for me to put on my regimental uniform and parade as a "real soldier"; furthermore, I doubt if anyone even can imagine the pride I felt in being immaculate when "all dressed up" in full regalia. I reported at the armory that day on time with the rest of the band, and when the bugle sounded the call to fall in! I stood proudly erect and responded to my name in the roll call like a full grown man. Then followed inspection, which of course was another new experience for me, and I fairly trembled as the officer inspected my uniform from the neck down, I even tried to stretch up a little taller than usual fearing to be called from the ranks as being only a boy fourteen years of age.

## **I AGE RAPIDLY**

As a passing word, at the time when I was "sworn in" to the regiment and had to state my age, the officer in command asked: "What is your age?" "Fourteen, Sir", I said. "You are eighteen!" he said in a tone that would admit of no contradiction. This was the legal age for enlistment, and although too scared to open my mouth, much less to contradict, I was not too frightened to realize that my good Mend, Sergeant Young, had "fixed" things for me.

The regiment was formed into line and also carefully inspected, and after a few words to the men from Colonel Otter, the officer in command, the bugle again sounded -this time for Advance! The doors of the armory were then thrown open and I started forth on my first march as a boy-soldier. The parliamentary opening occurred in the month of February, which as quite cold, however, for believe me I was at fever heat with joy and pride. I was so greatly elated that had a bullet gone through me it is doubtful if I would have minded it at the moment.

My troubles began when the band reached the outside air and commenced playing. It was with difficulty that I kept the mouthpiece in place at all while marching, and even at that it slipped and "skidded" so much all around my lips that it was impossible for me to produce at one. I wonder if any of my readers recall the first time they ever tried to play an instrument while marching in parade line. Well, I did my best and blew as hard as I knew how, but no sound could be induced to come from my cornet. I kept at it, however, working harder than any man in the band, but without results. The other members were used to such kind of work in such sort of weather, and as there were eleven cornetists in the band besides myself (and all playing) my deficiencies were not noticed.

When the first selection was finished the bugle section took up the marching music and carried it on while the band rested, but during the interval of rest (and owing to

the intense cold) the valves of my cornet froze so that I could not press any of them down. This frightened me, for in my ignorance of such matters I thought that some dire accident must have happened to the instrument to put it so completely "out of business," and I felt responsible to the Government for the cornet going wrong. I meant to have stated before this that the streets were filled with ice and snow to such an extent that when I tried to march my feet slipped so that it was all I could do to stand up and walk, not to mention playing an instrument at the same time.

But the worst was yet to come, for when the bugle section had finished and the signal was given for the band to start another march, I naturally placed my cornet in position to play. To my consternation the mouthpiece at once stuck to my lips and when trying to take the instrument away from my mouth the skin on my lips came with it, and stuck to the mouthpiece. This of course put me "out of business" as well as the cornet, but I had been taught a great lesson, namely; when playing out of doors in cold weather keep the mouthpiece warm by holding it in the mouth when not playing and never let it get cold. Of course the older members of the band were used to playing under such conditions, and being wise to the predicament that might result protected themselves against it.

The Parliament Building was reached at last, where as Guard of Honor the regiment and band were drawn up in line outside at Present Arms until the ceremonies inside were over, then marched back to the armory for dismissal. The Government pay for this "job" was only fifty cents a man, but whether much or little it was not so much the pay for which I cared as the honor of being permitted to play (or, in this instance, hold) a cornet in the band of this eminent regiment.

## **PRIDE SUSTAINS**

The march to and from the Parliament building did not tire me, neither did the extreme cold nor loss of skin from my lips greatly affect me. I was so proud to wear the uniform that nothing else mattered, and I felt greater than any king. Oh how our pride upholds us! I remember of meeting my father when on the way home, but instead of affectionately greeting him as a son naturally should, I simply saluted him and-walked on.

A few of my schoolmates also were with me, and proud to walk with one of the Queen's Own Regiment. But they did not know that I had not played a note during the entire march, nor did I enlighten them, For some days afterwards my poor lips were pretty sore from the loss of skin and I could not practice comfortably. Nevertheless, I had learned several great lessons during the day, and that in a way compensated for the secret humiliation of knowing I had not earned that fifty cents for the parade.

## **EIGHTH SERIES**

I waited until my lips were thoroughly healed of their soreness caused by inadvertent contact with a frosted cornet mouthpiece (this happened, you will remember, when playing for my first time out-of-doors in a twenty-degree below zero temperature), and then resumed practice, only now in a different way from that which heretofore, I had been following. I established for myself a rule of regular routine, and ceased trying to

acquire in a short time what I really sensed could be accomplished only through a more or less extended period, Experience obtained from constant attendance of the band rehearsals had taught me that nothing was to be gained by trying to play when my lips were tired, for they not only would swell but fail to vibrate and respond as they ought. So, in order to overcome this trouble, I would practice for only ten minutes at one time, and then rest a few minutes to allow the blood in the lips to again flow normally. The entire time of these ten-minute periods was devoted to practicing the same elementary study many times over very carefully. This not only served to make me become more accurate in my general playing, but gave me greater self-confidence.

After completing this regular daily routine, my next move would be to take the march book of the band and try to play an entire piece through without stopping. Of course I succeeded in accomplishing this after a while, as I was playing only the third cornet part which was confined wholly to the middle registers. Nevertheless, so many of the notes were what are known as the "after beats" that my practice-playing must have sounded rather strange to anyone hearing me. Then I became anxious to develop myself in the first cornet parts which of course contained the melody, but such wished-for consummation proved itself to be very far distant, and this for the simple reason that my embouchure being weak and underdeveloped, I could not play the high tones and keep it up for any length of time.

## **A BIT OF BOYISH POPULARITY**

As the one boy in school who belonged to regimental band and this regiment being the "crack" military organization of Canada at the time, I grew to be quite popular among the other boys, many of whom harbored aspirations themselves of some day becoming members of the same regiment. Away back in the "eighties" all the public schools of Toronto included in their regular course drilling and the manual of arms. These drill exercises were considered as important as were mathematics, history or grammar. One hour each day was given up to the drilling, and once a week we were inspected by an officer in the regular service, who also taught us marching and how to handle arms - possibly a sort of "preparedness" in case of war! Under such regime, it is hardly necessary to say that when the boys had graduated and become eligible to join a regiment, they did not remain long in the "awkward squad," having learned military tactics while in school.

It was about this time that I began to play cornet in Sunday school, leading the singing, and naturally had to learn how to transpose and play the hymns a tone higher than the keys in which they were written. This at first was something very difficult for me, as when a hymn was written in, say the key of C, I had to play in D (two sharps), and soon. To gain confidence in transposing, I took the hymn book home and commenced the study of transposition by writing out the various hymns a tone higher. This was a wonderful help, but I very soon discovered that it would be necessary for me to play in many more keys that were only in two sharps or two flats, I commenced playing them in three, four, five and even six sharps and flats. At the start this was extremely difficult. I was obliged to play everything very slowly, thinking carefully of each note and interval while pressing my fingers down on the valves with determination. And thus it was that in due time I mastered nearly all the keys by thoroughly practicing their scales.

## **AN EMOUCHURE EXPERIENCE**

I hold very vivid recollection of the first time I played for the Sunday singing. The opening hymn was Jesus, Lover of My Soul written in the key of G and this I had to play on my B-flat cornet in the key of A(three sharps) in order to be with the singers. You can imagine that it took some mighty keen thinking on my part not to make any mistakes, which not only would have sounded horribly raucous and out of tune, but might easily have thrown the singers off the key. There were four verses to the hymn. The first and second verses went along all right, but as the accompanist did not play an interlude between the successive verses and each verse came right along after the other, there was not the ghost of a chance for me to rest between verses or even wipe my lips for a fresh start.

What made matters worse was that I had started the hymn with a fine big tone played in full strength. After the second verse was played I felt that by the time the end of the third one was reached my lips would be all in and-they were! Nevertheless, I had enough grit to stick it out and made up my mind to go through with the fourth verse or "bust." Of course I did not do that last named thing, but playing the hymn through to its finish required more stamina and greater physical exertion than would have been needed to break the running record for a fast mile. It certainly was an awkward situation in which I found myself, my face was the color of a beet from the exertion and enforced strain I was enduring, and I seemed to feel that my eyes were fairly popping from their sockets. I could not stop playing, however, for inasmuch as I was sitting on the platform in full view of the people and doing my first church playing, it would have been most embarrassing and humiliating K I had been forced to quit, and so- I stuck! I sincerely hoped that the next hymn would have only two verses at the most, and then began to worry whether, after all, I would be able to play through another tune. No one ever can know my intense relief when for the second hymn the superintendent of the school announced: "We will next sing two verses of Pull for the Shore, Sailor." That indeed was a blessing for me, and as this hymn was taken at a much quicker tempo than the first it did not tire my lips so badly. it surely was some embouchure experience for me, and playing through that opening hymn was the first time I ever was obliged to exert all my power of will to combat physical exhaustion. Pride, however, forced me into doing what I would have believed the impossible; it also taught me a man's lesson.

As a passing thought- I wonder how many of my readers ever have experienced their "first time" of playing in church, and perhaps passed through a similar trial of mental suffering and physical strain induced by trying to play four verses of a slow hymn? The experience proved of excellent service to me, nevertheless, for it started me trying to play through as many verses of the different hymns as was possible without a stop. Strange to tell, this practice not only helped in building up my embouchure, but enabled me to play everything better and easier than any practice I ever before had tried.

There is no better experience for a young cornetist, after he had made a certain degree of advancement on his instrument, than church or Sunday playing. The very knowledge that he is playing before an audience (congregation) gives him a new confidence in himself, besides inspiring him to the endurance necessary for finishing

in good condition. As regards myself, I stuck to the Sunday school playing during that entire winter, which greatly improved my band work. At home too, I began to practice, playing "softly" to keep my lips from tiring so easily, and that purified my tone to the extent that I no longer had to use a mute when playing in the orchestra.

## **MERCANTILE VERSUS THE MUSICAL**

When school closed for the summer, I became obsessed with an idea of securing some kind of work and earning money thereby, perhaps gathering in a few dollars wherewith to obtain music and methods for the cornet, with possibly a few solos for practice work. To further this end my mother permitted me to answer an advertisement in one of the morning papers, which called for a boy to work in a large printing house. I made my application in person, and from out of some twenty-odd boys (likewise looking for a job) the firm selected me for the place, starting me in as "proof-reader," "errand-boy" or some such responsible position at a salary of \$1.50 a week. To meet the requirements of the place it became necessary for me to get out of bed a 5:30 o'clock in the morning that I might make connections with my "office" promptly at 7:30 A.M. Then came an hour for lunch at 12 P.M. and at 6:00 P.M. I graciously was permitted to call it a day and start for home. All this being a new experience for me, I rather liked it at first- or did until it began to dawn upon my mind that merchandise and music were not meeting on even grounds.

It soon became only too apparent that after starting the day at 5:30 A.M. and working steadily until 6:00 P.M. I was in no condition for cornet practice. After I had reached home, eaten my supper, and then begun on the evening music routine, I had found myself getting so sleepy that it was impossible to keep awake and practice; thus my cornet gradually began to be sadly neglected. This worried me, and I commenced to reason matters out with myself. I reasoned that by continuing work at the printing house my practice eventually would lose ground, and with this thought came action. I had started working on a Thursday morning, and I quit on the succeeding Saturday night without stopping to ask for any pay: neither did I show up on the following Monday, nor send any notice that I had quit. The sum total of my reasoning had been- if business interfered with cornet playing, give up the business! When I did not get out of bed Monday on the usual 5:30 schedule mother said nothing. She knew!

Having thrown over the mercantile, I again picked up the musical and now resumed my cornet practice with greater enthusiasm than ever, if such were possible. Nor did I entirely lose out on the financial by making the sudden shift, for during all that summer I played with the Regimental Band, at Hanlans's Point on the island for \$1.00 a concert once a week. With the coming of September I started going to school as usual and when autumn arrived, became greatly interested in football. Being a husky fellow for my age, I was made fullback on a crackerjack boys' football team, but that proved my physical undoing, as from it, there resulted a long hiatus in all playing.

I would work very hard at practicing football after school hours and, when overheated and perspiring profusely, had a habit of lying down on the cold ground to cool off. As a result of such carelessness, I contracted a very heavy cold that quickly turned into congestion of the lungs, terminating in a serious illness which confined me to the house from early December to the following April. No more cornet or any other kind

of playing were to be mine for five long, weary months! Even the doctor finally lost hope, stating that I was a pretty sick boy with one lung gone and the other seriously affected, My sickness quite naturally interfered with all school progress for a time, but when convalescing my studies were all brought home to me by boy friends, so that, in a way, I kept up with school work, although not allowed out of doors for three months.

I omitted to mention that while I was sick the band called in its cornet, thus leaving me without any instrument. One day after I had begun to sit up, thinking that my brother Ed would let me use his cornet occasionally, I asked the doctor if I might be allowed to play a little. His reply was that it would be better to wait until he felt sure that I was well on the way to complete recovery, However, it was only a short time later (I had so greatly gained in strength) that he allowed me to practice on an old alto horn we had in the house. At first, my practicing was restricted to only ten minutes a day, but extended itself gradually to half an hour, and then still longer periods.

Heaven bless that good doctor! He attributed the gradual restoration of my health to the easy blowing on that old alto horn, and stopped giving me drugs, saying that this quiet playing was the best medicine of all! I firmly believe that it was his sound advice which really cured me, for this easy playing required taking a full breath upon beginning to play, then breathing deeply and without strain. In later years I developed an unlimited breath control, and today have a most excellent pair of lungs.

## **NINTH SERIES**

At various times since beginning this serial, its writer has been the recipient of not a few letters from new subscribers to the Jacob's Orchestra and Band Monthlies who quite evidently had seen only a current installment of the series. In consequence of not having read any of the previous chapters, they did not realize that the number which was being read by them was only a single chapter in a series of progressive chapters, each succeeding one dealing in turn with successive phases of any career in music, dating from the time when as a boy I began the study of the cornet.

For the benefit of these correspondents, and other new readers of the magazine, I will break the thread of my story long enough to explain that in this current chapter and preceding ones, I am supposed to be only a fourteen-year-old boy cornet blower, not at all approaching any future status I might ever possess as a grown player, the last being a point in progression that will not be reached until some few chapters farther on in the series. Therefore, in all the previous installments I figure merely as a beginning, or (as implied by the name of the entire series) simply a "pilgrim"; a boy blower of the cornet, yet full and bubbling over with enthusiasm for the instrument-just a boy who at that time never anticipated becoming anything more than what his love for the cornet might make him. With this brief explanation I will again pick up the thread and come back to a

## **RESUMPTION OF THE STORY**

The time of this present chapter is in the spring of 1883, when I am convalescing from a severe illness which had set me so far back in my cornet practice that it became necessary for me to begin all over again and pick up the playing of the instrument practically from its first starting. The cornet that had been loaned to me by the Queen's Own Regiment Band, and which I had been using while playing with that organization as a boy amateur, had been called in, of course, during my long illness and as personally I never had owned a cornet, this naturally left me without an instrument on which to practice, so I did not quite see how I was to make a new start. For a time I practiced on an old alto horn to build up the strength that had left my lungs and although it helped materially in regaining control of deep breathing it did not greatly help in building up my all but lost cornet embouchure; but it was the best I could do under the existing circumstances.

I finally prevailed upon my good mother to intercede with my brother Ed and persuade him to allow me to use his cornet, which then was not being used as he had been engaged to play violin in the Grand Opera House Orchestra during all that season. His permission being granted, I commenced all over from the very beginning, considering myself a mighty lucky boy to be practicing on such a jim-dandy cornet. I first began to rebuild my embouchure by playing very easy exercises in the middle and lower registers, determined to recover all that I had lost through my severe sickness, although at first it was up-hill work.

Prior to my sickness I had become not a little experienced in routine work (lacking, of course, trained endurance), so it was mighty discouraging to again take up and play all the elementary exercises like a beginner who never had touched the cornet. However, realizing that it must be done, whether liked or not, I stuck to it even in my immature and boyish mind I could see that it was not unlike the case of a man with a broken leg, who cannot walk again with security until the bone is properly knitted and the muscles have regained their accustomed strength.

## **RETURN TO HEALTH**

No one excepting myself ever will fully know the many obstacles I had to overcome in the early part of my career, but the love of the cornet kept me plugging away in spite of all the barriers that constantly seemed to buck and block me at every turn. But Ed's cornet (a beautiful, silver-plated instrument which I kept in almost as perfect a condition as when new) seemed to inspire me with an added impetus to work, and as I became stronger and better able to practice, my patience and perseverance were regarded by eventually winning; I even astonished myself by the progress made within only a few weeks. Moreover, the pride in playing on such a "swell" instrument seemed to give me new aspirations and high ambitions. Following my full recovery, I returned to school for the balance of that term, and after its close I started out to find work and earn money to buy a cornet of my own, though Ed repeatedly told me that I might use his instrument continually as he had taken up the violin for good. Through the influence of one of the deacons in the church where my father was organist, I secured a position in the office of a wholesale drug establishment at four dollars a week. This seemed a munificent amount of money which, if judiciously saved, would enable me to buy an instrument within six months, but I worked hard to earn it. My new position was supposed to be that of an assistant bookkeeper, yet all that I did for

some weeks through every day, was to address thousands of advertising circulars and make out shipping invoices.

In the meantime, and through the influence of some of the managers he had met and made friends with at the Opera House my brother Ed had fallen into a fine berth as orchestra leader of a road show with the Baker and Farron Company (old-timers among my readers will recall the firm). And so it was that, about the time when I went to work as a bookkeeper, Ed, a full-fledged leader, was busy selecting men for his orchestra; some of them had to double, playing brass in the day-parade band and strings in the orchestra at night. By the first of July all the men had been selected, and Ed found himself the director of a first-class band and orchestra that consisted wholly of experienced Toronto musicians. My brother Ernest was a member of the organization, doubling on trombone and violin.

Ed's contract called for a summer engagement in Buffalo before starting out on the road, but on the very day when, with his players, he was to leave for that city, one of the men, Johnny Anderson (a cornet player who rated as one of the best in Toronto), claimed he could not leave town for the summer and backed out. This placed Ed in a pretty pickle, which rather upset him, for the "turn-clown" came on Saturday and he was scheduled to open in Buffalo on the following day (Sunday). I, of course, knew nothing of the trouble in which my brother found himself, and not having to beat the office on that day (Saturday) my entire interest was centered in sailing, a summer pastime to which I was particularly partial.

I went down, got out the boat for a sail on the bay, and congratulating myself on having a perfect day with a spanking sailing breeze, was about to put off, when, like a wild man, who should come rushing and tearing down to the boat but Ed. He seemed about ready to burst or fall in an apoplectic fit from pent-up excitement as he announced the looming fiasco, and wound up by telling me that I simply must go to Buffalo as his cornet player.

Even though Ed could not find another cornetist in town willing to leave town and travel for the season, I was greatly elated in thinking that he considered me good enough to fill the position.

Well, that ended all sailing for me on that day! Even if my parents should consent that I might leave home and go with Ed, which seemed doubtful, there were preparations to be made and time was short. I told Ed for one thing that it would be necessary for me to give notice to my employers, but he promised to take care of that, saying he would telegraph them I was unavoidably called to Buffalo. I did not like the arrangement, however, and insisted upon their having a more personal notification. I was only fifteen years old, and in my boyish mind it was a great temptation to forget everything and go with Ed, but on second thought I decided it was better to play fair with the firm, and within a few hours they were notified.

To this day I cannot quite comprehend how it was that, at my age, father and mother allowed me to drop everything so summarily and start out with Ed, even taking into consideration the points he so strongly stressed that if I failed him his engagement in Buffalo could not be opened on time, that in consequence his contract might become void, and that as a result he might find himself out of an engagement for the entire



season. My parents did consent, however, and as a boy of fifteen I started out with my brother Ed to fill my first engagement as

## **A PAID PROFESSIONAL PERFORMER**

We left Toronto at midnight and arrived at Buffalo early on Sunday morning- an easy trip today, but in those days a tedious one, sitting up all night without sound sleep, as for me, the night ride did not drag greatly for I had new thoughts and was as ambitious as my companions. The anticipation of playing cornet in a professional orchestra with older musicians not only thrilled me, but seemed to arouse within me the spirit of manhood, and from that time on I began to mature mentally, We three brothers comprised the youth of the company, Ernest, the trombonist, was only a young man; Ed, quite young for a director, was eighteen, while of course I was the youngest. The other players were men quite old enough to have been my father, and all of them passed away years ago, but before their passing (and after I had become known as a cornet player with Gilmore's Band) I met them many times and we talked about the days when I was the "kid of the orchestra."

As previously stated, our engagement was with the Baker and Farron Company, who operated a Summer Garden in Buffalo, where we played from eight to twelve every night. At first it was a wonderful and broadening experience: Ed's orchestra played all kinds of music and my salary often dollars a week looked like a "young fortune" tome. But all this changed, for under the cold comfort of continual boarding-house living the glamour of the new life soon wore off, and I began to think what it meant to a boy: to be constantly in the midst of home comforts and the affection of parents. I tried not to dwell gloomily on these thoughts, but they would not be quieted.

When the excitement and newness of my position had worn entirely off, and as I became more and more-impressed with the difference between the environments of a strange place and those under which I had lived and been brought up, genuine homesickness began to creep in. One night when my thoughts and feelings had become all but unbearable, I told Ed how horribly homesick I actually was, and added that if he didn't get a substitute for me soon I would throw myself into the lake. Don't smile. Remember that I was a musically sensitive boy of only fifteen who never before had been out of his home surroundings.

I so thoroughly enjoyed playing the cornet at night that I forgot everything gloomy, but with the whole day to myself I had nothing to do but think! After playing for a month, Ed wrote Duncan McNabb (a cornet player in Toronto) who came on to replace me, and I returned-home! Upon arriving there I cried quietly to myself for sheer happiness in knowing that I was back again where there was nothing but love and kindness. I at once began practicing harder than ever, but with a new experience behind the practice, and, upon resuming my school work in the following fall, I devoted myself more seriously to study, with a new appreciation of what a good education means to a boy.

## **TENTH SERIES**

The fall season of 1883 was now approaching, and with its approach came the usual forerunners or signs of the annual renewal of seasonal activity in professional music

circles, but these no longer held a lure for me. My little taste of life away from home as a professional player in Buffalo with my brother Ed was only a slight one to be sure, yet somehow it seemed to have cooled my ardor for becoming a great cornet player, and the thought of being just an ordinary cornetist and living at home appealed to me more strongly than the first. Naturally, all boys of fifteen or sixteen years of age like to get away from home restrictions and have their own way; they like doing exactly as they please, with no one to interfere or find fault with them or to adjudge punishment for little things done or not done. The lost is judged under a parental reasoning that no boy of that age ever can or will understand, and probably I was no exception to the rule.

## **I RE-ENTER SCHOOL**

Playing with Ed's combination in Buffalo had given me a month of having my own way in everything, yet without much else to show a result than the horrible homesickness that had hastened me back. I missed having someone to pet me when feeling a bit out of sorts; to see that I was nicely tucked in bed nights, and in the morning at breakfast give me the affectionate words of greeting such as come only from our mothers. Through my short experience on the road I had learned to reason with myself in a way, therefore it did not require any great effort of will for me to decide not to go out again with the Baker and Farron Comedy Company in the coming season; instead I decided to stay at home and go to school. So when the term opened in September I re-entered school with the determination to learn something that should stand me in good stead for the future, and devoted myself to hard study with the hope of graduating as one of the best. I really did work hard, and my efforts were rewarded in the following summer by graduating as one of the three highest students.

I played the cornet occasionally throughout the winters of 1883 and 1884, still holding my position in the Queen's Own Regimental Band, attending rehearsals. In its small way my band work was thorough, and recognizing this along with my general improvement, Mr. Bayley (the bandmaster) shortly promoted me to the regular second cornet chair in the band, pushing me ahead of a few "seat-warmers". Thereafter, whenever the band played outside engagements calling for twenty or twenty-five men, I always was selected for the second cornet part: this gave me an opportunity to earn a little pocket money for myself, as these jobs paid from a dollar to a dollar and a half each.

I also resumed my church work, and began to play songs at the Sunday morning services as offertory solos, which seemed to please. It was not long before quite a few of the church people, as well as friends of my family, began telling me what a "splendid" cornet player I was, even at that age and time. Instead of allowing this well-meant yet unthinking flattery to turn my head, however, and knowing exactly how inefficient I actually was in comparison with cornet players I had heard, I paid no attention to what they said. Perhaps I may have done fairly well for a boy of only sixteen years, but as compared with men of real cornet experience I knew that I fell mighty far short of being in their class. However, these friends persisted in telling me that with my "talent" I should apply for solo cornet playing at local concerts, even though I received no remuneration for my services. As the writing of this little point brings to mind the many failures I have known in life who fell because of flattery, I

take the liberty of interpolating a bit of genuine philosophy I read the other day, namely: "Talent is a great breeder of laziness, and laziness is one of surest means of destruction!"

I graduated from school in June of 1884, and shortly afterwards my father had a call as organist to a large church in Indianapolis, Indiana. He accepted the offer, and in the following month the entire Clarke family again migrated, this time back to the very city whence it came only a few years before. We had lived in Toronto, Canada, only four years, but even as a boy I grew to love the city which really marked the beginning of my career in the music world. During these four years I had made many friends among boys of my own age, and it was with sincere regret that I was forced to leave.

The day before we left the city I called upon my two dear instructors, Mr. John Bayley (Bandmaster of the Queen's Own Regimental Band) and Dr. F.H. Torrington (Director of the Philharmonic Orchestra), and never shall I forget the kind words of encouragement and advice extended to me by both of these men. It was indeed with a sad heart that I went from Toronto to locate in Indianapolis where I knew scarcely anybody, particularly boy-friends, for I was only nine years old when we left this city before and went to Somerville, Massachusetts.

## **A NEW TECHNIC REVEALED**

We had been in Indianapolis about a week, and were fairly well settled in our new home, when one night I went to the Park where a band was giving regular summer evening concerts, and incidentally received an "eye-opener" in cornet playing, judging by the spontaneous applause which followed each number the band was exceedingly popular with the public, and as the organization played really good music finely rendered, I enjoyed the concert greatly. At about the middle of the program a young man not much older than myself stood up and without moving from his place began playing a cornet solo which at once so captivated my attention that I forced my way through the crowd in order to get nearer the bandstand and not miss a note. As the player continued with the introduction to the solo he astonished me with his clear, musical tone and playing poise, but when he came to a most difficult cadenza and played it faultlessly in a musically manner I held my breath in sheer astonishment. Never before had I heard a player with such perfect technic. It truly was remarkable!

The number, an extremely difficult cornet solo which demanded great endurance in playing was the Excelsior Polka by Frewin (I later purchased a copy for cornet and piano). At the ending of the solo the young player was given an ovation of tumultuous applause, in which I joined vigorously. The cornetist again arose, but this time stepped to the front of the platform, and to my wonderment played the entire solo through for the second time without seeming tired or making a slip. The remarkable thing about his performance was that he played so easily, gracefully; apparently with unconcern, and without any facial muscular contortions or movements. His face did not become purple, distorted, or show any signs of strain. I always had made such hard work in playing even a simple little polka which did not reach G on the first space above, that to watch him play with such perfect ease a number which seemed filled with top "C's" and then end it on the highest note, actually dumfounded me. It was both a revelation and an inspiration!

After the close of the concert I inquired as to the players identity, and learned that he was a Walter B. Rogers who came from the little town of Delphi, in Indiana, I also found out that he played at the Opera House when the season was done.

## **I TRY TO FATHOM THE SECRET**

When I reached home that night my mind was so filled with the cornet solo and the way in which it was played that I could not sleep. Half the night I argued with myself as to how it was possible to play so difficult a solo with such ease and grace, and finally came to the conclusion that Mr. Rogers must have some new system of cornet playing. As I was all but crazy with a desire to find out how he had acquired such an embouchure and wonderful endurance, when I took up my cornet the next day for practice I tried to see if by any possible means I could produce those high notes without straining for them, but of course I completely failed. I blew hard and strained until I felt as if my eyes would pop out of their sockets, but without results. Then I reasoned that if one person could do a certain thing easily so could another, but the point was how to go about doing it.

A little later on I attended a second concert and tried to get close to the bandstand, but as the platform was elevated about twelve feet from the ground there was no chance to get near enough to observe closely the manner or method of Mr. Rogers' art, I waited a few weeks for a better opportunity of getting close enough to the man to try and find out his secret of natural cornet playing, and during the interval of waiting, tried all sorts of ways to play easily, but without avail; the more I experimented, the worse I played and the madder I became! At last the Opera House opened and I bought a ticket for the first show with a seat in the front row near the cornet player. From the time the orchestra entered to play the opening overture and up to the end of the show, whenever Mr. Rogers was playing I leaned forward in my seat and watched him as a revenue officer might watch a liquor "suspect". I can't remember anything about the show itself, for my thinking faculties were concentrated in trying to reason out how cornet playing could be made so easy as Mr. Rogers had proved by his own playing.

After the show was over I walked along to think about it, and finally determined to try to imitate this "wonder". The next morning after breakfast I took my cornet to my room and commenced to experiment, but the more I blew the harder it became for me. Then I stood before the mirror and tried to adjust the mouthpiece to my lips the same as I had observed Rogers do the night before, placing just a little of it on the upper lip with more on the lower lip and drawing the latter in slightly over the teeth, but- not a tone came out of the cornet! I tried it again and again with no better results, and then I did actually get mad. I kept up this experimenting all that day, and the following night bought another front seat ticket for the same show. On this night Rogers played a cornet solo between the acts, not standing up before the audience but remaining seated. The selection was Hartman's Carnival of Venice, and-well, perhaps I did not watch him as he played it!

The next morning I tried the same way of playing as on the previous day, only changing the position of the mouthpiece against my lips, and again struggled to produce tones. The only result being that I found myself worse off than before, and

by the end of that week I could play neither in the old way nor in the new. This was so discouraging that I nearly arrived at a point of giving up the whole thing in disgust. Fortunately for me, however, I had been born with a goodly amount of perseverance and obstinacy in my make-up and stuck to the game- although not without admitting to myself that if it was necessary to play the cornet in the old way and suffer with the some strains and headaches as before, perhaps it might be as well if not better to discard playing altogether. However I kept at it for another three-week period of struggle.

One day I picked up the instrument for the usual practice and imagine if you can my surprise and almost bewilderment when the first tone I produced with ease was the formidable high C! It was almost startling, but I tried it once more and for the second time produced this heretofore all but impossible tone. Now the whole secret was out, only there really wasn't any secret about it! I had used only a little pressure of the mouthpiece on my lips and so allowed them to vibrate naturally, instead of pressing against them with so great force that all lip-vibration was stopped and tone would not come from the cornet. It then dawned upon my mind that, always when trying to reach a high note I had been pressing the mouthpiece so hard on the lips that it kept them from vibrating at all. I had been like a man trying to walk with his legs bound firmly together!

Starting for the third time with the high C, I began to run down the scale and watch for results. At first a few tones sounded, then there was no further response. Slightly relaxing my lower lip, I repeated this for a few times until I was able to reach down to middle G on the second line of the staff, but not a tone lower! I laughed at myself and thought: "Well, if it is so difficult for me to play low tones then I must practice low tones, which I proceeded to do. It did not tire me at all, but I took good care not to keep it up for too long at a time. Think! I had journeyed all the way from Toronto to Indianapolis to stumble against this easier way of playing through, seeing it marvelously demonstrated by Walter B. Rogers, a young player not much older than myself!

I now started in earnest to begin the mastery of what to me was a new art. I began to relax my lips when playing, instead of pinching them together and pressing the mouthpiece against them with force, and very shortly I could produce C on the ledger line below the staff easily. After that I kept on working hard, but in a sensible way, reasoning out each problem as it came up, and before another month had passed could play fairly well again, and so much easier! The lesson involved in this is: If you find you have the right idea according to your own characteristics, work on it from the very beginning and build up slowly from the foundation.

## **ELEVENTH SERIES**

At this point of narrative I want to state that the Walter B. Rogers mentioned in the preceding chapter as a boy-wonder on the cornet, in later years become one of the most celebrated cornetists in the country, with the most remarkable technic of any cornet player ever heard. As we grew up into manhood our two lives became linked together, both of us later on occupying professional positions in America's great Metropolis, New York City, Rogers became cornet soloist in Cappa's Seventh Regiment Band, and I served in a like solo capacity with Gilmore's famous

Twenty-second Regiment Band. About ten years afterwards Rogers was my side-partner in John Philip Sousa's Band, at the time when it made its first European tour, playing at the big World's Fair in Paris, France, and throughout all Europe.

To my knowledge, there never has been any great cornet soloist who has not changed his method of playing several times before becoming successful. In other words, each has commenced playing the wrong way at first and then worked out his own salvation by finding the easiest way of playing for himself -adopting it, working with it and, having proved it, sticking to his own idea no matter as to how other players might advise him. When a cornetist can do his work musically and easily and prove results, he certainly must be on the right track, regardless of what the "Book" says. Remember, that every cornet method published is simply an explanation of the way in which its author himself played.

Quite a few fine authors contradict each other regarding the proper way of playing the cornet, i.e., position of the mouthpiece on the lips, holding the instrument, and tonguing correctly. In consequence of these various contradictions, with many struggling players of wind instruments who live in remote parts of the country and cannot have the advantage of personal instructions, the question arises in their minds: "What is the proper position of the lips when placed on the mouthpiece!" Many beginners, even after purchasing an instrument and instruction book, when working on the theory of the author and finding they are not making the advancement expected, become so discouraged that after playing a year or so they give it all up. Some players have a protruding upper jaw, others an undershot lower jaw; some have thick lips, others thin lips, and yet the "Book" gives only one explanation of how to play, Now I do not mean to find fault with different methods, as all of them are good in many ways. I simply wish to point out that each individual player must reason a little with himself, and not take the text too literally. Remember, we are not all born alike and fashioned from the some mold!

## **CHANGING THE BASIC FOUNDATION**

Well, here was I who had been playing the cornet a few years under hard and assiduous practicing, only to reach a point where I could not seem to improve, no matter how long and hard I worked each day! I had the ambition and plenty of time for practice, as well as the spirit to play many hours more, but one hour with swollen lips was enough. My poor lips would become so tired that I could hardly produce a tone, and was compelled to quit because they were "all in." However, watching someone else play with perfect ease all the time without any noticeable strain or facial contortions, hardly ever taking a rest, yet doing the most wonderful stunts as easily as playing marbles, started me thinking. Quite naturally I did a lot of that when I reflected on the way I was torturing myself, also a great deal of experimenting in seeking some way whereby to better conditions, with the result as stated in the chapter before this.

After succeeding in my efforts by changing my embouchure, I began practicing all the elementary studies in the first part of the "Book" and all the different scales both chromatic and diatonic. I was careful always to play softly, but surely, so as not to injure the sensitive nerves of my lips, and gained the satisfaction of noticing an improvement each week. My earnest efforts were finally rewarded by being able to

last longer, produce a smoother tone, and reach the higher notes without any strain, This encouraged me greatly.

I always played before the mirror, which of course reflected every movement, in order to note if my playing caused any undue facial contortions. I noticed that sometimes when I tried to hold out a high note my face would become a little red, although there was no visible sign of strain. I did not attempt to hold these high notes very often at first, however, fully realizing that my muscular "foundation" had not become quite firm enough in the short time since I had made the change, and I did not want any set-back to further discourage me. You see I was growing older, getting more sense, and using thought.

## **A TORCHLIGHT TEST**

I forgot to mention that my two brothers who went out with the Baker and Farron Company had finished their season's engagement, with Ed accepting a position in Boston as leader and Ern returning home. It was a presidential election year, with the campaign of 1884 just approaching.

Back in those times all bands were in great demand for torchlight processions in Indianapolis, the same as in other cities, and as brother Ern had become a pretty good trombone player from his years experience on the road, he began getting acquainted with the different musicians around town with an eye to business. One day he came home and told me he had an engagement for that night to play with Biessenhertz's Band in a Republican Club parade. To me it seemed fine that he should get a job so quickly after having been in town only so short a time. He had played for quite a number of these parades when one day he asked me: "Bert, wouldn't you like to do a parade tonight!" Well, wouldn't I just! It would be a fine chance to test my change in embouchure.

Ern took me to the band room with him to obtain a uniform, and when we arrived there the men were all ready to start out. He introduced me to the band leader, whom I found to be a dear old man and a fine musician-one of the old-timers. The leader spoke kindly to me, and asked whether I played first or second cornet. As I did not want to make a fiasco upon my first introduction to the band, I answered that I played second. He supplied me with a march book and then took me to his solo cornetist, who was none other than Walter B. Rogers! This was the first time for me to meet my "Model" personally, and I found him to be the most affable chap I had ever met in my whole musical career up to date. Rogers showed me the principal marches that would be used and made me feel quite at home. This was intensely gratifying, as I was beginning to feel a bit nervous at being only a strange boy among many experienced bandsmen.

I was mightily pleased to be playing in the same band with Walter Rogers, and thought that after we had become better acquainted I would apply to him for instructions on the cornet and learn his method of playing. I did not have the nerve to do it then on so short an acquaintance. We made the first parade and were immediately engaged by the Democratic contingent for the following night, after which we seemed to alternate every successive night between the two political

parties. This kept the band business mighty good up to election day, as almost every night there was a rally of some sort.

I now had made such progress in my playing that I was advanced to first cornet. This of course placed me beside Rogers, and he being only two years my senior (the age of my brother Ern) we soon became quite intimately acquainted. By this time I also had come to know all the bandsmen, the most of whom were regular old-time professionals and old enough to have been my father. Association with these men seemed to so mature me that I soon began to feel like a regular "professional" myself, and being an unusually robust, chunky boy for a seventeen-year old did not detract from the feeling.

## **FROM TORCHLIGHTS TO FOOTLIGHTS**

The band business, of course, fell off after the election was over, but the majority of the men played in the different theatres around town. Mr. Biessenhertz was leader of English's Opera House Orchestra, where Rogers played during the winter, and as some of the big shows that required an enlarged orchestra demanding two cornets not infrequently came to the house, Rogers put in a request that I should be engaged and play beside him.

This, of course, would give needed experience in the music game, but I think that what impressed me the most favorably was finding myself placed so unexpectedly in close playing juxtaposition with my ideal cornet player, whose ease in playing I was striving to imitate, and hear him play in such near proximity. This not only proved to be actually instructive, but afforded me a glorious chance to watch, listen and improve my own playing by example. Even though I now was playing one hundred per cent better than ever before, the situation inspired me to still further ambition, so I kept on practicing and working hard, improving wonderfully and devoting my whole time and thought to the study of music.

My brother Ed finished his Boston summer engagement and come home in the fall, and, being as ambitious as Ern and myself, he practiced all day long on his violin while we were doing the same with our instruments. Ed's coming home once more brought we three brothers together in home contact with our father, and living in a fairly large house each had his own room for practicing and playing -father at the piano, Ed on his violin, Ern on his trombone, and myself on the cornet. The neighbors on each side of us (it was a corner house, by the way, on Alabama and Michigan Streets) most certainly must have gained their full share of noise from four different instruments all going at the same time, for many were the unsigned notes dropped into our letter box calling us a "nuisance to the community." I guess they were right, but we were too deeply immersed in our music to pay any attention to anonymous letters, and cared little so long as the police didn't interfere and give us warning.

I often have wondered how our good mother ever stood for the frightful din we must have constantly created, but that's away "good" mothers generally have, With the exception of our father none of us played any too musically, and the continual playing of scales and exercises could not have been very entertaining to a disinterested listener. Of course, we kept all our windows closed, but even so the anonymous



missives kept coming, only in fewer numbers, some of the neighbors evidently becoming used to the racket, or else moving away from it.

## **TWELFTH SERIES**

As before stated, I now was devoting my entire time to music, and realizing that it was foolish to practice all the time on the cornet only, at my father's suggestion I took up the study of viola. He said that if I could learn to play it well enough we would form a family string quartet, Ed and Ern playing first and second violins, myself the viola, and himself the cello. He had learned to play this instrument fairly well in his youth, and was sure that with a little practice he easily could get back into playing form. I immediately planned out a schedule for myself to play four full hours on the cornet each forenoon, with four on the viola every afternoon. The latter instrument did not prove so very difficult for me, as all that it required was reading anew clef (the alto) and a little longer stretch with the fingers. By careful study and diligent practice the work was soon accomplished and I was ready for the quartet.

One never-to-be-forgotten Sunday afternoon, about a month from the time when the project originally was started, we made our first full try-out on one of Mozart's beautiful string-quartet compositions. Everybody became so deeply absorbed, and the time passed so pleasantly, that nobody gave any thought about supper, although we were called several times. Father suddenly remembering that he was supposed to play the organ at evening church service, finally jumped up and left precipitately without stopping to eat. The rest of us then came down to earth long enough to eat.

## **PATIENCE, PERSEVERANCE AND PERSISTENCE**

This experience, new to me, was so fascinating and so increased my love for good music, that I became more determined to follow out my previously planned schedule for routine work and study in a systematic manner. In detail my schedule was as follows: The cornet in the forenoon, with one hour on scales, one hour on slurring, one hour on tonguing, and one hour on miscellaneous work: i.e., a little of each of the preceding combined with playing songs and easy solos. I kept this up all that winter, getting up early and working from eight in the morning to twelve noon. The afternoon was devoted to the viola, carrying out the same general system in scale playing, finger exercises, bowing, and playing parts from the different string quartets. My improvement on both instruments astonished even myself.

## **I GET TIPS FROM ROGERS**

Occasionally I would go over to Rogers' home to play cornet duets with him and talk music. In addition to his wonderful cornet playing he also was a remarkably fine violinist, having studied at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music under the celebrated teacher, Schradieck. I gained many pointers from Rogers on cornet playing without taking regular lessons. He said that he did not teach, but would be only too glad to help me if I thought I could learn anything from him. Maybe I didn't, eh!

I was ready to take advantage of every opportunity to perfect myself in music, and not a day passed that I did not learn something new. I persistently asked questions,

no matter how silly they may have sounded, for I desired to find out and know things. Nor was I ever quite satisfied with the explanations given, but would argue on both sides until I was fully and firmly convinced that I was on the right track and would not be compelled to undo any of the foundation work I was building up for my future.

Those hours of perseverance and struggle in trying to learn have repaid me a thousand fold, for without perfection in my work I never could have made the success of my after life. And yet in those days it merely was pleasure to strive and do my work well, and never at any time did it seem arduous or laborious.

Now that we three brothers (Ed, Ern and myself) were in the "music game," so to speak, playing small engagements here and there for whatever the job at hand might pay, (in those days there was no union to fix and govern prices), of course we played whenever and wherever there was a chance to make a dollar. Often times, however, we did not receive any remuneration, but our inherent love of music and its playing kept us sufficiently interested in our work to hold together. The main idea with us was to be "playing all the time," anywhere or somewhere, but we never played for nothing if someone in connection with the job was receiving pay.

The rehearsals of our family string quartet (Ed, first violin; Ern, second violin; Dad, cello and myself viola) taught us real music, for we played the works of all the old masters. Such atmosphere and environment formed the best possible education for a boy who had decided to follow music as a profession, and my aspirations soon began to climb. I wanted to not only make a fair cornet player, but a good "all-round" musician, and so began to study the tonal qualities, compass, and fingering of all the other instruments which go to make up band and orchestra ensembles. I now could read music in all clefs, and often tried to write for the different instruments by making a regular score, using some simple song as a guide for the orchestration.

## **ARRANGING AS AN AID TO STUDY**

Naturally my work with the viola enabled me to write in the alto clef, but I soon realized that as the cornet was built in B flat, all parts for that instrument must either be written or transposed a tone above the piano part. This soon became intensely interesting to me, and I would try to hear in my mind the sound of what I was arranging, to catch the sounds without actually playing the parts. It was similar to painting a picture and correctly blending the colors, only that as yet I had to learn to simplify parts for the ordinary players and still not write melody for all the instruments. This not only trained my mind, but seemed to help me play the cornet better, and through it I learned to study my music mentally before ever attempting to play it; likewise, I found that it enabled me to read all music more readily, and to execute with greater fluency.

Playing in our string quartet gave me the idea of forming a brass quartet, so one day when visiting my boyfriend, Walter Rogers, I broached the subject to him. He readily responded to the idea, and told me that if we would organize such an ensemble he would be only too glad to make one of the quartet. I went home and brought up the matter of a brass quartet with my brothers. It appealed to Ed, who said that all we needed to carry out the

plan was someone to play alto horn. Ed had not touched his cornet (or any wind instrument) for a very long time because of devoting his entire time to studying and playing the violin, but said that as there was a good alto instrument in the house he would tackle it. This made the brass quartet complete, with Rogers playing first cornet, myself second cornet, Ed the resurrected alto, and Ern trombone.

Then came the question as to where and how we should get published music for our combination. I spoke with Rogers about it and asked if he knew where we could obtain music. He at once dug through his own collection of music and brought to light a few manuscripts. They were original compositions for brass quartets of the same combination we had organized which he had written some few years before while attending the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. The next day I went to a music store and bought up all the brass-quartet music they had in stock, then set a date in the following week for the first tryout of our brass experiment. Rogers came over to our house, where a very pleasant afternoon was spent playing all the music-numbers we had. These, of course, included Rogers' own compositions, which really were the best of all, and the effect of our playing together was mighty good for a first trial.

## **BRASS QUARTET BECOMES CHURCH CHOIR**

After we had become used to playing together, with each one trying to hear the parts of the others while listening to his own part (true ensemble work), a suggestion came up that it would be better for all to phrase alike, and that it would sound more musical if all breathed alike and at the same time. After much study and constant practice, the quartet had improved to such an extent that one day Dad came into the room where we were practicing and complimented us on our playing. At that time he was organist in the Plymouth Congregational Church, and having built for that church the largest organ in Indianapolis, gave many daily public recitals on the "King of Instruments."

One day while the quartet was rehearsing as usual, Dad again came into the room and informed us that because of a "strike" in his choir (numbering about thirty-five voices) he had decided to dispense with the singing body at the following Sunday service. We did not quite see the connection until he suggested that our quartet should take the place of the choir, stating that it not only would be a distinctive novelty but settle all further talk among the congregation concerning the "strike." It seemed that the cause of the trouble was the old one of "jealousy"; there were several soprano singers in the vocal body, and each one wanted to be the soloist. As it was a volunteer choir all the members had their individual friends and adherents in the church body as personal supporters. Things were coming rapidly to a head when Dad assumed the initiative and took the matter into his own hands. He simply selected as soprano soloist the singer whom he considered most ably fitted to fill the part. Then the cloud burst and disclosed the jealousies that eventually broke up everything.

We accepted Dad's suggestion and as this would be the first public appearance of the Schubert Brass Quartet (our new name) we began rehearsing in earnest twice daily until the eventful day came. When on that Sunday morning we took our seats before the assembled congregation a murmur went through the church, emanating mainly from the choir members who were present in the hope of seeing a complete failure of the entire service. Naturally, we fellows of the quartet were a little nervous,

but we played the opening number in a quiet, reverent and impressive manner that pleased the congregation and compelled its attention. At the close of the service the quartet was permanently engaged as a musical attraction for the balance of the year. Of course our quartet repertoire was extremely limited as to sacred selections, so at once I started a search through the stores for more music of that nature, something that proved exceedingly difficult to secure for a brass quartet. I spent many hours in looking through different publications, but wholly without success, Almost everything was on the secular order, which naturally was entirely out of keeping with, and utterly inappropriate for, a church service. Then I hit on the happy scheme of purchasing part-songs for mixed voices. These I arranged for our brass voices, and here again my music education was greatly advanced. Our quartet became so popular that the church auditorium was filled every Sunday, but no one ever thought of asking about the choir, which simply had pushed itself out of singing existence.

### **MAKING MONEY THROUGH MUSIC**

Towards the close of that year(1884) roller skating sprang up as a popular craze, and a fine and commodious rink was built on Pennsylvania Street. Of course a band was vitally essential, and one day I was offered an engagement at \$14.00 a week to play nights at the rink. With the permission of my parents (although they did not want me to become a paid musician) I accepted the offer and found myself with steady employment at a stipulated wage, which, even if not much, was a tangible something. The band was a small one of only six pieces, with an instrumentation of two cornets, two altos, a baritone and tuba (no drums).

It was hard work to play three hours steadily (in a combination so small there was no rest for anyone) yet to me it was professional work. It was my first regular band engagement, and playing it all that winter I easily can recall its personnel. It was Jim Hall, second alto; Coney Schellschmidt, baritone, and George Mills, tuba. Some of these men are yet living. I met two of them only recently, and we talked over the "old times" with many a hearty laugh at incidents which had transpired hours everyday, I most assuredly was kept pretty busy. Yet even so, I found time to arrange a lot of waltzes, marches, etc., for that six-mouthpiece band, and the experience I gained from reducing larger orchestrations to meet the requirements of our small combination stood me in good stead and repaid my work a thousand-fold during my after life.

I recollect that there was to be a Grand Fancy Costume Carnival at the rink, and that the management requested the band to head the Grand March on skates. I could do any "stunt" on ice skates, but as I had never tried roller skating I was told to come over in the afternoon and practice, so as to be in shape for the Carnival at night. It was very simple when just skating up and down the floor, but becoming too ambitious I started trying to skate on one foot, cut the figure eight, and do other fancy skating which had been so easy for me on the ice. I forgot there were wheels under me, however, and in trying to do the "outside-edge" I slipped and came down to the floor in an awful tumble which seemed to shake the building. I tried to get on my feet, but could not move because of the terrific pain in my knee, and had to taken home in a cab. The knee, which was badly dislocated, laid me up for some time, and I never have tried roller skating since.

## **THIRTEENTH SERIES**

The trifling incident of my mishap on roller skates which closed the last installment may not be strictly in keeping with the theme of my article, but I have related it for a purpose. I wanted to explain that although confined to bed, I could sit up and carry on my practice and study just the same. Neither did the accident cool my ambition, but I did miss the Carnival and did not head the Grand March.

With the money I was now making by playing cornet I had an opportunity to buy many things necessary to my music, besides paying my board at home, which gave me a feeling of independence. My first savings went towards buying me anew cornet, something which I had wanted for a long time, as the instrument I had been using was a cheap

French make that cost only twelve dollars. I had succeeded in getting this poor affair by shoveling the snow from sidewalks during the winter, for my father would never contribute a cent towards helping me in my career as he did not wish to encourage me in any way that might lead to my becoming a musician.

## **I PURCHASE A NEW HORN**

I purchased a "Three Star" Boston cornet of which I was very proud. It was brass, but I kept it shining like gold. There were very few silver-plated cornets in those days, but after a time I took a notion that I wanted mine plated and took it to a jeweler who said that he could plate it. The plating was all right but the burn is her rubbed the bell so hard that it was badly flattened out in some places. As I had always been very careful not to dent or even scratch an instrument, this nearly broke my heart, but I could not get it repaired anywhere in town and I simply had to let it go as it was. I purchased all the cornet methods and exercises published, as well as a considerable quantity of cornet solos. Every week I bought something which I considered might help me to improve myself, and before long my music library contained every cornet solo that I could find published, either in America or Europe.

It always has been strange to me that so many cornet players seem to have such a strong antipathy against spending money for music, or anything which possibly might help them to improve their condition in music and so perhaps eventually bring in more money. Yet they smoke cigars, and never kick over spending at least a dollar a day for little extravagances that really count for nothing. If these same people would spend only a few dollars weekly for cornet methods and studies written by different authors, getting from these various writers their individual ideas as to playing the cornet correctly, and thereby gaining new suggestions to work out for themselves, in a short time their advancement would be noticeable.

In time, every dollar expended in the manner mentioned will bring in from ten to one hundred more. Even in the music profession money makes money, as well as in commercial life. When spent for a good instrument, good instruction, or good music of any sort, a dollar never is thrown away by a person who desires to make a success with the cornet.

My father always advised me to hear good music whenever possible, and to especially study the work of the different soloists, whether vocalists or instrumentalists, and acting on his advice I made it a point to be present every time a good concert company or fine musical organization appeared in town. This, of course, cost me money, as I had to hire a substitute for my evening work, besides paying admission fee into the concert, yet I never allowed to pass any opportunity that I thought might help me in my music education.

It was by taking advantage of these opportunities that I gained instruction which has helped me even more than as if I had placed myself under the guidance of academic tuition, for one can form a better idea as to how standard music should be interpreted by hearing great artists than can be gained from all the printed and verbal explanations in the world. Therefore, I considered my money well spent when listening to the best artists of the time, and simply sat and absorbed all the good in music that was possible. Nowadays, the phonograph and the radio make wonderful educators when the best in music is heard from them.

It seems strange to me now that I leaned so strongly towards singers principally, yet such was the case, I listened carefully to their rendition of songs and arias, hearing and noting the proper interpretation of the words when combined with music, I learned to judge the correct phrasing of the songs I loved the best, whether sentimental or dramatic, and tried to convey the some meaning of the text by my cornet when playing them. This was much more difficult than playing the regular published cornet solos, even though the latter required greater technic; and I also realized that it exacted more thought, concentration and even endurance than did the playing of ordinary brilliant solos.

## **LED BY THE GREAT LIGHTS**

But the strictly cornet work was not neglected because of the song playing, for it was by attending these various concerts that I became familiar with the playing of great celebrities, such as Jules Levy, pioneer of the cornet and most powerful and brilliant soloist of the age, Walter Emerson who was an exceptionally good soloist, Liberati the neatest and most dashing soloist I ever heard in those days; and the great trombonist, Fred Neil Innes, who, although not a cornetist, could execute on his trombone any cornet solo in Levy's repertoire with marvelous dexterity and fidelity to the original. There also were many lesser lights, all of whom were excellent in their individual line of work.

In later years it was my good fortune to meet and become intimately acquainted with the great players mentioned, as I found that merely exchanging ideas with them were lessons almost priceless, each one having a distinctive individuality in his playing which had made him renowned throughout the entire country. Boy-like, I tried to imitate their playing in my amateurish way when doing my daily practicing and naturally without any great degree of success, but I soon began to distinguish the more minute differences in their styles. I never once thought of criticizing their playing, as all were too great for me to try to find any flow or faults, and I didn't have the nerve to attempt it.

After an evening at a concert where I had listened to any one of the great ones play, I would go home and lie awake half the night thinking of all that I had heard, and as my memory was good (at least in music matters) I could follow mentally the solos they had played almost note for note. Of all these many concerts I attended, the most impressive was one in which I heard the inimitable Patti sing the simple little ballad of Home, Sweet Home. I sat entranced, and when she had finished, like the rest of the audience I had tears in my eyes and a lump in my throat. Her singing of the old song was revelation which induced me to try to imitate her on the cornet, although I realized it would be next to impossible. Nevertheless, it helped to purify my tone and taught me to play as softly as such a song stress must sing when rendering simple songs in a way to affect an entire audience as it had me.

## **I DEVELOP BOTH STYLES**

This style of practice did not tire my lips as did playing the brilliant cornet solos but seemed to rest them, Still, I realized that the public demanded pyrotechnical demonstrations on the cornet, so each morning after my regular practice on the scales in all their different forms I would tackle some of the solos I had heard these great cornetists render, and the recollection of the pitch of enthusiasm to which they had aroused their audiences filled me with greater ambition than ever. I would play and play until my poor lips refused to vibrate and I was forced to rest, I would pickup some music magazine and read of their success until I was again fired with ambition and filled with aspirations to become as celebrated as were they, then pick up my cornet and go at it again with greater zest than before.

In those days I did not know how to governor control my practice. There was no one to correct faults but myself, and in boyish ways I let many mistakes pass without rectifying them as I should have done. Everyone knows that as a rule boys are not blessed with much philosophy, not to mention common sense, yet they think they know a lot about almost everything. With us boys in those days daily practice meant that so many pages of exercises were necessary to build up a strong lip, instead of one exercise being practiced and played faultless before a whole page was attempted.

I remember a date when the famous Gilmore's Band was booked for a concert, and on the morning it arrived in town I was at the depot to have a look at these wonderful musicians who Were supposed to be the greatest instrumental performers in the world. When the train pulled in and the men left the cars, I stood back in awe as they passed me, although I gladly would have helped "tote" grip or instrument to the hotel if I had had the nerve to approach any of them. I wanted to speak with the celebrated Ben Bent, solo cornetist, and question him as to the correct way of practicing so that I might become a good player myself. But I could not muster enough courage to brazen it out and approach him, and so he too walked off with the rest of the bandsmen. I realized that with his going I had let an opportunity slip by, and for so doing never really quite forgave myself, as perhaps I might have learned more in a few minutes' conversation with this solo cornet player, than so far, I had from all my studying. Anyway, I attended the concert and was enthralled beyond words by the playing of this magnificent aggregation, which then was the only traveling band in the United States. Oh, how tome our own town band sounded at our next rehearsal! For the first time I began to notice the mistakes we all made that were allowed to pass by

the leader, and to observe how little he made of dynamic and expression marks, carrying everything through without trying to produce contrasts, and without paying any attention whatever to proper interpretation.

Right then and there I made up my mind that if I became a good cornet player I would make every endeavor to become a member of Gilmore's great band, which was the best in the world; and well it might be as it was made up of picked men from all countries, and comprised the best players that could be procured. My young friend, Walter Rogers, appealed to me as being a mighty good cornetist, he did everything so easily on the instrument, and really was my model. He could read anything at sight, and we used to play cornet duets together so frequently that gradually I learned more from him through observation than by hearing anyone else.

Sorry to say, I shortly lost both the companionship and playing of Rogers, for when the spring of 1885 was approaching he had a call from Cappa, the then celebrated bandmaster of the New York Seventh Regiment Band. Cappa had heard Walter play a few solos, and was surprised at his wonderful display of technic and style. He at once engaged him as the cornet soloist of the big band, and so Rogers left Indianapolis for bigger things in New York. I was so proud because of my friend securing one of the best cornet positions in the big Metropolitan city that I could not have been more overjoyed had it been myself. We were all proud of him! This was amply testified when he left for New York, as all the musicians in Indianapolis gave him a grand "send-off"; for he not only was recognized as the best cornetist in the city, but was well liked because of his genial disposition. What was most gratifying to all, however, was to think that one of our town boys had been sought to fill one of the best cornet positions in the country. Rogers went to New York and made good.

The director of the theatre orchestra in which Rogers had been playing, engaged me to take his place. This of course was quite an advancement for me, but I knew it would be necessary to put in some mighty hard work even to try to fill the position the best I could. To make good on the job I started into practice with greater zest, always thinking of Rogers, and wondering if it were possible for me ever to become good enough as a cornetist to secure some sort of an engagement in the great American Metropolis, where I could hear the best in music at all times and perhaps be more or less associated with world renowned musicians. I argued it out with myself that, if one fellow from a country town was sufficiently good to compete with the best cornet players in New York City, possibly there might be a chance for another if he studied carefully, faithfully and sincerely!

## **FOURTEENTH SERIES**

At the time when I left Toronto (Canada) for Indianapolis with our family, my oldest brother, Will, remained, as he was holding a fine business position. One day, not long after my engagement in the theatre orchestra, a letter came from Will in which he stated there was vacancy in his department which perhaps "Bert" (myself) might like to fill, going into the business and learning it from top to bottom as he himself had done. His proposition was discussed by my parents, then I was approached to find out what were my feelings in the matter. With all my hard struggles to improve myself on the cornet and become a good player running through my mind, and with all my dreaming ambitions and aspirations looming before me, it perhaps may be imagined



just how the suggestion did not appeal to me. From the very start Dad had opposed my desire to become a musician, explaining many times over that a business career was far better than a berth in the music profession, He now backed that up with the proposal from my brother, saying that it was the finest opportunity in the world for me to work up into something fixed and definite: something that in the long run would pay me better than working with musicians, who very seldom rose above their own environment or ever made much money outside of their regular jobs.

## **I SUCCUMB TO MY FATHER'S LOGIC**

I was then a boy not quite eighteen years of age and his arguments, which really were quite reasonable and logical, began to impress me favorably, particularly when he cited instances of many successful business men who had started from the bottom and risen to high positions as wealthy and influential citizens. What I did not particularly relish, however, was the idea of living away from home, especially at so great a distance as Toronto. Then come the memories of my school days in that city, and the old pleasant associations with many boy friends began to present renewed attractions. This, with the thought that I could return to them as a cornetist of greater experience and much improved playing ability, began to have a favorable effect on my mind. It was because of such thoughts, coupled with my good fathers sensible suggestions, that at length I was persuaded to accept the proposition, although it nearly broke my heart to abandon the music ambitions so long cherished and laboriously built up. Possibly this was tempered a bit by a secret idea of again joining the Queen's Own Band, this time as a better cornet player.

In every boys life there comes a crisis which upsets and changes all his plans. The change had come to me, and as I thought it meant the real beginning of my life among men, I began training my notions along different lines, fired with a determination to do my best. Perhaps the hardest thing of all was that I must resign my position in the theatre, for I not only loved to play in the orchestra but liked to watch the different shows that came each week. I fought these things all out with myself, however, and prepared to enter into the change in a manner that should show my determination to make good in the enterprise, as well as prove the great respect for my fathers judgment.

The stiffest blow, that was almost a knockout, was the matter of salary. I was to start on ten dollars a month in the commercial as against fifteen dollars a week in the musical. Perhaps as a crumb of comfort, I was told that, in many cases, boys of my age worked all of the first year for nothing just to learn a business. That might have been so, yet I wondered how I should manage to live away from home on such a beggarly pittance!

I left Indianapolis for Toronto in April of 1885 to commence what I considered was to be a new life and a new career, filled with keen ambition and high hopes for the future.

## **I TAKE STOCK**

The trip from Indianapolis to Toronto was a long and lonesome ride, but it gave me ample opportunity for thought, to "size myself up" and begin to think as a man, and

plan for something very different from what as a boy I always had looked forward to as my future, First came the question of living. How was I to live on ten dollars a month, when through the goodness of my parents I had been used to having every home comfort and indulgence? of course I had saved a few dollars from my earnings during the post winter, and depended somewhat upon chances of playing nights, this not only to keep up my practice of the cornet, but to earn money.

My intentions were to re-enlist in the Queen's Own Band, which usually had steady engagements. especially during the summer months at Hanlan's Point on the Island, For the latter only a small band of twenty-five to thirty men was used, but I felt confident that my wider experience and increased ability would place me among the selected few, as there were only three cornets used in the band. These jobs paid one dollar an engagement, a small amount, but it would help out considerably when added to my "ten" a month. I could begin to see now how it might be possible after all to exist on a meager salary without having my parents contribute to my maintenance, something which pride forbade me to accept, much less ask for. Then again, I argued that while it would not interfere with the business I was again to learn, playing the cornet would be a relief and recreation, that it would be a source of pleasure and contentment for me to utilize my evenings in this way. Thus my thoughts kept me from being homesick and downhearted because of leaving my parents for good, or so I then supposed.

My brother Will met me on the arrival of the train in Toronto, and taking me at once to the store when I was to begin my new business life, introduced me to Mr. John Kay, the "Governor," who started me in to work even before I had found a place to board. Will had a boathouse at the bay, however, and said that I could live there upstairs and so save room rent. This was a blessing as far as economics were concerned, but otherwise when comfort was considered. There was neither cooking stove nor heating apparatus; the room was not even plastered or sheathed, the ice had not yet broken up in the bay, and the cracks in boards made it just about as chilly in-as-out-of-doors. I stayed there just the same, however. and cooked meals on an oil stove like a genuine camper-out, while waiting for summer time.

The work in the store was quite interesting for the first week; as it was such an absolute change from the bit of professional life I had experienced; in fancy I could see myself before long at the head of this large business establishment, earning all kinds of money and carrying out my fathers advice when he induced me to accept this position by outlining the possibility a successful business man had to attain prosperity. The next week my enthusiasm cooled down a little, as the old desire to play cornet returned and I realized there was no chance for practice except at night, when I would be all tired out and not feeling very ambitious. I also realized that if my practice was neglected my playing would suffer, and I wanted to show the men in the band how I had improved in my playing since leaving Toronto the previous year.

On the following Sunday I called upon Mr. Bayley, the bandmaster, and explaining my presence in the city expressed my desire to again join the band. His reply being favorable I mustered enough courage to tell him how I had improved during the lost year, and that I now wished to play first instead of second cornet, He was quite amazed at my presumption, and told me to bring my cornet and prove my ability. I was quite scared, but my pride and ambition pushed me on. After the "try-out" he

seemed satisfied that I might make good, and directed me to appear at the regular band rehearsal on the following night and to sit beside the solo cornetist. This elated me greatly, and I felt so happy that all the next day my mind was on the rehearsal in the coming evening. In consequence of this my business work suffered so sadly that I was called down several times for carelessness and stupidity. But what boy wouldn't be excited when every fiber in his body was vibrating with the very thought of playing once more in a big band!

## **AN UNEXPECTED HONOR**

I went to band practice early that evening to meet the men I had known before, also to become acquainted with the new members. When eight o'clock arrived Mr. Bayley ordered me to occupy the second chair beside the solo cornetist, although already occupying the chair was a player who was told to sit back. This caused some little surprise, and all eyes were turned first on me and then on the bandmaster, the men wondering why this change was ordered, for they all knew that when I left the band a year before I simply was one of the second cornet players.

The rehearsal started and I forgot everything but the music, and knew I was playing it well. This attracted Mr. Bayley's attention and later on he had me play one of the solos occurring in a big selection. After I had finished he paid me quite a compliment before the sixty players by stating the possibilities obtainable even in a short time by diligent practice in a proper way. I made a hit with the men, too, and at intermission they all crowded round me, asking what I had been doing to make such an improvement in so short a time: that is, all except the player whom I had displaced by occupying his chair. I could see that he was hurt and felt sore, so after the rehearsal was over I went to Mr. Bayley and talked with him about it. I told the bandmaster I was perfectly willing to sit in the third chair, in fact preferred to do so rather than discourage the fellow and hurt his feelings: further, that the way in which all had warmly demonstrated their notice of the improvement in my playing was sufficient glory for me, and that I did not care to advance at another's expense. Well, my playing that evening created some talk which went all over town, even reaching the ears of my employer's son (an officer in the regiment) who spoke to me about it the next day.

I now began working hard in the store, feeling happy in the thought that after all it was possible to "serve two masters," music and business. The more I played with the band, the more my local reputation as a cornet player began to spread. I received an offer of a job for the Queen's Birthday on May twenty-four (a holiday in Canada) to play solo cornet with a country band that was to compete in a contest on that day. I was to receive \$5.00 and expenses, Think! A half-month's salary all in one day! I of course accepted the engagement and left town after business hours that night. I rehearsed with the band until late at night, then arose early in the morning and drove to where the contest was to take place.

It was an exciting day for me, as there were many bands competing and the contest lasted all day. In the evening a concert was given by the three leading bands, with a prize offered for the best cornet soloist. Our band won second prize, although fully believing it would receive first and counting on me to pull them through. However, they were a dandy lot of good-natured fellows from a small village (some farmers and some business men) with all out for a good time, so they never questioned the

decision of the judges. I remember, too, that they posted my name for the cornet solo prize without notifying me. At the concert each winning band played a number, and then was presented with the prize it had won by the judge. He spoke encouragingly to each organization, stating that the three bands were so good it was difficult to decide which was the best, and each should have received the first prize.

Then came the cornet contest. For the first time I was told that my name had been posted, and it quite frightened me! My heart seemed to stop beating for a second, although the night before I had rehearsed a solo with the band in case of an emergency. Strange to say, there was no other entrant to compete for the beautiful cup which had been placed on exhibition, and naturally there could be no contest without another entry. Quick as thought a brother of the leader of the band in which I was playing entered his name as a contestant, so that someone might win the cup. He said afterwards he wanted the honor to go to his brother's band and knew that I would win it.

Harry King was the player's name, and he was only a boy in knickerbockers. He played valve trombone in the band very well at that time, and since then has developed into one of the best baritones I ever heard, I was chosen to play first, during which time King went off to borrow a cornet and play a few notes in order to get his lip in proper shape for the change from a trombone to cornet. It was a nervy thing to do, but the boy wanted me to win that cup and that was the only way to do it, I had often played in church and Sunday school, also at small entertainments, but this was the first time I had ever played an ambitious solo before a large audience. It was a big thing for me, not so much the thought of winning a prize as standing up before so many people, I began to get thirsty and dry in the mouth, my heart seemed to beat twice as fast, and when standing to play, my legs trembled so that I nearly fell down. I simply was terribly nervous, that's all! I probably suffered more than my looks portrayed, yet notwithstanding all this torture I really wanted to play that solo. What an awful handicap is nervousness! I wonder if any of the readers of this article have ever failed to experience this horribly sickening sensation?

However, I bowed and smiled, but what a smile! It stayed, and I'm sure made me look silly. The muscles of my face seemed to have grown set and rigid and I could not get them back. Upon striking the first note I had to push it with all the power possible; my lips became swollen, my mouth dry and tongue thick. The solo was Levy's Whirlwind Polka, much too difficult for me anyway, but I worried through it while wishing every minute that someone would shoot me and end my misery. I would have fallen over had it not been for the thought that if I gave up and failed, the humiliation would be so great that I might go out and kill myself. I thought everyone in that great audience was a critic who would mark down each mistake I made to taunt me with it afterwards, whereas in reality I now believe that not half a dozen had ever heard the solo before.

It is astonishing how many thoughts go through the mind of a person while playing a solo before an audience. One thinks of everything but the most important, and that is the music that is being played and how to play it. I am confident that there are many who have felt exactly as I did when playing their first solo, and it is generous not to find too much fault when the player is doing his best under such trying conditions. He needs all the encouragement possible to make a success of it, and hearty applause

at the end of each solo strain will put new life into the player, often causing him to play better than he ever thought possible. I was told afterwards that the solo was played wonderfully well. When it was finished Harry King stepped on the stage like a little major, and played the Last Rose of Summer. He played in a bold, dashing manner, although having had only about five minutes to form his lips to the cornet, and that took grit! I never have forgotten this incident, for we won the cup for the Streetsville Band!

## **FIFTEENTH SERIES**

The outbreak of the Northwest Rebellion in 1885 made that year one to be remembered in Canada, practically all regiments in the Dominion having been mobilized preparatory to being sent out to the disturbed section to quell rioting. The Queen's Own Regiment of Toronto (with which when going back to the city to study business I once more attached myself by again joining the band) was one of the first to be called out by the Government and ordered to report early one morning at the armory, in full uniform. Of course, that meant a trip for the band, and in order to accompany it I had to absent myself from the store of John Kay & Co., where I was employed. That was not a hardship by any means, and as was only natural for a boy of my age, I found myself all but bubbling over with excitement in imagining I was already a soldier of war and wondering when "we" should start for the "front."

## **WE DO NOT GO TO WAR**

We hung around the armory all that morning and afternoon while waiting for orders' Towards night the adjutant of the regiment came and inspected the musicians, reporting to the Colonel in command after the inspection that his band of sixty-five pieces and bugle corps would head the "Queen's Own," and in that respect the services of the band would not be required-the excuse given being that "bandsmen always were in the way during a battle, besides eating too much!" Flimsy, for who ever heard of bandsmen in the lost connection?

I do not now recollect whether I was disappointed or pleased at the military dictum. Of course, I would like to have had the adventure with chances for playing the cornet every day, yet even now I am not sure that, had the band gone, there would have been much playing done. Anyway, and numbering a thousand strong, the regiment left Toronto with the bugle corps at its head, while the band remained at home to play concerts at Hanlong's Point on the Island every night during the entire summer. These concerts netted me a dollar for each one played, and with the six dollars a week so earned (concerts were not played on Sundays) added to my monthly salary of ten dollars at the store, I managed to live a little better and really was quite happy.

Interest in business for me was now rapidly waning, as all my old fever for music began to assert itself in fuller force. I would spend the larger part of my leisure time at the store in writing and working out cornet solos which crept into my mind, for this purpose drawing out music staves on wrapping paper in order to avoid the expense of buying regularly ruled manuscript paper. This, of course, was all done secretly, yet whenever any customer came into my department I honestly would endeavor to sell the firm's goods. Nevertheless, my mind no longer centered on the mercantile as a career.

My supposed working in secret finally came to the attention of the head salesman, who reported my negligence to the "Governor" (John Kay), with a result that very frequently I received a vigorous "calling-down" for my shortcomings. It also came to the notice of Will, my brother, who not only "lectured" me, but tried his best to impress upon me that I must do more and better work for the firm or else "get fired." I picked up for a time, trying earnestly to improve in business matters, but soon came the full realization that business was nothing more than an interminable grind after all, and not nearly so independent a life as that of the regular musician.

Matters continued to run along smoothly during the summer months, however, and by dint of rising early enough each morning I managed to gain a full hour of practice on scales before it was time to go to the store. Together with working all day until six o'clock and then playing every night at the Island, it may be imagined that but little time was left for me to "loaf" around the street corners and cultivate undesirable acquaintances.

Band playing, as already stated, was not allowed on Sundays in Toronto, everybody being supposed to find sufficient recreation for the Sabbath Day in attending church. About this time, however, and along towards the close of summer, there was organized a new orchestra that rehearsed Sunday afternoons under the direction of Thomas Claxton, the proprietor of a big music store in Toronto. One day Mr. Claxton asked me to join his organization. As there was no concert playing at the Island on Sundays, and my time,

therefore, being wholly unoccupied on that day, I gladly accepted and played second cornet. It was a good orchestra, numbering about thirty men, each one of them playing at the various local theatres. I realized that besides affording me excellent opportunity for practice, playing in this ensemble would add to my band experience that of doing orchestral work. My Sunday afternoons were now completely occupied.

### **"TRYING IT ON THE DOG"**

After rehearsing a few weeks, Mr. Claxton asked if we were willing to donate our services to the Hospital for the insane, by playing a concert for the inmates on a certain Friday night and as the concerts at the Island were finished for the season we unanimously agreed to do this. I was asked to play a cornet solo, which I thought would give me a glorious chance to "spring" the first solo I had ever composed, arranging it for the orchestra during spare moments at the store, unbeknown to anyone. It had gone fairly well at the rehearsal, and being highly complimented for my efforts I began to feel a bit swelled up, the same as all young beginners when someone tells them they are "good."

I was greatly elated over my first venture and looked forward to the night of the concert as the time when I would show people that besides being a good player I was a composer as well. Well, the great night came. I felt in pretty good form, remembering that I had won the cup in a cornet contest at the band tournament in the previous May, and this thought gave me more courage to try again and not give way to foolish nerves and feel frightened to death. But all that changed when standing before those poor imbeciles at the Hospital.

The concert hall of the Institution was crowded with thousands of inmates, and I became almost paralyzed with fear. I could not collect my thoughts or myself, and fervently wished that the stage might sink or open to swallow me up. However, I managed to produce a few tones, and worried through my new solo with great suffering. When I had finished the applause was wonderfully vociferous, the demented ones in the audience making all sorts of demonstrations when allowed to. They did not know any better and evidently were having a good time with me. Anyway, it braced me up to play an encore, which was received in the same boisterous manner.

Naturally, I felt humiliated by such a performance and went home broken hearted. I sat up all that night wondering if it ever would be possible for me to play a solo the same as all the great soloists I had heard, without any apparent showing of that terrible nervousness. It was then I realized that to become a good soloist I must conquer self, never be self-conscious, keeping my mind on what I was playing instead of what the audience might say or think if I missed a note or two.

### **THE QUESTION OF LIVING**

As the summer passed and fall approached, I began to consider how I would live when the cold weather set in. The boathouse I occupied certainly was not a place for cold weather, and the small income from playing at the Island having ceased with the concerts, my salary at the store would not be sufficient for outside board and lodging. At several places where I had inquired as to the cost of living, none were under three dollars a week, and at that rate I could see myself losing out when paying twelve a month for board and getting only ten dollars a month from working.

Having been employed at the store six months, I considered it about time to ask for a raise in salary, which I did, and was told I was not worth anymore. I knew this was right, but I also knew that I could not live on that amount very long, and so explained to the firm. The reply was that my parents should help me out; but I was too proud to ask help from home, although I could have obtained all the money I needed from my father.

Those indeed were hard times for me, but I did my best, trying to work out plans for the future. I was promised a job to play in the skating rink during the winter at one dollar a night, but there would not be any chance before the real cold weather set in, as there was no artificial ice in those days; besides, the band only played on nights when the ice was real good, I had managed to save a few dollars during the summer, which would not last more than a month or two when I began to pay board and lodging, even at only three dollars a week. However, I still kept practicing my cornet with the same determination as ever, while wondering how I was going to live. Yet I never became discouraged.

### **SIXTEENTH SERIES**

Last month I was left wondering how on earth I could manage to exist on the amount of money that I was able to earn from my position at John Kay & Co. Summer had passed and with it the extra income from playing with the band on the Island. I managed to keep up my courage, however, awaiting developments.

## **A SUDDEN CHANGE IN THE MUSIC TIDE**

And then the totally unexpected happened! Just when I was at my wits' end, trying to figure out how to make both ends meet, I received a telegram from the orchestra leader at English's Opera in Indianapolis, Indiana, where my parents lived, offering me a season's job in that theatre at \$15 a week! Oh Joy! Perhaps I did not become mighty independent all of a sudden, going again to the firm and demanding an increase in salary with the alternative that I would leave the business! My demands were refused for a second time, so I gave notice of immediate leaving, and wired my acceptance of the theatre job, stating I would be on hand for rehearsal the following Monday.

I never shall forget the kind treatment I received from the firm when I was handed my pay envelope on the day I left the store. There was something like \$8.56 due me for the month, but when I opened the envelope and found that it contained \$25, I spoke to the treasurer about the mistake that had been made. He referred me to Mr. John Kay, who said that he did not want me to leave without enough money to pay my fare home, which amounted to quite a little, as the distance was some six hundred miles. This money from the firm, with what I had saved for the past six months, made it possible for me to travel home, comfortably in a sleeper and with good meals en route, returning in proper style instead of buying a second-class ticket and sitting up all night in a day coach.

After resigning again from the Queen's Own Regiment and bidding all my friends "goodbye," I left Toronto for the second time. My career as a businessman had proved a failure, so with greater determination than ever to make a success of the profession I loved, once more I started in the music life, under the firm decision to stick to it for all time and under all conditions. My business experience had taught me a good lesson.

It was mighty good to get home again, after trying to exist on almost nothing for six months, with very few comforts, no petting or anyone to look after a boy the way a mother does. I had a splendid home with everything that I wanted, and never should have left it, if my father had not wanted me to follow business instead of music as a career. However, the experience in Toronto did not hurt me a bit, as I learned to appreciate the value of money. How I worked to earn it, learning to spend carefully only for bare necessities, and allowing myself no luxuries of any kind!

After my arrival in Indianapolis, I went to work in the theatre immediately, playing viola in the orchestra the entire season for \$15 a week, instead of earning \$ 10 a month working at the store of John Kay & Son. Brother Ed played violin and brother Ern the trombone in the same orchestra with me, so we three boys were together once more, all interested in music, and helping each other in our daily practice.

## **I BEGIN SERIOUSLY TO STUDY THE VIOLA**

I began to practice the viola in a scholarly manner, devoting the entire mornings to technical studies, and my improvement within a few weeks was quite noticeable. My interest was spurred further when my playing of the exercises became more perfect.



All this practice helped in acquiring a splendid tone, which is a necessity in viola parts, and especially in dramatic cue music.

My cornet was neglected some, I guess, although I did blow for a few moments each day to keep my lips in shape. There was no band business during the winter, and as there was a good cornet player in the orchestra (Joe Cameron), I was content to play and draw my fifteen-dollar weekly salary. There were some excellent shows that season, musical comedies, light operas, grand operas, and many dramatic companies of high class, and in many ways I certainly gained much experience from playing in the theatre. Besides, I was growing older and meeting a better class of people all the time. Many good musicians accompanied some of the opera companies, and I became acquainted with a number who gave me a great many pointers. Naturally, I fell in with the cornet players, who showed me how to overcome my many faults in cornet playing, and this encouraged me very much.

All in all, I worked very hard that winter on both "string and brass." Toward spring the "band fever" took hold of me once more, especially when I was asked to play cornet with the then celebrated "When Band," as it was called. The band was connected with the "When Clothing Store" of Indianapolis, for which it was used as an advertising medium.

Rehearsals were called once a week for the band, and nearly all the theatre orchestra members belonged to it. Joe Cameron was the leader, brother Ed was the solo cornet, and I played beside him. All the men were full of "ginger and pep," and possessing good teamwork, certainly played well together. As the summer approached, we booked many engagements. The theatre closed early for the season, and now we had to hustle for odd jobs to make a living. My parents moved to Rochester, New York, where Dad was engaged as organist in one of the largest of the churches. We three boys, who were left behind, took rooms in the "When Block" and lived together, practicing, and studying hard to succeed.

## **SUMMER BRINGS EXTRA WORK**

There was a good deal of business for the band that summer, and I had quite a few extra jobs, playing cornet in one church Sunday mornings, and in another afternoons, both of which paid me about five dollars each Sunday. Playing the hymn tunes and leading the congregation in singing gave me excellent opportunity for practice, and I began to develop endurance without straining. I was able to play four consecutive verses of the different hymns without stopping, keeping up a powerful tone all the time. It was difficult at first, but with practice it became quite easy. I would argue with myself to this effect while playing: "If I make work of it and struggle along, then cornet playing will become a torture instead of a pleasure." By playing easily and carefully for the first two verses, I could finish the other two without fatigue. The only feature of this church playing I did not like was sitting in the choir and facing the congregation all the time, because if I should make the least break in my playing, some one would "snicker" and this would "get my goat." To eliminate such unpleasantness, I used to practice in my room, trying to play these Gospel Hymns ten times through without stopping; then it would become a joke to play only four verses in church. I always used a B flat cornet, and transposed all the music, playing one tone higher, which was far more satisfactory than using a C cornet.

During this period my viola practice was being sadly neglected, as I had little use for a string instrument, except on a few jobs where we had to double for dancing at picnics, after parading to the grounds. Consequently, all my spare time was taken up with the cornet. I stuck to it like a leech, working hard at my practice, even in hot weather, Our band was also practicing hard on one special program, getting in shape for the big State Band Competition that was held annually at Evansville, Indiana. There the principal bands throughout the State met to try out their musicianship and win money. This year there was also to be a contest for the championship of the State, which I was secretly planning to enter. I wanted to try for the first prize and also to see if I could control myself and not get nervous when standing up and playing alone before an audience. I certainly did practice and practice, striving to build up a proper embouchure in order to be able to finish a difficult solo with as much ease as I had started, and to be prepared for the encore.

There was one member of the band who was always finding fault with my playing. He often used to listen while I practiced, and afterwards would tell me how "rotten" I played. After he had kept this up for a few weeks I became angry, and told him to go away and not bother me. He paid no attention to what I said, but persisted in telling me the same thing, until one day I asked him just why he thought I was a "rotten player." After he listened to me play a few exercises, mighty difficult ones, too, I looked up at him and said, "Well, how did I play them?" He looked me squarely in the eye and calmly answered, "Why don't you play those exercises correctly? You made many slips and mistakes in each one, even if you did finish without becoming fatigued." Naturally, I had wanted him to compliment me. However, although I really thought I had played them fairly well, way down in the bottom of my heart I did realize that he spoke the truth. I had never given much attention to correcting the little slips that occurred so often in my practice, as my idea then was to play twenty-five or thirty pages daily, never considering whether mistakes were made, as long as I could play the desired number of pages without fatigue.

Then my friend-in-disguise left me all alone. I put down my cornet, and began to think. Yes, he was right! I did make a great many mistakes, most of them simple ones, but mistakes nevertheless. By not correcting these slips immediately, I was practicing for hours to play imperfectly, instead of practicing to play perfectly! I also found out that I was taking a breath whenever I felt like it, leaving out a note or two, and stopping rhythm to breathe, which, of course, was quite unnecessary. This habit also made it impossible for me to use a metronome while playing.

## **A NEW IDEA IS BORN**

Stopping short in my tracks to think gave me an entirely new idea of correct cornet playing. I started to play over those same exercises, and in counting my mistakes I found so many that I turned to the first exercises in the book. After playing the first one, I found, much to my chagrin, that I had made many mistakes even in this simple exercise.

Then I turned to the study I had been playing for my fault-finding friend. It was No. 1 of Arban's Characteristic Studies, in the back part of this Method, the playing of which requires an elastic lip and much endurance, the first twelve measures must be played

in two breaths. I worked an hour on this particular study, and found I had made a hundred mistakes each time I played it. When my lips gave out, I realized this study was far too difficult to use as a means of conquering myself, and learning when and how to breathe. It seemed that the more I played it, the more mistakes I made. Then I lost my temper, But, instead of laying the blame on myself as I should have done, I vented my injured feelings on my defenseless cornet and wanted to smash it on the floor, How foolish we are to blame our deficiencies on something else, rather than shoulder them ourselves! And the world is full of individuals who act over and over again the little drama just recounted, and who never really succeed at anything.

I sat still a few moments after my anger had passed away, leaving me rather ashamed and sorry, and said to myself: "Well, if I want to be a great cornet player, I must be perfecting the little things first, otherwise I can only reach a certain limit and stay there."

With a renewed joy in my work, and a head full of good resolutions, I turned to the front of Arban's Method and commenced playing the eleventh exercise, setting the metronome at 120 common time to see if I could play it through in one breath. I found it difficult at first, tried again, gained another measure, and so on, until I won out. In doing this, however I had made many mistakes. After I had learned how to take a full breath to start and conserve my wind at the beginning, I played more easily, and soon acquired the habit of filling my chest completely with wind before starting an exercise. It was fully six weeks before I could play the eleventh exercise perfectly in one breath, and with ease of performance. Finally, after I had played it ten times in ten breaths, I tried to play it twice in one breath, and in a few weeks managed to accomplish my aim. This practice was the foundation of my endurance, which has always been one of the means of my playing the cornet easily. With the surmounting of obstacles, my love for the instrument grew, and I realized, as never before, that in order to become a successful player, such a regard for one's instrument is quite necessary

Every cornet player in the world, I believe, has an equal chance to become great if each one strives to conquer himself, to overcome bad habits, and to become perfect in his practice.

## **SEVENTEENTH SERIES**

During the summer of 1886 the band (the "When Band" of Indianapolis mentioned last month) was quite busy, principally with the regular band concerts in the park, parades, and picnics. The pay for these engagements, averaging about fifteen dollars a week, paid my living expenses, and yielded some extra money with which I purchased more music for the cornet.

By this time I had a good-sized collection of methods, exercise books, and cornet solos, many printed in Europe, which I obtained through the music stores in town. I wanted to get every author's ideas on the method by which he leaned to play the cornet, for, as I worked on, I began to realize that no two cornet players play exactly alike, any more than there are two faces exactly alike in the whole world. Consequently, I, myself, must work out the easiest and most natural way to play. To do this, I determined to observe the different cornetists I met, talk with them and get

their ideas, read all the text material in the standard methods, and practice according to the instructions given in each book. Carrying all this out required much experimenting on my part, but I was always careful not to abuse my lips, nor to play harshly.

## **STRUGGLES TOWARD PERFECTION**

I started to study music magazine advertising telling "how to become a good cornet player without any special practice" through the agency of a lip salve, embouchure ointment, or high C mouthpieces. Of course, I sent for each article, trying it out according to the directions that accompanied each package. You see, I was bound I would become a good player, and when I saw the testimonials from prominent cornetists endorsing these artificial "helps," I thought they might improve my playing. After using them a while my playing was no better,, in fact, I seemed to go backwards, so I resumed my practice of elementary exercises, playing as before, slowly and correctly, carrying in my mind each note before sounding it. Building a firm foundation, strengthening my embouchure, as well as purifying my tone, were the results of such practice, which has proved to me to be the best and surest road to success. I discarded all artifice and adhered to the manner most natural for me, practicing for endurance and perfection.

To gain proper experience we must experiment with all kinds of suggestions offered by well meaning friends. To this end, I believe, I have tried every manner of playing the cornet that one could think of in order to find out which best suited me. I tried many different theories, such as playing with wet lips, dry lips, puckered lips, loose lips, or rigid lips-about everything I was told to do- and arrived at the point of almost complete discouragement. Yet I kept right on because I loved the instrument.

When looking back upon those days I feel glad that I tried all these different ways, for I could not have had better training in learning to think, to reason out by myself just which style was best suited to me, and to prove that my own method of practice helped me most. Thereafter, no matter who criticized me, I adhered to that style, being perfectly content to be called a "rotten player" when I could feel an improvement in my playing each week. In certain ways I must have been obstinate, but it was this very youthful stubbornness combined with common sense, which helped me, more than anything else to reach success.

It is my advice to all interested readers that they listen to people who tell them how to play the cornet correctly, whether they think the adviser is right or wrong, as everyone has a new suggestion to offer. Sometimes it is amusing to ask a certain type of "know-it-all" to demonstrate himself, the brilliant performance to be obtained from the knowledge of his "secret," for it will generally be found that no "demonstration" will be forthcoming.

While the band was preparing for the big State Band Contest, which was to take place early in October, 1886, I was working hard on the solo that I was to play for the cornet competition, rehearsing it carefully with the band in order to become thoroughly used to the accompaniment. When alone in my room I worked faithfully on one phrase at a time. playing it over and over before trying the entire solo, and soon I could play the whole fairly well.

## **MY CAUSTIC CRITIC AGAIN**

At this time I again heard from the man who had previously brought many errors to my notice. One day he came into my room and listened to my rendition of the solo. When I had finished playing it, he again admonished me, "Why don't you play it in a brilliant style" You play every note, but use only one quality of tone, as though you were a machine, and not as a soloist should play. Put some 'ginger into it! By the way, he was our drum major, Will Manson, a fine looking man with a military bearing. When the band played a concert, he was our third alto, but his knowledge of fingering on the alto and his musical education were rather limited. Knowing this, it made me angry to think that he had the audacity to criticize my playing so much, and yet his finding fault made me work twice as hard, just to show him some day that I would reach my goal. In that way I believed I could square all differences between us.

I tried his suggestions regarding brilliancy of tone, and found that it took so much effort and wind that when I come to the finish of the solo my lips just "petered out", and I could not make a proper climax. Here was another phase of cornet playing which I must work on. It seemed to me that there were so many angles to the study of the cornet, and so many different styles, that I must begin a regular routine of practice to cover them all. Although it appeared to me at times that I was not progressing, I really was gradually improving, and this gave me more confidence. I reasoned that I must practice for endurance, and not tire my lips with too constant playing. Alternating short rest periods with those of playing kept my lips fresh and pliable, and enabled me to finish a days practice with more ease and comfort than ever before.

## **I PLAY UNDER A FAMOUS MAN**

Prior to the band contest, our band was engaged as escort for a Knights Templar Commandery bound for the Triennial Conclave held at St. Louis, Missouri. We were in fine condition when we arrived, and made a very good appearance. The band received congratulations from all over the country from citizens and bandsmen alike, when it wheeled about in its different formations while playing on parade. The engagement lasted a week and there was plenty of playing to be done; it seemed these Knights Templar never went to bed, because we were kept up all night, serenading other Commanderies. There were at least a hundred bands in the city that week. Hearing the different groups play and mixing with their members, I learned much. And it was here I first met Fred Weldon, who came down from Chicago with the Second Regiment Band, at the head of the Chicago Commandery.

Gilmore's famous band was then playing at the Exposition, and all my spare time was spent listening to his wonderful concerts, which were an education for me. I heard Ben Bent play several solos, which also gave me more food for thought. He was an excellent cornetist, with the most natural and musical tone I had ever heard. One morning Mr. Gilmore invited every band in town to report at the fair grounds for a massed band concert, and there must have been a thousand or more musicians playing under the direction of the great bandmaster. It was a wonderful experience, and my enthusiasm for band music mounted higher and higher. My! but I was proud

to play under him! Perhaps some of my readers were present at this massed band concert, and remember the occasion.

This engagement was a great experience for us all, and we returned to Indianapolis with a wider scope of knowledge, and a much better band in every respect.

## **EIGHTEENTH SERIES**

After our week's engagement with the Knights Templar Commanders at the Triennial Conclave held in St. Louis, Missouri, we returned home to Indianapolis and commenced drilling in good shape for the big State Contest that was to be held in Evansville, Indiana. We went into rehearsal every day until each member of the "When Band" could play his part in the three selected numbers from memory. Also we devoted more attention to the matter of teamwork, each man "feeling" the others, so to speak-something of course, essential to good band work, or, in fact, to any sort of work where more than one player is involved.

## **THE CONTEST AT EVANSVILLE**

On October 10th, 1886, we left Indianapolis early in the morning and arrived at Evansville in time for the introductory parade in which all the competing bands took part. The following day began with the contest, with every band from all over the State each playing three selections. There were competent judges placed in a tent out of sight, as was customary, and the bandmasters drew lots for the order in which their organizations were to play. When our turn came, although we were quite excited, as was to be expected, still we were confident and played our numbers better than at rehearsals, with the result that we were awarded first prize.

Then, in the afternoon, came the cornet contest, and my application having been duly sent in, I was chosen to play first. The fact that we had won first prize in the band contest of the morning gave me more confidence and courage than usual, and then, too, the boys in our band "rooted" strongly for me, which added to my courage. The solo I had chosen was "The Whirlwind Polka" by Levy, the same that I had played in Canada the previous year at the time I won the cup. After finishing the long cadenza at the beginning of the piece, I was somewhat in a trance, although not nearly so nervous as on the previous occasion when I had played the number. My technic had improved, and I was not any longer the least bit afraid of the high notes. The tip I had received from Will Manson concerning "brilliancy" also had its effect. Nevertheless I was glad when it was all over. Although the boys complimented me upon my efforts, I realized that my playing was far from being satisfactory to myself, and I could do much better if only given another chance. I had not played nearly as well as I would have been able to play had I been in my room all alone.

After my solo, I left the bandstand and walked to the rear of the great audience in order that I might listen to the other contestants. The next soloist in line to play then stood up. I think his choice was "The Lizzie Polka," by John Hartman, and there is no question but that he played well. I knew every note of the solo and I had to admit that his style was splendid; quite brilliant, as should be that of a virtuoso. I felt that he surely must win the prize. This thought affected me to such an extent that I did not want to hear the finish of his selection, but went some distance off into the woods

(the fair grounds where we played were on the outskirts of the city) feeling the most disconsolate boy in the world. I knew our band boys were set on my carrying away the prize and should I lose it I never could face them again. From the way the other fellow played, at any rate as far as I had listened, I knew that his performance was far superior to mine.

I must have been out there fully an hour meditating on how I could get back to Indianapolis all alone, feeling discouraged, broken-hearted, when one of our boys found me after looking everywhere. and told me to hurry back to the bandstand as the judges were waiting to present me with the first prize! Imagine my surprise (and secret delight) upon hearing this good news, although I felt sorry for the other fellow who really had played well. A few moments ago I had been contemplating suicide in its less painful forms. I could not understand my good fortune. I cannot remember the name of the player who lost to me and I have never heard of him since- I believe he came from Brazil, Indiana. I was told later that although he began his solo in a fine manner, playing well throughout until nearing the end, he eventually caved in and made a bad finish.

## **OVERWHELMED BY APPLAUSE**

On reaching the bandstand I was greeted with a degree of applause which almost staggered me- I had to be led up to the judges. One of these made a nice speech, complimenting me on my playing and stating that I had won first prize. Turning around, he introduced me to dear old Henry Distin, the celebrated instrument maker who, coming forward and shaking me by the hand then presented me with the award, a baby cornet, one of his own make-the smallest B flat cornet ever made measuring only six and one half inches long and five inches high, with an oval bell, and gold-plated and elaborately engraved. Mr. Distin, enthused over my playing as being remarkable for a boy, and asked me to play some suitable song on the small instrument. Again completely staggered and unable to open my mouth in response, I took the cornet and endeavored to play on it. I was astonished at the power possessed by the miniature instrument; it made a hit with everyone, both audience and bandsmen. It was the only one of its kind ever made, and I still have it by me, a carefully cherished possession.

The big contest being over, all the boys gathered around me, making a lot of fuss over my success, and I was really proud that our band had taken both first prizes in the 1886 competition. We left for home the next morning and upon reaching Indianapolis marched all the way from the depot to the band room as winners of the State Championship, being cheered all along the streets by the people, who took a great interest in our success. Our popularity in town increased after the reputation we had made at Evansville, with the result that some concerts given by us netted a good sum of money.

## **ONLY SCHOOL BAND CONTESTS NOW**

What a pity there are now no such band competitions in the country. We do have, however, the annual band contests for school bands- first the State, then by the winners of these, the National Contest. These affairs, part of the splendid movement of instrumental music in the schools, instill ambition into the student. This is true of all

contests; the trying out of the competency of the different bands creates more ambition for all who take up wind instruments for a pastime, there being something to work for more than a weekly concert paid for by subscriptions. That is why I say it is a pity that band competitions in the general field are no more, at least in America.

Being away from my parents was causing me many an hour of loneliness, and I began to wish for all the comforts of home and a motherly caress. My father and mother were writing encouragingly of what my prospects might be if I should come to Rochester, N.Y. (where they were living) and take up some sensible occupation. They were still against my following music as a profession. Of course, I had tried business once before and had made a failure of it for the reason that I, myself, was not interested. Now that I was improving in my music I had hoped that they might be satisfied with my success. But mother wanted me home, I imagine, and, secretly, I wanted her. However, I contented myself with my daily practice and began to study music properly from a theoretical standpoint- so as to be a good musician as well as a good player.

Every person who plays a musical instrument for professional remuneration should understand first of all the rudiments of music, then study Harmony, Composition, and Instrumentation, so as to be able to arrange music for both band and orchestra besides composing now and then. These things all help in the end to the making of a fair living in case something should happen that would make it impossible for one to play. The study of music is interesting if started properly; even an hour a day will work wonders and possibly provide protection for one's old age.

## **NINETEENTH SERIES**

In the fall of 1886, after my summer with the "When Band" of Indianapolis, of which I told last month, I resumed my old position as viola player in the orchestra of English's Opera House. Complications arose when the theatrical business soon showed no indications of coming up to the expectations of the management and it was hinted that there was going to be a cut in the orchestra. Even in those days the first economy in an opera house commenced with the music, reduction in the number of musicians. In this case, of course, we knew the instruments to be dispensed with, namely, the second violin and viola, which were to be supplanted by a pianist.

## **A STRIKE IS CALLED**

Meetings were held by the members to decide what would be done were this to take place. All agreed that if the two instruments, violin and viola, were replaced by piano, the entire orchestra would "strike." This the men felt no qualms about, as they all felt sure that their positions could not be filled. About two weeks later, the order was issued from the front of the house that the above two instruments would not be needed for the rest of the season, starting the following week.

Next Monday morning we all appeared at rehearsal as usual, and shortly afterward the manager came down the aisle with the piano player. His discharging the two string players, my brother Ed and myself, precipitated the action we had decided upon two weeks before. The entire orchestra arose and said that they would all quit unless we two were kept to play the whole season. The manager became quite



incensed at being dictated to, and said, "Well, you can all leave if you feel that way about the matter." The entire orchestra packed up and walked out. The men went to the bandroom, and talked the matter over, feeling confident that their places could not be filled, as good, experienced musicians were mighty scarce in the city at this time, and every player in the orchestra was the best that could be procured. It was necessary to maintain this standard, as the shows booked were of the highest order.

Word was left at the theatre that if the manager reconsidered his words and the complete orchestra was wanted, we would come over immediately, and finish the rehearsal. We waited all morning in the bandroom, but no answer came. We wondered what the show would do without any music. The leader, when questioned about it by one of the men who went to his home, refused any answer or satisfaction.

In those days there was no Union to arbitrate or protect us against such occurrences, so we had to submit to the inevitable. At night the entire orchestra attended the show to see how it could possibly be given without any music. Imagine our surprise when the orchestra bell rang and we saw one man after another entering the pit; all of the young men strangers to us. Upon investigation, we learned that the leader had used a number of his pupils as substitutes for our men. He just had to do this, or lose his job. I felt sorry to think that, on account of my brother and myself, all the other men had lost a season's engagement. On the whole, it was a good experience for me, showing very clearly that there is no one, no matter how good, who cannot be replaced, and I decided then never to or be too independent unless I had something better ahead to step into,

This calamity forced us to create some kind of business, because all the men depended upon the musical profession for a livelihood. To start action, we rehearsed together every day and advertised for engagements, hustling like real business men. The manager of the When Clothing Company appeared on the scene, and made us a proposal to take the orchestra on tour as a advertisement for the store, playing all the small towns in the central and southern part of Indiana. As we were all members of the "When Band" we were well known, having made quite a reputation through out the State with work at the Band Contest.

## **MR. BRUSH TO THE RESCUE**

The When Clothing Company store manager was John T. Brush, who later on became manager of a celebrated major league baseball club and was known all over the country. He was a fine man, as many people will remember. Mr. Brush furnished us with a complete set of Swiss bells at his expense, and we began practicing with the new outfit. This innovation created a new impetus for us, and our little organization was christened "The Alliance Orchestra and Swiss Bell Ringers." Our rehearsals with the new outfit resulted in a splendid rendition of several well-known selections for Swiss bells, and together with our orchestra numbers and a reader or comedian (who was our drummer, Pink Hall), we made up a fine program for an evening's entertainment.

A number of towns were booked, and we started out with zest, thoroughly convinced that our venture would prove a success as well as a money-maker for the When Clothing Company. All of us doubling on brass, we played half an hour outside the

theatres before each concert, and also serenaded the newspapers in the different towns. These customs now, evidently, are of the past.

Our season lasted for several weeks, during which time we found that, as our little band certainly played well, the crowds were greatest outside the theatre, but inside there were many vacant seats. We found ourselves in financial straits, for although each man was to receive equal pay after all expenses were paid, our receipts were hardly enough to pay for transportation, let alone our hotel bills. My salary for the entire time amounted to six dollars, and this I borrowed from Mr. Brush, one day, when he came on to see how we were doing.

After finishing this short, unsuccessful trip, we come back to Indianapolis, and the dissension among the orchestra members, petty jealousies and criticisms that the situation seemed to breed, cooled my ambition to become a professional musician. Prior to this I had seen only the sunny side of professional life, especially since I had never spent much time talking with the men, my practicing keeping me occupied in all my spare moments. Now there was a lack of money to pay my running expenses, and business was very poor, which I believed was due to our "strike" at the theatre.

I began to realize that if I ever expected to make anything out of my life as a businessman, it was high time to get started, for I was now nineteen years old. After my parents had moved to Rochester, New York, their letters again urged me to come home and get into some good business, and this, also, had some influence on me now. I made up my mind to take fathers reiterated advice, and try for a connection in some business house. This time I left Indianapolis for good, and arrived home in Rochester early in December, 1886, prepared to give up music altogether. First of all, as the Y.M.C.A. had helped so many industrious boys, I joined the organization, placed my name on the register of applicants for any kind of employment to start at any salary, and waited. A couple of weeks passed, but still nothing turned up. Meanwhile, I canvassed the whole town, going from store to store, asking if a good healthy boy were needed, but with no better results. There did not seem to be a single vacancy in any line of business.

## **BUSINESS POSITIONS SCARCE**

During this time I helped Father with his services by playing cornet on Sundays. I would get in the organ up among the pipes and play a sacred song accompanied by Dad. Many of the congregation thought it was some new stop in the organ, and a good deal of pleasant comment was heard when Dad informed them that the "new stop" was none other than one of his sons. Through his position as organist in a prominent church, my father was able to get in touch with some of the town's influential business men about some sort of work for me. However, even with this help, the only thing that presented itself was a chance to clerk in one of the largest banks- if I cared to wait until a vacancy occurred through death, or some such mischance.

It was very good to be back home again where everything was so comfortable, and with no responsibilities on my shoulders, although, after having tasted some success in cornet playing, it humiliated me to be dependent upon my parents and not be able to provide even some spending money for myself. I could not seem to understand

why I did not obtain a semblance of job, after having tried so hard in every possible manner. These reverses made me determine to give up music as a career, and I regretfully cost aside all ideas of becoming the great player of my dreams. My success in winning the cornet contest a few months previous ought to have braced me up, but it did not. I was completely discouraged.

One evening, about seven o'clock, someone rang our front doorbell. I answered, and a man asked if there were not a "young man living here who played viola and cornet." When I told him that it was I, he rather took my breath away by saying, "Put your hat and coat on, and come down to the theatre tonight with your instruments." I was so astonished that I stood there, forgetting to ask him in. He left quickly, telling me to go to the Academy of Music as soon as possible.

All thoughts of abandoning music were promptly forgotten, and in my excitement I did not stop to wonder how anyone could know that I, a newcomer to Rochester, was a musician. The man had left so hurriedly that I was given no opportunity to tell him of my decision to give up professional playing. The thought occurred to me that perhaps, after all, I had better go to the leader and explain this to him. I hastened to the Academy, taking both instruments with me, however, in case there was no one to play the parts. On my way down, while in the street car, I thought things over and decided to do my best that night and, should my work prove satisfactory, try to make some money out of music, at least for incidentals.

## **A WORSE BARK THAN BITE**

Arriving at the theatre, I heard a band playing on the outside balcony and it sounded very good to me. I listened until they had finished, then went to the stage door, made myself known, and met the orchestra leader, a big "bluffy" fellow. His opening shot was, "Why didn't you hurry down and play outside with us? Well, get your viola out and hike up in the pit and play the overture. Hurry, now! Delivered in a brusque manner. I did not like the way he talked to me and almost decided to turn back, but was angry enough to stay and show him I could play. I remained, and played the entire show.

Once, when I had played a variety show in Indianapolis I had used bass rosin on the bow to make the tone of my viola louder, and this night I leaned over to the bass player during an interval and borrowed some. The tone of my viola, which was really excellent, cut through the rest of the team, so that even the orchestra members turned to look in my direction. I vented my feelings against the leader in this way, playing as "bluffy" as he had talked to me.

Imagine my surprise when the leader came to me after the show was finished and engaged me for the rest of the season to play viola inside the theatre, and second cornet outside before each performance. Playing two shows a day netted me \$14.00 a week. It was a Godsend!

As is so often the case, upon better acquaintance I found the leader, Dave Morgan, to be quite a decent fellow. He asked me how I produced such a big tone on my viola, and was interested to know that using bass rosin produced that result. Of course, I had a splendid instrument—one of the best violas I have ever seen or heard.

## **MY CAREER AS SOLOIST BEGINS**

After playing at the Academy several weeks, I mentioned one day that it might be a novel little "stunt" for me to play a cornet solo when performing with the band outside. This band, which was composed of splendid musicians, was very popular, both afternoon and evening concerts drawing large audiences, and I was programmed for a solo the following week. I played seated with the orchestra in a balcony over the entrance about twenty feet above the street, and no one could see me. As it had always been a trial for me to play facing an audience, I acquired more confidence by being out of sight, and the solo "took." For the rest of the season I played this way each week, and due to the necessity of learning new pieces found my repertoire becoming more extensive. Thus really commenced my career as a soloist. My practice at this time consisted of a morning session with the cornet. Playing two shows a day, three hours each, I considered was enough time to spend on the viola, so I left that in the theatre.

This venture into music once more was a disappointment to my parents, but I felt that I must make a living some way, and music seemed to be thrust upon me continually. Too, the theatre engagement paid me better than would have a position as clerk with some business house.

My pleasure in the work was increased when, while playing in the balcony, I looked into the windows of the bank across the street and realized that there was a chance I might have been one of the young clerks bending over books keeping accounts, and waiting for a small raise in the ten-dollar-a-week salary on which they had started. And it was perhaps a youthful pride that made me feel whenever one glanced up at me that surely he would be delighted to change places. Although my job in the theatre was hard, from a musician's standpoint, it was not so confining as working in a bank, and was more interesting.

## **TWENTIETH SERIES**

The year 1887 presented a favorable prospect to me: I had by this time thoroughly made up my mind as to what my life work was to be. As will be remembered, I had made several attempts in commercial lines without finding anything that suited me, to say nothing of the fact that this sort of work did not seem over-plentiful at the time. On the other hand, at the period of which I write, I appeared to be able to find any amount of work in the music field- in fact, jobs were practically thrown at me, I would have been foolish to let these opportunities slip by without taking advantage of them, and decided that, no matter what objections were raised by my family, I would definitely follow music as a life profession.

I had by this time realized through past experiences and associations with other musicians, that everything does not turn out the way we expect, and that we cannot force the world to run in just the manner that we would like it to run. Having noticed a lack of proper ambition in most of the musicians I had met, these seeming to be quite content to live on a theater salary and displaying nothing of the progressive spirit, I argued that the more I improved in music, the better position, quite naturally, I would eventually occupy. And of course, no one can improve without study and practice.

## **IGNORING FACTS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

In looking back over these years of which I write, and comparing my experiences with those of other musicians, I am astonished at the number of men content in securing some steady engagement in a theatre, and who, while they are thus employed, never seem to realize that in certain months of the year these theatres close, or every once in a while change hands (this meaning, oftentimes, two weeks' notice), and that when they are not working their expenses go on just the same—a case of "all going out and nothing coming in." It would pay these men to equip themselves with a proper knowledge of music from various angles so that they might be in a position to earn money during their layoff periods. Of course, the more branches of music that they familiarized themselves with, the more their income would be stabilized and increased in proportion.

A musician's "stock in trade" is knowledge, the product of study and practice, which he is able to sell according to its extent and quality. He advertises his talent through the good and efficient work he accomplishes. If his stock becomes low (i.e., if he does not constantly improve the range of his knowledge), in the course of time he becomes dependent upon other musicians of a charitable and liberal bent. I have known many musicians of the type of which I speak who have had a steady theatre job for five or ten years, and even more, and, being quite content with these engagements and what they have brought in, have never realized that the older they grew, the more incompetent they became; less able, except they had kept up with the times, to meet the competition presented by the younger men, who, quite naturally, are pushing themselves forward all the time, even to the point of trying to force the old men out. The salvation of this type of musician lies in the liberal leader who will keep his old men out of charity, when he could better his orchestra by replacing them with bright and intelligent "young blood."

## **A GOOD PRACTICE STUNT**

Such matters impressed me greatly the more I observed the things happening around me every day, and I determined to make my "hay" while the sun shone, especially now that I had the engagement at the Academy of Music in Rochester, New York, which more than paid my expenses. I decided that I must work hard at home to become a better musician, so that later on, if an opportunity presented itself whereby I might double my salary, I would be in a position to grasp it, and not lose out by being told I was incompetent, or if I had secured the position, be discharged for some reason—either of which circumstances would have been a terrible humiliation to me.

Living about two miles from the theatre where I played, I would walk to and from there twice a day. The exercise was beneficial, and gave me a good opportunity to think out all the problems that were occupying my mind at that time. In addition, I began to practice single tonguing with each step, articulating four times to the step, finding this to be excellent practice for acquiring precision and rhythm; before long I had my tongue under perfect control. I discovered that to walk and tongue the syllable "tu" four times to each step, walking thirty-two steps in one breath, helped me

in the matter of endurance. Try this some time, you cornetists, and students of the instrument.

Playing two shows a day and going home after the matinee, made nearly two hours of daily practice for proper and decisive attack, and when I had learned to control single tonguing to a point where the muscles of the tongue did not tire, I then tried triple tonguing in the some manner- "tu-tu-ku" -two triplets to the step. This was difficult at the start as the third syllable "ku" was not as distinct as the "tu," so I made up my mind that if I expected to triple-tongue perfectly, I must acquire the same proficiency with "ku" as with "tu".

Finding that –"kuk" was more decisive than "ku", I commenced using this syllable four times to the step, but was compelled to walk much slower at first in order to articulate evenly; and my! how I seemed to stutter. All this required some patience and much effort, as I could only walk a few steps in one breath and keep the articulation regular and even, But before long I mastered it completely, which proves what practice will accomplish, Then, having conquered both the "tu" and "ku" separately, I tried triple-tonguing again with the result that it became even and distinct in every syllable. This method of practice was the foundation of my correct tonguing, which has stood by me to this day, How easy my scale exercises became now,. and how well I could control all kinds of difficult articulations! So often, in after life, have I suggested this method of practice to my pupils, for their own benefit, and how few have ever taken advantage of this great essential of correct cornet playing!

The more I improved in my playing, the greater interest I took in my work: consequently all my spare time was now taken up with proper study. Then my theatre engagement (playing two shows a day, one hour in a brass band outside and three house inside for each performance, utilizing eight hours daily, besides Monday morning rehearsals for the show and Saturday mornings for the band) left little time for home practice, as many will infer. But I managed to get in at least three hours of good solid practice and study every day, besides the other work, and this kept me healthy and content, knowing and feeling that I was becoming a better player all the time. My desire, now, was greater than ever to be a real cornetist, because of the encouragement offered by my progress.

## **ODD TIME FILLED WITH ARRANGING**

With all this work (or play!) I still found enough time to arrange music. Each week there was some act appearing at the theatre that needed new orchestrations for its songs and dances, and I had gained much experience from my theatre playing (viola inside, and cornet outside) that made this arranging an easy matter. Besides, if added a few dollars to my pocket book. "Every little bit, added to what you've got makes a little bit more!" This extra money, however, went towards new music. I began to purchase all kinds of instruction books, and new cornet solos with band arrangements, which were needed, as I played a different cornet solo outside each week. All this took money, but my "stock in trade" was increasing, as my repertoire became enlarged, which was necessary should I ever apply for a soloist engagement where different solos were required daily. To be prepared is half the battle! There are many excellent soloists whose repertoires are limited to about ten heavy numbers. and even the arrangements of these few pieces are quite incomplete and in a

horrible condition to be accompanied properly. Yet they except soloist's prices when soliciting summer engagements in this capacity.

The winter wore away all too quickly for me, I was so interested in working up a firm foundation in case I might have a better chance later.

I might mention here that brothers Ed and Ern had followed me from Indianapolis to Rochester, and we were all together once more. Ed secured a position as first violin at the theatre with me, but Em's ambition quite outshone mine, for he had developed into a splendid trombone player, playing on his slide trombone all the cornet solos I had practiced. I used to marvel at how he could execute so rapidly on that instrument, and with as much perfection as a cornetist on his. He had the nerve to make a trip to New York and apply to the great Patrick Sarsfield Gilmore for a job in his famous band, and, fortunately for him, he secured it, all through his perseverance and ability to satisfy this wonderful bandmaster. Naturally, I was proud of him, and once more my aspirations turned towards this famous organization. I thought that if my brother should succeed and make a hit, in time his influence might help me to get in Gilmore's Band. Ern was only twenty-one years of age at that time, and it seemed remarkable to me that he had already climbed so high in the performers world as to be associated with the very best players in the country, for Gilmore was noted for engaging the greatest artists in the world, and naturally I classed Ern amongst them. His success encouraged me doubly, and I worked harder than ever.

As the spring approached I was playing quite well, happy all the time. My solo playing was being talked about around town, and one day a leader came to me offering an engagement to play viola at Ontario Beach for the summer, and to act as cornet soloist in addition. As I was to play my solos with an orchestra, this necessitated my procuring orchestral arrangements for all my numbers. I purchased quite a few, and had to arrange some that were not available in this form. More expense, just then, but my "stock" was increasing, becoming more valuable to me than money.

It often amuses me when I hear musicians kicking about buying new music, hating to spend a few dollars on what would later repay them a hundred fold. So few men can see beyond their noses. Even the price of a magazine, such as this for which I am writing, is objected to by many, although it is the broadening influence exercised by reading that we are helped to keep up with the procession and prevented from staying too long in one rut, that hopeless condition well exemplified by a certain type of theatre musician previously referred to.

I commenced playing Sundays at Ontario Beach before the theatre closed for the season, and by the time summer had come was well broken in for the work, as I had been playing viola all winter. My associations were pleasant and interesting; the musicians were good players and splendid fellows. My reputation increased as a soloist, by reason of the fact that there were visitors from everywhere who spent the summer at this resort, besides the excursionists from Canada, the steamers bringing many of these from across Lake Ontario, and I met many old friends who come over from Toronto, and who congratulated me upon the improvement in my cornet playing since leaving their city a few years before.

This engagement lasted until the theatre opened in September, and the regular cornet player not being re-engaged (Hiram Batchelor), I was to take his place, playing cornet instead of viola for the season. This pleased me and put new life into me, for I must have made much improvement during the past winter on the cornet to satisfy the leader, Dave Morgan, who was a "grouch" but still a good fellow.

The first week we opened I had the surprise of my life in the form of an offer to become solo cornetist of the Citizens' Band of Toronto, directed by my old friend Mr. John Bayley, who was appointed director of this new Regimental Band, and supported by the citizens of Toronto. I was to receive a regular yearly salary as a retaining fee, all outside engagements of regimental duties being extra pay, with plenty of time for teaching and for playing other engagements that did not interfere with the band. The reputation gained me by my solos at Ontario Beach had reached Toronto, hence this offer, which I accepted, giving notice to Dave Morgan, my theatre leader, who became quite angry at my leaving him so early in the season. But I promised to remain with him until a suitable substitute could be procured, and this delayed me a week or two. I was fortunate in securing a good man from Boston, Freeman by name, who proved satisfactory to Morgan. Then I said "good-bye" to all the boys, and started once more for Toronto, returning there this time as cornet soloist, and under salary. Just think! This was practically the same band I had joined in 1883, starting as the twelfth cornet, working my way up to first cornet, and in four years had improved my playing to the extent that I was engaged for really the best position of its kind in Canada.

Nobody ever encouraged me to practice. Nobody ever pushed me ahead. Nobody ever taught me how to play. Nobody ever told me that I played well. I had to do all things by myself, even in the face of all kinds of opposition. The only encouragement I ever received for my efforts was the fact that, somehow, I seemed to be useful to the different leaders who employed me, and I always held a position until a better engagement turned up.

I am not making these assertions from a conceited standpoint, but simply to prove that every cornet player, or in fact any instrumentalist, has an equal chance to become successful if he perseveres properly, discovering his own mistakes and weaknesses, correcting them immediately, and setting the highest point of excellence as his goal.

In many ways it was a wise move on my part to accept this offer from Toronto, for my father had purchased a large farm of forty acres in Reading, near Boston, Mass., to establish a school for organists, building himself the largest organ at that time in the country, and I would be without a paternal home if I remained in Rochester. Besides, the new position in Toronto placed me in a different environment in the musical field, giving me more prestige and a better chance to improve my musical studies and to demonstrate just how much my "stock in trade" might be worth should I place it upon the market. Also, Toronto was like an old home where I was well known.

The future looked bright and I had increased confidence in myself as a soloist, with opportunities I had often dreamed of.



## **TWENTY-FIRST SERIES**

In the early part of September, 1887, I returned to Toronto, Canada, as cornet soloist of the Citizen's Band which was virtually the Queen's Own Regimental Band, and once more enlisted in this famous regiment. My duties now, as I was under a yearly salary, necessitated my attending all band rehearsals, regimental drills, and march outs, and giving my first services to the band. However, I was allowed to take outside engagements that did not conflict with these duties, and I had more time to devote to practice and other work, such as teaching and playing solos at concert engagements. The environment was immeasurably better than that held in the regular theatre work in Rochester, and I began to plan a new future that would bring about better results in every way. The yearly salary was sure, and was considered a retaining fee, all engagements with the band paying extra, with the exception of regimental duties. So at least I was sure of as much money as I had received in Rochester, and still more time to myself in which to continue my musical education.

## **I KEEP ADDING TO MY WORK**

Almost its first engagement after my joining the band was the Annual National Canadian Exhibition in Toronto, and I was programmed for a solo at each concert, which gave me quite a local reputation to begin with, the result being that many cornet players wishing me to instruct them, I started a small class.

The band had many engagements in and around town. Later on, when the winter concert season opened. I played with the Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Dr. Torrington, as well as with the Claxton Orchestra, the latter organization being in quite good demand.

In addition I was approached to teach a new band, just organized, made up of about thirty men, employees of the Taylor Safe Works Company. I well remember the first night I tried to direct and teach the band, it being the first time I had ever attempted to use a baton. Under these circumstances, quite naturally, I was awkward, but I went at it the best I could. The work gave me still another experience in the music line; one that has helped me much in my career, Before very long, after some practice at home, beating time before a mirror. I succeeded in drilling the band so well that in a few months we gave to a large audience a successful concert at Shaftsbury Hall on Queen Street. Besides this, I was engaged as violin instructor at the Trinity College School at Port Hope, a small town about sixty miles east of Toronto, going there once a week. In the evening, I taught an amateur orchestra composed of about fifteen businessmen of the town. All of these activities netted me more extra money.

The more pupils I had, the more I seemed to learn, even from them. Each played in a different manner, and I would often find one who could play, easily or naturally, exercises that I had found difficult, and over which I had spent many days, weeks, and months, before I could play them perfectly the first time I really learned much from such experiences.

## **I STUDY HARMONY**

All these things seemed to create a new desire in me and my ambition to become a better musician took anew form. Although I studied regularly each day, there was still much more for me to learn, so I decided to take harmony lessons that I might be able to arrange and compose music properly, and correct misprints in band publications, which occur frequently. This knowledge would also enable me to answer thoroughly questions asked me by men in the band, or by inquisitive pupils and to prove my statements by the rules that govern the theory of music. So many musicians "bluff" their way along in life. Sometimes they get a bad jar just when they least expect it, and then wonder later on in life why they have not been more successful.

Selecting the best harmony teacher in the city, I one day applied for instruction, and was told that he had more pupils than he could attend to, but that if I would wait a few weeks, perhaps he could give me an hour later on. This made me more anxious than ever to learn theory, and, instead of going to another teacher, I waited until he notified me that he could take me on. He charged five dollars per lesson, which seemed pretty high to me (it equaled a charge of twenty dollars a lesson at the present day), but I soon found it be well worth the cost. After I had taken one lesson a week for a period, it began to seem like a long time between lessons, for I always had my examples worked out the following day, and had to wait six more days before another lesson, which seemed a waste of time. I suggested taking two lessons a week, and this my teacher granted, as he took a special interest in me, stipulating, however, that I must be at his studio at 7:30 in the morning; otherwise he had no other available time. I then asked him if he made any reduction in price to professional musicians, as two lessons would cost me ten dollars. But he gave no discount at all, and of this I am glad, now that I look back upon the incident, because having to spend so much money (which ate into my income, as I was living away from my parents) made me work more carefully. And I can truthfully say that every dollar I spent in learning the theory of music has brought me hundreds in later life.

There is much satisfaction in knowing how to do things the right way, and to be able to answer musical questions intelligently. All this can be acquired by spending a little money carefully and storing knowledge in one's brain, thereby insuring success and making it possible to climb continually, rather than fall behind with the majority, who seemed satisfied with what they already know.

During that winter I had many concert engagements as cornet soloist, both in and out of town, and these began to pay me well. I now realized that there was as much money in the musical profession as in any commercial line, if it were properly attended to, and the thought that I was beginning to earn a good living out of the profession that I loved inspired me to work with more zest.

## **POSSIBILITIES IN MUSIC ENDLESS**

I was now twenty years old and making a considerable amount of money, much more than I could hope to receive for years to come as a clerk in some store, and yet I realized that the possibilities were practically endless in the music business if one became popular; for one's prices, naturally, could be increased in accordance with the law of "supply and demand."

Prices for the services of musicians were then very low compared to those of the present day, there being no union to govern them, but I managed to keep busy all the time and to save a little money to pay for my music and adding to my repertoire, which was my "stock in trade."

Now realizing that I must go after whatever I wanted and not wait for things to come to me, I began soliciting and advertising for pupils and concert engagements, giving up dance and party work and confining my playing to a higher class. This action still further increased my income and kept me in greater demand, I hustled for everything I got and consequently was never idle, although I never neglected a days practice, which to me was more essential than paying jobs.

So many musicians work hard at their practice, spending hours to become great players on their favorite instrument without ever seeming to reach out for opportunities to come to them (which seldom happens), with the result that they become discouraged and never amount to anything more than theatre or dance players.

## **TWENTY-SECOND SERIES**

Growing older (I was now in my twenty-first year) and continually learning, as well as gathering success in all my work because of the fact that I always tried hard to be as perfect as possible in everything that I undertook, my dreams of becoming a great cornet soloist took hold of me again, and I began to work with more determination than ever, especially in correcting my faults, so that if the time should come for me to apply for a higher position I would be fully prepared.

Even so, although I devoted much time to my profession, there was always a chance for recreation of some kind, and I was always out for a good time with the boys, riding the bicycle (I was bugler in the Wanderers Bicycle Club), and doing considerable yachting, of which I was extremely fond. I had a small sailboat, a sloop rig, named The Puritan, with which I won the championship in the Fifth Class of The Royal Canadian Yacht Club Regatta for three consecutive years, sailing the boat myself, with a crew of four.

Three years passed pleasantly, during which time I was always occupied, branching out into broader channels as my popularity increased. Although still a young man, I was appointed to the staff of teachers in the Toronto Conservatory of Music as instructor for the violin, viola, cornet, and all brass instruments. I might say here that I had again taken up the viola for amusement, and had become a member of the Conservatory String Quartet, giving monthly recitals at the Auditorium. This, to me, was a most interesting phase of music, especially while I was studying harmony, as string-quartet music is the purest form of harmony and the foundation of the symphony orchestra. This experience still further extended my education in music, giving me a better standing throughout the Province, with the result that out-of-town concert engagements began to pour in.

## **MORE WORK THAN TIME**

I soon realized that there were not enough hours in the day for all the work I could take on, so I raised my price for pupils, as well as that for concert work, arguing that even with less pupils at an advanced price, I would make just as much money and have more time to myself. The same with concert engagements; if I received as much for one concert as I had been getting for two, it would make me a bit more independent and increase my drawing power. Even with my advance in price, during the winter season I averaged three concerts a week for solo playing, my territory covering the entire Province of Ontario, and even extending to Montreal, Quebec. With all these engagements, I managed to carry out my duties with the band, not once failing in my obligations to the regiment or band engagements, and the more work I had, the happier I became. I never wasted much time gossiping with musicians whose principal theme, generally, was to "knock" successful players and the different leaders upon whom they depended for a livelihood. And still I seemed to be popular among them, trying to help everyone who was not doing very well, recommending many for jobs, and also advising each to try to better his playing through proper study and practice.

I am mentioning my successes at this early age to impress the reader with the thought that everyone has an equal chance to succeed if he goes about it in the proper way, there being no such thing as luck, either good or bad. I had my struggles, in fact, I am never without them, but I always tried my best to overcome obstacles that at first seemed impossible. By sticking to it, I managed to conquer many faults (another name for obstacles) and gained a realization that the most important matter was to learn self control. This has been the fight of my life.

Ambition is the first essential for musical success, but patience is the greater virtue. It is so difficult to hold back and not strive to reach the top of the ladder too soon. Through Difficulties to Triumph is a splendid motto to follow, but much thought and understanding are required to reach the highest pinnacle; so many disappointments occur before one has learned to climb very high, We only learn by making mistakes, and these mistakes should be lessons to us. We should immediately correct them as best we can, without falling into discouragement, a state that has been the downfall of the majority of enthusiasts. (I often tell the members of my band at rehearsals that there is no crime in making a mistake, but that there is in making the same mistake twice.)

## **MANY ROADS TO ROME**

Often in my practice, finding that I cannot accomplish something I try for in a certain way, I simply try another way, in fact, several ways, as there is no set rule for correct playing, except to be absolutely perfect in each exercise one practices. This principle, followed out, gives us the experience necessary to win. Keep on trying to do the best you can. Gain knowledge by asking questions when in doubt, and never give up, no matter what you have to face.

Whenever a player imagines he is "good" his career is ended. Remember that the more we learn, the less we seem to know, and the better we play, the more mistakes we discover in our efforts. Consequently, perfection is never reached. Even if the public congratulates us upon a good performance, we all know secretly that the result

has been far from what we intended it to be, and this knowledge inspires us to correct the little faults we discover in our work of yesterday, Flattery is our most dangerous enemy. I did not make my reputation; it was made by the public. All I had to do was to back the public by trying always to give a good performance.

I think it was in the fall of 1890 that I was tendered the leadership of the Heintzman's Piano Company Band, an organization in Toronto that had come to the front musically, being composed of good musicians who were secured through employment offered by the firm. The position had been made open through the resignation of the band's former leader, Mr. Thomas Baugh, who, after having made a success of the band, had returned to New York.

Thinking the matter over seriously, and realizing that such a position would give me more prestige, as well as more experience, I decided to accept, which necessitated my resigning as a cornet soloist of the Queen's Own Regimental Band, and after the expiration of my second enlistment term of three years, I was given an honorable discharge.

My duties as bandmaster called for responsibilities for different than simply playing cornet in a band, for I now assumed full control of the men, with the additional burden of procuring engagements. I was also given more opportunities in the musical line. So I began to hustle around for all kinds of engagements, with the standing of the Heintzman company to back me. I was surprised at the first rehearsal to hear the men play so well. There were about forty members and these took much interest in the organization. My experience in band work under the direction of Mr. John Bayley, bandmaster of the Queen's Own Regimental Band, together with what I had learned as a member of the Philharmonic Orchestra under Dr. F.H. Torrington, helped me to try to interpret good music properly, and the men responded splendidly at rehearsals.

I owe much of my success to Mr. Bayley, as he so often drilled me in my solo playing at his home, showing me the stories of each, and playing the music on the piano. He was one of the best accompanists I ever had, besides excelling on the violin. He was concertmaster of the orchestra, a wonderful organist, and one of the best clarinet players I have ever heard. The same held true in the case of Dr. Torrington, who had played violin with Theodore Thomas, and was considered, at that time, the best organist in Toronto. So with this environment, I very naturally, when a boy, absorbed the best in music, and certainly made good use of my chances, never losing an opportunity of asking vital questions concerning music from both of these splendid musicians, and never forgetting anything they told me. These experiences prepared me for a career later in life, and it is needless to say that I was very thankful for them.

## **TWENTY-THIRD SERIES**

The following summer (1891), I secured a long engagement for the Heintzman's Piano Company Band, of which I was now the leader, at Hanlon's Point on the island, the resort of Toronto. We became quite popular.

My cornet practice was not neglected in the least, although I confined my playing now to solo work entirely and practiced diligently for this alone, purchasing all the cornet solos I knew of, published in all countries. My repertoire consisted of some three

hundred solos, including arias, fantasias, air varies, polkas, waltzes, and ballads. Living in one city for any length of time and playing at concerts continually, one must keep adding something new each week if one expects to be in demand.

## **I ORGANIZE A TRIO**

There was not much business for the band during the winter months, except the regular rehearsals, and having permission from my firm to do some individual concert work, I formed a little company of three, called The Canadian Trio, giving an entire evening's entertainment. I booked concerts throughout the province of Ontario, which not only netted a good substantial income, but helped to increase my reputation. Before long I became known as "Canada's Favorite Cornet Soloist." Everyone thought I was Canadian born, and I never disputed the belief, as I really did make my reputation as soloist in Canada, even first starting to play the cornet there.

In September, 1891, my band was engaged for a week at the Montreal Exposition, and many were the flattering comments on our playing, as well as on my cornet solos. I had a splendid band of forty-five players.

About this time my brother Ernest was making quite a name for himself as a trombone soloist in New York City, as well as during his tour of the country with Gilmore's Band, and I received frequent letters from him, each containing the advice for me to come to New York whenever it was possible and have a tryout with this famous organization; for Mr. Gilmore was engaged to play the entire six months at the World's Fair at Chicago, in 1893, with a band of one hundred men, and the following year to make a tour throughout Europe.

I began to get interested, thinking what a grand opportunity it would be for me if I should make good and become a soloist of this great band, and be heard every day at the Chicago Fair, which would be visited by millions of people during the six months. Also, to play concerts all over Europe would be the dream of my life. I began to realize that in order to become known, one must travel and be heard in different countries, Even a local reputation is all right in a way, but an international reputation is best of all, and this might be the chance of a lifetime for me if I were only capable.

Still, I was doing well financially in Toronto just now, and if the change were made, it would compel me to give up everything after having become so well established in the band business. I pondered over this question for weeks, until another letter arrived from Ernest, telling me that Mr. Gilmore was looking for a good cornet soloist for these future engagements, and that I should prepare to make a trip to New York just as soon as Possible and play for the great bandmaster before the position was filled.

So in February, 1892, I mustered enough confidence, with the kind encouragement of the Heintzman Piano Company, to go to New York City, arriving there on a Sunday morning and going direct to Mr. Gilmore's home, without any notice to him. On my reaching his house, his maid informed me that he could not be disturbed this morning, as he was resting after a hard week's work, preparing for his regular spring tour, but she made an appointment for me for three o'clock in the afternoon.

Both my brothers, Edwin and Ernest, were then living in New York, and I was Pleased to meet them again, after having been separated for three years. Ernest went with me to Mr. Gilmore's home, to introduce me.

I did not go home with my brother, but walked around in Central Park for several hours all alone; for Mr. Gilmore's home was close to the Park, on the West Side. During this time I nearly lost courage and was going to back out and return to Toronto. When I thought of all the great cornet players, then in New York, who had played with Gilmore, such as Jules Levy, Walter Emerson, Ben Bent, Liberati, and of a host of very fine cornetists there without a national reputation who Gilmore would need for his great project touring the country with the largest band in the world composed of the very best musicians that could be mustered from all countries, is it any wonder that I felt afraid to play before him for a position such as my brother Ernest had written me about"?

## **I EXPERIENCE QUALMS**

Of course, I was well thought of in my own city, and this naturally flattered me and gave me the conceit to think that I might probably make good. But when I began to realize that I was simply coming from the "backwoods" so to speak, without the experience necessary for such at) organization, it dawned upon me that my coming to New York was the result of some ambitious dreams, promoted by the local reputation I had made in Toronto, and the persistent letters from Ernest to make a tryout. It seemed audacious on my part ever to attempt such an impossibility, One can imagine my feelings as the time drew near for my appointment with Mr. Gilmore.

However, the trip to New York was expensive, and I was not going back a coward, even if I failed in the examination. Anyway, I would have the honor of playing before Mr. Gilmore, and perhaps learn something from any suggestions he might offer, and when I grew older, I would be in a better position and condition to make another trial at that time. I made up my mind that I would do my very best, even if I failed to satisfy him.

With this thought uppermost in my mind,, and the knowledge that if I-ever expected to win out and become a great artist I must go after just what I wanted, and furthermore that even if this tryout proved a failure, it would not kill me, I walked bravely to Mr. Gilmore's home, rang the bell, and was ushered into his beautiful library, and was told to wait a few moments.

While looking around the room I discovered a photo of myself and wondered how it came to be there. it was beside a picture of my brother Ernest, who probably had given it to this great bandmaster. Mr. Gilmore was a man who kept in touch with every soloist in the world, and I felt proud that my picture was exhibited in his home. This gave me even greater courage to do my best when the time came for me to play before him. I realized that this event was the crisis of my life, and that I must put forth every effort I could command in my playing. I determined to "win out or bust," knowing that if I should get the least bit nervous, it would take away ninety percent of my skill, and leave me only ten per cent to work on, which would surely spell disaster.

Brother Ernest accompanied me to Mr. Gilmore's home, and kept encouraging me to do my best, telling me of the wonderful chance to be heard all over the world as a soloist, and of the experience I would gain in seeing different cities, besides the opportunity presented of hearing other great soloists and learning much from them, an opportunity I would not have living in one city all the rest of my life. He pointed out that my musical education would benefit a thousand fold in this environment of association with the best musicians in the world.

Of course, this inspired me with thoughts of what I might accomplish in the musical field, should I satisfy Mr. Gilmore with my playing, and I really braced up and made up my mind that I would obtain the position I sought, and with this determination, half my battle was fought, and I was ready to show just what I could do.

## **TWENTY-FOURTH SERIES**

Upon my calling at Mr. Gilmore's and waiting in his library for about half an hour, he appeared and greeted me so affably, a characteristic that made him such a lovable man to all, that I really forgot my excitement for the moment. He talked quite a while about conditions in Canada, asking after his old friend, Dr. Torrington, and then requested me to take out my cornet and play something for him. Before starting, he advised me to "warm up a bit," and this gave me more confidence, but I could not think of a single piece to play. He noticed my hesitation and began to encourage me, saying that he realized just how I felt. His manner was so delightful that I forgot my self-consciousness and commenced to play one of my most difficult solos; I think it was Levy's Whirlwind Polka. After starting, I felt all right, keeping my mind wholly upon every note. I certainly worked hard, knowing that I must make good if I expected to land the engagement..

## **MR. GILMORE SAYS, "GO ON"**

When I had finished this number in a creditable manner, Mr. Gilmore simply nodded his head and said "go on." I then played a difficult "air varie," finishing on a very high note, top F, that was not in the music. His exclaiming "bravo!" encouraged me to play another solo with more execution, or technic. I was then told to rest, during which time he asked me some questions regarding what experience I had had in the band field, also what music I had been used to playing. I told him that my education in playing had been under the direction of Dr. Torrington and Mr. John Bayley, who were efficient musicians, as he well knew, and that I had been well drilled in all the standard overtures, oratorios, symphonies, and operatic selections. He next asked me if I could play some simple ballads, suggesting The Last Rose of Summer, which I knew and interpreted to his astonishment and satisfaction.

By this time I had begun to get a bit exhausted, having used up all my strength in the numbers I had already played, and I hoped he would let me go, telling me whether or not I was capable of becoming a member of his band. But he did not once talk business, and I could vision myself returning to Toronto without any success. This caused me to feel discouraged and sorry that I had spent so much time and money coming to New York, although, as a matter of fact, the experience was already well worth ten times the amount.



## **THE FINAL TEST**

Then suddenly he asked if I knew the popular soprano aria from Robert the Devil, by Meyerbeer. I answered, "Yes." "All right, play it," he said. So I carefully blew all the water out of my cornet, and at the sometime braced myself for this number, as I knew it required more endurance than any polka to interpret properly. Taking a little time in starting, I felt my confidence return, as I had been coached many times in this aria by my old bandmaster, who had explained its words and sentiment as well as its dramatic meaning in the opera; I really felt quite sure of myself. I certainly did my best, and played the entire aria faultlessly, thinking of each phrase as it was taught me, and putting all my knowledge of music into the rendition.

After I had finished, Mr. Gilmore came over to me, patted me on the back, and told me that he had been looking for a great cornet player who could play musically, with the endurance I had displayed this afternoon and at last he had found one! I nearly fell over on hearing this expression of enthusiasm regarding my playing, and had to sit down. All the playing I had just done had completely exhausted me, and his encouragement, coming on top of it all, actually knocked my legs from under me.

It was then that business was talked, I was asked if I was in anyway bound by contract in Toronto, or, if so, could I be released honorably. In answer I said that the Heintzman Piano Company, of whose band I was leader, would not stand in my way should I be fortunate enough to secure the position of cornet soloist in Gilmore's Band. Mr. Gilmore was too square a man to take away any player from an organization, unless it could be done ethically, and I always admired him for this characteristic.

The position I had long sought was now offered me. I was told to report in New York early in April for rehearsals, these taking place before the regular Spring Tour through the New England States, which was succeeded by a month at Madison Square Garden, the entire summer at Manhattan Beach, with six weeks at St. Louis Exposition, and later a Fall Tour, returning to New York for Christmas. Imagine my happiness now, to have secured the highest position of any cornetist in the world. I could hardly believe it, after all the worrying I had gone through during the whole morning. And yet, was it not just what I had been after all my life?

## **I LEAVE, TREADING ON AIR**

Mr. Gilmore dismissed me cordially, thanking me for the treat I had given him, and impressed upon me the importance of being at rehearsals promptly in April. He also told me that in order to play in his band I must join the New York Musical Union, an act compulsory for every member, that I was to provide myself with a Gilmore uniform and the necessities for traveling, as well as all my solos with full band arrangements. As I left his home, my feet seemed so light that they hardly touched the ground. I was simply in a trance! It was a great satisfaction to me, also, to realize that all my struggles in the past were rewarded, and that my perseverance was not in vain. I was then in my twenty-fourth year, and seemed really too young to have accomplished my hearts desire so soon. A reaction soon set in, and I began to realize that the effort made in playing before Mr. Gilmore had been a strain. My lungs ached, my lips were sore, and my nervous system suffered most of all. For several days the effects of this strain told on me, yet I was repaid for it all in the end.

Brother, Ernest was quite as pleased over my success as I. Now we both would be together again, this time as members of the greatest band in the world. Ern had not heard me play for years, and was himself astonished at my improvement as he was that I had gained the position he so wanted me to occupy.

I returned home to Toronto the following day, my thoughts full of the future, making up my mind now that I had a real start, I would show Mr. Gilmore how I could improve with the experience I would obtain after playing with him a while, and how I would be able to make myself useful to him in many ways.

Upon reaching Toronto, I explained my good fortune to my employers, who in the most encouraging terms congratulated me upon my securing the desired position, and were perfectly willing to release me from my obligations saying that while they were sorry to lose me, yet they were proud that a Toronto boy had won the highest position within the grasp of a cornetist. I wired Mr. Gilmore in regard to this release so that he would be sure of me for his tour.

I had nearly two months before me to get a substitute for my position as bandmaster. and I wished to leave my band in good hands. Fortunately, as the position was a good one, I found no trouble in securing a man from New York, Mr. Thomas Baugh, who was well known to all the boys, and a first-class musician in every way. So the Heintzman Band continued to keep up its reputation, and everybody was satisfied. My practice during these few weeks was done with more thought and carefulness than ever, especially on the point of endurance, a thing very necessary with Gilmore; for I would have to play first cornet in the band, and solos at every concert, the whole requiring more energy than any one realizes until one has done this kind of work.

The citizens of Toronto were very proud that one of their boys had won the distinction of appearing in this world-famed organization, which was equally as popular in Toronto as it was in New York, and, to show their appreciation of my past efforts, on the eve of my departure for New York, tendered me a testimonial concert, in which all the professional celebrities in the neighborhood of Toronto took part, thus giving me the most wonderful send-off I have ever experienced. The proceeds were handed me as a token of esteem and admiration for the musical work I had been doing for the past five years.

Having reached the pinnacle of my ambition, I made up my mind that I must work all the harder to hold it, and add new laurels through perseverance and ambition; this I have always tried to do.

And now, this little story of mine must end, and I honestly hope that my readers have not tired reading of my A Cornet-Playing Pilgrim's Progress experiences from boyhood, up, and also that many will derive some benefit in their work from these chapters and be helped to better things. It is all up to the individual himself. He must persevere, and whatever he wants in this life, he must go after himself. People who lean on others to push them ahead cannot succeed; they, themselves, must develop a stronger manhood. It must be remembered, that all have an equal chance to rise to success, provided they have the initial talent, and work properly and conscientiously. There is no luck in cornet playing, at least I have never found it so. One, of course,

must have self-confidence: the least doubt of oneself of any kind will bring failure. I was cornet soloist with Gilmore at the age of twenty-four, held the same position with Sousa at twenty-five, and did not really know how to play the cornet correctly until I was thirty-five! Since then it has never been a task to play my chosen instrument all day long.

In closing, I might add a synopsis of my career as a cornetist since my joining with the Gilmore forces in 1892:

Over eight thousand miles of travel with different musical organizations, such as Gilmore's Band, Victor Herbert's Band, and that of the great John Philip Sousa. Over six thousand programmed cornet solos, including 473 concerts in one season, this being a record.

Visited fourteen different countries, playing before crowned heads and the nobility of Europe.

Thirty-four tours of the United States and Canada, and four European tours, as well a tour completely around the world.

Made more phonograph records than any other cornet player, both in the United States and Europe.

Appeared as soloist at all the great "World's Fairs," including the Chicago World's Fair, Chicago, 1893; Atlanta Exposition, 1895; World's Fair, Paris, (France), 1900; Pan-American Exposition, Buffalo, 1901; Glasgow Exposition (Scotland), 1901; World's Fair, St. Louis, 1904; Panama Exposition San Francisco, 1915. In addition to these I appeared in the some capacity at many famous resorts throughout this country, Florida; Atlantic City, Nantasket Beach; Manhattan Beach; Washington Park, Coronado Beach; Willow Grove Park (sixteen seasons), and Pittsburgh Exposition (eighteen seasons).

My bandmasters career Director of Taylors Safe Works Band, Toronto; Heintzman Piano Company Band, Toronto; Reeves' American Band of Providence, R.I.. Clarke's Providence Band, Providence, R.I.; Naval Brigade Band of Massachusetts; Second Regiment, B.R.I.M. , Providence, R.I.; First Light Infantry Band, Providence, R.I.; Anglo-Canadian Concert Band, Huntsville, Canada. At present I am Director of the Long Beach Municipal Band, Long Beach, California, a position held for the post seven years, playing two concerts daily the year round (Long Beach is both a summer and winter resort), these free to the public.