

Editorial . . .

Willard R. Hallman: An Appreciation

Frank Bateman Stanger

The influence of music is seen primarily in the personalities and lives of those who come under its sway. Dr. Willard R. Hallman is truly one whose total life has been influenced by the art to which he has devoted himself professionally. Naturally gracious, and richly enhanced by the gifts of God's grace, Willard Hallman's personality and character has been perfected by the power of music. He is one of those "musical people who always seem to be happy." He fits the description of the musician: "His very foot has music in it as he comes up the stairs."

Music makes a person nobler and causes a Christian to become more saintly. It is "music that washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life." Addison wrote aptly: "Music wakes the soul and lifts it high and wings it with sublime desires, and fits it to bespeak the Deity."

Music must have its interpreter. One has reminded us that "there is no truer truth obtainable by man than comes of music." But such truth in music must be interpreted by those who understand. Dr. Hallman is a superb interpreter of sacred music. His is the enlightened gift of helping others understand the rich meanings latent in such music. He is particularly gifted in the interpretation of music through choral presentations. To be reminded of this, one has but to recall the musical selections presented by the Seminary Singers and the Seminary Chorus. The exquisite interpretation of Mueller's "The Lord's My Shepherd" imparted to the listener an awareness of the guiding presence of the Great Shepherd. Each rendition of "Christ the Lord is Risen Today" seemed like a contemporary resurrection morning. Bach's lovely "May God Smile on You" inspired one to commit anew himself and his children to the compassionate care of the Heavenly Father.

Music has its inspiration. Willard Hallman is an inspired musician. As a result, his life, his teaching, his conducting of music have been an inspiration to others. He has inspired us to worship through music. He has helped us to understand the relevance of Martin Luther's words: "Next to theology I give to music the highest place and honor." "Music is the art of the prophets." Likewise, we appreciate with a new freshness what Chateaubriand meant when he

declared that "music is the child of prayer, the companion of religion." With Carlyle we gladly confess that "music is the speech of angels," and Chalmers voices our sentiments when he writes that "music is the language of praise."

Willard Hallman is gifted as a leader of congregational singing. Many have paid him the high tribute of saying that they have never known a song leader who could so inspire others to sing. One has but to remember those thrilling occasions when he has led great congregations in the singing of "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name," to the tune of Diadem, and in the singing of "How Great Thou Art."

Willard Hallman has also inspired seminarians in the realization that music is an indispensable tool of the Christian worker. Hosts of seminarians, under his influence, have gone to their chosen fields of labor with their personal and professional lives inspired by sacred music.

Music makes its impact. I am thinking primarily of the impact of Willard Hallman's ministry of music upon Asbury Theological Seminary as an institution. He has helped to create the Seminary's image in the contemporary religious world. He has insisted that the music of evangelism also be of high quality. He has clearly demonstrated that classical sacred music and spiritual sanctity are entirely compatible. He has always demonstrated that dedication to the highest includes the appreciation of the best. And such an institutional concept of music, inspired by this Greatheart of the musical arts, has made a profound contribution to the creation of Asbury Theological Seminary's image in the contemporary world.

We at Asbury Theological Seminary thank God for Willard R. Hallman. Dedicated saint, talented musician, gifted interpreter of music, a constant inspiration to all who have shared in his life and teaching, we honor him for his tremendous contributions to the work and influence of Asbury Theological Seminary. The entire Seminary Family says "Thank you" to this Christian gentleman for an outstanding musical ministry magnificently performed.

"Music is a prophecy of what life is to be."
(Child)

"That heavenly music! what is it I hear?
The notes of the harpers ring sweet in mine ear.
And, see, soft unfolding those portals of gold,
The king all arrayed in his beauty behold."
(Muhlenberg)