

ADDRESS OF MR. CHARLES GALLOWAY

Apollo Club Dinner, April 22, 1918.

As I stand before you to-night, my memory carries me back some fifteen years, to an Apollo concert, at which concert I appeared for the first time as your conductor. Fifteen years! How time does fly! This suggests that we not only sing together in harmony, but that we work together in harmony. Naturally, the personnel of the Apollo Club has considerably changed since I first assumed the conductorship; quite a few of our former active members are now on the honorary retired list; many, for various reasons, have moved to other cities; some have joined the colors, and others have crossed the Deep River.

The path of a choral conductor is not strewn with roses; the disappointments and the discouragements a conductor is sure to meet with are disheartening at times, to say nothing of the mental strain incident to the giving of a concert.

A choral conductor, if he would secure results that are at all worth while, must possess a bull-dog tenacity of purpose, he must needs have the patience of Job, and then some. He must be an optimist; at least he should try to jolly himself into the belief that conditions might be worse. He must be a philosopher; he must always (oh the irony!) be able to visualize, as it were, the words, "Smile, damn you, smile."

Such a trifling matter as a member strolling in to

rehearsal ten, fifteen, twenty or twenty-five minutes late—Oh the nerve of some people's children—must not at all ruffle him. He must never get worked up over the inattention, I had almost said discourtesy, of a member at rehearsal; at least he should never show his displeasure, not even by punishing the poor, innocent, though punk, piano.

Happily for my peace of mind, I have a way of relieving my pent-up feelings. It is by expressing myself in writing in a diary book. Yes, I have been doing this for a number of years; as the Englishman would say, I find the keeping of a diary jolly interesting, don't you know. One thing is certain: this diary-keeping serves as a sort of safety valve for the public man who may be forced, for this or that reason, if not to bridle his tongue, to indulge in camouflage. If any one present will meet me in, say, either Tower Grove or Forest Park some day about thirty years hence—I do not expect to be engaged in as many activities then as I am now—I will take great pleasure in reading to you from my diary. And would it not be interesting were you to hear your name read?

The thought has occurred to me of late that David, the sweet singer of Israel, must have just returned home from a rehearsal of some kind when he wrote, having in mind some six or eight of his choristers who had gotten his goat that night, "Break their teeth, O God, in their mouths; smite their jaw bone. Or, even their pots be made hot with thorns: so let indignation vex them, even as a thing that is raw."

One thing is certain: David was very much perturbed over something or about somebody when he

penned those lines. He was not peeved. he was downright mad, hot under the collar. Since last Tuesday night I have felt convinced that David wrote those just quoted words of deprecation upon his return home one night from a concert that one of his choral clubs had just given, at which concert some of his singers, standing erect like little soldiers, failed to sing, because, forsooth, they had forgotten their words.

Well, on the other hand, conducting is intensely engaging. It is real fun at times to work up the different numbers; then, too, it is interesting to meet and to come in personal contact with minds of every conceivable kind. I am oft times reminded of what an eminent Frenchman once wrote—that half the world is off, and the other half is not on.

Just at present I have in mind a dear boy, a former member of this club, who was always harping to me about his family Coat of Arms—I always wished him farther. There was another lad, he moved East some three years ago, who used to get on my nerves by telling me about the abnormal mentality of his little son, who was then just five months old. He surely tried my patience on more than one occasion. Then there was another member, an Ouija Board crank, or shall I say nut, who, on one of our rehearsal nights started to tell me of a seance he had had just the night before with Mary Queen of Scotts and General Grant. Now, can you beat that?

There is more than one member of this club who has been forced to listen to the effusions from the mind of a certain long, lean, lanky tenor, (he is not now a member of the Apollo Club), who was always laboring

under the delusion that no one could sing quite as well as he could, Gounod's *Salve Dimora*.

Well for me that I have a little sense of humor. Whenever I saw this long shank approach me, I quoted to myself the classical phrase, "O Percy, pass the prunes."

A few lines concerning the work of the club the past season. Words of appreciation in regard to the Club's singing have been received from many of our associate members, not to mention the fine criticisms that have appeared in our press, representatives of which are honoring us tonight with their presence. The man does not live but likes to be told of his success in whatever line of business or profession he may be engaged. I shall not be positive, but I think I am safe in saying that I am in possession of every criticism, every write-up of our Apollo concerts that has appeared during the past fifteen years. I avail myself of this opportunity—and I am sure I speak for each member of the Club—to thank the gentlemen of the press for all the nice things they have seen fit to write about our concerts, especially as regards the singing of the Club itself. We hope, gentlemen of the press, to continue to merit the good opinion you have of us.

The Song of the Camp, by Stewart, was our season's most ambitious number; Deep River, I should say, our most popular; and Robin Adair, our most troublesome, albeit, one of our most effective. Our standard. Our second concert was excellent. Your first concert in November was not up to our high

work at our third concert averaged 89 5-6 per cent; lacking, you see, a little over 10 per cent of being perfect. I have figured out that if some of you had talked less and sung more at rehearsals, our work at our third concert might have averaged close on to one hundred per cent. Two of our members, Messrs. Francis Miller and Russel Rizer, neither of whom, up to two weeks ago, had expected to sing last Tuesday night, when they learned that no fewer than three of our first tenors, because of sickness, would not be able to participate in our third concert, showed a fine spirit by offering their services. And their services, needless to say, were accepted.

I am hoping that each member of the Apollo Club will be in his seat on the night of our first rehearsal, season 1918-19. Let us get together not only for the pleasure we all derive from our work, but in order to show our interest in maintaining in the old town a Male Chorus that is second to none in this country.