

Minnesota Musicians of the Cultured Generation

Leopold Bruenner

Cecilian and democrat

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The St. John's University Band (1887) from Bruenner's Scrapbook
Bruenner is identified by the arrow and his comment "Me"
Courtesy Minnesota Historical Society

Chapter 1

A Cecilian in Minnesota

Leopold Georg Bruenner¹ was born 16 March 1869 in Würzburg, Germany, the third child of Georg Brünner, a trader in home produce of Steinsfeld (bei Haßfurt am Main) and his wife, Maria Anna Schleicher, of Lauda an der Tauber. He was baptized 17 March 1869 into the Catholic Church in the Parish of St. Peter and Paul of the city of Würzburg,² a center of baroque architecture, in the heart of Catholic Germany not far from the center of Catholic music at Regensburg. In this capital of Franconia (*Franken*), at that time a Duchy, now part of Upper Bavaria on the Main River, lies a fifteenth-century bridge (*Alte Mainbrücke*) with a statue of the Virgin, patron of the town, while the town counts three hundred other Madonnas that adorn the houses, an aggregate that has led to the name “the city of Madonnas.”

A Prince-Bishop as Duke ruled Würzburg from the eleventh century and was responsible for the teaching of religious music until secularization in 1802 at which time the Royal Conservatory of Music, the oldest such institution in Germany, took over music instruction.³ Bruenner trained at this conservatory under Wohlfahrt⁴ and Hoffman and later studied with unknown teachers at Lohr am Main. Though known as a pianist at age fourteen, he is not listed among the graduates of the conservatory probably because he was too young to have completed all official requirements.⁵ He and his brother, Henry, came to America with the goal of escaping Bismarckian militarism. Bruenner, encouraged by the Catholic Church to become a priest, entered St. John's University at Collegeville, Minnesota in 1883.⁶

Until 1888, Bruenner attended the Classical Course at the university. He studied music (piano and violin), Latin, Greek, English, algebra, geometry, history, freehand drawing, elocution and religious studies. In his second year, he won 9 distinctions for his academic work, 4 to 5 being the amount to secure a premium (that is a reduction in tuition), in his third year 7 distinctions and 2 premiums (one in piano), in his fourth year premiums in piano, religion, and Latin.

St. John's was known at that time as the “largest educational institution in the Northwest.” It was a true university in the scope of the courses it offered with curricula in commercial, scientific, theological and classical studies as the advertisement from *Der Wanderer* below will indicate. That notice does not make special mention of music as do the notices for the women's colleges, St. Benedicts and Winona Seminar, placed beside it. Music was thought to be a woman's subject, a sort of accomplishment for social and family grace. None the less, St. John's had from its Germanic heritage a tradition of music shared by the priests and students from the foundation of the school up to the present day.

St. John's University,



Collegeville, Minn.

unter Leitung der Väter des Benedictiner-Ordens, ist die größte und bestausgestattete Lehranstalt im Nordwesten. Die Lage romanisch und gesund. Unterricht wird erteilt in allen Fächern. Studenten können nach höchsten folgenden Cursum aufnehmen:

COMMERCIAL, SCIENTIFIC, THEOLOGICAL, CLASSICAL.

Das Schuljahr beginnt am Freitag 4. September und endet mit der letzten Woche des Juni.

Bedingungen: 20 per Monat zur Beförderung, Unterricht, Bett und Wäsche; fünfmonatliche Monatszahlung ist erforderlich. Für Catalog u. s. w. wende man sich an

Rt. Rev. Peter Engel, O. S. B., Präbent, oder an Rev. Alexius Hoffmann, O. S. B. Vice-Präbent.

St. Benedict's Academy,

St. Joseph, Stearns Co., Minn.

Der Unterricht in derselben umfasst die deutsche und englische Sprache, nebst allen weiblichen Handarbeiten sowie Zeichnen und Malen. Besondere Aufmerksamkeit wird dem

Unterricht in der Musik

geschenkt. Auch wird hier Töchtern Gelegenheit geboten sich für das Schreien auszubilden.

In Verbindung mit der Academy, jedoch in einem besonderen Gebäude, wird eine Schule erteilt, für Knaben von 8 bis 11 Jahren, woselbst sie eine gute Erziehung und mütterliche Sorgfalt genießen.

Für nähere Auskunft wende man sich gefälligst an

MR. DIRECTRESS, O. S. B.

Winona Seminar,

Winona, Minn.

Ein Pensionat für Mädchen, geleitet von Franciscaner-Schwester. Gründliche literarische und wissenschaftliche Kurse. Ausbildung in Musik, Vortrag und Kunst. Wegen Catalog wende man sich an die

bp

Oberin.

Advertisements for Educational Institutions
From Der Wanderer

St. John's had been established as a Benedictine seminary in 1857 and in 1869 was granted by the Minnesota State Legislature the authority to confer all university degrees. In the year of Bruenner's entrance, 1883, the name changed to St. John's University,⁷ a reflection of its accomplishments and its growing enrollment and physical plant.

A visitor in January 1884 reports: "A stately structure presenting 370 ft. front and a church that rivals the largest and most beautiful in the state, compose the present university buildings. But even this structure, large as it is, does not furnish the needed room, hence the foundations are laid and already raised one story high for other buildings whose entire length is 300 ft. and width 60 ft. Since 1870, when the first annual catalogue was issued, 1113 names are on the roll and this is for but one half of the years of the institution. The "annual" of this year will contain about 200 names. Of the entire number since 1870 there have been 103 ordained to the priesthood and 237 have received diplomas and degrees in the arts and sciences."⁸

Bruenner found support for his art.

Music was, according to an extant report, diligently cultivated, "four professors give instruction in music, and 5 pianos, 2 organs, flutes, violins, guitars and citherns are in service."⁹

This department offers first-class facilities. Professors of marked ability and highest reputation teach it various branches. A well-regulated Choir, a full Orchestra, a choice Quartette, and an excellently trained and well and favorably known Cornet Band of 15 instruments make this Department attractive for the lover of Music.¹⁰

Bruenner played clarinet in the college band. His eager young face among his classmates (many destined for the priesthood) can be seen in the 1887 photograph at the beginning of this chapter..

Dramas and educational entertainments often had incidental music. The Alexian Philharmonic Association under the direction in 1885-1887 of the Reverend Isidore Siegler, O.S.B. and the Reverend John Katzner, O.S.B., installed Bruenner as manager.

An elaborate series of entertainments was given on Thanksgiving Day under the auspices of the Alexian Dramatic and Philharmonic Associations, both of which had just come into existence and were displaying astounding vitality. On the evening of November 25 [1885], the eve of Thanksgiving, a German farce, "Doctor Wunderlich," set the audience in good humor for the efforts of the next day. On the 26th there was a second entertainment, the principal feature of which was a dramatic performance, "The Elder Brother." The orchestra made its first appearance on this occasion; among its members was Mr. Max Dick, whose solos were much admired and who has since charmed many audiences from the eastern to the western coast.¹¹

Another entertainment was offered on Washington's Birthday in presence of many friends of the institution. At 2 p.m. "The Elder Brother" passed over the boards a second time, and it was followed by a German sketch "Aus Haendel's Jugend." The several acts were interspersed with numbers by the band and orchestra, instrumental solos on the violin, cithern and flute, and vocal

selections. Hon. H. C. Waite and Hon. J. L. Wilson, of St. Cloud delivered brief addresses at the conclusion of the exercises.¹²

Similar entertainments occurred in the following years for Thanksgiving and Washington's Birthday. Toward the end of May, the boys enjoyed their first swim of the season and the band and vocal music class made the evening festive with an open air concert.¹³

Great festivals of the church were celebrated by Pontifical High Masses with significant music and most especially at the Feast of Saint Benedict and Easter Day, the latter a time in which brothers made their solemn vows to the order. With all this music surrounding Bruenner at St. John's, it is not surprizing that he decided on a musical rather than an ecclesiastical career.

The music of the Catholic Church in the Midwest was at this moment firmly in the grip of the American Caecilian Movement¹⁴ formed in 1873 by John B. Singenberger, a pupil of Father Witt, founder of the German Allgemeine Cäcilien-Verein. From 1874 on, Singenberger published a journal, *Cäcilia*, which in discussion and musical examples strove to "banish all music of a profane or worldly character, and to substitute the sublime compositions of such authors as: Palestrina, Witt, Mettenleiter" and many German church composers of the nineteenth century.¹⁵ The ideal that the Cecilians sought is shown graphically in a vignette from *Cäcilia*, a representation of two angel singers and two instrumentalists, an angel harpist and lutenist, engaged in praise of God. The instruments are of the *bas* variety,¹⁶ gentle indoor types. The whole atmosphere is one of quiet devotion reminiscent of the miniatures found in medieval and renaissance manuscripts.



Vignette of angel musicians from *Cäcilia*
Courtesy St. John's Abbey and University

This society—whose main purpose was to bring music into line with taste and liturgy—centered around the Catholic Normal School of the Holy Family in St. Francis, Wisconsin. Its membership was heaviest in that state though it spread through all the surrounding states as well.¹⁷ The diocese of St. Cloud, Minnesota, followed these ideals and reported its musical activities in the journal. The Abbey and University of St. John's—in the neighborhood of St. Cloud but independent of the diocese—joined in the movement. The library of the university has even today an extensive run of these journals and their musical supplements. Those of Bruenner's day are marked for the Musical Library of the Abbey as part of the *Repertorium Musicae † Sacrae*. Many are carefully indexed with handwritten indications as to which compositions could be best realized by men's voices. Most of the repertory is to Latin texts but a few pieces have German texts which must have found welcome at the monastery so German in foundation as St. John's. Because the revival of the Gregorian Chant was one of the aims of the movement, quite a few compositions have sections of chant presented with harmonizations as was the style at that time.

In addition to extraordinary exposure to living music and to liturgical ideals, Bruenner had excellent opportunities, in and out of class, to master languages. St. John's University, in common with many colleges of the day, emphasized polished communication: Latin, the language of church; German, the language of St. John's founders and of that portion of Minnesota;¹⁸ and English, the language in which the graduates would communicate to the larger world. As part of this literary tradition, the Alexian Association launched in 1887-1888 a college journal, *St. John's University Record*. This auspicious occasion demanded music to help the celebration. "Among the selections were the "American Overture," "Recollections of the War" and "Flowers of St. Petersburg Waltzes,"¹⁹ music at the other end of the spectrum from carefully cultivated church music but welcome in establishing an air of camaraderie.

St. John's had two literary societies, one devoted to English—the St. Thomas Literary Association "Nunquam Retrorsum" which was organized in 1868: "Its object is to foster a taste for literature and eloquence. It holds meetings semi-monthly, and its exercises consist of public reading, essay writing, declamations and debates."—the second to German—the St. Boniface Literary Association "Virtuti et Musis" which "was organized in 1869: "It holds its meetings weekly, and by means of debates, essays and exercises in elocution, affords its members an opportunity of acquiring ease, fluency, and elegance in German composition, an easy and graceful delivery, and an extended knowledge of German literature."²⁰

Bruenner became vice-president of the English literary group. He experienced such success in "public reading, essay writing, declamations and debates" that at his graduation exercises, Wednesday, 22 June 1887, he was awarded the Gold Medal of Merit in Elocution given by the Honorable John. W. Arctander, LL.D., Minneapolis, Minnesota.²¹ At the same ceremony, he took the part of Alexius in the commencement play "The Hidden Gem,"²² a real achievement for one of German background.²³ From the time of his graduation forward, he turned completely toward American ways and language.

Bruenner thus added to his native German a fine command of Latin and English. So proficient was he in the ancient languages that his family later reported that he could "speak in Latin and Greek." Given his musical ear to assist his active mind, this statement may well be true. At an earlier point of the century, the composer, Berlioz, met the music lover, Griepenkerl, and since they did not share a contemporary language, they communicated in Latin.

Bruenner's commencement program, given below, gives further proof of the prominent role of music at St. John's although the piano numbers, "Angel's Dream," "Love's Greeting," and "Rock beside the Sea" smack of the salon music so prevalent in that day. Undoubtedly this was exactly what the proud parents expected instead of the classics.

Twentieth Annual Commencement of
St. John's University
 Wednesday, June 22, 1887

March		University Cornet Band
Welcome		
Overture, "Sylvester"		University Orchestra
Chiming Bells		Vocal Class
"THE HIDDEN GEM"		
<i>Cast of Characters:</i>		
Euphemianus		Herman Utsch
Alexius		Leopold Bruenner
Carinus		Edward Zapp
Proculus		J. C. A. Jacobs
Eusebius		A. Schmitz
Bibulus		Robert Hamp
Davus		E. Burke Dinneen
Ursulus		Frank Schaaf
Verna		Jos. Lucking
Gannio		A. Ott
Officer		P. Meyer
Slaves		
	ACT I—Scene I	
"Angel's Dream," <i>Piano Solo</i>		F. Bernick
	Scene II and III	
Music		Quartett
	Scene IV	
"Love's Greeting," <i>Piano Duett</i>		F. Bernick
		J. C. Mahherel
	ACT II—Scene I and II	
Music		Flute Solo
	Scene III	
Music, <i>Piano Duett</i>		A. Bahner
		Geo. Bahner
	Scene IV	
"Rock beside the Sea," <i>Piano Solo</i>		J. C. Hammerel
	Scene V	
Music		University Orchestra
CONFERRING OF DIPLOMAS AND DISTRIBUTION OF MEDALS		
Music		University Orchestra
Address		
"Home Sweet Home"		Vocal Class
Retiring March		University Cornet Band

Program from St. John's University Twentieth Annual Catalogue

Leopold Bruenner remained at the university through the 1887-1888 year for special work and probably beyond that date for care of his brother. This brother, Henry,²⁴ had entered Saint John's in 1885, gained many honors in music and classical subjects, and continued through the 1888-1889 scholastic year. During that latter year, he grew noticeable weak and showed signs of tuberculosis but continued his studies toward the monastic life. On 6 March 1890, his condition became critical and after last rites before he died he was allowed to give his profession to the monastic community under the name of James Henry Bruenner.²⁵



Leopold Bruenner came in 1891 to St. Paul where he at first taught piano and played clarinet in the Fred Will Orchestra.²⁶ In June of that year he gained his final naturalization papers marking the end of his allegiance to Germany and the fulfillment of his goal of escaping the German military.²⁷ In the same year he became choirmaster and organist of St. Matthew's Church. He seemed secure enough in his position around 1895 to marry Clara A. Kauffman (born in St. Cloud, 1874)..They were to have four children, Sybil, Elizabeth, Roland and Bertram.

In 1897 Bruenner was appointed choirmaster at St. Luke's Church, one of the select churches along Summit Avenue, a boulevard which sheltered the homes of the the first families of St. Paul and also a series of wealthy churches that were destined to become the religious backbone of civic life. These communities not only worshipped God but sponsored all sorts of estimable endeavors—literary clubs, study groups, festivals, reading circles, ladies aid societies, children's camps and more.²⁸ Bruenner entered gladly into the work of the parish and later served as secretary of the St. Vincent De Paul Society of St. Luke's, a group founded in 1888 for "work among the poor and downtrodden."

Each denomination established its musical traditions and soon vied with other churches along the avenue for the very best organists and choir masters, versatile musicians capable of leading civic events as well as church services. Bruenner succeeded director Ernest Burke and organist Gertrude Sans Souci at St. Luke's.²⁹ The music program there, like so many churches of the day, had, prior to Bruenner, consisted of a quartet of soloists.



A typical choir as depicted in 1906 in G. L. Morrill's *A Musical Minister*

The repertory at St. Luke's had been in a musical style more secular than sacred. On Easter Sunday, 11 April 1890, for instance, the service consisted of:³⁰

- Grand Mass in D Le Jeal
- Offertory Hummel
- Sancta Maria Owens
- Regina Coeli Lambillotte

The days of such music were numbered. The Cecilian Movement had been fighting against it and in November of 1903, Pope Pius X issued his *Moto proprio* stating even stricter ideals for Roman Catholic church music—the restoration of Gregorian chant according to the researches of the monks of Solesmes, the model of Palestrina for polyphony, certain restrictions on instrumental music and particularly the disapproval of music that smacked of the theater.³¹

Bruenner, even before the *Moto proprio*, moved away from a quartet of soloists and soon had a true sacred choral program going at St. Luke's.³² On the 17th of March, 1898, he presented a sacred concert for the benefit of the choir fund. The program featured "masters of church writing" and was advertised as being "especially interesting."³³

Gallia	Miss Coglan and Chorus	Gounod
Excerpts from Elijah		Mendelssohn
It is Enough	Mr. Phillips	
See, Now He Sleepeth	Mr. Burke	
Lift Thine Eyes	Miss Coglan, Miss Ellis, Mrs. Yale	
He Watching Over Israel	Chorus	
Sonata for Violin and Piano, Op. 13	Herr Emil Straka and Leo G. Bruenner	Grieg
Ave Maria (with organ, violin and piano)	Mrs. Yale	Mascheroni
Sancta Mater (Stabat Mater)	Miss Youngman, Mrs. Yale, Mr. Burke, Mr. Phillips	Rossini
Inflamatus (Stabat Mater)	Miss Montfort and Chorus	Rossini

This occasion made minimal demands upon the choir and gave main stage to the soloists, but it should be noted that this was not a service but a true concert. Services demanded other music and a more severe approach. For Easter of 1899, the *St. Paul Globe* carried this announcement for St. Luke's:

Solemn high mass will be said by Rev. A. McNulty, assisted by Rev. Dr. W. Turner and Rev. T. Rehill. The sermon will be preached by Rev. Dr. Turner. The following musical programme will be rendered by the large choir, which is second to none in the city.

Vidi Aquam	Gounod
Kyrie	Guilmant
Veni Creator	Handel
Offertory—Regina Coeli	Cherubini
Sanctus	Guilmant
Benedictus	"
Agnus Dei	"
Recessional—The Heavens Are Telling	Haydn

In the evening musical vespers will be sung by the full choir, and sermon will be preached by Father McNulty.³⁴

All of these compositions fit into the ideals of the Cecilian Movement. For the remainder of the Proper of the mass, Bruenner evidently used Gregorian Chant. Within a year he was chosen to teach the chant to students at the St. Paul Seminary and as the years went by, chant became a standard usage at St. Luke's.

By comparison, the Cathedral offered a Mass by Haydn accompanied by the Danz Orchestra, the type of music explicitly prohibited, despite the renown of Haydn, by the Cecilians because of elaborate repetitions of the liturgical text and by the display element in the music. St. Mary's offered a Mass by Biedermann, likewise unapproved. Both of these churches ended their services with Handel's Hallelujah Chorus; both offered solo singers major opportunity for display, things that Bruenner eschewed.³⁵

Unsuitable musical choices—even when the brilliant selections might be justified by the joy of the Easter Mass—were not going unnoticed. "Caecilianus" wrote after Easter of 1898 a lengthy editorial, "Musica Sacra," for the front page of *Der Wanderer*.³⁶ This essay spared no one, rebuked those churches still using "concert" music, and made a clear distinction between service music and concert music that we have already noted in the early years of Bruenner's career, an ideal that he was to carry for his entire life.

It strikes us as a desecration of the most solemn Easter Festival that in local churches music was performed which could possibly be permitted in sacred concerts but which however should under no conditions be tolerated in the celebration of the sacrifice of the mass. With a few praiseworthy exceptions, true sacred music was not chosen to join in the lofty, "Resurrexit, sicut dixit, Alleluja!" at the local Easter Festival in St. Paul. Cimarosa, Lambilotte, Haydn, Mozart, Gounod, Mascheroni, these were some of the names which shone on the programs. The "churchly" compositions of the first two belong to the class which Joseph von Görres judged with the following words: "This "church music" with its brazen instrumental noise, with its lascivious form and movements, with its frivolous facility, with its empty coquetterie wherein one part outbids the other! It resembles a bayadère who, rocking and dancing, makes sacrifice to the lowest type of Indian idol. The strict serious chant has given way to light companions who drive into the holy places with tumult and wantonness. In short, it is a church music which carries the hallmark of surface paint."³⁷

Cecilian principles guided Bruenner in his own compositions. What might at first seem to have been a limitation became in his hands a positive value. He used each musical element for its basic expressive quality. If we compare the setting of the Sanctus that Carl Maria Weber made in his Mass in E-Flat—found in the old choral library of St. Luke's and therefore known to Bruenner—with the setting Bruenner made in his Requiem, we can see how he made the most of simplest means and how true his musical judgment was.

While both Weber and Bruenner grasped the increasing intensity implied in the repetitions in the text, Weber treated the text as a series of separate words: *Sanctus* - pause - *Sanctus* - pause - *Sanctus* - pause - *Dominus* - pause - *Deus* - pause - *Sabaoth*. Bruenner let

the text run without dramatic breaks and respected the grammar by joining *Sanctus* with *Dominus* and *Deus* with *Sabaoth*. This led quite naturally to the following truly climatic phrase, "*Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua*."

Weber began with orchestra and double chorus in a mysterious pianissimo. He built quickly with a number of chromatically altered chords to the roaring intensity of two choirs and orchestra on the last prolonged fortissimo chord for *Sabaoth*. In addition he embellished that word with a solo cadenza reaching the soprano's high C, something that one might expect in opera.³⁸ By this point Weber had already used his full resources and had within a few measures given this text the same raw power that would have been necessary to power it past the footlights.

Bruenner, on the other hand, used only a four-voice chorus and optional organ, with which he built a more modest climax but one much more suitable to the solemn service of the church. He started with sopranos, added tenors for the second intonation of *Sanctus*, let the complete chorus enter with a slight syncopation for *Sanctus Dominus*, another slight syncopation for *Deus Sabaoth*, which reached a rich sound of four unaccompanied voices, but which then reached its fullest sound only on the following phrase, *pleni sunt coeli et terra*. He did not color the harmony with chromatic alterations (save for one V/V). Within the phrase, *Pleni sunt coeli et terra*, he symbolically marked the word *coeli*, heaven, with a higher pitch in all voices and *terra*, earth by lower pitches—hyperbole, an exceeding of the upper limits to show *heaven*, and hypobole, an exceeding of the lower limits to show *earth*, rhetorical devices of Renaissance composers. Only then did Bruenner employ a few colorful chromatic tones for *Gloria tua*.³⁹

Sanctus.

Andante con moto

Sanctus *Sanctus* *Sanctus Dominus Deus*
Sanctus Dominus Deus
Sanctus Dominus Deus

The first system shows the vocal line with lyrics: "Sanctus Sanctus Sanctus Dominus Deus Sanctus Dominus Deus Sanctus Dominus Deus". The piano accompaniment is in the right hand, with the left hand providing harmonic support. The tempo is marked "Andante con moto".

Andante con moto.

The piano accompaniment for the beginning of the Sanctus, featuring a steady rhythmic pattern in the right hand and harmonic support in the left hand. The tempo is marked "Andante con moto".

f. ff più mosso.

Saba-oth. Ple-ni sunt coe-li et ter--ra glo-ri-a tu-a, glo-ri-a
Sa-ba-oth. Ple-ni sunt coe-li et ter--ra glo-ri-a tu-a, glo-ri-a
Sa-ba-oth. Ple-ni sunt coe-li et ter--ra glo-ri-a tu-a, glo-ri-a
Sa-ba-oth. Ple-ni sunt coe-li et ter--ra glo-ri-a tu-a, glo-ri-a

The second system shows the vocal line with lyrics: "Saba-oth. Ple-ni sunt coe-li et ter--ra glo-ri-a tu-a, glo-ri-a". The piano accompaniment is in the right hand, with the left hand providing harmonic support. The tempo is marked "ff più mosso".

Beginning of Sanctus from Bruenner's Requiem Mass

Bruenner composed masses and smaller sacred works for special occasions: celebrations in the women's schools, the dedication of St. Luke's new church, the first visit of the Archbishop, the Golden Jubilee of the Archbishop, and the funerals of his wife and his pastor. His pastor, Monsignor Byrne, died 12 June 1942 and Bruenner's Requiem Mass was sung at that funeral. Bruenner's wife, Clara, died shortly thereafter, 10 August 1942, and the same Requiem was sung but this time dedicated to her memory. Bruenner's smaller works, hymns and motets, were often intended for particular people such as Matilda Heck, supervisor of music in the St. Paul schools, or Sister Marie Philip of the College of St. Catherine's.

In addition to the church, the Minnesota Music Teachers Association (MMTA) needed music by local composers. In the 1890s leading musicians of the Twin Cities, led by Willard Patton and Gustavus Johnson, had formed a Manuscript Club to perform local compositions. They were also attempting to form an association to help music teachers. It was not until 1901 that they were successful in founding the permanent association MMTA. This group took over the functions of the earlier Manuscript Club and sponsored yearly concerts of music in later years a number of his songs.

Bruenner's secular pieces show some of the same restraint as his church compositions. Only a few were meant for concert use. Prime among these is his setting of Edgar Allen Poe's *Eldorado*, one of a group of five ambitious songs and his only secular piece to be published. When he was requested to have a composition for Louise Homer to sing at a Schubert Club Artist Concert, he submitted several to the renowned contralto. She selected *Eldorado*, the poem of a gallant knight searching for the fabled gilded city which could not be found despite a constant search. Bruenner set the poem with trotting rhythms and in major mode but with a digression into a series of mysterious diminished-seventh chords for the phrases "as his strength failed him at length" and "the grim shadow." Then as the shadow replies "Ride, boldly ride," the music and the marching rhythm resume but fade into the distance as if the knight were riding away on his journey. Suddenly the prevailing major mode is changed to minor for the last chord as a suggestion of the futility of the search.

The *St. Paul Sunday Pioneer Press and Dispatch* for Sunday 5 October 1913 carried a picture of Madame Homer with this announcement:

Madame Louise Homer, prima donna contralto of the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, will appear in concert Friday evening, October 10 at the People's Church under the auspices of the Schubert Club. Madame Homer resided in St. Paul during her childhood days and has many friends here. Her father, Dr. Beatty at one time occupied the pulpit of House of Hope Presbyterian Church, and in a letter to St. Paul friends, Mme. Homer tells of her delight at the thought that she will sing for friends of her girlhood. She is the wife of Sidney Homer, the well-known American composer, and her appearance in St. Paul is interesting both from a social and artistic standpoint.⁴⁰

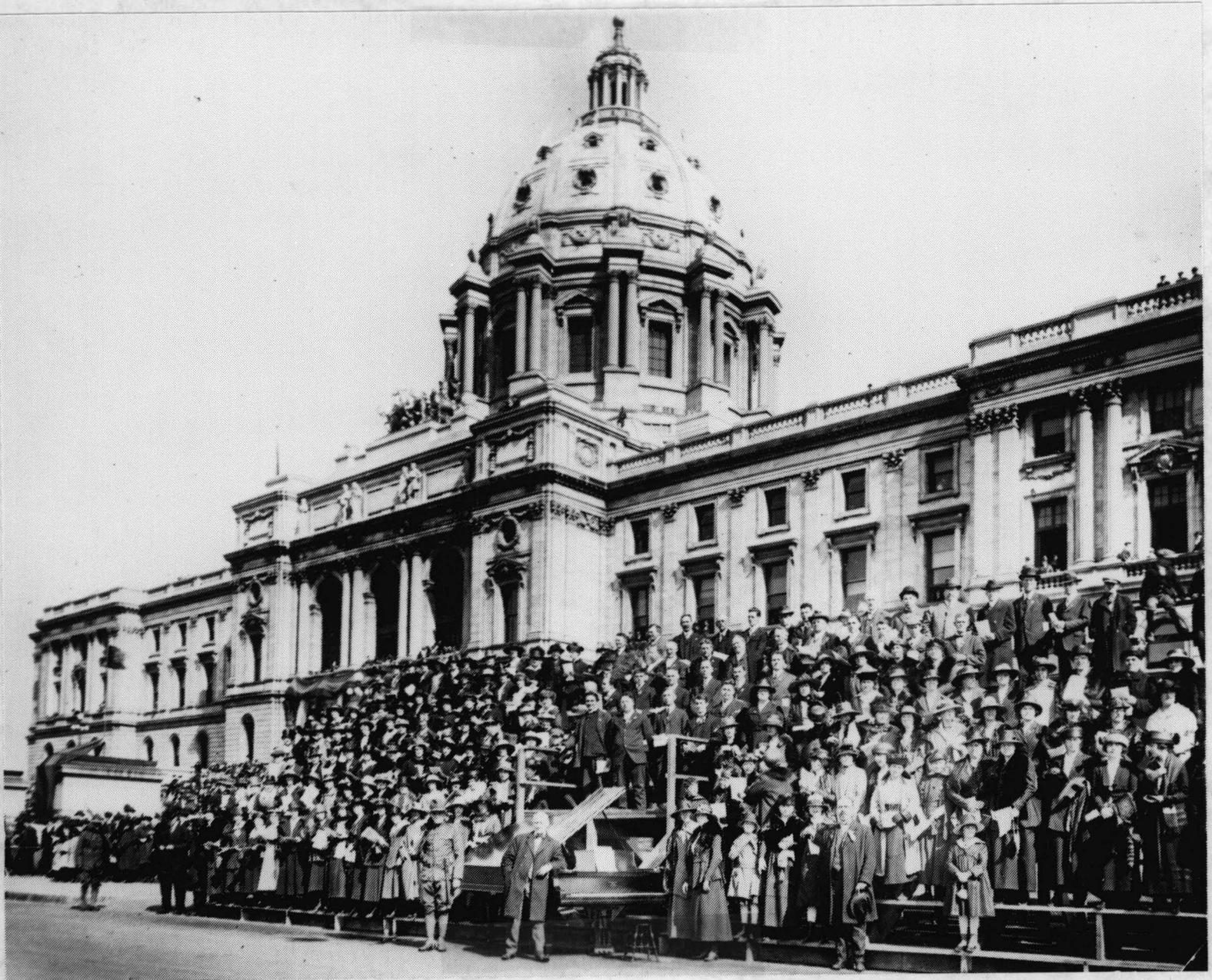
At the concert, Mme. Homer sang *Che faro* from Gluck's *Orfeo*, Lieder of Schubert, Brahms, Strauss, Reger and Wolf, a group of songs by her husband, Sidney Homer, and a final group of Chadwick and Bantock. As encores she sang *Annie Laurie* and her

husband's *When I am Dead*. A Brahms and a Strauss song had to be repeated as did Bruenner's composition.

An added gala and artistic feature also of the evening, calling forth the full share of enthusiasm, was the rendering by Mme. Homer of an original song, a setting of Poe's "Eldorado" composed by Leopold Bruenner, Director of the Choral Art Society. The song proved to be one of admirable worth, musicianly in its construction and highly poetic in conception. It had the melodic charm of a Schubert Lieder [sic] and was also suggestive of Loewe, without any accentuated obligation to either. It was one of the best rendered songs of the evening and at the close of a loudly demanded repetition, Mme. Homer insisted upon calling Mr. Bruenner from the audience to her side to share in the ovation.⁴¹



Father Witt, Founder of the Cecilian Movement
Pictured in *Caecilia*, 1 February 1889
Courtesy University of Minnesota Music Library



Bruenner and the St. Paul Municipal Chorus at the unveiling of
a plaque honoring the World War I dead, State Capitol, ca. 1918-1920
Courtesy Minnesota Historical Society Photo Archive

Chapter 2

A democrat in the Community

Much of the music Bruenner wished to perform involved complex musical styles which demanded extended rehearsals, something possible only with a devoted organization which prepared slowly for special concerts without the pressures of weekly services. With these considerations in mind, Bruenner organized in 1909 the St. Paul Choral Art Society, a group of fifty to sixty trained voices capable of studying and performing difficult *a cappella* works of the past and present. He hoped to show the Twin Cities the finest in choral arts or as the *Musical Courier* said, "the production of vocal masterpieces of the olden times."¹

The new society was announced in the *Courier* for 26 June 1909.² In repertory and quality, the St. Paul Choral Art Society soon proved its worth. In January of 1910, it earned the thanks of the Schubert Club and distinguished itself in a concert at Park Congregational Church.³ His picture published in the fall of 1909 when he was forty shows quite a youthful and intense man.



Bruenner pictured in *Musical America*, 9 October 1909
Courtesy the Bruenner family

The accompanying article read:

No forecast of the season's activities in St. Paul would be complete without mention of the St. Paul Choral Art Society. Leopold G. Bruenner, as its inspiration, founder and director, is a figure to be reckoned with among musicians and the musical public of St. Paul. A man of inherent musical qualities, trained and experienced, and best of all, with the highest ideals for choral work, he has indicated in an excellent concert of *a cappella* choruses what he proposes to do along this line. A body of men and women numbering less than fifty, chosen from a large number of applicants, has been selected and held together by a common love for choral work and the leadership of a man of high ideals and undeviating exactness in his requirements. So good was the impression made by the society at its last concert that the Schubert Club's conservative and exacting program committee has engaged it for an appearance in its series of concerts this season.⁴

Both the Schubert Club of St. Paul and its Minneapolis sister, the Thursday Musical,⁵ had for years been sponsoring educational programs, lectures and concerts. Members knew and experienced great music; therefore, the notice above is not idle boosterism of an isolated town of the Midwest. The way had been prepared for a "choral art" program and Bruenner's training and background led him to significant artistic achievements. By 1912, the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* could boast.⁶

The Choral Art Society is one of the most important artistic assets of the musical life of this city. It stands for the highest and best in the realm of choral singing. Its repertoire is exhaustive and scholastic in size and scope. Within its dimensions are all the greatest and most inspiring of the choral writers from Palestrina down to the present century inclusive. Indeed last night's program began with Palestrina and concluded with numbers by MacDowell and Elgar of the twentieth century. Whatever this body of well-trained singers attempts is distinguished by a certain authority of correct mastery and artistic finish. As a choir they are well balanced in quantity of tone, and, moreover, the latter is always, with rare exceptions, of an even, finely sustained quality that betokens an individual musicianship among the members of more than average worth. The sopranos are clear, accurate of pitch and never shrill, though sometimes slightly too loud on attacks which are marked otherwise. The altos are of noticeably rich and beautiful quality, and subdued in tone, as are also the excellent group of tenors and basses. They sing for the most part as one voice, are precise in tempo, and attack with musicianly promptness, also as one voice.

During the time of this stellar chorus (which lasted until World War I),⁷ Bruenner was engaged in several extra endeavors: the Knights of Columbus Chorus of 140 voices and the Stillwater Choral Society. The Knights performed a number of light operas or operettas such as *The Chimes of Normandy* and *The Yeomen of the Guard*.⁸ The Stillwater Society managed the not-so-demanding *Rose Maiden*.

As if this activity were not enough when added to his duties at St. Luke's, Bruenner also served two Catholic schools, St. Catherine's College and Visitation Convent Academy. For these two women's schools, he wrote masses for treble voices with organ accompaniment: *Mass in honor of St. Catherine of Alexandria* for the Sisters of St. Joseph at the College of

St. Catherine and the *Mass in honor of St. Francis de Sales* for the Sisters of the Visitation at Visitation Convent. Though these masses are no longer employed with the schools since the change into the vernacular language for the Catholic liturgy, many of the older members of the communities still remember them fondly.⁹ He chose music for these schools according to his highest ideals. Thus for a Lenten Musical of 11 and 12 March 1917 at St. Catherine's, a pianist, string orchestra, chorus and soloists from the student body performed:¹⁰

Stabat Mater
Adoramus Te Christe
Jesu, Rex Admirabilis
The Daughter of Jairus

Pergolesi
Orlando di Lasso
Palestrina
Rheinberger

From time to time, he was called upon for special occasions such as the Twenty-Fifth Festival of the Singer's League of the Northwest (*Bundesfest des Saengerbundes des Nordwestens*). This deserves special mention. Germany throughout the nineteenth century had developed an amazing number of city choruses, choral unions (*Vereine*) and choral competitions or festivals (*Saengerfeste*) that not only served music but also sociability (*Gemütlichkeit*). Choruses from various cities would flock to the host city for some days of music and revelry. It was up to the host city to provide the finest music and the finest facilities possible.

German-Americans continued these traditions. For this twenty-fifth festival,¹¹ the local society used the Minneapolis Symphony as its greatest attraction. The meeting included 95 clubs assembled to form a chorus of 1,750 male voices. A festival chorus of the Twin Cities, 400 members strong, appeared several times under conductors, Harmsen, Maenner and Bruenner. The *Empfangschor* (Reception or Host Choir) under Bruenner's direction sang Schubert's *Miriam's Siegesgesang* and Bruch's *Schön Ellen*¹² on 24 July 1912, the first day of the four-day festival.

The motto on the cover of the program indicated the way in which Germans viewed their musical heritage.

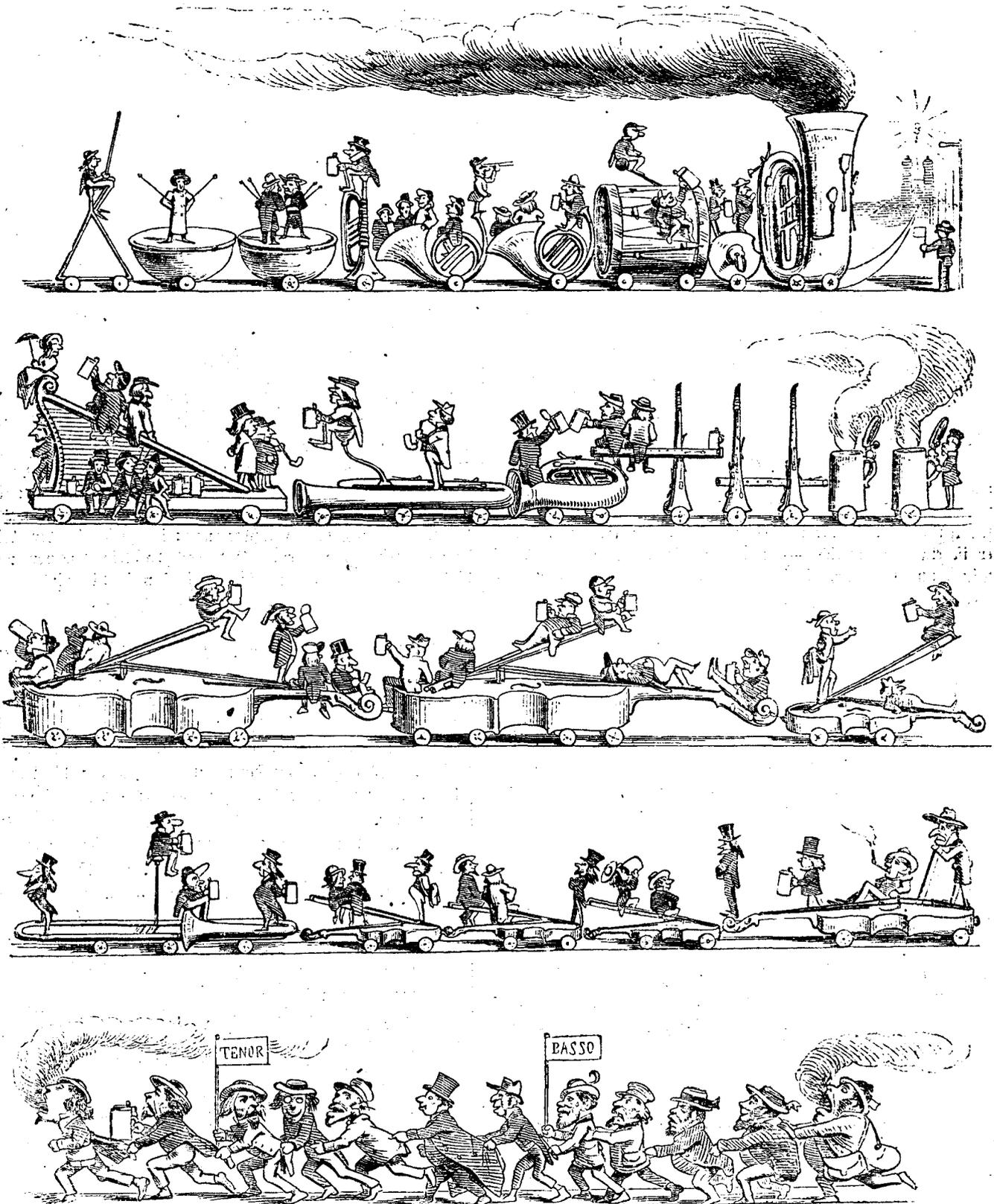
O grüne fort
und blühe lang,
In unser'm Bund
Du deutscher Sang.

Oh green again
and blossom long,
Within our band
thou German song.

A three-stanza paean within the program claimed that the German Lied would bring peace and love to the world, that it was sent from God to reconcile the peoples of the world, a nineteenth-century view of the powers of harmony.

Deutsches Lied, an jenem Tag
Wogen deine Melodien,
Jubeln über Wald und Hag
Und wo hell die Sterne glühen,
In des Lichtes ew'gem Land
Klingst du uns in Feiertönen,
Deutsches Lied, von Gott gesandt,
Um die Völker zu versöhnen.

German Lied, upon that day
Billow forth your melodies,
Joyous through the wood and mead
And where bright the stars do gleam,
In the eternal land of light
Ring thou forth in festive strain
German Lied, sent here from God,
Uniting nations once again.



A Cartoon Showing the Preparation for a Music Festival in Germany
"The Extra-Train for the Music Festival in Munich"

Fliegende Blätter, Vol. 23 (1855), p. 32

With Bruenner's devotion to American ideals, it is doubtful that he attributed as much significance to Germany as the foregoing would suggest. Still he unquestionably was imbued with the same conviction that music was a "calling" and represented one of the finest things in life. Older people today still recall that at his rehearsals with students he would often get so engrossed with the music that he failed to see some of the youngsters acting up.



Bruenner's achievements as a choral conductor soon brought him to the attention of his colleagues who invited him to assume leadership positions in the Minnesota Music Teachers Association, MMTA. During three years, 1909-1912, Bruenner helped plan the convention programs, a delicate task that required one to adjust the demands of attention-seeking composers and performers with the requisites of worthy music. Of course, he had also to put together balanced programs suitable for the ticket-buying public invited to the association's concerts.

At the MMTA convention of 1911, Bruenner's St. Paul Choral Art Society performed a program with repertory both old and new, an inspiring resumé of music history.

"Break Forth O Beauteous, Heavenly Light"	Bach
Ave Verum 1521	Josquin de Pres
Adoramus Te 1594	Palestrina
Caligaverunt oculi mei 1806	Michael Haydn
Cherubim Song	Tchaikowsky
O Villanella 1586	Claude le Jeune
Matona mia cara 1564	Orlando di Lasso
"Come Lovers, Follow Me," 1594	Thomas Morley
"I Will No More Come to Thee"	Thomas Morley
Sie ist mir lieb 1621	Praetorius
Entflieh mit mir	Mendelssohn
Es fiel ein Reif	Mendelssohn
Auf ihrem Grab	Mendelssohn
Nachtlied	Rheinberger
"O Happy Eyes"	Elgar
"Northern Slumber Song"	MacDowell
"The Brook"	MacDowell

With such programs, Bruenner became a mentor his colleagues. At this time little chance to hear early music existed. Much of that repertory was just being transcribed into modern notation. Such music held special appeal to MMTA member, Donald Ferguson, later to be a distinguished music historian.

The association members recognized the musical and leadership abilities of Bruenner and elected him president. It was appropriate and advantageous to the group that they would

choose someone at the peak of his fame. Bruenner assumed his duties in 1914 at a crucial moment for the organization. The newly-incorporated group was starting publication of its bi-monthly magazine *Minnesota Music* and was instituting—with considerable fear—its certification program, the first one in the nation for music teachers. The steady hand and gentle persuasive voice of Bruenner, “Prince of Good Fellows,”¹³ carried them through this period successfully.



When the country declared war in 1917, the large Minnesota population of German extraction found itself in the position of being suspect by its neighbors. Many long-time citizens still had relatives in Germany; many read newspapers in what for them was their native language. Now they were called upon to prove their loyalty with dire consequences for those who could not. Each family had its own special experience. My father and mother rented a house from an old German gentleman, Mr. Wartenburg, whose home was defaced with terrible slogans in yellow paint by a group of ultra-loyalists. The group then came to my mother and demanded that since our house was owned by this elderly man, she must display the American flag. Deeply involved in Red Cross work, she went to her supervisor who told her to do nothing and the Red Cross would take care of this unruly group. My father, raised in a bilingual family, continued to speak German to those of his patients who needed it but discontinued its use otherwise. A great uncle, long naturalized, burned his picture of the Kaiser on the day that his son joined the army. Such were the passions of the moment.

Bruenner quickly showed his support of Americanism by becoming President of the St. Paul Patriotic Singing Society. His feelings for democracy ran deep. As early as 1915, he had composed words and music for a patriotic hymn which began:

Great mother of a new-born race,
All earth shall be thy dwelling place.
Democracy, thy holy name
Shall set the continents aflame...

His devotion to democracy ran as deep as his devotion to the Cecilian cause. Religious faith and democratic faith were the twin pillars of his life. Those who were educated during the 1890s often had a proud confidence in the American way. Bruenner’s friend, Donald Ferguson devoted two major papers and one musical composition to the topic. Bruenner considered himself American, not German-American. Later after the Second World War, his children offered him the chance to return and visit Germany. He declined.

In late August of 1918, Bruenner received a letter, one of a group sent to prominent musicians in the state by the Public Safety Commission, requesting a musician to serve as State Director of Liberty Choruses.¹⁴ This came just as Bruenner was leaving for a vacation and was due at the train, none the less, he sent a hasty note to “please consider me at your service unconditionally as we must win the war.” Within a few days, he wrote from his vacation home in Forest Lake:

I am now choral director in two private schools with choruses of 175 and 350 students. I have organized community singing in St. Paul and am chairman of the National Song Committee for the city. Expect to return from my vacation September 3 and will be glad to call on you prior to leaving for Great Lakes Training Station, where I intend to investigate choral work, which is advertised as the best in the country. If I can be of service please command me; my heart and soul are wrapt up in this work.¹⁵

On 11 September 1918, Charles W. Henke, the Publicity Director for the commission wrote back:

After going over a variety of applications and the qualifications of the many patriotic men and women who were so kind as to offer their services to the Commission as State Director for Liberty Choruses and Community Singing, I feel certain that we cannot do any better than tender you the appointment...you are given full sway in the matter and such items of expense as postage, printing, etc., will be paid by the Commission, and the clerical work handled from this office under the direction of this department at your suggestion.

As with practically all correspondence from this office, the typist placed at the bottom of the page: **W E M U S T W I N T H E W A R**. The situation was grim. Each day the newspapers carried long lists of casualties¹⁶ and the war seemed to be deadlocked—though only a short time later the allied forces would break through the German lines definitively.

The Minnesota commission had lagged behind national efforts in musical matters and had to be prodded into action.¹⁷ The goals however were clear:

Community singing for war purposes has passed the stage of experiment. It is an asset in speaking campaigns, always assuring a large and enthusiastic attendance at patriotic meetings. It gives the people of the nation an opportunity to learn and sing the songs of the nation; it stirs the spirit of patriotism, as hardly anything else can, and it promotes the spirit of unity in each community, without which none can do successful war work.¹⁸

Bruenner's appointment was soon publicized in the newspapers. An article in the 21 September issue of *Minnesota in the War* brought a commendation from the Council of National Defense.¹⁹ On the same day, Bruenner's first letters went out to the county directors of the Public Safety Commission asking for names of possible sing-leaders. Then he had to select songs, arrange for the printing of song sheets, ask for permissions from various publishers, answer all sorts of questions from the various towns, appoint directors, deal with would-be composers and soloists,²⁰ and settle disputes—onerous tasks for one serving without salary, tasks only possible with the help of the commission's clerical staff.

Bruenner examined song sheets from several sources especially the Community Singing Association of Pennsylvania and eventually arrived at a collection of patriotic and sentimental favorites:

The Star Spangled Banner
Battle Hymn of the Republic
Columbia the Gem of the Ocean
America
Home, Sweet Home
Old Black Joe

Old Folks at Home
My Old Kentucky Home
There's a Long, Long Trail
The Marseillaise
Keep the Home-Fires Burning
Smile, Smile, Smile
Over There²¹

The Public Safety Commission though outwardly concerned with loyalty and the war effort also had a somewhat hidden agenda, the suppression of certain "left-wing" and labor groups: the IWW—International Workers of the World, often called the Wobblies or, as my father would say, "I Won't Work"—and the Nonpartisan League. This opposition placed the Minnesota group at odds with the national commission which was trying to enlist labor in the war effort.²² Even in regard to music, the Minnesota commission evidently felt that it must combat radicalism. Henke wrote to several offices and finally received two copies of the *I.W.W. Song Book* (the Joe Hill Edition) from the Department of Justice in Washington, DC.²³ Here he could read the songs of the opposition and take steps to return singers to "right thinking." Or should we say right-wing thinking?

The *I.W.W. Song Book* had only words (as did the community song sheets) but these were not the texts of the old favorites. They carried a political message. *Old Black Joe* became:

Gone are the days when the master class could say,
"We'll work you long hours for little pay;
We'll work you all day and half the night as well."
But I hear the workers' voices saying, "You will, like Hell."
For we're going, we're going to take an eight hour day.
We surely will surprise the Boss come first of May.

Along with *The Red Flag* (to "Maryland, my Maryland") were such songs as *We come* (to the "Toreador Song"), *A Dream* (to "The Holy City"), and many others. Even the *Star Spangled Banner* was reworked to become:

And the BANNER OF LABOR will surely soon wave
O'er the land that is free, from the master and slave.

The answer for the community choruses to these left-wing challenges was to continue to sing the old songs in the traditional manner.

The choruses were hardly established when the armistice was signed and since that was close to Thanksgiving Day, the national commission suggested that that become a day of thanks for the victory. Afterwards on 9 December 1918 Bruenner sent another circular letter recommending continuation of these choruses that had proved so inspiring to public spirit. However, this was not to be. Already by the time of the armistice, the newspapers were carrying accounts of the Spanish flu and by Christmas time, an influenza epidemic was upon the nation. Director after director wrote saying that he was sick or that it seemed imprudent to gather people together during the crisis So gradually, the community sings and the Public Safety Commission itself faded from sight.

The national singing campaign had, however, sparked a renewed interest in choral singing²⁴ and even as the Liberty Choruses were dying, Mayor Hodgson of St. Paul, responded to the patriotic musical urge and the new-found enthusiasm for what civic organizations²⁵ could accomplish. He relied most particularly upon suggestions of his

secretary, Gustav B. Wollan, a choral enthusiast, and of Commissioner James M. Clancy. The mayor approved the establishment of a municipal chorus under the jurisdiction of Clancy's Department of Parks, Playgrounds and Public Buildings.²⁶ Several other activists for song insured the success of the new chorus—prime among them the secretary for the group, John Jaeger, tenor, of Hamline University and W. W. Norton, bass, of the St. Paul Community Sing, an organizer for the War Camp Community Service. In mid-summer of 1918, Norton had spoken of:

the power of music in training our fighting forces, of the advantages of the "sing" over other forms in that its power lies in the active participation by all people. In ideal conditions, it is the embodiment of true democracy.²⁷

He believed further that simple popular music could lead to the desire for more serious music—even to that of a Bach choir!

Before the exigencies of the war, cities had tried various cooperative municipal endeavors. Among the first in music was a municipal program in Baltimore in 1915 which resulted ultimately in the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra.²⁸ Bruenner's group in St. Paul became the first *municipal* chorus established in the United States²⁹ and was among the most thriving. By 1924, St. Paul appropriated yearly \$25,000 toward its music program, \$20,000 for two summer bands, \$2,000 toward two winter bands, \$2,000 for the Municipal Chorus, and \$1,000 for singing and entertainment.³⁰

The first season of the St. Paul Municipal Chorus revealed a direct connection with the war effort. Some of the original volunteer singers had the "belief that the Chorus was to sing only popular and patriotic songs in unison having confused it with the familiar community sings." Only five weeks after its organization, the group with a new membership of choral singers started a remarkable year.³¹

February 12—Lincoln Day Celebration, Auditorium.
February 22—Washington Day Celebration, Auditorium
March 23—Library Week, Opening Reception, Public Library
April 24—Free Municipal Entertainment with St. Paul Turners, Auditorium
May 8—Home Coming Celebration for "Those Who Served," Special stand, front of State Capitol
May 30—Memorial Day Exercises, Auditorium
June 23—For Convalescent Soldiers, Fort Snelling
July 4—Fourth of July Celebration, Phalen Park
July 21—Free Concert, Langford Park
July 28—Free Concert, Terrace Park
August 11—With Minnesota State Band, Phalen Park
August 15—With Albrecht's Concert Band, Como Park
August 30-31—State Peace Jubilee Sing, Minnesota State Fair
September 17—Constitution Day Celebration, Auditorium
November 3—Rendered Cowen's Cantata, "The Rose Maiden," with Soloists and Orchestra, Auditorium
November 11—Sang in Parade, Armistice Day Celebration
November 27—Thanksgiving Day Patriotic Celebration, Auditorium
December 15—Concert and Social Evening, Palace Playgrounds
December 26—Community Christmas Festival, Auditorium

Bruenner directed over 100 concerts³² until the summer of 1927 when he resigned in favor of Christopher Herse.³³ The *St. Paul Dispatch* of 19 July 1927 reported that "Mr.

Bruenner was one of the first to conceive the plan for a large municipal singing organization here, and with others he worked enthusiastically until the chorus became a reality." A slightly earlier account summarized:

The chorus consists of 218 voices and made its first public appearance in April 1920, when the *Bohemian Girl*³⁴ was presented in the Municipal Auditorium to a capacity house. Since then the chorus has presented, *The Messiah*, four times, *The Creation*, twice, *The Rosemaiden*,³⁵ twice, *Elijah*, once, *The Geisha*,³⁶ once, *Hiawatha's Wedding and Hiawatha's Departure*,³⁷ once, and a great number of part-songs in Italian, Latin, German and English. These performances were given at various civic entertainments during the past few years. For the ensuing season 1925-1926 preparatory classes will be organized from which the students will be graduated into the chorus and the officers hope by this means that the chorus will gradually be increased to 500 voices.³⁸

For a concert at Como Park 15 July 1925, 10,000 people attended. The St. Paul Auditorium, site of other concerts, also had about the same seating possibility but proved an unwieldy place for concerts although the chorus gave a number of concerts there with the municipal organist, Chandler Goldthwaite. Sometimes they had the assistance of Minneapolis Symphony orchestral players and, in 1924 and 1925, they joined with the symphony chorus and performed *Messiah* with the Minneapolis Symphony under the direction of Henri Verbrugghen, conductor of the symphony.

The repertory for this chorus was not drawn from Renaissance and modern *a cappella* masterworks as was that of the Choral Art Society. It regularly used piano accompaniment. The group appeared on many occasions to sing only a few selected numbers, but they also gave extended oratorios and cantatas such as Hugo Goodwin's *From Easter to Pentecost*. Cowen's Cantata, *The Rose Maiden*, was their centerpiece for the First Civic Music Week in St. Paul 23-26 October 1921. It followed an organ recital by Chandler Goldthwaite,³⁹ and a Band Concert, Parade, and Community Sing at Rice Park, and was succeeded by a Scandinavian Night with the Normaendes and Vega Singing Societies, a program by the Pupils of the St. Paul Public Schools—supervised by Elsie Shawe, another enthusiast for patriotic music—a Schubert Club Concert, and finally a Symphony Night.

WING'S IMPRESSIONS OF "THE GEISHA" PRINCIPALS



Cartoon of Bruenner conducting from the St.. Paul Papers
Courtesy Minnesota Historical Society

The congregation of St. Luke's, Bruenner's church, dedicated a new building in October of 1926. A Casavant Organ became the musical centerpiece of the edifice. At that point, Bruenner's church work had to take precedence over his civic duties⁴⁰ and he tendered his resignation to the St. Paul Municipal Chorus in July of 1927. The chorus, in grateful recognition, gave him a dinner, a dance, and presented him with a gold-mounted ebony baton. The chorus continued to remember him and sent flowers at the time of his daughter's death in December of 1930. In his thank-you note, he said, "The interests of the chorus are always near to our hearts and we wish you every success in whatever you may undertake." To him, these great civic occasions were like public expressions of democracy in action. Only his devotion to faith and church could supercede his municipal activities.



From 1930 on, Bruenner found his life centered more and more upon his church position where many occasions were celebrated with his music. Some, such as the investiture of Father J. J. Cullinan as Papal Prelate on 22 June 1947 were graced by a small string ensemble that Bruenner had organized. The picture below shows a string ensemble: First Violins: Mrs. E. B. Moon, Mrs. Thomas J. Towle, Miss Helen Hart, Second Violins: Rev. Russell Doerrer, Mr. Hubert Hubert, Mr. Michael T. Hoxmeier, Piano: Miss Matilda Becker, Cello: Mr. Emmett O'Connor.



Ensemble Picture (Kenneth M. Wright Studios)
Courtesy Minnesota Historical Society

On the occasion of fifty years of service, St. Luke's recognized their venerable musical director with special events reported 16 November 1947 by the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*.

A 78-year old musician who has been organist and choirmaster at St. Luke's Catholic church 50 years will be honored today by the parish. He is Leopold Bruenner, who for half a century has played wedding marches, funeral music and music associated with the great church holidays for St. Luke's and directed its choirs. The observance of his half-century in the choir loft will begin with a solemn high mass at 11 a.m. Monsignor John J. Cullinan, pastor, will celebrate the mass and preach the sermon. The musical service will be made up exclusively of Prof. Bruenner's compositions, including his "Mass in Honor of St. Therese." Prof. Bruenner will be at the organ. At 7 p.m. there will be a parish reception in his honor in St. Luke's school hall, Portland and Victoria.

Throughout his life, Bruenner composed songs for personal friends. Regrettably not all will be recovered since they were given freely as gifts to now-scattered families. A rather disproportionate number of the recovered compositions went to his close friends, the Dr. James Ferguson family (a medical doctor, not related to Donald Ferguson). These were hymns for the home, songs for anniversaries and holidays, often inscribed with a few words of dedication and some colorful decoration. They are all for medium voice and have relatively simple piano accompaniments, never pretentious nor utterly bland. A number of these are lullabies or songs about children, a genre much favored by the cultured generation in their concept of domestic bliss.

On Bruenner's sixty-fifth anniversary as choirmaster-organist, he was honored by a concert given on 17 December 1956 in the Jeanne d'Arc Auditorium of the College of Saint Catherine by The Catholic Choirmasters' Chorale directed by Rev. Richard J. Schuler. This included a group of Renaissance polyphonic works representing the highest Cecilian ideals, an address by the Right Reverend Monsignor John Cullinan, Pastor of Saint Luke's Church, and the following compositions by Bruenner.⁴¹

1. Two Hymns: Ave Maris Stella
Jesu Dulcis Memoria
2. Four sacred Songs: Ave Maria
Hark, Hark My soul
In Paradisum
Ave Maria
3. Five lullabies: A German Cradle Song
Cradle Song for Elizabeth
Fairy and Child
An Irish Cradle Song
Du bist wie eine Blume
4. Mass in honor of the Little Flower
Kyrie—Gloria—Credo—Sanctus—Benedictus—Agnus Dei
5. Song of Freedom

No more fitting portrait of Bruenner can be found than that before the doors of St. Luke's, a photo which shows his earnest but gentle and outgoing nature.⁴² In 1956, his eighty-seventh year, Bruenner completed his lengthy service to ecclesiastical music. In recognition, he received Pope Pius XII's blessing, an inscribed manuscript lettered in red and blue and embellished with a picture of the Holy Father and the Church of St. Peter in Rome "on the occasion of his sixty-fifth anniversary of teaching Sacred Music." In his ninety-second year, the choir of St. Luke's under the direction of Herm Sittard (who had been Bruenner's student from 1934 to 1939) presented him with a copy of their recording, "Christmas at St. Luke's." Mr. Bruenner died at his home 304 Brimhall St., St. Paul, 21 November 1963, at the age of 94 and was buried in Calvary Cemetery after services at St. Luke's 25 November 1963.⁴³



Bruenner at the doors of St. Luke's
Courtesy the Bruenner Family

The cultured generation sheltered many gentle souls who saw their calling in life as one of service and education in the cause of the deity and humanity. These people changed the musical taste from the glee club style to one of serious expressive purpose without turning their backs on the entertainment styles. Among these, Bruenner, with his service to his

friends, his fellowmen, his country and his church, stands prominent. A hymn to the Little Flower, penned by Monsignor James C. Byrne, his pastor, and set by him to music of utter simplicity, embodies his belief. It speaks of the red and white roses of the Little Flower—"Red are gifts of body lowly, White are gifts of grace divine," *red* the symbol of his civic life, *white* of his spiritual one: democrat and Cecilian.



N.B. An earlier and somewhat incorrect version of this essay was published without my permission and editorial assistance in the 56th volume of the *Würzburger Diözesan-Geschichtsblätter*.

List of Works

Ms = Manuscript
 Pr = Print
 Bl=Blueprint
 MnHi = Minnesota Historical Soc.
 MnMo = Minneapolis Public Library
 (old music)
 NN = New York Public Library
 Church of St. Agnes
 Archives of the College of St. Catherine
 DLC = Library of Congress

Masses

Ms. or Print	Title	Dedication & Date Publisher	For	Location
Ms Pr	Mass in Honor of St. Catherine of Alexandria	To the Sisters of St. Joseph at the College of St. Catherine Mpls: Paul A. Schmitt, 1926	2-part chorus of equal voices with organ	St. Catherine's MnHi, DLC
Pr	Mass in Honor of St. Francis de Sales	To the Sisters of the Visitation, Visitation Convent Mpls: Paul A. Schmitt, 1926	2-part chorus of equal voices with organ	DLC
Ms	Mass in Honor of St. Luke	Dedicated to Monsignor Byrne For the Dedication of St. Luke's Church 3 Oct. 1926		
Ms	Mass in honor of Saint Theresa "Little Flower of Jesus"	8 Dec 1931 "To Archbishop Murray" sung for the first time on the Archbishop's visit to St. Luke's, spring of 1932	SATB, organ	St. Agnes
Ms	Requiem Mass	To the memory of Clara Bruenner	SATB, organ	MnHi

Hymns and Motets

Ms	Ave Maria	To Miss Matilda Heck St. Paul, Feast of the Ephiphany, 1942	Mezzo- soprano and organ Tenor & Bass parts separate	MnHi
Ms	Ave Maris Stella		SATB	St. Agnes
Ms	Christ our King		SATB	St. Catherine's
Ms	Come Holy Spirit	Text and Music by Leopold Bruenner	SATB	St. Catherine's
Ms	Domine Jesu Christe		Solo with organ	MnHi
Ms	Domine, Jesu Christe		S, organ also as SATB	MnHi
Ms	Ecce Sacerdos	Pontifical Mass 25 Oct 1938 Golden Jubilee of St. Luke's Archbishop Murray		
Ms	Flos de radice Jesse	arr. by Fr. Missia Oct. 1st, 1943	SATB	MnHi
Ms	Hail King of Angels	Poem by Leopold Bruenner	4 voice	MnHi
Ms	Hark, hark my soul (Faber)	Christmas 1955, ut in omnibus glorificatur Deus, with best wishes sincerely yours, received by Sr. Marie Philip	SATB	St. Catherine's MnHi
Ms	In Paradisum		4 voice	MnHi
Ms	Jesu dulcis memoria		SATB	St. Agnes
Ms	Jesu tibi sit gloria		SATB	MnHi
Ms	Juravit Dominus		4 voice	MnHi
Ms	Lead Kindly Light (John Henry Newman)	sent to Sr. Marie Philip	SATB	St. Catherine's
Ms	O Lord, I am not worthy	26 July 1951	SATB	
Ms	O Paradise		SATB	MnHi
Ms	Offertory "Coelertis Urbes Jerusalem"	Pontifical Mass 25 Oct 1938 Golden Jubilee of St. Luke's Archbishop Murray		
Ms	Our Father	in D in C, to Sr. Marie Philip, March 19, 1951	SATB	St. Catherine's MnHi
Ms.	Regina Coeli		SATB	MnHi

Sacred Songs

Ms	Grace Before Meal "Bless us, or Lord"	"Written for the Ferguson family in grateful appreciation of the delightful dinner I enjoyed at their home on my birthday, March 16th 1950	Med Vc, piano	MnHi
Ms	Hymn to the Little Flower "Sweetly blow the airs"	Poem by Mons. James C. Byrne	SATB	St. Agnes, MnHi
Ms	O Lord I am not worthy	St. Paul, July 26th, 1951	SATB	MnHi
Ms	Our Father (same as hymn above)	"For Mrs. J. C. Ferguson" 9 February 1950	SATB	MnHi
Ms	Psalm 136 English version "Upon the Waters of Babylon	Respectfully dedicated to the Dean of the College of St. Catherine, Sr. Antonia	Female chorus, Violin, harp & Organ	St. Catherine's score, harp part, bl of voice parts

Patriotic Songs

Ms	Democracy "Great mother of a newborn race"	2 Aug 1915	Piano score with words	MnHi
Pr	Song of Freedom "Unfold the flag of Freedom" First two stanzas by Mary Perry King, text of third stanza by Leopold b. Bruenner	"To Mr. President and Mrs. Dwight D. Eisenhower" Pub. by Leopold G. Bruenner 304 Brimhall Street St. Paul 5, Minnesota	SATB Fanfare intro.	MnHi, DLC

Songs

Ms	A German Cradle Song			
Ms	A Scotch Folk Song			
Ms	An Irish Cradle Song			
Pr	Cradle Song	"To My Elizabeth" Acme Publishing 304 Brimhall Avenue St. Paul, Minnesota	Med Vc, piano	MnHi Sheet Music #106
Ms	Du (Thou)	Words by Johanna Ambrosius		
Ms	Du bist wie eine Blume	Heine		

Pr	Eldorado	Words by Edgar Allen Poe Listed as Op. 1, No. 5 but no further contract is on file To Mrs. W. S. Briggs coyright 1915, John Church Company	Low/Medium Vc, piano	Archives of Theodore Presser Co. Bryn Mawr PA Archives of the Edgar Allen Poe Society of Baltimore NN, MnMo
Ms	Es war ein alter Koenig			
Ms.	Eternal Valentine "Always lovely, always bright" Poem by Robert Cary	"Dedicated to Dr. James C. Ferguson and Mrs. James C. Ferguson on the occasion of their silver wedding anniversary June 3rd 1947	S, piano	MnHi
Ms	Fairy and Child			
Ms	Flames "The summer is gone with its glad desire" Poem by Mary Aldis	"To Mrs. James C. Ferguson"	Med Vc, piano	MnHi
Ms	Gondola Song	Words by Clinton Scallard		
Ms	Moon so Round and Yellow poet unknown	For Bert and Madeleine and their children	Med Vc, piano	MnHi
Ms	My Luve is like a Red, Red Rose Poem by Robert Burns	"To Mrs. James Cory Ferguson. For James to sing to you"	Med Vc, piano	MnHi
Ms	O Go Little Birdie	"To Mrs. J. C. Ferguson, Christmas 1948. That all your wishes may come true is the wish of the writer of this little ditty"	Med Vc, piano	MnHi
Ms	O, Dinna Ask Me Text by John Dunlap	"To Mrs. James Cory Ferguson. For you to sing to James, Valentine's Day 1947	Med Vc, piano	MnHi
Ms	The Journey			
Ms	The Khan			

Ms	The Rock-A-By Lady Poem by Eugene Field	"To Doctor and Mrs. J. C. Ferguson and their children 4 July 1925	Med Vc, piano	MnHi
Ms	There is no Music in my Heart			
Ms	What would I Carry	Words by Margaret Garrin		

Secular Choruses

Ms	Crossing the Bar (Tennyson)		3-part women's chorus, violin obbl.	St. Catherine's voice parts only, accompaniment missing
Bl	Hymn to the Night (Longfellow)	"I heard the trailing garments of the Night"	4-part women's chorus	St. Catherine's voice parts only, accompaniment missing
Ms	Requiem Words by Robert Louis Stevenson	St. Paul, 1930	4 voices a cappella	MnHi Sheet Music #104
Ms	Swing Low, Sweet Chariot	Slave Song	arr. for women's chorus and piano accompaniment	St. Catherine's
Ms	The Devon Maid			

Violin and Piano

Ms. or Print	Title	Dedication & Date Publisher	For	Location
Ms	A Little Cradle Song	For Helen Kneffner and her baby, with permission Sr. M. Renata, on the Feast of St. Leopold, Nov. 15, 1916	Violin, piano	St. Catherine's
Ms	Indian Dance	"to Dr. J. C. Ferguson"	Violin, piano	MnHi better copy St. Catherine's
Ms	Sunday Evening	To Sister Renata, St. Patrick's Day, 1917	Violin, piano	St. Catherine's

Waldo Selden Pratt and Charles N. Boyd, eds. "Leopold Bruenner," *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, American Supplement* (Philadelphia: Theodore Presser, 1920)

A number of the manuscripts were presented to Mr. Laudon by the Bruenner family and several others were entrusted to him by Mrs. Henry Olsen, (Katherine Fitzpatrick), long-time soprano soloist of the St. Luke's Church, who specifically wanted them held in some safe place. All of these have now been acquired by the Minnesota Historical Society.

Notes for Chapter 1

- 1 In later years Bruenner used the name Guido, not his baptismal name of Georg. Whether this was his own personal choice, a family consideration, or possibly his tribute to Guido d'Arezzo, the eleventh-century ecclesiastic who initiated the solmization method of singing, is not known.
- 2 Information from the Matrikel der Pfarrei Würzburg, St. Peter/Paul, Bd. A8, Taufen 1850-70, Eintrag S. 218 Nr. 41 kindly sent through the offices of Erik Soder, the Diocesan Archivist. The priest was Father Schneider, the godfather, Leopold Stehling. The father's occupation is listed as *Produkt Händler*.
- 3 The history of this institution was written by Dr. Kliebert, *Die Kgl. Musikschule Würzburg. Ihre Gründung, Entwicklung und Neugestaltung. Denkschrift aus Anlass 100jährigen Bestehens der Anstalt 1804-1904*.
- 4 The Wohlfahrt family was noted for its piano pedagogical material. The founder of the dynasty was Heinrich (1797-1883). While it is chronologically possible that Bruenner studied with him, it is more likely that he studied with one of his sons, Robert or Franz, about whom little is known.
- 5 Kliebert, pp. 139-144. The information on his teachers comes from the bulletin of the Institute of Musical Art, St. Paul, Season 1927-1928, found in the Minnesota Historical Society Pamphlet Collection, *MT4.
- 6 It is quite possible that Bruenner had some personal ties with people in the area of St. John's. There was a continual exchange between the old and the new country with news flowing both directions. See pp. 1-29 of *Albany, the Heart of Minnesota* issued by the Albany Heritage Society in 1991.
- 7 Alexius Hoffmann, *St. John's University. Collegeville, Minnesota. A Sketch of its History*, (Collegeville: Record Press, 1907), pp. 71-72.
- 8 *Ibid.*, pp. 72-73. With the building of the new church, the old one has now been converted into a Great Hall.
- 9 *Ibid.*, p. 75.
- 10 Eighteenth Annual Catalogue of Saint John's University (1884-1885), p. 20. The boast of a "full" orchestra probably referred to a group of 15 to 20 players which was more or less the norm at that time.
- 11 Hoffmann, *St. John's University*, p. 79. Maximilian Leonard Dick, originally of St. Peter, Minnesota, was a violin student at the Leipzig Conservatory entering in 1887 as Student #4848. Later he was active in concerts in the Twin Cities.
- 12 *Ibid.* p. 80.
- 13 *Ibid.*, p. 84.
- 14 The American movement took the German name and kept the spellings of Caecilia or Cäcilia instead of the English spelling of the saint's name, Cecilia.

15 *Cäcilia*, vol. 1, no. 1 (1 February 1874), p. 1. The fifth volume of the journal (1878) published an English translation of the aims of the German Society together with a list of the music approved by the German branch.

16 Medieval (and to some extent, Renaissance) instruments were classified as to whether they were *haut*, that is "loud" and suitable for outdoor use or *bas*, that is "soft" and suitable for indoor use.

17 Nearly every issue carried a list of members of the organization, a register that reveals the preponderance of Wisconsin members. The history of the American movement is reported by Ronald Damian, *A Historical Study of the Caecilian Movement in the United States*, Doctoral Dissertation, The Catholic University of America, 1984, available through UMI Dissertation Services.

18 Stearns County, the county of St. John's, had and still has one of the largest populations of German-speaking peoples in the country.

19 *St. John's University*, pp. 86, 88.

20 *Twentieth Annual Catalogue, St. John's University* (1887), p. 23.

21 *Ibid.*, p. 34. James J. Hill donated \$20 toward the medals awarded in this year. See the James J. Hill Papers, Subscriptions, Donations, Etc. 23 May 1887 to Chrysostom Schreiner "for purchase of medals for scholarship year 1888."

22 *Twentieth Annual Catalogue.*, p. 48.

23 Since German at this time used the older *Schreibschrift*, he had not only to change his speech but his writing as well.

24 Born 29 January 1871 in Zell (probably Zell, a suburb of Würzburg) in Bavaria according to the obituary.

25 *Scriptorium*, a record of the professed monks of St. John's Abbey and *The St. John's University Record*, March 1890, p. 30, held by the Stearns County Historical Society and Heritage Center.

26 Will was a violinist, concertmaster of the Danz Orchestra in the 1880s and in the violin section of the Minneapolis Symphony for its first two seasons, 1903-1905. See John K. Sherman, *Music and Maestros* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1952), p. 18 f. The Danz Orchestra was "The Orchestra" of the Twin Cities before the formation of the Minneapolis Symphony in 1903. The music of Will's Orchestra was in the entertainment tradition as a concert reported in the *St. Paul Globe* for 19 June 1889 (before Bruenner's arrival) given at St. Luke's Parish will reveal.

Overture	"Lustspiel"
Gavotte	Forget Me Not
Waltz	Woman's Love
Selection	Erminie
Patrol	Boulangier
Selection	Odds and Ends
Gavotte	Orange Blossoms
Waltz	Dream on the Ocean

Bruenner kept up an interest in entertainment music; for instance, he directed the Glee Club of St. Thomas College, 1898-1903.

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- 27 Final papers on 26 June 1891, Ramsey County Book D, p. 145.
- 28 To gain an idea of the numerous activities of such a church, see the opening chapter of *Church of St. Luke, A Centennial Memoir, 1888-1988*, ed. Patricia Condon Johnston (St. Paul: Church of St. Luke, 1988). St. Luke's at one time even had a symphonic band.
- 29 See Robert T. Laudon, *The Dashing Miss Sans Souci*, an essay deposited in the research library of the Minnesota Historical Society.
- 30 *Church of St. Luke, A Centennial Memoir, 1888-1988*, p. 16.
- 31 The decree is available in a number of editions such as C. J. McNaspy, S.J., Mus.D., *The Motu Proprio of Church Music of Pope Pius X, A New Translation and Commentary*, (Toledo, Ohio: Gregorian Institute of America, 1948). The principles enunciated eventually led to a list of the most suitable music for Catholic worship, *The White List of the Society of St. Gregory of America*, (Glen Rock, N.J.: Society of St. Gregory, 1947) in which the compositions listed above are on the Black List though they could perhaps be excused on the basis of a sort of brilliance that might be tolerated for the Festival of Easter.
- 32 He placed his directing duties first. He had another musician to assist him. From "1900 to 1910, Miss Anna McQuillan, F. Scott Fitzgerald's aunt, was organist according to the history, *Church of St. Luke*, p. 16.
- 33 "Music and its Lovers," *St. Paul Globe*, Sunday, 13 March 1898, p. 10. Emil Straka, the violinist and the first of a distinguished line of musicians, was born in Suez, Egypt. After study in his early childhood, he entered the Conservatory in Prague from which he graduated with special honors in 1885 after study of music theory and organ as well as his solo instrument. He came to St. Paul in 1887 where he took several important positions. He taught at the Northwestern Conservatory of Music in Minneapolis and made numerous concert tours. Harry Phillips (1864-1928) was a leading baritone within the Twin Cities. He was educated in music at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Stuttgart, 1885-1889. He founded and directed the Music Department of Macalester College, St. Paul, from 1894 on. He sang in a number of Twin Cities churches and for 23 years directed the choir of Westminster Presbyterian Church in Minneapolis. Among the many prestigious positions he held, he was president of the Minnesota Music Teachers Association, 1915-1916.
- 34 *St. Paul Globe*, Saturday, April 1, 1899.
- 35 The Cathedral's music was under the direction of John Gehan, one of the soloists in their choice quartet; the music for St. Mary's was under the direction of Elsie Shawe, Supervisor of Music for the St. Paul Public Schools and soon to be President of the Schubert Club (1900-1902). Her brother, Lewis, was featured in Mascheroni's *Ave Maria*.
- 36 *Der Wanderer* was a long-lived Catholic weekly which carried news of the old country and the new.
- 37 "Musica Sacra," *Der Wanderer*, Thursday 14 April 1898, p. 1. Johann Joseph von Görres (1776-1848) had a varied career, first as an ardent Republican of the French Revolution, then a supporter of German nationalism against Napoleonic domination, and finally as a devout Roman Catholic.
- 38 *Cäcilia* early took a stand against such concert or operatic styles, compositions in which the composers "make scarcely any difference between the church and the concert-hall" as Damian translates the passage in his *Historical Study of the Caecilian Movement*, p. 21. This meant that the symphonic and operatic style masses of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and Weber were not authorized.

39 In his Cecilian grasp of the fundamental expressive quality of the simplest musical means, Bruenner exemplified also in practice those principles of expression announced by his friend, Donald Ferguson: a musical fabric which is correct and interesting in itself but which also carries an emotional message arising out of its musical elements. Ferguson and Bruenner were long-time friends from their days in the music teacher's association. Later they lived together for a year while Mrs. Ferguson was in New York where her youngest daughter, Griselda, was studying dance. It would have been interesting to eavesdrop on the two friends, both accomplished Latinists, both devoted to early music, both ardent democrats, and both convinced of the enduring cultural value of the "divine art."

40 The same issue also carried the announcement of the Eighth Season of the St. Paul Symphony (11 evening concerts) and a notice of the new works to be studied by Bruenner's St. Paul Choral Art Society: *Joshua* by Mussorgsky and *Zigeunerleben* of Schumann. On Louise Homer and her early days in the Twin Cities, see Anne Homer, *Louise Homer and the Golden Age of Opera* (New York: William Morrow, 1974), and Sidney Homer, *My Wife and I*, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1939). Bruenner in his activities with the various choruses and with the Schubert Club knew many of the leading artists. He enjoyed their friendship but his wife occasionally had other ideas. She considered Mary Garden "quite vulgar." (Information from Dr. Bertram Bruenner). He also knew Nadia Boulanger, the French mentor of so many American composers, and evidently sent students to her for advanced study. When his daughter, Mrs. E. F. Backstrom, visited Paris, she was invited to dinner with Mme. Boulanger.

41 *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, 11 October 1913.

Notes on Chapter 2

- 1 *Musical Courier*, 22 December 1909, p. 47.
- 2 Oscar H. Hawley of 3012 James Avenue South, Minneapolis, was in charge of the Northwest Department of the *Musical Courier*. This enterprising Twin Cities reporter wrote about every important music event of 1909 and 1910 until he moved to Cincinnati (later he was a band director of the 77th Field Artillery during World War I). The magazine carried regular accounts of the Twin Cities in the Grace Notes section after the main events of large centers such as London, Leipzig, New York, etc. Both Minneapolis and St. Paul had their own large pictorial headings which distinguished them from smaller isolated places.
- 3 Bruenner Scrapbook.
- 4 *Musical America*, special fall issue of 16 October 1909, p. 43. The publicity and reception were in large part the work of Mrs. Warren S. Briggs, long-time president of the Schubert Club. See James Taylor Dunn, *St. Paul's Schubert Club, A Century of Music, 1882-1982* (St. Paul, 1983), pp. 20, 29-35. Her help in national publicity matters is acknowledged in the minutes of the Minnesota Music Teacher's Association for 25 June 1914.
- 5 See Barbara Sue Lamb, *Thursday Musical in the Musical Life of Minneapolis*, Ph. D. Dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1983, especially Chapter 1 on the structure and policy of the club.
- 6 *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, 15 November 1912.
- 7 See Jerome S. Kleinsasser, *Nineteenth-Century Twin City Choral Activities*, Ph. D. Dissertation (3 volumes) University of Minnesota, 1972, on the short life of various choral groups. The St. Paul Choral Art Society commenced at an auspicious time—after the demise of the St. Paul Choral Club which had flourished 1898-1907. The library of the Choral Art Society consisting of hundreds of scores with thirty to forty copies of a title was donated to the St. Paul Public Library by Leopold Bruenner. See the Annual Report of the Music Room of the St. Paul Public Library for 1944. The location of these scores now is unknown. Bruenner's Choral Art Society was assisted at a number of concerts by fellow artists, George Fairclough, Mrs. Herman Scheffer, and on one occasion by a former Bruenner student, Graham McNamee, the well-known radio announcer who also pursued a concert career and who sang (22 November 1915) one of Bruenner's songs, *Eldorado*. So much did Bruenner treasure the Choral Art Society that he tried many years later to revive it but only managed a single performance 7 January 1936 when it was assisted by the Schubert Club Trio (see the Bruenner Scrapbook).
- 8 Gilbert and Sullivan.
- 9 Older members of St. Catherine's and Visitation Communities sang his two masses for treble voices often, the St. Catherine of Alexandria and St. Francis de Sales masses, and could still sing favorite melodies from them.
- 10 Notice in *The Music News* (Chicago), 13 April 1917, p. 34.
- 11 The Saengerbund was first organized in 1866 as the singing societies of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa and Wisconsin. For a review of the St. Paul meeting see Robert Griggs Gale, "Chords and Discords," *The Bellman*, 1 (July-December 1906), pp. 19, 67.
- 12 Max Bruch (1838-1920), today known principally for his Violin Concerto in G minor, was known in that day for many choral works and operas. *Schön Ellen* was a cantata for

chorus of mixed voices with soprano and baritone soli and orchestra. There is some indication that Bruenner sometimes used a version for women's voices which predominated in the group.

13 As he was named at the end of the convention where he presided.

14 All of the information on this matter is drawn from the files of the Public Safety Commission, Box 103.L.9.6 (F), File F 283 and Box 103.L.11.8 F. The latter consists mainly of Bruenner's correspondence with the individual directors.

15 Bruenner to Henke, 27 August 1918.

16 In the *Liberty Chorus Song Book, Americanization Songs for Home, School and Community Singing* edited by Anne Shaw Faulkner (Chicago: McKinley Music, 1919) after the Patriotic songs of the United States and of the Allies, and the Songs of the Camps, are two Memorial Songs for those killed in the war—*In Flanders Fields* and *When the Little Blue Star in the Window Has Turned to Gold* which indicate the impact of the casualties on the civilian population.

17 A letter from Henke 24 August 1918 is a reply to an earlier complaint.

18 Letter from Henke, 23 August 1918.

19 To Henke from Frederick Allen, Chief of the Speaker Section, 3 October 1918.

20 There are several examples, such as *Swat the Kaiser* (to *There's a Long, Long Trail*) by Dr. A. E. Spalding, Luverne, Minnesota, within the files of the commission.

21 Song Sheets in the files of the Public Safety Commission.

22 This is thoroughly explored by Carl H. Chrislock, *Watchdog of Loyalty* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1991).

23 Assistant Attorney General to Henke, 5 October 1918.

24 Musical groups quickly realized the possibilities. R. Buchanan Morton, director at the House of Hope Church, planned a Choral Union (later called St. Paul Philharmonic Society) because "community singing is responsible for revival of choral singing" (*St. Paul Pioneer Press*, 6 October 1918). See also the *Press* for 8 December and 15 December. The MacPhail School of Music in Minneapolis established its Department for Church Music, Choir Directing, and Chorus Singing in July of 1919 under Stanley R. Avery, director at St. Mark's Episcopal Church. Later Avery as president of the Minnesota Music Teachers Association tried to push choral programs without much success in an association devoted to private teaching. It should also be mentioned that during the war, almost every concert of any kind whatever was termed a "patriotic" concert. Even when the greatest orchestra of our ally, France, the *Orchestre du Conservatoire* appeared in the Christmas season of 1918, the concert was termed "patriotic" (see the *Press* for 15 December 1918).

25 See among others in early 1919, the actions of the Baltimore mayor to aid the Music School Settlements (*Musical America*, 11 January 1919, p. 13); the establishment of the Civic Music League of Red Wing under Carl R. Youngdahl (*Musical America*, 8 February 1919, p. 37); the mayor of Portland, Oregon, on establishing municipal concerts (*Musical America*, 27 February 1919, p. 57); the Sioux City establishment of a municipal orchestra (*Musical America*, 5 April 1919, p. 39); and the Denver entry into municipal music (*Musical America*, 19 April 1919, p. 42).

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- 26 See the *Report of Department of Parks, Playgrounds and Public Buildings of the City of St. Paul, 1914-1919* pp. 60-64 made available to me by Claire Martin and the staff of the present Division of Parks and Recreation. This includes details of the start, officers, numbers of choristers, events, inventory of their music and a roster of membership. A sketch of Wollan by Wing, the *Press* cartoonist, is found in the paper for 10 September 1918, p. 10.
- 27 Norton, at the eighteenth annual meeting of the Minnesota Music Teachers Association, Carleton College, 19-21 June 1918 "conducted a fine, spirited sing." *The Music News*, August 1918, p. 17.
- 28 See Kenneth S. Clark, *Baltimore, Cradle of Municipal Music*. Clark edited a number of community sing books and completed a review of civic music, *Municipal Aid to Music in America* (New York: National Bureau for the Advancement of Music, 1925).
- 29 It was so reported in the leading article of *Musical America*, 18 January 1919, by Mrs. W. S. Briggs, President of the Schubert Club, who acknowledged also the role of patriotic song and sing leaders plus the support of the St. Paul Institute and the Schubert Club. The magazine carried pictures of Mr. Wollan and Mr. Clancy.
- 30 Clark, *Municipal Aid*, p. 202.
- 31 *Report of Department of Parks, 1914-1919*, p. 61.
- 32 The archives (1920-1934), minutes, programs, and newspaper clippings of the chorus are in the Minnesota Historical Society, Manuscript Division BP2.S149m. Lists of the compositions sung and lists of the library of the chorus are also included. Several of Bruenner's compositions were sung from blueprint copies.
- 33 A later director was Philip Wade.
- 34 By Michael William Balfe, Irish composer (1808-1870).
- 35 By Sir Frederic Hymen Cowen, English composer (born Jamaica) (1852-1935).
- 36 By Sidney Jones, English composer (1861-1946).
- 37 By Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, British composer of African Negro descent (1873-1912).
- 38 *Who's Who in Music and Dramatic Art in the Twin Cities*, compiled by Arthur E. Wascher and Thomas Clayton Ingham and published (1925) by Associated Publicity Bureau, 927 Plymouth Building, Minneapolis, price \$5.00.
- 39 Goldthwaite grew up in Melrose near Boston. He had studied violin with Jacques Hoffmann of the Boston Symphony and after high school, piano with Prof. John Martin, organ with Prof. Marshall and then with Lynnwood Farnham in New York. He was municipal organist of St. Paul for 2 years from September of 1921.
- 40 Patricia Condon Johnston, ed. *Church of St. Luke, A Centennial Memoir, 1888-1938*, pp. 16-20.
- 41 *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, 18 Dec. 1956, *The Wanderer*, 6 Dec. 1956.
- 42 This picture was sent to his children with love on his 73rd birthday, 16 March 1942. connect
- 43 *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, 24 Dec. 1961.

Kauffman (born in St. Cloud, 1874) and the couple had four children, Sybil, Elizabeth, Roland, and Bertram. Mrs. Bruenner, the wife of "the well-known composer and music director," died 10 August 1942.⁵ Bruenner's *Requiem Mass* is dedicated to her memory (the Mass had been sung at the funeral of his pastor, Monsignor Byrne, who died 12 June 1942).

His secular pieces were nearly all destined for particular recipients and occasions or for his work at women's schools. Regrettably not all will be recovered since they were given freely as gifts. A rather disproportionate number went to his close friends, the Dr. James Ferguson family (a medical doctor, not related to Donald Ferguson), hymns for the home, songs for anniversaries and holidays, often inscribed with a few words of dedication and some colorful decoration. They are all for medium voice and have relatively simple piano accompaniments, never pretentious nor utterly bland. A number of these are lullabies (Illustration No. 4) or songs about children, a genre much favored by the cultured generation in their concept of domestic bliss.

dream all these dreams that are long and fleet? They'll come to you
 Rock-a-By L-a-dy - from Thresh-a-by street Come steal---ing, come
 one little dream of a beauti-ful drum - a - rub-a-dub it

Illustration No. 4: Bruenner's Lullaby "The Rock-a-By Lady"

A few of Bruenner's songs fall into the category of the "recital song." Prime among these is his setting of Edgar Allen Poe's *Eldorado*, one of a group of at least five songs that were more ambitious. When he was requested to have a composition for Louise Homer to sing at a Schubert Club Artist Concert, he submitted several to the renowned contralto. She selected *Eldorado*, song of a galant knight searching for the fabled "gilded city"—which could not be found despite an unending search—a storied panorama which Bruenner made into music by simple means, suggestions of the riding knight in the rhythms (Illustration 5) which permeates the piece.

Moderately fast

p

Gai - ly be -

mf

p

Illustration 5: The riding rhythm of Bruenner's *Eldorado*

He portrayed the knight's journey in major mode with a digression into a series of diminished-seventh chords for "as his strength failed him at length" and the meeting of a "grim shadow." As the shadow replies "Ride, boldly ride," the music and the marching rhythm fade into the distance and at the final notes the major mode is changed to minor for the last chord as a suggestion of the futility of the search (Illustration 6)

pp

Ride, boldly ride,

Illustration 6: Ending of Bruenner's *Eldorado*