

# The Guitar and Steel Guitar Round Table

*The Round Table welcomes your questions and suggestions at all times. No question is too simple or too long for a reply. Enclose postage for a personal reply.*



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CONDUCTOR

## Editorial

I again had the pleasure of hearing Andres Segovia at a private concert which he recently gave at the Penn Athletic Music Association in Philadelphia. This concert was one of a series which this association gave and the first of the two concerts which Segovia gave in Philadelphia during the month of March. Philadelphia, however, is not the only city that has had the privilege of hearing Segovia on more than one occasion in a short time, as there are many other cities in the country where he has given several concerts. It is evident that the genius of this master has raised the guitar to its proper place in the musical world.

It is not my intention in writing this short article to comment on Segovia's playing as I feel sure many readers have either heard him or have read of his supremacy as a guitarist and artist. It is rather for the purpose of calling attention to the significance of his coming to this country, resulting as it has in arousing great interest in the guitar and enlisting as its enthusiasts and lovers the greatest music critics and musicians. This, however, does not justify our relying upon Segovia to uphold the prestige of this instrument, but we must all grasp the opportunity which he has given us, and work toward the permanent establishment of the guitar as an instrument fully worthy to interpret the works of the great masters; and this can only be accomplished by assiduous study and ever keeping before us the highest ideals.

Unfortunately, the majority of fretted instrument players consider only the technical side of music, looking upon speed as the ultimate end and aim, and do not realize that technique is only the vehicle by which we can interpret music itself. A machine can play faster than any human being, but the machine, having no soul or power of feeling, cannot imbue the

music it performs, with any warmth or understanding; and I would ask those readers who, perhaps, have not realized the importance of this, and who consider playing the correct notes at great speed the highest point of achievement, whether they wish to be regarded as machines.

The trouble with a number of fretted instrument students is that when they have completed a course of ten or twenty lessons, or perhaps finished a method, they feel quite equal, if not superior to a conservatory graduate, which is a decidedly destructive and unprogressive attitude to adopt. The great philosopher Socrates said, "All I know is that I know nothing," and we only begin to learn when we realize our limitations. This, surely, is food for thought, and it would be well for us all to ponder on it sometimes, particularly when we are feeling satisfied with our little achievements.

THE following is a letter which I was requested to answer directly, but, feeling that it will be of interest to all readers, I am quoting it here also.

"Dear Sirs:—

Can you tell us to whom we should write or how we should proceed in order that we may secure employment broadcasting over the radio; either for some station or for some large concern — advertising.

We have a Hawaiian quartet consisting of first and second Hawaiian guitars, regular guitar and ukulele. We also double and then we play first and second mandolins, tenor mandola and regular guitar. Each one of us plays solos on the various instruments. Two of the boys sing duets quite well.

We have been broadcasting over WBCM, Bay City, Michigan, for over

a year, and we have many admirers. The manager always promises us something but never comes thru. Can you help us?"

No doubt these players are good and, having played for a radio station for a year, should have gotten some engagements; not having done so, there must be something fundamentally wrong.

We all know that music is a science as well as an art but that the modern development in application and reproduction of it and the large scale on which things musical are transacted have made it also an industry, and a major one, too. To have a good organization is just like having good merchandise to sell, and the first thing that the manufacturer does to sell his merchandise is to look for a good salesman; therefore, if you have good music, go out and sell it. I will not go any further in this respect but would like to ask some questions which all organizations of this kind should be able to answer in the affirmative if they wish to succeed.

Are you organized in a business way as well as musical? By business I mean, do you have a manager? Such manager need not be one of the players, as quite often it might be impossible to find a good business man in the group. Are you always punctual at your engagements? Do you dress uniformly? Do you have cards? (not the ones you get at one dollar for a hundred) and stationery? Are your letters always typewritten and in good English? Have you a picture done by a good photographer? Are you making desirable contacts? Have you approached the music stores of your city, the booking agents, heads of various organizations? Are you courteous? And modest?

I am convinced that all organizations which can answer the above questions in the affirmative are succeeding.

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## Round Table THE GUITAR

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silk and which gut?

2. I have trouble in tuning my guitar. The strings are in tune when open but when fingers are placed on the frets it sounds out of tune, so I wonder if the guitar is at fault or if it is in the strings.

### ANSWER

1. The 1st, 2nd and 3rd strings should be gut and the 4th, 5th and 6th silver wire wound on silk.

2. If the strings are of good quality and not very old the neck of your guitar must be warped, in which case the best solution is to buy a new instrument of standard make, preferably one that is already equipped with gut and silk strings.

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M. C.—Dallas, Texas

Can you tell me if the Mexican song, "Estrellita" by Ponce is published for the guitar and

where I can obtain it? Also some other of Ponce's songs.

### ANSWER

There is an excellent arrangement of Ponce's song, "Estrellita," also many other Spanish and Mexican numbers in the "Spanish and Mexican Album" by Vahdah Olcott Bickford, published by the American Guitar Society. Three of Ponce's songs have been arranged by Segovia. Ponce has also written several major compositions for the guitar, these latter numbers being published in Europe, and obtainable through the Crescendo.