

NEW ORCHESTRA TRIUMPHS.

Brilliant Concert by Washington Symphony Under Heinrich Hammer.

Once more the Capital has a symphony orchestra in which it has reason to take a genuine pride, as was demonstrated at the first concert of the consolidated Washington Symphony Orchestra and the Hammer organization, with Heinrich Hammer occupying the conductor's rostrum, at the Columbia Theater yesterday afternoon. The concert should be a source of gratification to the contributing patrons of the orchestra, and the reception which the conductor and musicians received at the hands of an enthusiastic audience will doubtless stimulate them to redoubled effort.

The opening number of the program, and the most delightful selection of the afternoon, was Weber's overture to "Oberon," played with refreshing delicacy and charm. The pianissimo passages were particularly pleasing, every shading of the score being given with deft and artistic touch.

Following the Weber number came a group of Massenet compositions (Scenes Pittoresques), embracing "Marche," "Scene de Ballet," "Angelus," and "Fete Boheme." The "Angelus," with its tranquil atmosphere, interpreted with a full appreciation of all its nuances, was received with the greatest cordiality.

Edward Grieg was represented on the program by two selections, "Herzstunden" (for strings only) and the ever delightful "Im Fruhling," which was played with the charm and freedom of spirit which carried with it the very breath of springtime.

The most ambitious effort of the orchestra was Saint-Saens' symphonic poem, "La Jeunesse d'Hercules," which, although belonging to the modern French school, has at least one phase in which there is a striking Oriental atmosphere. The spirit and diversity of mood in the composition were admirably set forth.

The monumental "Tannhauser" overture, which closed the program, revealed a certain weakness in the brasses which previously had not been forced upon the attention of the audience. This defect will doubtless be remedied when the orchestra is on a more secure footing.

Throughout the program Conductor Hammer manifested his ample qualifications as a director. His reading was scholarly without being academic, and there was a fine breadth of spirit in his leadership. He sought out the latent qualities of musicianship in his associates, and they responded with splendid precision of execution and brilliant attack. And while some of the members evinced a pardonable degree of nervousness, there was every evidence of sincerity and skill both individually and collectively.

The consolidation of the Washington Symphony Orchestra and the Heinrich Hammer Symphony Orchestra has been effected largely through the efforts of Mrs. Herbert Wadsworth.