

# THE REVIEW'S TECHNICAL DEPARTMENT

Conducted and Edited by Wm. B. White.

## THE 88-NOTE PLAYER.

Whatever may be the technical results of the decision arrived at by the convention of piano-player manufacturers lately in session at Buffalo, there is no doubt that the whole problem of the 88-note player will be brought appreciably nearer to a correct solution. It is not the business of a technical department to consider the business side of these questions, except in so far as that side cannot be disentangled from the purely technical considerations which must always take first place. As it happens, however, all the attention which has been given to the recent convention of player manufacturers has been concentrated upon the commercial aspects of the deliberations of that body. The technical considerations which equally inure to the problem have been largely overlooked. Let us remedy this omission as far as may be in our power.

I do not suppose that anyone will deny the inevitableness, as it were, of the 88-note player. There is no possible argument valid against it. For just as soon as you decide that the time has come to make a change in the extent of the player compass there is nothing left but to go the whole hog. Seventy-eight, 82 or 85-note ranges will fall under precisely the same condemnation, in principle, as is visited upon the 65-note. Just as long as there remains one single piece of music that requires the use of 88 notes, then we must, to be logical, have a player that will render it faithfully, note for note, without transposition.

It has been urged that the 65-note range is adequate for the complete expression of nearly all music. As a matter of actual fact, this is not so. On the other hand it is equally absurd to contend, as the extreme 88-note protagonists have, that the 65-note roll cannot be made to render most compositions in any but a false manner. The mere dropping of perhaps one or two notes is perhaps not a very serious thing. But it is, in fact, incorrect, and therefore the 65-note roll must ultimately be superseded.

### THE TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF THE 88-NOTE ROLL.

While little attention was paid to the technical considerations involved in the making of an 88-note roll at Buffalo, enough was said and done to make it quite clear that the adoption of a nine-to-the-inch scale for the tracker-bar and roll was due principally to the fact that the advocates of this standard had gotten further in their work of making players and music than the others. Regarding the relative merits of nine and eight-to-the-inch scales, one can say so much that caution is necessary. We shall try to observe it.

If one uses a music roll with the perforations cut on a basis of nine tracker board holes to the inch, it can readily be seen that the holes with the bridges between them will number in the aggregate 17 to each inch. Now it is absolutely necessary that a reasonable breadth be given to the bridges or divisions between adjacent holes, for the reason that enough room must be allowed to afford support to the paper. The width of the bridging space, either on tracker or paper, must therefore be not less than 3-64 inch. This will leave an approximate width for the tracker board openings of 1-14 inch, as against the 1/4 inch width on the six-to-the-inch 65-note scale. Now, it is perfectly obvious that atmospheric effects upon a roll where the openings are as narrow as this will be more serious than where more space can be left. On the other hand the same rule works both ways. If the width of the roll be increased, then the wider paper will also swell and shrink more in proportion.

Again, the use of a nine-to-the-inch scale means a wide margin on either side of the roll, which can be used for the purpose of cutting in perforations for melody accenting devices, automatic

sustaining pedal devices, and so on. To the firms which have adopted or are adopting such a policy, and thereby destroying gradually the artistic status of the player, the margin is an essential. But to the makers who are attempting to make the player an instrument for the education of artistic taste, the eight-to-the-inch should commend itself as a more sensible scale. For such manufacturers will not need marginal perforations, while all will and do need more space than the nine-to-the-inch gives.

If anyone will take the trouble to sketch out a nine-to-the-inch tracker-board, and then an eight-to-the-inch underneath it, the difference in space will at once be obvious. There is not, as far as I have been able to see, any reason at all why a well-made eight-to-the-inch tracker-board used with good paper rolls should need a shifting device. But, likewise, I am equally unable to see how the nine-to-the-inch scale is going to get along without a device for assisting the tracking.

Every nine-to-the-inch 88-note scale with which I am acquainted needs the assistance of a shifting device to produce anything like playable conditions. If left to itself the slightest change in the alinement of the paper will throw out the entire registration with a natural and inevitable result. Every firm that has been experimenting with the nine-to-the-inch 88-note player knows well that this statement is not exaggerated. As a matter of fact, the fundamental difficulty does not lie in the mechanism of the player at all. There is no question at all that a player can be devised, as such players are now being built successfully, which will play perfectly on the nine-to-the-inch opening, provided that the paper can be made to track with sufficient correctness; or in other words, provided that the opening can be made full use of at all times. But if the paper will not do this then where is the nine-to-the-inch scale going to land?

We may wish to, and probably shall, say a few more words on this subject a little later.

I sincerely trust that all readers of this department have had a very Merry Christmas, and that they are looking forward to a New Year which I earnestly hope may be happy for all of them.

Communications for the department should be addressed to the Editor, Technical Department, The Music Trade Review.

## KOHLER & CAMPBELL IN ABERDEEN.

Harms Bros., who conduct one of the finest piano stores in that section of South Dakota, on Third avenue, West, Aberdeen, are enthusiastic representatives of the Kohler & Campbell pianos, having handled that line for over a year past with excellent results. Harms Bros. order their pianos in carload lots, several cars of Kohler & Campbell pianos having been delivered within the last few months. They took the opportunity recently of having a photograph taken of a car-



load shipment of Kohler & Campbell pianos which had been unloaded in front of their store, previous to unpacking, and it presents an impressive view.

## MY YULETIDE WISH.

To have you as a friend for now, for always!  
To own your interest, honor and respect,  
To merit all your kindness always,  
In friendship's realm ne'er show the least defect,  
That is my wish, this Xmas tide and ever,  
This the one hope I cherish and caress,  
That naught may come these ties to sever,  
And that to all, your answer: Yes

And for that boon I, in my turn will wish you  
All that is true in life and truly sweet,  
Your home, your loved ones, and yourself, too  
May every joy for them and you be quite complete,  
Come what there may, and be it joy or sorrow,  
Here is my hand to grasp and hold  
My friend of yesterday and on the morrow,  
Take me as I do you, into your fold.  
To you and yours!

Joyous and Happy Holidays.

B. H. JANSSEN.

Yuletide, 1908.

## NORRIS NOISELESS AXIOMS.

### No. CCXXXIX.

May the Yuletide logs burn brightly in the homes of all our friends this Christmas week. It is a time for reflection and good cheer, and in this connection nothing will tend to the more perfect happiness of the manufacturer and dealer than the use of the Norris noiseless pedal action, made by the Norris Noiseless Pedal Action Co., Boston, Mass. Their use removes one of the evils of life, namely, the squeaking, noisy, nerve-racking piano pedal mechanism. The Norris specialties insure both prestige and satisfaction.

## UNIVERSAL PIANO CO. PROGRESS.

Atherton Furlong, Jr., vice-president of the Universal Piano Co., 192 Southern Boulevard, returned Christmas Eve from a successful trip through Pennsylvania. The Universal piano and player-piano are meeting with popular favor. The business on players is exceptionally good and the factory has been pushed the past two weeks to get the goods required for the holidays.

Louis Goldman is greatly pleased with the success scored to date and is endeavoring to secure additional factory room so as to increase their output.

## TELEPHONING FOR KRAKAUER PIANOS.

W. B. Lincoln, of Springfield, Mass., sent in a telephone message the past week for nine Krakauer pianos and asked for immediate shipment. He also added that he sold that number in one day and that his Christmas trade was away beyond his expectations, furthermore that he would probably be cleaned out of stock on several lines before New Year's Day.

Henry W. Eschenbrenner, superintendent of the Krakauer Bros. factory, left Christmas day for Canada Lake in the Adirondacks, for a week's rabbit shooting. Members of the firm of Krakauer Bros. and office staff expect to eat rabbit pie on New Year's day and insist on Mr. Eschenbrenner making good, or forever after never mention his prowess with a gun.

The Kaufman-Morse Piano Co., Norfolk, Va., have incorporated succeeding the Cable Co. Capital from \$10,000 to \$25,000.

The John C. Hayden Co., of Rochester, N. Y., have incorporated; capital \$10,000; to handle musical instruments.