The Evolution of Syncopation

Table of Contents
Example of the Cakewalk and Scotch Snap Rhythms – 3
Essay: ‘Early Minstrel Syncopation in the Cakewalk - 3
Magazine Articles on Syncopation – 8
Right & Wrong Way to Interpret Syncopation - 10
1900 – March – Musician – “Ragtime – 11
1901 – Nov. – Musician – “Syncopated Rhythm vs. Ragtime – 11
1912 – August – Orchestra Monthly – “The Ethics of Ragtime – 22
1913 – Feb. – Musical Opinion – Ragtime on Parnassus - 23
1915 – August – Ragtime Review – “What About Ragtime” – 32
1915 – Dec. – Current Opinion – “Will Ragtime Save the Soul Of the Native American Composer” – 33
1917 – Literary Digest – August 25 – “The Appeal of Primitive Jazz” - 34
1918 – March – New Music Review – “Concerning Ragtime” – 36
1918 – April – New Music Review – “Negro Spirituals – 39
1918 – August 15 – Dial – “American Influence on French Music” – 40
1921 - August - ladies home Journal - Does Jazz put the sin in syncopation - 42
1922 – April – “That Jazz Wail Again - 44
1922 – May 6 – Literary Digest – “To Jazz or to Rag” – 47
1924 – Feb. – Flutist – “Jazz-It’s Origin, Effect” – 52
1924 – June – Metronome – “Rhythmic Symphonic Syncopation Vs. Modern Jazz” – 52
1924 – July – Metronome – “France’s Ban on Jazz” – 53
1925 – Feb. – Christian Science Monitor – “of Symphonized Syncopation” – 54
1925 – August – Pictorial Review – “Jazz & the Dance” – 58
1925 – Sept. 19 – Literary Digest – “On with the Charleston” – 58
1925 – Dec. 9 – Nation – “Music-The Pedant Looks at Jazz” – 59
1926 – April 17 – The New Statesman – “Waltz King and Jazz King” – 60
1926 – July 3 – Collier’s – “Where Have I Heard That Tune Before” – 61
Below I give just two of many examples of syncopation in plantation music. The syncopation is not used as extensively as in the cakewalk or ragtime but it, with both the use of the Scotch Snap and the Cakewalk rhythm, are found in many songs and their use is found in the music of the minstrels.

Essay:
Early Minstrel Syncopation In the Cakewalk

Early minstrel music did not use syncopation as a rhythmic feature and we find no examples of it in the printed music beginning with the first minstrel shows of 1843. There are no quotes as to the interpretation of the music during performance, and no written records that state that improvised syncopation was a practice of minstrel singers. While the lyrics of early minstrel songs used Negro dialect and Negro subjects; the melody is in a regular pulse which we will call ‘straight’ rhythm. There were solo performers (like ‘Daddy’ Rice) doing Negro type material and no syncopation appears in the printed music nor in quotes from early performers that syncopation was a part of their interpretation of the music they sang.

Examination beginning with the minstrels of 1843 show that syncopation was not a part of the rhythm. In 1874, in a minstrel song
entitled “I’m A Gwine Down South”, by William Shakespeare (page M211) we find the use of the cakewalk rhythm (16\text{th}, 8\text{th}, 16\text{th}) which, of course, is a syncopated rhythmic figure. In the cakewalks we find the earliest use of syncopation within an entire musical composition. In the minstrel song “Deed I Has To Laugh,” (page M212) written by John Philip Sousa in 1877, there are a few bars that use the cakewalk rhythm. In the early 1880s songs written by Negro composers such as James Bland and Sam Lucas, many of their songs written and performed by these composers in minstrels do not contain syncopation. Through 1898 and the late 1890s minstrel songs are still ‘straight’ rhythms. In 1901 the minstrel team of Williams and Walker performed the song entitled “The Phrenologist Coon” (page M220) performed a song in which there are a few measures using the cakewalk rhythm.

In 1902 the song “You Can Search Me” (page M221) contains the use of syncopation in the introduction. Syncopation is also used in the verse and the chorus. The popularity of the minstrel show was beginning to fad in the early 20\text{th} century and was evolving into the variety show and Negro themes were being replaced by other topics, although Negro entertainers such as Williams and Walker continued to use Negro themes in their acts with Williams joining the Ziegfred Follies doing the same type routines as he presented in his early minstrel show appearances.

The use of a syncopated figure was the main rhythmic feature of the cakewalk. “Happy Uncle Joe” (ex. 39, page CW68), written in 1867 does contain some measures in the cakewalk rhythm. The vaudeville team of Harrigan and Hart included the song “Walking For Dat Cake” (ex. 40, page CW69), written in 1877 by Harrigan and Dave Braham. While the song contains some measures in cakewalk rhythm it basically is not what we will recognize as a traditional cakewalk. It was basically called a cakewalk in name only (the title). Other songs contain the name cakewalk in its title and some dancers may have performed cakewalk routines to the music - i.e. “Kullud Koons’ Kake Walk” (ex. 41, page CW70) and “The Cakewalk Patrol” (ex. 42, page CW71) by W. H. Krell. In section 3 of “The Cakewalk Patrol” we find a section that can be noted as a cakewalk. The piece does make use of some syncopation. Section 3 is notated as “Taking The Cake.” The song “I’ve Been A Good Old Wagon” (ex. 44, page CW73) by Ben Harney in 1896 mistakenly noted as the first rag, uses use some cakewalk rhythms in
the melody, the accompaniment in the last 15 bars uses the cakewalk rhythm in the bass of the piano part, for 5 measures.

In 1896 we find the song “Remus Takes The Cake” (ex. 46, page CW75). The last section is a true cakewalk. It was published first in instrumental form. In 1897 it is published with lyrics. In the 1897 arrangement the introduction uses the cakewalk rhythm, but then the remaining section presents only ‘straight’ rhythm.

In 1897 Kerry Mills publishes “At A Georgia Campmeeting” (ex. 47, page CW76) using a melody of “Our Boys Will Shine Tonight.” Mills writes what is considered one of the earliest true cakewalks. The example (ex. 47, page 76) show the multiple use of the cakewalk rhythm appearing as 16th, 8th, 16th and 8th, quarter, 8th. Even the cover is in the poster style art nouveau which became the mode for cakewalk art on the piano sheet music covers of the cakewalk era. Marked a Rag-Two Step, “Louisiana Rag” (Ex. 48, page CW77) is a cakewalk. The title of songs during and after this era used the terms cakewalk and rag synonymously. This song makes extensive use of the syncopated rhythm of the cakewalk. Published in the year of the zenith of the cakewalk in 1899, Louisiana Rag was written fore the piano (earlier cakewalks were mostly in the brass band genre). We now find the use of the cakewalk syncopated rhythm appearing in numerous popular songs of the late 1890s. by 1899 the cakewalk becomes the most popular style in the newly developed syncopation style. It is popular the world over.

We now find the use of the cakewalk syncopated rhythm appearing in numerous popular songs of the late 1890s. This adaptation of the cakewalk for piano was the opening for what was to become a keyboard genre - ragtime.

The popularity of the cakewalk is seen in the famous Broadway production of “Clorindy” or “The Origin of the Cakewalk”, written by the now famous Negro composer William Marion Cook with the libretto by Negro poet Lawrence Dunbar in 1898. One song in the show is “Dar’ll Be Wahm Coons A Prancin” (ex. 50, page CW79) It presents some measures in the cakewalk rhythm and features the great Ernest Hogan, the composer of the hit “All Coons Look Alike To Me” (ex. 26, page C44) perhaps one of the first groups of songs to be called “Coon” songs. From 1898 to 1899 there were hundreds of cakewalks published, all using the syncopated cakewalk rhythm. This syncopated cakewalk figure gradually was developed into what is called “United” syncopation which evolved into which will be called Ragtime. One
example would be “Eli Green’s Cakewalk” (ex. 51, page CW80) which became an enormous hit of the era. Many songs had in their title “cakewalk” but were evolving into ragtime. One of Scott Joplin’s earliest compositions, written in 1899 was entitled “Original Rags” (ex. 53, page CW82). This is in reality, a cakewalk, using the cakewalk rhythm throughout (ex. 53, page 82). It was the cakewalk rhythm with the last note of the cakewalk rhythm tied ( o o o o) emphasizing not only the cakewalk rhythm but using united syncopation. It is a good example of the cakewalk style and rhythm evolving into ragtime. Even John Philip Sousa begins playing cakewalks, many of these being referred to as rags. (ex. 26, page 9) of “Bunch O’ Blackberries”. The Sousa band, with arrangements by Arthur Pyror, play numerous cakewalks as part of their concerts, mostly as encores, including “Smoky Mokes” (ex. 54, page CW83) and “Creole Belles” (ex. 61, page CW90). Perhaps the best example of the combining of the cakewalk genre and ragtime is the Arthur Pyror song “Southern Hospitality” (ex. 55, page CW84) written in 1899. It is marked “A Ragtime Cakewalk”.

What was entitled “Mississippi Rag” (ex. 56, page CW85) is in reality should have been called “Mississippi Cakewalk.” It is laced with the cakewalk rhythm. The cover describes it as the first ragtime two step. This title only emphasizes the evolving of the cakewalk into ragtime. Many songs were entitled ‘rags’ but were really cakewalks, i.e. “Bos’n Rag” (ex. 58, page CW87). In reality it was a cakewalk.

Songs that became standard popular song hits that we still remember today were again, in reality-cakewalks. Case in mention “Hello Ma Baby” (ex. 59, page CW88) which uses the cakewalk rhythm in 9 of its 16 measures. Abe Holzmann, a famous ragtime composer wrote cakewalks - many of which are known as rags but really are cakewalks. His characteristic cakewalk “Hunky Dory” (ex. 62, page CW91) is a classic example of a cakewalk of the era published in 1900 (ex. 62, page 91). It was a favorite of the Sousa Band. We might mention Joplin’s “Swipsey” (ex. 63, page CW92) written with Arthur Marshall in 1900. It is notated as a cakewalk and uses the cakewalk rhythm extensively.

H. W. Loomis, a pupil of Dvorak, wrote (following the encouragement and lead of Dvorak, who had remarked that American composers should look at Negro music as musical material for composition), in 1902, wrote a charming piano duet entitled “Cakewalk” (ex. 64, page CW93) Published by the Wan-Wan Press of
Arthur Farwell, it was accompanied in the Press’s publications by Farwell’s “Plantation Melody” of 1902 (ex. 65, page CW94), which uses the cakewalk rhythm. (ex. 65, page 94)

“Bunch O’ Blackberries” (ex. 68, page CW97) written by Abe Holzmann is called a rag when Sousa played it in Paris. Written in 1900 the composed called it “cakewalk-two step and uses the cakewalk rhythm throughout.

Kerry Mills wrote “Kerry Mills Ragtime Dance” in 1909 (ex. 69, page CW98). By using united syncopation the rhythmic figure gives a ‘short-long-short’ rhythmic feeling which is the cakewalk rhythm but used as part of the figure that uses united syncopation. By this date the cakewalk and its characteristic ‘short-long-short’ rhythm has evolved into true ragtime. The piece used the cakewalk rhythm, especially in the 2nd and 4th sections - section 4 using the cakewalk rhythm in 12 of its 16 measures. The first section includes numerous uses of syncopation.

In 1911 Sousa published his “Dwellers of the Western World” (ex. 70, page CW99). In the 3rd part entitled “The Black Man” Sousa uses the cakewalk rhythm.

As jazz begins to evolve from the cakewalk and ragtime, there was a revival in 1914-15 of the cakewalk. It was short lived but many fine cakewalks were written during this period. “Keep Moving” (ex. 71, page CW100) was written by William White in 1815.

With the popularity of the cakewalk the “Coon” song was beginning to be known. From the many mentions of the Negro characteristics minstrels and show business performers began using the popular genre of the “Coon” song genre to include more derogatory mentioning of the Negro race. This inclusion in popular music degrading the Negro race reached a high point with the publication, in 1896 of May Irwin’s “The Bully Song” (ex. 27, page C46) the most successful early Coon Song. Coon lyrics had been added to cakewalks and soon became a genre of it’s own. Songs with the mention of Coons had been seen in songs as early as 1851 with the song “The Sensitive Coon” (ex. 9, page C9). It contained no syncopation. Minstrel material included the mention of the word Coon frequently. “Gentlemen Coons Parade” of 1878 (ex. 13, page C13); “Mary’s Gone With A Coon” of 1880 (ex. 14, page C14); “De Ole Plantation Coon of 1881 (ex.15, page C15); “De Coon Dinner” of 1882 (ex. 16, page C16); and “The Coon's Excursion” of 1886 (ex. 17, page C17)- all do not include syncopation.
These songs all used Negro dialect. The famous James Weldon Johnson favored the use of Negro dialect as part of the Afro-American heritage but avoided the rough text of the Coon songs. This can be seen in a song entitled “Under The Bamboo Tree: of 1902 (ex. 23, page C29). Using a modified cakewalk rhythm but one find no other use of syncopation. The song became a big popular hit of its day.

“The Bully Song” (ex. 27, page C47) of Irwin uses the cakewalk rhythm in its introduction and in both the verse and chorus. The chorus beginning each phrase using the cakewalk rhythm. It is the lyrics that make a Coon song and not the use of the cakewalk rhythm with its syncopated figure. The accompaniment is in ‘straight’ rhythm. We will see in the accompaniment of this Coon song an early example of ragtime’s syncopated rhythm. Most Coon songs use ‘straight’ rhythm in its melody with Coon style lyrics. May Irwin brings the Coon song genre to the Broadway stage, perhaps not the first to do so, but surely the most successful in a long series of Broadway shows in which she starred.

In the song “Mister Johnson, Turn Me Loose” of 1895 (ex. 26, page C43), Harney makes the song a ‘hit’ playing the accompaniment in a ‘ragtime’ style.

A big step came when the Coon song began to include what was to be a ragtime accompaniment. One of the earliest of this style was “Syncopated Sandy” of 1897 (ex. 42, page 68). If one plays the accompaniment without the melody it appear and sounds like a charming rag. The piece uses the cakewalk rhythm and an extensive use of syncopation. The song appeared 2 years before “The Maple Leaf Rag” of Scott Joplin. The accompaniment gave the piece an exciting syncopated feeling. If the melody was de-emphasized the accompaniment which featured the feeling of ragtime was now on the popular music scene. The ragtime feeling is best heard in the piano accompaniment of the chorus of the song. Soon publishers began hiring arrangers to write ragtime accompaniments to popular songs. This process can be seen in “Bom-Ba-Shay” of 1897, arranged by Max Hoffman (ex. 16, page 72). The combination of the Coon song using the cakewalk style is seen in the 1898 Coon song “The Coon’s Breach of Promise” (ex. 47, page C73). The dance at the end is a short cakewalk.

Max Hoffman’s work as an arranger can also be seen in the Coon song “Ma Genuine African Blonde” of 1898 (ex. 48, page C74). The chorus uses the cakewalk rhythm and untied syncopation and one gets a
contrapuntal feeling when hearing the accompaniment part in the chorus of the song.

It only remained to drop the lyrics and listen to the accompaniment part and we have a true ragtime piano piece. An excellent example is found in “Mr. Johnson Don’t Get Gay” written in 1898 (ex. 49, page 75). Most Coon songs of the era use the syncopated cakewalk rhythm and Coon songs that do not use a ragtime accompaniment are becoming rare. The Coon song, with its lyrics begin to fad and ragtime becomes the music of the land. Thus from the minstrel song, to the syncopation of the cakewalk, to the Coon song, to ragtime and finally jazz, which ends the ancestry of syncopation and jazz becomes its new champion. By 1918 the era of jazz matures into what will become the art music of America.
Magazine Articles on Syncopation

The Right Way and Wrong Way to Interpret Syncopation

By Edwin H. Pierce

The first beat of each measure has an accent. In compound time there is a secondary accent as well—sometimes more than one, in fact. These are rules to which we have long grown accustomed. But in syncopation there arises an important and striking modification to which we shall turn our attention.

For the sake of simplicity, let us deal here only with the syncopated note of longer duration than a single beat. (The same principle holds good in smaller divisions of time, however.) A syncopated note of this description is one beginning on a (normally) unaccented beat and continuing long enough to extend into or beyond the position of the next (normal) accent. But—and this is the gist of the matter—a syncopated note is never punctuated midway by an accent. On the contrary it begins with one. That is to say, the normal accents of the measure must be temporarily shifted to a new position. This is the whole basis and meaning of syncopation.

For the sake of indicating accurately the right and wrong position of accents, we shall first express this passage:

Ex. 1

in quarter-notes, by the use of ties:

Ex. 2

Now the normal accent of the measure would cause the accents to fall as follows:

Ex. 3

but this would be a totally incorrect manner of performance, because it is the nature of syncopation to shift the accent from its normal position and place it upon the beginnings of the syncopated notes.

The correct manner of accentuation is, of course, as follows:

Ex. 4

Suppose a young violin-student, for instance, to be counting aloud in order to master the correct rhythm. It would be perfectly proper, and in some ways very helpful for him to express the usual accents in his counting. Thus the first two measures of this example might be counted "one, two, three, four, one, two, three, four," while the other two measures would be counted "one, two, three, four, one, two, three, four," in the conventional manner.

Syncopation does not confine itself to "popular" music. It has been understood and used effectively by classical composers for the last two hundred years. Schumann in particular carried it almost to excess. In the last movement of Beethoven's "Ninth Symphony" there is one passage some thirty or forty measures long which contains every essential element of modern jazz except the use of the saxophone. However, it must be conceded that there are at least two particular forms of syncopation which belong particularly to modern popular dance-music—the peculiar rhythm of the Charleston and the following rhythm:

Ex. 5

which is found largely also in popular songs of a rather vulgar variety. In both these cases the principles herein stated hold true, but, in case of the one last named, there is another explanation which may be helpful to some—namely, that it is not real syncopation at all but the use of several measures of varying rhythm with the same time signature being used throughout. The above example might therefore very properly be written thus:

Ex. 6

though in such form it might be puzzling to the unlearned and would be of no really practical benefit. All rhythms, indeed, especially syncopation, must lend themselves to close scrutiny before they are ready to be intelligently executed.
"I would not do away with rag-time music," said Mr. Root. "If some one should ask me if I would blot out Mother Goose's rhymes I would say unhesitatingly I would not do it. Mother Goose is a good thing in its way. So is rag-time.

"To make the matter plain, rag-time is syncopation. All of the great masters have enjoyed syncopated notes. That is all right, or the masters would not have done it. But they did not write all of their works in syncopation. That shows that syncopation is good for a while, but we do not want too much of it. Now, Mother Goose's literature is a good thing, but suppose you had nothing else to read you would get tired of it after a while."

"What would you suggest to be done about it?" he was asked.
"Let it alone, The people who like it may learn after a while to like something else better."
"What objection lies against rag-time music?"
"It is a repetition of the same thing, that's all. There is nothing else in the world the matter with it. As I said, if it were not a good thing the masters would not have used it."

Among many oddities of rag-time an example of its effect may be seen in the setting of "Old Hundred" to that measure.

"There is no such thing as good music or bad music," said Prof. Emil Liebling. "You may set good music to bad or vicious wordings and the music becomes bad by implication. So with rag-time. It is now lending itself to low vaudeville, in the main, and because of that association the music is denounced.

"The song from "Carmen" "Love is a wild Bird," is one of the best examples of rag-time in modern music. In the overture to 'Don Juan,' by Mozart, and in some compositions of Bach we have good examples of syncopation.

"Rag-time is simply having its day. It will be forgotten as a craze in a few years"

The subject of "Rag-Time" has never interested me, and in company with other musicians I have, heretofore, ignored it. But now it is my desire to correct an impression which seems to prevail among certain people, to wit: That rag-time is a musical peculiarity invented
by the recent makers of coon songs and other variety-hall concoctions. This is not true. Rag-Time is merely a common form of syncopation in which the rhythm is distorted in order to produce a more or less ragged, hysterical effect.

In the Theory of Interpretation I have already demonstrated that syncopated rhythms are used by classic composers for some of the following purposes;

1. As a relief and contrast to the monotony of regular rhythms.
2. As a means of expression or of bringing forward two opposing principles—dual rhythms being suggestive of strife or contention.
3. As local color, by imitating the rhythm of certain national songs or dances in which some form of syncopation is a characteristic feature.

That old Spanish dance, the Zarabanda, illustrates the early use of syncopation. The accented second beat was suggested by the poses of the dancers and therefore the syncopation served a distinct purpose, as it does in the more modern polonaise and bolero.

In the compositions of Bach and Handel we find that syncopated rhythms are an inherent part of the music design; Haydn used them more for the sake of variety. In the works of Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert syncopation serves both purposes, especially in their symphonies.

Every pianist will recall the leading motive in Beethoven's sonata in G, beginning like this:

\[ \frac{4}{4} \quad \text{\#1} \]

The composition of Chopin and Schumann contain innumerable instances of unusual rhythmic arrangement and combination. An interesting example occurs in the second period of the Schumann Lied by Schumann, Op. 124, XVI, where the melody is divided thus:

\[ \frac{6}{8} \quad \text{\#2} \]

This is much more individual and expressive than the common arrangement,
would have been. A similar effect occurs in the A flat waltz by Chopin, Op. 42. The melody is virtually in 2-4, while the accompaniment remains in triple measure.

Syncopated and dual rhythms occur prominently in many Spanish dances, especially in the bolero and the Cuban dance, Habanera. In the latter this rhythm is of frequent occurrence:

"Souvenir de la Havanna," "El Cocaye," and the famous "O jos criollos," by Gottschalk, illustrate this peculiarity very faithfully. But the rag-time "compositioners" have undoubtedly found their most direct source of supply in the Hungarian song-dances. In several works I have described and illustrated the Czardas, which is always syncopated. The slow movement (lassan) is especially so:

This dates back to the time of the Cythians and owes its origin to the unusual syllabic arrangement of the words sung to the dance. This peculiarity has been observed in the songs of Scotland and English writers call it the "Scotch snap."

Also the negro melodies contain this Iambic feature. Dvorak, in his so-called "New World symphony," uses these displaced accents frequently, as thus in the second theme:

This is similar to a once famous Southern plantation song and bears evidence of its Ethiopian origin.

Indeed, it is scarcely possible to mention a standard composer who has not employed some form of syncopation in certain of his compositions.
I have observed that the principal charm of Nevin's popular Serenade ("Good-night, good-night, beloved") is owing to the peculiar form of syncopation in the melody, thus:

\[\text{\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{syncopation.png}}\]

But for this genial touch of inspiration the song would be quite commonplace, as the melodic features are not remarkable. This assumes somewhat the character of a free rubato effect. (When I told the late composer of my liking for this serenade, I remember his somewhat incredulous smile as he replied: "Why, I composed that when I was a boy.")

In conclusion, it is evident that none of the so-called rag-time songs or dances is, in any sense, new or original, but that they are adaptations and perversions of the czardas, the habanera and the southern plantation song. Also, that unusual rhythmic combinations and syncopations have been used so extensively by high-class composers that it is not possible for coon song composers to invent anything along these lines.

1902 - THE MUSICIAN - OCT.

ETHIOPIAN SYNCOPATION-THE DECLINE OF RAGTIME - by W. F. Gates - The popular craze for "rag-time" music seems to be on the wane, and it is not probable that musicians generally will deplore its gradual departure. This craze was a unique example of an exaggerated use of a musical idiom that in itself is not only a lawful means of musical expression, but one that, used in reasonable moderation and in proper surroundings, is full of beauty and interest, namely, the feature of syncopation.

Every child with any pretensions of a smattering of musical knowledge knows that syncopation is a covering up or passing on of an accent to the next part of the measure. It is a feature of musical writing that is as old as the works of the classic masters, yet all of a sudden it is taken up over here in the New World, carried to an exaggerated degree, attached to words of supposed Ethiopian origin (often called poetry by the misguided authors), and goes the extreme of becoming a musical craze.

A hopper is fitted onto the press and into it are poured jerky note groups by the million, "coon poetry" by the ream, colored inks by the
ton, and out of the other end of the press comes a flood of "ragtime" abominations that sweeps over the country, not leaving untouched even the isolated little hamlet on the slopes of the remote Sierras, a hundred miles from the nearest railway. On the grand piano surroundings in the New York drawing room, on the cheap little organ in the cottage on the western plains, though all grades of society, culture and financial standing, the Ethiopian syncopations have swept in a tide that is only now beginning to pull on the taste of an over tickled public palate.

And with all this, not a word can be said against the idea of syncopation per se. It is legitimate and beautiful medium of expression. But it has fallen into bad company, been dragged in the mire of the commonplace and inartistic been loaded down with poetical abortions and hauled through degrading associations until it was in danger of losing, for the time being its true significance and artistic power.

Looking at the matter from an artistic standpoint, the fact that the works of Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Wagner and others furnish numerous examples of syncopation does not excuse the extreme use and extreme perversions to inartistic ends that has marked this craze. True, some good times have been turned out but they only emphasize the fact that certain of the more talented writers have been drawn into the muddy stream in hopes of bringing up some gold in the handful of mud.

Looking at the matter from the side of the largely unmusical public, I am inclined to think that this delight in the jerky lilt of "rag time" music comes from the fact that it furnishes a musical outlet for the extreme nervousness of American youth. Our prominent characteristic as a nation is that we can not sit down in our homes and our home towns and be content to follow our vocations in quiet and peace. No, we must be up and moving. We must try conditions in other places; we must dispose of our business here and see if we cannot make more money somewhere else. We must move on, even though there be no profit in it. At any rate, we will have the satisfaction of having "seen the country." And all this tends to destroy our steadiness and perseverance. No nation more deserves the name of a nation of roamers—a result largely of our national nervousness.

Another impetus to our rambling, though to speak of this may be slightly off my subject, is the continual urging we are subject to from the transportation companies. Excursions in all directions; home-seeking trips for people that already have comfortable homes and would be happy if allowed to enjoy them in undisturbed peace; tours
and travel till the feeling of permanence is destroyed; old associations full of warm friendship and hallowed memories broken off trying something new; moving on from Massachusetts to Illinois, from Illinois to Kansas, from Kansas to California, and they what? Perhaps a little home on a sandy mesa, a rain once in three months, a slender income, and finally, a despondent trip back to the old home to find the neighbors of former days prosperous and satisfied. this is one side, in many cases there is a brighter one. But I use this illustration, which is not at all a fancy picture, but one I have seen too often in painful colors, simply to exemplify this American spirit of nervousness that has its outlet in so many ways that are peculiar to our people.

This spirit of national unrest shows itself in all features of life, in the home, in the business, in the church, in society, in education, in recreation, and naturally in artistic matters as well, or rather, in those features of art that our too in artistic lives may touch upon. And, of course, our music has to suffer as well as the rest. Hence this plague of syncopations as penetrating in its sweep as the Egyptian one of flies, and as distasteful to the musical nature as was the buzzing plague to the worshipper of Isis.

But, as I said at first, this craze for "rag-time" seems to be on the wane. It is certainly to be hoped so. For it creates in the minds of the young a distaste for that which is more staid and solid, more dignified and useful. It is an appetite for spices rather than for nutritious foods. So its decline is a matter for congratulation to the teacher.

I saw an illustration of this change in tendency a few days ago that, while somewhat comical, pointed a little to the gradual change in popular taste. But it showed how prevalent the perverted taste was when a man had to advertise for a wife that was not steeped in "rag-time." It read as follows:

"A bachelor of forty, an expatriate from Manhattan by reason of incompatibility of climate, desires the acquaintance of a lady of cultivated musical taste (pianist) who is unencumbered and in the enjoyment of full autonomy. To prevent any misunderstanding of my conception of the term "musical," would say that Ethiopian syncopation is my aversion and So-So's marches are a weariness. Address, in confidence, R. Box 34, Times office."
1903 - THE METRONOME

THE MUSICAL POSSIBILITIES OF RAG-TIME - So much has been said and written against Rag-Time in general, that it may prove interesting to read a discussion in which the better musical possibilities of this much-abused form of music are held forth in both a natural and musically manner. The following article was written by Dr. Gustav Kuhl, New York City, and appeared in a number of a German musical periodical "Die Musik", which commands the highest position amongst present-day publications of this sort, in the German Empire.

Touching as it does upon a most interesting and important question of our own musical prospects, the ideas expressed there-in will do much to dispel the erroneous idea with many people that, as our country is at present over-run with Rag-time trash of the worst description, everything that savours of the name must be despised and shunned.

That there is a musical possibility in Rag-time is apparent to every musician interested in the question and the writer will add the hope that the following may contribute towards a better general understanding of what it really is and what possibilities it might unfold if properly developed.

It was during a visit to the little island called Jekyl, on the coast of Georgia, somewhat of an American Riviera, that I first became acquainted with the famous or might I say the ill-famed Rag-time rhythm of American Folk Music. The servants of the club together with those of the neighboring villas had arranged a masquerade ball in one of the adjoining buildings of the club house and the owners and their families had been invited to witness the merry-making.

The festivity was at its height when I arrived. Even before entering and while pausing for a moment in the corridor, I became aware of the peculiarly jerky and clappering sounds of the dance music, which could be heard most conspicuously above the noise and hustle made by the hilarious dancers.

After reaching the room where the dancing was in progress, I was to turn to the right where the invited guests had been seated along the wall in a double row. But my senses were captivated against my will by the music, which seemed to be produced by a little army of devils to my left. It seemed incredible to me for quite a while, how any person could dance a single step to such an irregular and noisy conglomeration of sounds; and it was even more difficult for me to understand how such
complicated and to me unmusical noise was brought about. Singularly enough, when looking over the musicians, I found that there were only two men, who managed to produce all this noise. Before a thoroughly dilapidated Grand Piano, the back of a muscular, short-haired negro, with snow-white collar, which reached well-nigh to his ears, presented itself; with his arms and elbows this fellow belabored the keys in sixteenths with such ease, and dexterity as many a pianist could wish for his wrists. In reality he produced all the music, as his colleague, with a double Bass (minus one string) simple supported the bass notes, with vivacious and grunting strokes from his bow. This constituted the entire orchestra and I decided to proceed with my observations from a distance and looked up the seat which had been allotted to me.

It was all very pretty. There were Brother Jonathans from the North and South, Chinese, Indians, Spaniards; here was a ship-wrecked individual who had tied himself up with the Lord knows how many boards and ropes there a sister of mercy with a band in her arm, showing the cross; all clean and thoroughly characteristic costumes in every detail and I again became aware of the cleverness and ingenuity of our common populace.

After greeting my acquaintances as hurriedly as possible, I lost myself in the pleasure of following the masked pairs, the ever-changing positions of their feet, the graceful movements of their bodies, the embracing position of their arms—here a pair, which seems particularly attractive, it loses itself quickly in the mass of glistening dancers, the eyes attempt to follow but the sudden appearance of a gleaming white neck and the outline of a chin are discerned under a protecting mask and in a moment we follow this new picture, till this also looses itself in the encircling crowd—and in this manner the senses are turned topsy-turvey, and only the lamps and garlands fastened between the beams of the ceiling seem to maintain their steady position in the general whirling mass.

Suddenly I discovered that my legs were in a condition of great excitement. They twitched as though charged with electricity and betrayed a considerable and rather dangerous desire to jerk me from my seat. The rhythm of the music, which had seemed so unnatural at first, was beginning to exert its influence over me. It wasn't that feeling of ease in the joints of the feet and toes, which might be caused by a Strauss waltz, no, much more energetic, material, independent as
though one encountered a balking horse, which it is absolutely impossible to master.

Naturally the company I was in—a be-jeweled daughter of a millionaire to either side of me, who every now and then would renew the conversation in their peculiarly dragging southern dialect—together with my own determination finally aided me in gaining a victory over these anarchistic desires of my feet. But the effect remained.

The continuous re-appearance and succession of accentuations on the wrong parts of the bar and unnatural syncopations imparts somewhat of a rhythmic compulsion to the body which is nothing short of irresistible and which makes itself felt even before the ears have discerned the time or rhythmic value of the various parts of the bar. Sometimes it was really only the last bar of a period with its sharply accented:

\[ \text{[Musical notation]} \]

which aided me in ascertaining the real rhythmic relationship.

There can be little doubt that "Rag-time" is a genuine creation of Negro blood. It perpetuates and embodies the rhythm of those crude instruments of noise and percussion, which, in their original African bottle awakens the fanatic enthusiasm of the natives for their religious and grotesque dances; the natural inclination for this rhythm is plainly shown among the present day American-born Negroes, who are so very fond of clapping their hands and swaying their bodies back and forth while practicing the many varieties of the clog dance. Two centuries of continued importation of slaves naturally checked the spread of civilization among them; 1619 the first Holandish Slave ship cast its anchor in the James River, Virginia; 1808 trading in slaves was prohibited but not stopped; and only in 1860 the last smuggler in slaves "the Wanderer" was captured, just as its human freight was being landed on this very "Jekyl Island."

Naturally the old rhythm has changed in the course of time, just as the melodies, the instruments and the entire life of the colored people has changed. One idea prevalent is, that Rag-time has been developed out of the Czardas of the Gypsy, the Spanish Sarabande, the Cuban Habanera, and that it was greatly influenced, in singing at least, by that
peculiar grace note in the Scotch Folks tunes, known as the "Scotch Snap." But such comparisons can only be applied to the products of the "professional rag-time composers" and to their products known as "raggers."

The original rag-time of the South is something entirely different and proclaims its originality and passion through means of its fascinating effectiveness. Now it has spread over all North America. The resident-negro of our cities, who is either a servant, waiter, driver or musician has carried his songs and original rhythm into every nook and corner. Usually he does not play the piano, but rather an instrument of the mandolin class, preferably the Banjo. This instrument is to the Negro what the zither is to the Tyrolean; it has somewhat of the tonal quality of the Mandolin, only deeper and more resonant, and like the Guitar serves principally for the accompaniment of songs. But such rag-time as we hear in the Variety theatres and Common Music halls has lost considerable of its peculiar originality and just as the Negro songs, has become more vulgar, machine-like and common-place. Small wonder that about a year ago the American Federation of Musicians declared war against Rag-time, owing to the degrading influence it commenced to exert on our public musical taste. If we only had some substitute to put in its place in this country, where we possess no higher class folks music of our own, and where we only boast of a few expressive and beautiful folks-songs! Compared to our local operatic attempts and Sousa marches, Rag-time certainly shows more character

But on the other hand there is no magic connected with it. As its name implies, Rag-time is no special style of composition, but merely a rhythm. Every melody can be transformed into Rag-time, providing we tear its rhythm to tatters. It is primarily based upon the principle of syncopation. Similar to the Hungarian Gypsy music-of which we find the grandest example in the Allegro Eroico of Liszt's Fourteenth Rhapsody-the principle beat of the bar is frequently preceded by a grace note or followed by one. Where it would be but natural for us to form a melody for a two-quarter beat in this fashion:

\[
\begin{array}{c|c|c|c}
\hline
\hline
& & & \\
\hline
\hline
\end{array}
\]

Ragtime transforms it thus
But the Negro is not content with this. A form of time as the following:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{image1.png}}
\end{align*}
\]

be treated by him as shown below:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{image2.png}}
\end{align*}
\]

But at the same time his left hand, or one of his colleagues may join him on his mandolin in this fashion:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{image3.png}}
\end{align*}
\]

while a third may join them with still another variety of rhythm:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{image4.png}}
\end{align*}
\]

Therefore, to the principle of syncopation must be added another one, which may be designated as that of willfulness. In this way it may be easily understood, what endless varieties and irregularities are brought about in tonal volume and character through the combination of the above mentioned rhythmic variations. A single player may also bring these about, by avoiding the natural beats of a bar as much as possible and accenting in between in an eccentric a manner as he can; somewhat like the small drum in our military marches, but of course not in such a monotonous style. It is more than perusable to me, that our nerves can hardly withstand such music. Involuntarily the body will strive to oppose and balance the weakly accented principal beats of the bar. This may also be observed in German, Hungarian and Norwegian marches as well as in many of the minuets, mazurkas and waltzes of the Viennese, especially Franz Schubert, who had a special liking for syncopated notes and who was nearly always in the habit of accenting the second quarter in three-quarter time. Therefore Schubert is really one of the great composers, in the works of whom we may find
something similar to Rag-time. Let us quote the second movement of his sonata Op. 53 (Con moto.) the constant alternation of syncopated eighths and sixteenths, can, if played mechanically and in somewhat accelerated time, make a listener quite as nervous as the bona fide rendition of Rag-time.

Therefore, as already mentioned, there is no magic connected with it, although a European will never succeed to produce anything near to genuine Rag-time. But the above quoted allusion to Schubert proves, that Rag-time is not to be condemned in every particular. Probably an unexpected prince will appear some day who like Liszt and Brahms, in the case of Hungarian music, will transplant this low class of Folk-music from the boards of the Variety stage to those of the Concert podium.


There are, however, many of the finest negro 'spirituals and shots' constructed upon other scales, the result no doubt of local influences. There is, however, another reason which lends force to the argument. It is in the sudden syncopations, in other words 'Scotch catch or snap,' found in both the Scotch and negro music. This may have suggested the so-called 'rag-time' attributed to the negro, which recently reached so much exaggeration in the 'coon-songs' seems to me a fallacy promulgated by Anton Dvorak and others to designate negro music, the national music of America. Because the music is not national at all, so long as it is restricted to a few less enlightened colored people and they chiefly local." (from the "Literary Digest."

1911 - VARIETY - DEC 23 - RAGTIME vs. CLASSICAL

I do not concede that 'ragtime' is not high grade music - in fact, quite the contrary. So-called 'ragtime' is merely a syncopation of melody of almost any kind.

AUGUST - 1912 - ORCHESTRA MONTHLY

THE ETHICS OF RAGTIME - A new "Websterian" dictionary gives as a definition of ragtime, "syncopated music, characteristic of negro melodies," which is about as clearly concise as to define the horse as energized pub, characteristic of carts that are not pushed. Ragtime, to be sure, is a form of syncopation, and one of the most beautiful of syncopated passages occurs in the solo "With Verdure Clad" from
Haydn's Creation, but the latter is never classified as "ragtime," although it may be a sublimated example of it.

1913 - FEB - MUSICAL OPINION & MUSICAL TRADE REVIEW -

"RAG-TIME" on PARNASSUS - "There is nothing new under the sun," said the wise man of old, and the present craze for eccentric rhythm is but one more reminder of the fact. It is also a proof that there is something in a name, despite the Shakespearean dictum. Syncopation is of course one of the oldest of musical devices, yet under its proper name and used artistically it has so far left the public cold. Vulgarized however and called "rag-time," it has sent nine-tenths of English and American people agog. While all public crazes are of interest to the student of human nature, this particular one is specially so to the musician, since it is surely the first time that the public has gone mad over a mere musical artifice; though, as I shall show later, something of the kind happened in the eighteenth century, and then curiously enough the craze was caused by a kindred rhythm. Still, the vogue was not to be compared to the present rage for stuttering and hiccoughing measures.

One is never surprised at the public showing a strong preference for any particular musical forms, but to lose one's head over a mere matter of accent! It is on a par with some of the ridiculous catchwords that from time to time take the town by storm,-those apparently meaningless questions that make the boy in the street a terror and reduce the most ready witted of his victims to impotent rage. Just now, rag-time fills such a place in our corporate life. All, face such sober sides as you and I, are bitten. Why it has so suddenly captured us who shall say? It has been a familiar feature in the strains of the music hall for some years without attracting very much attention. Indeed, it has quite a respectable past history, as we shall see. There is no denying its appeal, though like other good things one may have too much of it. The present boom will have served a good purpose, however, if it drives home to our composers and performers-and especially our singers-the importance of rhythm.

To begin with, what is it? My Grove tells me that it is "a modern term of American origin signifying in the first instance broken rhythm in melody, especially a sort of continuous syncopation. 'Rag-time tunes' is the name given in the States to those airs which are usually associated with the so-called 'coon' songs or lyrics, which are supposed to depict
negro life in modern America." It may be added that the peculiar rhythm is to be found not only in 'coon'' songs but in practically all religious songs popular among Negroes in the southern states before the abolition of slavery. Oliver Ditson's publish several collections of these under the title of "Jubilee songs." One of the most interesting of the works of Coleridge-Taylor is a collection of "Twenty-four Negro melodies." Of the twenty-four melodies, sixteen are religious plantation songs or "spirituals" as they were called. In almost every case, rag-time rhythm is a prominent feature. I have just been comparing them with an album claiming to contain "the latest rag-time successes," and a comparison supplies yet another proof—if such were needed—that the mob never lays an appreciative hand on art without leaving traces of its grimy paw.

There is the widest of distances between these pathetic songs of slavery (which were sung with swaying bodies and with religious fervor at camp revival meetings) and the vulgar tunes with their ugly titles that are just now a public obsession. As an instance of a melody with great emotional and harmonic possibilities and as a good example of sustained syncopation, take "Oh He Raise a Poor Lazarus:"

Here is a phrase from "Wade in the water," the first bar of which is by no means easy to sing:
while I have not so far discovered any piece of music hall rag-time with a lilt to beat the song commencing:

Further examples of such religious songs may be found in Grove's Dictionary: "Negro music of the United States."

How far these songs owe their origin to Africa is a debatable point. Probably the rhythmical peculiarities only hail from thence, as many of the melodies show decided traces of civilized influence. Some are curiously Scotch in idiom. The rhythms are often very difficult, but these dusky singers are credited with a very highly developed feeling for rhythm, due probably to their accompaniments consisting mainly of such primitive percussive effects as the clapping of hands, stamping of feet and the clacking of bones or pieces of wood. The banjo seems to have been very little used. (Sic. editors bold added)

As I said above, it is not easy to see why the public should go suddenly mad over a rhythmical peculiarity that was well known in England even before the day of the nigger minstrel. It must be nearly-if not quite-a half century ago that the Jubilee Singers were touring Europe, singing genuine plantation songs and hymns. What is still more odd is the apparently sudden discovery of the fascination of rag-time. The power and width of its appeal are shown by the fact of its existing in almost all folk music. The form most familiar to us Britishers is of course that known as the "Scotch Snap." It is not without interest at the present time to recall the fact that in the time of Burney the musical world was suffering from it in pretty much the same way as we are now from its American cousin. The historian, writing of the Italian opera in 1748, complains that there was too much of the "Scots catch or cutting short of the first of two notes in a melody," blaming especially Cocchi, Perez, and Jomelli for being lavish with the "snap." Later, popular song writers such as Hook made liberal use of the trick and probably not a few songs since called Scotch were produced in this way. For example, "Within a mile of Edinburgh Town," for all Caledonian flavor imparted to it by the "sea'," was born on the wrong side of the Tweed, having been composed by this same Hook and sung by Mrs.
Wrigthen at Vauxhall Gardens in 1780. Even Handel could not escape the infection, as the most cursory examination of his instrumental music will show.

While there is considerable difference between rag-time and the "snap," they are both alike in being manifestations of the popular love of spicy rhythm. No folk music is without it. European examples are now so well known that quotation is unnecessary. Plenty of examples of real rag-time are to be found in the Hungarian Rhapsodies of Liszt, in the dances of Brahms and in Grieg's arrangements of Norwegian melodies. Here is a "Scotch snap" from a less familiar source:

![West African Folksong](image)

This liking for disturbed accent is by no means confined to the worldly-minded. There are plenty of examples to be found in church music of all periods. Even plainsong had some dalliance with it, as in such passages as:

![Commonplace of Plainchant](image)

which is a commonplace of plainchant. Here is one from the old German tune "Es ist ein' Ros' entsprung'n:

![Old German Tune](image)

while the ancient English carol tune, "This endris nyght," has for its last line:

![Ancient English Carol](image)

A rhythm often found in the early versions of some old psalm tunes. Indeed, the original forms of many of our most popular early hymn tunes present us with some interesting rhythms. The wholesale simplification to which they have been subjected is a loss. They looked difficult, and for that reason they were ruthlessly made to fit the
Victorian church musician's idea of what a hymn tune should be. But the difficulty is more apparent than real; and I have heard some rhythmical curiosities taken up quite quickly by congregations and enjoyed on fuller acquaintance. After all, why should people who can pick up the latest catchy popular song find any difficulty with such a passage as this line from the Generan Psalter, 1551:

![Musical notation]

But you may be sure that the average hymnbook editor would feel it incumbent on him to turn the eighth and ninth notes into crotchets.

Nor should it be forgotten that to this feature in popular music we musicians owe much. This displaced accent, taken in hand by the great composers, has been the basis of some of their finest effects. One can scarcely imagine classical music without cross rhythm and syncopation, or curtailing, extension and overlapping of phrases, all being developments of this germ. Its charm lies almost entirely in its capacity for surprising; and it is this quality of the unexpected and even incongruous that makes it especially suitable for humorous purposes, though it can be sinister enough on occasion. It is not easy to explain the difference; but it may be said that, while rag-time is syncopation, syncopation is not always rag-time. Still, many pages of the great composers contain music that is as pure rag-time as any so labeled. For example, the opening of the main theme of the second and third "Leonora" Overture would surely answer to this description:

![Musical notation]

But would your music hall habitué, be excited when later on Beethoven uses the rhythm of the first bar for twenty-three bars in succession? Not a whit. He would know that he was listening to classical music and his frame of mind would be appropriately chastened. Call the same figure rag-time and let it be banged and screamed out by some American comedians and he will be duly roused. So, as I said before, there is something in a name after all.
Apropos the difference between rag-time and syncopation, I should say that this figure, also from "Leonora" No. 3: is better described by the latter than the former term, though I should be sorry to be suddenly asked why. I can only say that I feel in my bones that it is so; just as surely as I feel that this, from "Die Meistersinger" Overture;

is rag-time, albeit very expressive, thanks largely to the bebung in the first bar. Here, however, are two extraordinary rhythms of Wagner that are just as certainly not ragtime:

Here is a teaser from "Gotterdammerung:"

One wonders how often at rehearsal the weary players have found themselves drawing on the title for a due expression of their feelings!

Perhaps no one composer's works give us the germ and the fully developed result more completely than those of Bach. In his numerous little dances are to be found examples of just the little catch in the rhythm that belongs to folk music, while his mastery of complexity needs no mention. I may be allowed however to call your attention to the Fifth Partita, the Sarabande and Minuetto of which are specially interesting examples of rhythm. Surely the scheme of the latter must have caused astonishment. I can recall nothing similar in Bach or in any other composer of that period:
And so on for fifty bars.

The whole subject of rhythm is so interesting that volumes could be written on it. I must pull up, lest I find myself in the toils of a most fascinating theme. My object in these desultory remarks is to remind some of my brother musicians who may feel inclined to curse rag-time and all its works, that the thing itself is a pleasing device which has existed from the early days of music and is moreover one to which composers have been indebted for many fine effects. I will give you one last strain and ask you to guess the composers;

There! A piece of pure rag-time, if ever there was-naked and not ashamed. The composer? No, he is not American or English. French, did you say? You are getting warm now. It is so unlike the composer that you are hardly likely to guess,-Debussy! It is the opening of the last number in his "Children's Corner"-a piece called "Golliwog's Cake Walk"-wherein you will find plenty of piquant rhythm and abundant humor. Surely, after these examples, rag-time may be allowed to peg out a claim in some humble corner of the Parnassian slopes?


Today there are probably a hundred persons who know something about music-to the extent of singing, playing some instrument or operating a player-piano or phonograph, to every one of twenty years ago. And what has brought about this musical growth? What single factor is most responsible for this condition?

Beyond all doubt it is due to the extreme popularity of the "ragtime," light and "popular" melodies that have had such a vogue during the last decade. It is not the writer's purpose to champion all the light and trashy music that has been, and is being put upon the market every day, for much of it does not even deserve a first reading. But it is his wish to protest against the almost wholesale condemnation of
everything not bearing the stamp of so-called legitimacy; for light music
certainly serves a purpose when it gives pleasure to a multitude of
people.

The writer, for one, is in favor of restricting the word *ragtime* to
its original definition, as meaning that time or rhythm in which the
dominating and characteristic feature is *syncopation*.

Syncopation is almost as old as musical composition, and was
frequently used by Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert and many other
great composers. It appears in their compositions, however, only to
produce certain occasional effects, never as a feature. It was reserved
for America and the enlightened twentieth century to give it
predominant importance! In commenting on this subject some fifteen
years ago, the *Chicago Inter-Ocean* said: "Ragtime is not new—it was
written by southern musicians, and whistled, sung and danced by the
Southern Negro fifty years ago. In what shape the jerky, peculiar
rhythm called 'ragtime' first appeared in this country is not known, but
from the testimony of musical experts it was a wildly savage affair until
harmonized and made melodious by French and Spanish-Creole
influences."

Probably the first published composition in which syncopation was the
characteristic feature was, "The Pasquinade," by Louis Moreau
Gottschalk, the famous American pianist who lived in New Orleans.
This was written in the early fifties, and was such a novelty and of such
high musical value, that it was extensively used by concert pianists, and
is seen on programs even at the present day.

The term "ragtime" (probably a contraction of ragged time) was
not coined until about twenty years ago, but it has had a very active
existence since that time, and shows no immediate signs of being
obliterated. "The Mobile Buck," a peculiar "stop time" Negro dance,
popular about two generations ago, was one of the first numbers of this
character to become the rage, and in its wake came "The Darkey's
Dream" (still well liked) which contains considerable syncopation,
though it is not strictly a ragtime composition. Soon after this Kerry
Mills' "Rastus on Parade," "Georgia Camp Meeting" and "Whistling
Rufus" swept the country (England as well) and American ragtime was
thoroughly and irrevocably launched.

These compositions had no sooner been placed upon the market
than other composers and publishers, realizing the demand for this sort
of music, forthwith undertook to meet and nurture it. To attempt to
chronicle the compositions that have made ragtime history would be an interminable and all but impossible task. They seem to have been hurled at the public at the rate of several a day ever since.

1914 - THE MUSICAL OBSERVER - SEPT.

RAGTIME - A pernicious Evil and Enemy of True Art. - by Leo Oehmler -
Ragtime music is chiefly a matter of rhythm and not much a matter of melody or fine harmony
It is based almost exclusively upon syncopated time. Elson's Music Dictionary defines Syncope as follows: "An unequal division of the time, or notes; irregular accent; binding the last note of one bar to the first note of the next; accented notes occurring on the unaccented part of a bar."
"Syncopation is an artificial accent, an interruption of the natural pulsation of the music."
"It can be produced by giving an accent where none is expected, by taking away the accent from a point where it is expected, or by both methods combined."
"The natural rhythm must be restored after the syncopation has been used for a short time, otherwise the ear will accept the artificial accent as a natural one and the effect of syncopation be lost. Syncopations in accompaniments must be strong to be effective."

Now, this manner of note contraction, by cutting off part of the value of one note and giving it to the following note, thereby creating a restless pulse beat is probably as old as the art of music itself and has been used by great composers in all ages. But their genius determined to a nicety just how and when to use it to produce certain desirable emotional or dramatic effects.

In the hands of a superior composer who is a master of all the devices of composition, melodic, harmonic, contrapuntal and architectural design in general, syncopated rhythm becomes an unlimited resource for surprising and delightful effects, especially in the domains of operatic and orchestral music.

But in the hands of the average ragtime composer it becomes merely a vehicle for the exploitation of the rhythm itself, often with frantic attempts to intensify its peculiarities by eccentric perversions of melody and harmony.
By these popular exploiters of the rhythm, a noble melody, beautiful harmony, interesting ideas and clever transformations of themes are usually absent factors.

The composer of ragtime music is only too frequently an illiterate musician, a devotee of the dance hall or cabaret and be it candidly stated, his inspiration does not come from above as a Heaven-sent message, but only too often is born of fire borrowed from a flask or the inspiration of a rendezvous in the underworld.

1914 - Musical Observer – Sept. – Ragtime

The word syncopation is derived from "Syncope," a medical term, meaning, "a heart beating unevenly through excessive agitation, or diseased in some way."

1915 - Ragtime Review - AUGUST

WHAT ABOUT RAGTIME? In the following story by T. Fred Henry, the celebrated band master of Des Moines, La., much will be found of interest to the lover of ragtime. Mr. Henry's remarks are breezy, direct and to the point and coming from a man of his standing are a great boost for the "cause." The article follows:

When you stop to consider that in America and, in fact, all the civilized countries of the world ragtime is the musical craze of the hour, it must be admitted that it has something very fascinating about it.

To begin with, American ragtime is syncopated time and in its original form is therefore not a new-born idea, for you find it embodied in the works of almost all the old masters.

Of course it is then called syncopation, for none of the worshipers of the great Richard Wagner will admit that he ever wrote a bar of ragtime.

Well, maybe he did not, but he certainly missed a great chance to make an awful big hit with a lot of good fellows that cannot see anything else. Still if we are indebted to those great pioneers in the field of music for our waltz movements, barcarolles and other ballet and dance music, we should also give them some credit for the syncopated movement which forms the very foundation of ragtime.

But to the American composer belongs the real glory of having developed modern ragtime and that is something after all, for it is the most popular style of music ever written.
When I say it is popular I do not insist that its popularity is entirely due to its merits.

1915 – The New Republic – Oct. 16 – Ragtime

I haven't a notion whether ragtime is going to form the basis of an "American school of composition." But I am sure that many a native composer could save his soul if he would open his ears to this folk-music of the American city.

But the schools have their reply. "Ragtime is not new," they say. "It is merely syncopation, which was used by Haydn and Mozart, Beethoven and Brahms, and is good, like any other musical material, when it is used well." But they are wrong. Ragtime is not "merely syncopation." It is a certain sort of syncopation-namely, a persistent syncopation in one part conflicting with exact rhythm in another. But of course this definition is not enough. Ragtime has its flavor that no definition can imprison. No one would take the syncopation of a Haydn symphony to be American ragtime. "Certainly not," replies the indignant musician. Nor the syncopation of any recognized composer. But if this is so, then ragtime is new. You can't tell an American composer's "art-song" from any mediocre art-song the world over. (Permit me to pass over the few notable exceptions.) You can distinguish American ragtime from the popular music of any nation and any age. In the first instance the love of ragtime is a purely human matter. You simply can't resist it. I remember hearing a Negro quartet singing "Waiting for the Robert E. Lee," in a cafe, and I felt my blood thumping in tune, my muscles twitching to the rhythm. I wanted to paraphrase Shakespeare-

"The man who hath no ragtime in his soul, Who is not moved by syncopated sounds" and so on. If any musician does not feel in his heart the rhythmic complexities of "The Robert E. Lee" I should not trust him to feel in his heart the rhythmic complexities of Brahms.


On this same subject Drury Underwood in the "Chicago Record Herald" states:

"The origin of ragtime is referred to periodically by musicians something probably African, but beyond
analysis. Wherein they are partly right and wholly wrong. Ragtime is African-no probably about it—and the analysis is simple, leading facts considered.

"Real ragtime on the piano, played in such a manner that it cannot be put in notes, is the contribution of the graduated negro banjo player who cannot read music."

"On the banjo there is a short string which is not fretted and which, consequently, is played open with the thumb. It is frequently referred to as "the thumb string." The colored performer, strumming in his own cajoling way, like to throw in a note at random and his thumb ranges over for this effect. When he takes up the piano the desire for the same effect dominates him, being almost second nature, and he reached for the open banjo string note with his little finger.

"Meanwhile he is keeping mechanically perfect time with his left hand. The hurdle with the right hand little finer throws the tune off its stride, resulting in syncopation. He is playing two different times at once.

"This explanation, unsupported, is logical. Moreover, it was given to the writer by Ben Harney, who was the first to play negro ragtime on the piano before polite audiences. Harney was frankly an expositor of negro themes and acquired them from that part of the country whence came May Irwin's song about "The New Bully." He introduced "Mr. Johnson, Turn me Loose," along with his ragtime and a perfect illustration of flat-footed buck dancing through the medium of a negro named Strap Hill.

1917 -Literary Digest - The Appeal of the Primitive Jazz

"Jazz music is the delirium tremens of syncopation. It is strict rhythm without melody. To-day the jazz bands take popular tunes and rag them to death to make jazz. Beats are added as often as the delicacy of the player's ear will permit. In one-two time a third beat is interpolated. There are many half notes or less and many long-drawn, wavering tones. It is an attempt to reproduce the marvelous syncopation of the African jungle.

"With these elastic unitary pulses any haphazard series by means of syncopation can be readily, because instinctively, coordinated. The result is that a rhythmic tune compounded of time and stress and pitch relations is created, the chief characteristic of which is likely to be complicated syncopation. An arabesque of which is likely to be
complicated syncopation. An arabesque of accentual differences, group-
forming in their nature, is superimposed upon the fundamental time
divisions,'

"There is jazz precisely defined as a result of months of
laboratory experiment in drum-beating and syncopation. The laws that
govern jazz rule in the rhythms of great original prose, verse that sings
itself, and opera of ultra modernity. 'Imagine Walter Peter, Swinburne,
and Borodin swaying to the same pulses that rule the moonlit music on
the banks of African rivers,'"

1917 - CURRENT OPINION - NOV.THE GREAT AMERICAN
COMPOSER-WILL HE SPEAK IN THE ACCENT OF BROADWAY

Even our imitative musicians admit that the one distinctive
element which America has contributed to music is the so-called
"ragtime." Ragtime, therefore, should be the basis, or at least one of the
chief ingredients, of our national music. Indeed, ragtime, its champions
say, reflects the soul of the American people. The "soil" of America is
the pavement of its bustling cities; its "folk" is not the sluggish peasant
but the nervous "hustler" of New York, Chicago or San Francisco.

It will be objected by musicians that ragtime is only a rhythm-not
music but only one element of music. Technically it is known as
"syncopation." You cannot found a school of music on syncopation.

The matter is not so easily dismissed. Mr. Van Vechten points out
that Beethoven's Seventh symphony is largely based on a syncopated
rhythm, and Schumann wrote hardly a piece without syncopation. He
might have added that syncopation is the most distinctive factor in
Scotch folk-music, one of the oldest musical traditions in the world. But
ragtime is a different syncopation. It is not easily explained. Louis
Hirsch tried to describe its peculiarity by saying that its 'melody and
harmony are syncopated differently.' There are other complications. A
writer in the London Times calls attention to the fact that "Waiting for
the Robert E. Lee," tho written out in a rhythm of 8, is really a rhythm
of 3 followed by a rhythm of 5, proceeding without warning into the
normal rhythm of 8.

The fact is that ragtime is more than a mere rhythm. The rhythm is the
creation of the American Negro who brought it with him from Africa,
but the "ragtime" of to-day is of recent growth and it is not peculiar to
the blacks. This "apotheosis of syncopation," as Mr. Van Vechten calls
it, is only the crude basis of the thing. The spirit of it, the exuberance,
the nervousness, the irresistible urge, are the reflection of a national character. It is irresistible because it is genuine.

1918 - THE NEW MUSIC REVIEW - MARCH CONCERNING RAGTIME - by Daniel Gregory Mason

If the important matter in American music is not its expression of the American temper, but the peculiar technical feature, the special kind of syncopation we call the "rag rhythm," then the important matter in Hungarian music is not its fire but its "sharp fourth step." Beethoven ceases to be Teutonic when he uses Irish cadences in his Seventh Symphony, and Chopin is Polish only in his mazurkas and polonaises. Of course this will not do; and Mr. Moderwell, to do him justice, after remarking that "ragtime is not merely syncopation-it is a certain sort of syncopation," adds "But of course this definition is not enough. Ragtime has its flavor that no definition can imprison."

As for the rag rhythm itself, the sole distinctive feature of this music, it has undoubtedly something of real piquancy. The trick, it will be noted, is a syncopation of half-beats, arranged so as to pull bodily forward certain comparatively strong accents, those at the middle of the measures'-a scheme to which words as well as melody conform. The left hand meanwhile gives the regular metrical division of the measure, and a writer in the London Times, defining ragtime as "a strongly syncopated melody superimposed on a strictly regular accompaniment," points out that "it is the combination of these two rhythms that gives 'ragtime' its character." This is perhaps not strictly true, since in some of the most effective bits of ragtime the metrical pulsation may give way momentarily to the syncopation, and everyone remembers those delightful times of complete silence in which the pulse is kept going mentally, to be finally confirmed by a crashing cadence. But it is usually the case that both time schemes, metrical and rhythmical, are maintained together. For this very reason we must question the contention of the champions of ragtime that its type of syncopation is capable of great variety, and even makes possible effects elsewhere unknown, a contention in support of which some of them have even challenged comparison of it with the rhythmic vigors of Beethoven and Schumann."

The subtlety of syncopation as an artistic device results from its simultaneous maintenance of two time-patterns, the rhythmical and the metrical, in such a relation that the second and subordinate one, though
never lost sight of, is never obtruded. The quasi-mechanical pulse of the meter is the indispensable background against which only can the freer oscillations of the rhythm outline themselves. The moment the sense of it is lost, as it is sometimes lost in those over-bold passages of Schumann where a displacement is too emphatically made or too long continued, the charm disappears. In the following from his "Faschingsschwant," for instance, the interest of the rhythmic accent on beat "three" lasts only so long as we oppose to it mentally a regular metric accent on "one." In the continuation of the passage, for which the reader is referred to the original, our minds are apt to "slip a stitch," so to speak, letting "three" and "one" coalesce. The moment this happens the passage becomes commonplace. But suppose, on the other hand, in the effort to maintain our sense of the meter, we strike the bass notes on each "one." Now equally, or indeed more than before, the charm is fled, and the passage rendered stale and unprofitable, through the actual presentation to the ear of so mechanical a reiteration. In short, the metrical scheme, has to be mentally maintained but actually so far as possible, eliminated. Looking back, in the light of these considerations, at "The Memphis Blues," we shall realize that whatever the pleasing eccentricity of the rhythm, so relentless a meter as we here find thumped out by the left hand cannot but quickly grow tiresome, as indeed it will be felt to be after a few repetitions.

Reference to another well-known theme of Schumann will reveal a further weakness of ragtime. The second theme of the finale of his concerto for piano runs as follows;
Here the indescribably delightful effect is evidently due not only to the purely rhythmic syncopation, but also to the fact that on the silent strong beat of every second measure harmony and melody as well as rhythm are so to speak "tied up," or suspended, in such a way that the syncopation is at the very heart of the whole musical conception, and cannot be omitted without annihilating the music. Beside such essential syncopation as this the mere pulling forward of certain notes, as in "The Memphis Blues," is seen to be superficial, an arbitrary dislocation which may disguise but cannot correct the triteness of the real melodic line. In fact, we seem here to have tracked ragtime to its lair and discovered what it really is. It is no creative process, like the syncopation of the masters, by which are struck forth new, vigorous, and self-sufficing forms, It is a rule of thumb for putting a "kink" into a tune that without such specious rehabilitation would be unbearable. It is not a new flavor, but a kind of curry or catsup strong enough to make the stale old dishes palatable to unfastidious appetites. Significant is it that, as the writer in the Times remarks, "In American slang to 'rag' a melody is to syncopate a normally regular time." The "rag" idiom can thus be put on and off like a mask; and in recent years we have seen thus grotesquely disguised, as the Mendelssohn Wedding March, for instance, in "No Wedding Bells for Me," many familiar melodies. To these it can give no new musical lineaments, but only distorts the old ones as with St. Vitus's dance.

Thus the technical limitations of ragtime which we have tried to analyze are seen to be in the last analysis the results and indices of a more fundamental shortcoming—an emotional superficiality and triviality peculiar to it. Ragtime is the musical expression of an attitude toward life only too familiar to us all, an attitude shallow, restless, avid of excitement, incapable of sustained attention, skimming the surface of
everything, finding nowhere satisfaction, realization, or repose. It is a meaningless stir about, a commotion without purpose, an epilepsy simulating controlled muscular action. It is the musical counter-part of the sterile cleverness we find in so much of our contemporary conversation, as well as in our theater and our books. No candid observer could deny the prominence in our American life of this restlessness of which ragtime is one expression. It is undoubtedly what most strikes superficial observation. The question is whether it is really representative of the American temper as a whole, or is prominent only as the froth is prominent on a glass of beer. Mr. Moderwell thinks the former: "I like to think," he says, "that ragtime is the perfect expression of the American city, with its restless bustle and motion, its multitude of unrelated details, and its underlying rhythmic progress toward a vague somewhere. As you walk up and down the streets of an American city you feel in its jerk and rattle a personality different from that of any European capital. This is American. Ragtime, I believe, expresses it. It is to-day the one true American music."

To such an idolatry of precisely the most hideous, inhuman, and disheartening features in our national and musical life a lover of music and a lover of America can only reply that, first, it is possible that America lies less on the surface than we think, possible that it is no more adequately represented by Broadway than France is represented by the Parisian boulevards, or England by the London music halls; but that, second, if indeed the land of Lincoln and of Emerson has degenerated until nothing remains of it but "jerk and rattle," then we at least are free to repudiate the false patriotism of "My country, right or wrong," to insist that better than bad music is no music, and to let our beloved art subside finally under the clangor of subway gongs and automobile horns, dead but not dishonored.

1918 – New Music Review – April – Negro Spirituals

Syncopation, that offshoot of rhythm, is employed extensively; ignorant people claim that the Negro invented syncopation. He neither invented syncopation, nor was he the first to use it. It existed long before he was brought in shackles to this country-examples may be found in the old Greek and Hebrew melodies. Syncopation was probably discovered by the first aborigine who beat on a hollow gourd with a thigh bone, and has been used ever since by "all nations that do dwell upon the face of the earth."
1918 - THE DIAL - AUGUST 15 - AMERICAN INFLUENCE ON MODERN FRENCH MUSIC

In the "Children's Corner" we find the initial experiment. "Gollyiwog's Cakewalk" (all the titles are in English) is the last of this little set for piano. Debussy has taken a single syncopation which he uses as the basis for the entire composition; and here he is wrong, for true "rag" changes its meter continually. Debussy's effect however is not monotonous-his ear was too sensitive to allow him to commit any such mistake-and the middle section drops the rhythmic figure for a while. This middle section is noteworthy for its delicate burlesque of the opening cello phrase of "Tristan." The Teutonic super-lover becomes the grotesque Gollyiwog surprised by new, sacred emotions; but these are soon swept aside by the syncopated cakewalk. In the first volume of "Preludes," Debussy again tries American effects, and again he thinks his result sufficiently important to place it last in the volume. "Minstrels" he calls it, again using an English title; and it is really only this that betrays its meaning. He is giving his impression of a black-face show; we hear the drum, the sentimental song, and so on, with a little phrase like a guffaw punctuating the music, just as the puns of the endmen punctuate the performance. But Debussy has written this music with a characteristic bit of daring; he has left syncopation entirely out of it. And therefore no American is likely to realize what is going on, unless he appreciates the title.

JULY - PSYCHOLOGY REVIEW - THE NATURE OF THE RHYTHM EXPERIENCE

Syncopation

The phenomenon of syncopation to which Patterson has drawn experimental attention, "in itself, involves a complex of mental processes. The most essential part of the phenomenon seems to be that we keep our impression of a series of subjective time-intervals, regular, accelerating or retarding, but find a pleasure in marking the beats objectively, either by different forms of motion, such as foot-taps alternating with hand-taps, or by what appears at first as omission of objective marking for certain beats. As a matter of fact, this is usually nothing but the interpolation of some concealed form of motor reaction such as eye, throat, tongue, or breath movement, which alternates with
a more visible movement, such as nodding or tapping or dancing" (31, p.4).

Stetson has described it in much the same terms. "Along with this precision of all the movements comes a tendency to beat a new rhythm. This accompanying rhythm is simpler and broader in character; it is a kind of long swell on which the speech movements ripple. This second rhythm may express itself in a new movement of hand, head, foot or body; when it has become more conscious, as in patting time to a dance or chant, it develops complicated forms, and a third rhythm may appear beside it, to mark the main stresses of the two processes. The negro patting time for a dance beats the third fundamental rhythm with his foot, while his hands pat an elaborate second rhythm to the primary rhythm of the dancers. This regulation of the movement by the coincidence of several rhythms is the cause of the striking regularity of the temporal relations" (51, p.465-6).

In Patterson's definition (31, p.4), syncopation is apparently manifested by the performer of the rhythm. Syncopation is used by Patterson in three senses, (1) as any full motor response (p. xix), (2) motor response in the performer of the rhythm (p.4), (3) a correlation of the 'unitary pulses' and objective stimulation in the observer (p.91). This analysis has shown that while there is coexistence, there is not necessarily correlation and rarely coincidence of the objective stimulation and the reflex response. syncopation in the third sense exists, but it is limited to a comparatively small field of rhythm.

Full motor response is not so evident in modern rhythm. As Patterson says, "Modern sophistication has inhibited many native instincts, and the mere fact that our conventional dignity usually forbids us to sway our bodies or to tap our feet when we hear effective music, has deprived us of unsuspected pleasures" (pg. xix). Patterson concludes: "What is left, then, but to conclude that the sentence which has in its structure the possibility of a maximum of rhythm must be capable of evoking in us a maximum of motor response? To test it, therefore, we must tap to it, nod to it, walk to it, sway to it, chop wood to it, if necessary. If it is easy for us to nod or tap, or, for that matter, hoe potatoes to these salient 'drum-songs'. the first degree of rhythmic excellence is obtained" (p. 15).

The contortions of the polar bear which Patterson has called 'prose' merely present syncopation of the muscular responses of various organs due to the pendulum rates of the organs. They are not, however,
'harmoniously but intricately regulated by the incessant unitary "flap! flap! flap!" of those great white feet' (32 p.261). Each is an independent in its own sphere as the walking movement is in its sphere. the large body of literature on rhythm, then, is not invalidated by the 'new standard.' On the contrary, it is enriched by the hitherto experimentally unrecognized field of syncopation.

DECEMBER - MELODY - JAZZ MUSIC AND THE MODERN DANCE - The attitude representative of that class of musicians which is the "nerves and sinews" of the profession towards "jazz" question was firmly and broadly expressed by Benton T. Bott, president of the American National Association, Masters of Dancing, who was recently in New York to attend the thirty-seventh annual convention of that association, at the Hotel Astor.

"We do not recognize the term "jazz," which is purely a coined word," Mr. Bott told the Tribune. "We do, however, recognize syncopation, and we have nothing against certain forms of syncopated music. It can be played brilliantly if played right, and then again it can be played in another form so sensuous and evil that it harks clear back to the wild and irresponsible barbarism of the dark ages. We have tried to teach and preach moderation. Civilization has begun to revolt against the wrong kind of syncopation, this so-called 'jazz,' which during the more a unrestrained period of the war swept the country with a crop of immodesty in both song and dance in its wake. It first appeared on the stage, and eventually it audaciously entered the public dance hall and private ballroom alike

AUGUST - LADIES HOME JOURNAL - DOES JAZZ PUT THE SIN IN SYNCOPATION

Many people classify under the title of "jazz" all music in syncopated rhythm, whether it be the ragtime of the American Negro or the csardas of the Slavic people. Yet there is a vast difference between syncopation and jazz. To understand the seriousness of the jazz craze, which, emanating from America, has swept over the world, it is time that the American public should realize what the terms ragtime and jazz mean; for the words are not synonymous, as so many people suppose.

The Elements of Music Out of Tune
Jazz is not defined in the dictionary or encyclopedia. But Groves' Dictionary of Music says that "ragtime" is a modern term of American origin, signifying in the first instance broken rhythm and melody, especially a sort of continuous syncopation." The encyclopedia Britannica sums up syncopation as "the rhythmic method of tying two beats of the same note into one tone in such a way as to displace the accent." Syncopation, this curious rhythmic accent on the short beat, is found in its most highly developed forms in the music of the folk who have been held for years in political subjection. It is, therefore, an expression in music of the desire for that freedom which has been denied to its interpreter. It is found in its most intense forms among the folk of all the Slavic countries, especially in certain districts of Poland and Russia, and also among the Hungarian gypsies.

For the same reason it was the natural expression of the American Negroes and was used by them as the accompaniment for their bizarre dances and cakewalks. Negro ragtime, it must be frankly acknowledged, is one of the most important and distinctively characteristic American expressions to be found in our native music. Whether ragtime will be the cornerstone of the American School of Music may be a subject for discussion; but the fact remains that many of the greatest compositions by past and present American composers have been influenced by ragtime. Like all other phases of syncopation, ragtime quickens the pulse, it excites, it stimulates; but it does not destroy.

What of Jazz? It is hard to define jazz, because it is neither a definite form nor a type of rhythm; it is rather a method employed by the interpreter in playing the dance or song. Familiar hymn tunes can be jazzed until their original melodies are hardly recognizable. Jazz does for harmony what the accented syncopation of ragtime does for rhythm. In ragtime the rhythm is thrown out of joint, as it were, thus distorting the melody; in jazz exactly the same thing is done to the harmony. The melodic line is disjointed and disconnected by the accenting of the partial instead of the simple tone, and the same effect is produced on the melody and harmony which is noticed in syncopated rhythm. The combination of syncopation and the use of these enharmonic partial tones produces a strange, weird effect, which has been designated "jazz."
The jazz orchestra uses only those instruments which can produce partial, enharmonic tones more readily than simple tones—such as the saxophone, the clarinet and the trombone, which share honors with the percussion instruments that accent syncopated rhythm. The combination of the syncopated rhythm, accentuated by the constant use of the partial tones sounding off-pitch, has put syncopation too off-key. Thus the three simple elements of music—rhythm, melody and harmony—have been put out of tune with each other.

1922 - APRIL – THAT JAZZ WAIL AGAIN

The PIANO TRADE MAGAZINE does not believe that the verily-orchestrated syncopated music roll is the best thing for the player piano industry. But at the same time it appreciates the fact that tastes differ, and that a large majority of roll buyers have been purchasing the heavily orchestrated music rolls. Men like Thomas M. Pletcher of the Q. R. S. Music Company and Arthur A. Friestedt of the United States Music Company, have testified to this, and as both are business men of sound judgment they would not tell us that these rolls were good sellers if it were not so. They believe in giving the public what it wants, and if the public did not want it calls the "jazz" roll, Mr. Pletcher and Mr. Friestedt would be the first ones to abandon it.

This publication is not putting up an alibi for either "jazz" music or the over-orchestral syncopations in music roll form. Its own attitude on this question was stated in the preceding paragraph. But it does believe that the professional reformers are trying to educate the public in the wrong way. To intimate, for instance, that most people who will listen to syncopated music are rotten to the core, is ridiculous. Syncopated music is not necessarily "jazz," and if rendered on a music roll it cannot be "jazz." If virtue in this country were to be gauged by the type of music preferred by the mass of people, and it were assumed that lovers of syncopated music represented the class lacking in virtue, only an infinitesimal percentage of the people would be found to be virtuous.

MAY - THE MUSICIAN - SYNCOPATED RHYTHM VS. "RAG-TIME" by A. J. Goodrich.

The subject of "Rag-Time" has never interested me, and in company with other musicians I have, heretofore, ignored it. But now it is my desire to correct an impression which seems to prevail among
certain people, to wit: That rag-time is a musical peculiarity invented by the recent makers of coon songs and other variety-hall concoctions. This is not true. Rag-Time is merely a common form of syncopation in which the rhythm is distorted in order to produce a more or less ragged, hysterical effect.

In the theory of Interpretation I have already demonstrated that syncopated rhythms are used by classic composers for some of the following purposes:

1. As a relief and contrast to the monotony of regular rhythms
2. As a means of expression or of bringing forward two opposing principles - dual rhythms being suggestive of strife or contention.
3. As local color, by imitating the rhythm of certain national songs or dances in which some form of syncopation is a characteristic feature.

That old Spanish dance, the Zarabanda, illustrates the early use of syncopation. The accented second beat was suggested by the poses of the dancers and therefore the syncopation served a distinct purpose, as it does in the more modern polonaise and bolero.

In the compositions of Bach and Handel we find that syncopated rhythms are an inherent part of the music design; Haydn used them more for the sake of variety. In the works of Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert syncopation serves both purposes, especially in their symphonies.

Every pianist will recall the leading motive in Beethoven's Sonata in G, beginning like this:

The composition of Chopin and Schumann contain innumerable instances of unusual rhythmic arrangement and combination. An interesting example occurs in the second period of the Schummerlied by Schumann, Op. 124, XVI, where the melody is divided thus:
This is much more individual and expressive than the common arrangement,

would have been. A similar effect occurs in the A flat waltz by Chopin, Op. 42. The melody is virtually in 2-4, while the accompaniment remains in triple measure. Syncopated and dual rhythms occur prominently in many Spanish dances, especially in the bolero and the Cuban dance, Habanera. In the latter this rhythm is of frequent occurrence:

"Souvenir de la Havanne," "El Cocaye," and the famous "O jos criollos," by Gottschalk, illustrate this peculiarity very faithfully. But the rag-time "compositioners" have undoubtedly found their most direct source of supply in the Hungarian song-dances. In several works I have described and illustrated the Czardas, which is always syncopated. The slow movement (lassan) is especially so:

This dates back to the time of the Cythians and owes its origin to the unusual syllabic arrangement of the words sung to the dance. This peculiarity has been observed in the songs of Scotland and English writers call it the "Scotch snap."

Also the negro melodies contain this iambic feature. Dvorak, in his so-called "New World Symphony," uses these displaced accents frequently, as thus in the second theme:
This is similar to a once famous Southern plantation song and bear evidence of its Ethiopian origin.

Indeed, it scarcely possible to mention a standard composer who has not employed some form of syncopation in certain of his compositions.

I have observed that the principal charm of Nevin's popular Serenade ("Good-nigh, good-night, beloved:) is owing to the peculiar form of syncopation in the melody, thus:

\[ \text{[Musical notation image]} \]

But for this genial touch of inspiration the song would be quite commonplace, as the melodic features are not remarkable. This assumes somewhat the character of a free rubato effect. (When I told the late composer of my liking for this serenade, I remember his somewhat incredulous smile as he replied, "Why, I composed that when I was a boy.)

In conclusion, it is evident that none of the so-called rag-time songs or dances is, in any sense, new or original, but that they are adaptations and perversions of the czardas, the Habanera and the southern plantation song. Also, that unusual rhythmic combinations and syncopations have been used so extensively by high-class composers that it is not possible for coon song composers to invent anything along these lines.

MAY 6 - LITERARY DIGEST - "TO JAZZ" OR "TO RAG"

Ragtime and syncopation are two words that have been grievously misused, says Mr. Paul Whiteman whose orchestral leadership in the playing of popular airs is recognized as among the foremost. "Syncopation sounds important," he tell us in the New York Tribune, "To gives a sense to the ignorant of participation in the world's scientific knowledge." But he pulls us up.

"Every community has its own ragtime pets. These are the fellows that are killing American music and standing in the way of your development.

"Syncopation no longer rules American music. Syncopation, of which ragtime is the most familiar form, as we use it in the United States, is an African inheritance. It has descended to us, on one hand,
direct from Africa, and on the other, through Spain and Spanish-American civilization.

"Syncopation still exists in American music; in fact, you can not hear more than a very few bars of any popular composition without its cropping up. But to-day it is no longer a necessary thing. It has been retained much as an ornament. It gives to all American music much of its peculiar character. But if you listen close and look sharp you will note that few dances of to-day depend wholly on syncopation. The fox trot is being danced (this is in 1922) to the rhythm 1 and 2, 3, and 4, which is not syncopation. It is the rhythm of the old Greek poetic dactyl, older than Christianity."
JUNE 1 - MUSICAL COURIER  - JAZZ MUSIC AND ITS RELATION TO AFRICAN MUSIC by Nicholas G. Taylor of Sierra Leone, South Africa.

In New York, at least, this "jazz" music has been the subject of much controversy of late, both by the press and the pulpit - some denouncing, others commending.

But what is the matter with this, music that has evoked so much comment? Has syncopation never been used in music before with such frequency, or is it because the harmonies sometimes employed are rancid and sea-sick, as Wagner's music was described by some in the latter part of the last century? When the attention is directed to the study of Bach's well-tempered clavier more syncopation will be observed than has ever been used in the whole realm of "jazz" music; and as for the harmonies, "jazz" composers are well conservative when it is remembered that some composers of the present day use what I may term chords of the "twenty-second," and abandon as common place those of the seventh and ninth.

More Syncopation

"Jazz" music makes use of syncopation to a marked degree more than African music pretends to do. It is regular in its accents and the rhythmical contents of its bars; it is mostly of the four-and-eight bar period. All these things, together with the question of idiom, are so foreign to the native African that he scarcely recognizes any connection between "jazz" music and his own. On the other hand, African music is cross-rhythmic, its use of syncopation is decidedly moderate and the rhythmical contents of many a bar of African music is as irregular as it could be. Again, owing to the use of cross rhythms, the periods and phrases are explained in a different method from that employed in "jazz' music.

The American Negroes brought over from Africa this music with its cross rhythms. Here they were surrounded with a different idiom; they had to face different conditions and the atmosphere in which they lived was a decided contrast to the environments that they had about them in their native land. The result is that they began to reduce African music to suit their new conditions and this is how they did it:
JAN. - MELODY - FRANK WESTPHAL, CHICAGO EXPONENT OF JAZZ -

Writer of Popular Music Maintains that Variety and Punch Essential to Successful Presentation of Syncopated Music by A. C. E. Schonemann - If jazz music has done nothing more than to be the forerunner and impetus that has ushered in syncopated music, it has more than justified its existence if one is to accept the opinion of Frank Westphal, who draws his conclusions from fifteen years' experience in orchestra work, during which time he has been writing popular music, producing phonograph records and playing practically every form of engagement known to the profession.

"Jazz music has had its day. Today it is a nonentity in the popular field and the music that many people regard as jazz is in reality syncopation of the highest form," said Westphal in a recent interview. "Jazz was born in the Southland, and when it came North it was served up with piano and drums. Later came the saxophone and other instruments, including the cornet, trombone, banjo and big basses. With this growth came the special arrangements, and then the finest forms of syncopation. Today, the man who is skilled in the art of writing and bringing out most effectively the various instruments is usually the most successful in entertaining the public.

"Syncopation is typical of the American people. It represents their thoughts and sentiments, and it has the dash and pep that is expressive and so characteristic of our people. The average American loves variety, and whether he visits a vaudeville house or a cabaret he insists upon diversity of music, in dancing, in the numbers on the program and in fact in all entertainment. In so far as this applies to the popular dance orchestra it has necessitated the writing of original arrangements and the use of new and striking ideas in these arrangements."

Mr. Westphal contends that the secret of success in playing syncopation lies in the use of unusual scores, in the introduction of novel effects and the featuring of one or more instruments in such a manner as to produce eccentric harmonies, quick breaks and strange counter melodies. The most successful exponents of syncopation today, he says, are the men who can take the themes of popular numbers and reconstruct them, injecting unique ideas and making them palatable to suit public taste.
"Men who are expert in arranging are in demand if they can supply the ideas," said Mr. Westphal. "Syncopation is not made up of freakish effects and trick playing, and the scores that are being used today call for men who can play entirely from manuscript and who are artists in every respect. The modern dance orchestra has drawn many men from the ranks of symphony orchestras because the opportunities are greater and the financial return is far in excess of that enjoyed by most symphony men. Another factor is that symphony men with their training are more competent to handle the manuscripts that are so often written out hurriedly and set upon the stands at the last minute.

"The strange effects and uncanny tricks that have been used by some of the old jazz orchestras are for the most part a memory. They have been revamped until the supply has been exhausted, and many leaders are now striving for musical coloring and shadings rather than the use of extreme musical effects. The music that pleases today is popular because of its strange harmonies, and greater than this fact is the manner in which the orchestra presents the number.

July/Dec – Dial – Toujours Jazz

Strictly speaking jazz music is a new development-something of the last two years, arriving long after jazz had begun to be played. I mean that ragtime is now so specifically written for the jazz band that it is acquiring new characteristics. Zez Confrey, Irving Berlin, Fred Fisher, and Walter Donaldson among others are creating their work as jazz; the accent in each bar, for example is marked in the text-the classic idea of the slight accent on the first note of each bar went out when ragtime came in; then ragtime created its own classic notion-the propulsion of the accent from the first (strong) note to the second (weak). In jazz-ragtime the accent can occur anywhere in the bar and is attractively unpredictable. Rhythmically-essentially-jazz is ragtime since it is based on syncopation and even without jazz orchestration we should have had the full employment of precise and continuous syncopation which we find in jazz now, in Pack Up Your Sins, for example. It is syncopation, too, which has so liberated jazz from normal polyphony, from perfect chords, that M. Darius Milhaud is led to expect from jazz a full use of polytonic and atonic harmonies; he notes that in Kitten on the Keys there exists already a chord of the perfect major and the perfect minor. The reason why syncopation lies behind all this is that it is fundamentally an anticipation or a suspension in one
instrument (or in the bass) of what is going to happen in another (the treble); and the moment in which a note occurs prematurely or in retard is, frequently, a moment of discord on the strong beat. A dissonance sets in which may or may not be resolved later. The regular use of syncopation therefore destroyed the fallacy (as I hold it) of the perfect ear; and this is one reason why Americans are often readier to listen to modern music than peoples who haven't got used to dissonance in their folk and popular music.

FEBRUARY - THE FLUTIST - JAZZ-ITS ORIGIN, EFFECT,

The bridge tunes between the strictly instrumental "rags" and the modern "dance-song" era, were Alexander's Ragtime Band and the Oceana Roll. Both of these songs were popular from 1910 to 1912. Many musicians consider the former was the real forerunner of jazz, but I feel more like laying that doubtful honor to the Oceana Roll, as this, I believe was the first popular song to introduce double syncopation.

JUNE- METRONOME - RHYTHMIC SYMPHONIC SYNCOPATION vs MODERN JAZZ By Marian Gillespie. (Editors Note: Marian Gillespie, writer of the famous song hit, "When You Looked into the Heart of a Rose," magazine writer and playwright won the prize recently offered by Paul Specht over radio for the best one hundred word letter on Syncopated Classics vs. Popular Jazz.

Hundreds of manuscripts were submitted from all parts of the United States and Canada. They were written by people from all walks of life including celebrated writers and contained many interesting arguments concerning Jazz and Classics. Miss Gillespie's essay was adjudged the best and a Columbia Portable Phonograph together with a set of Paul Specht's records was delivered to her as the prize.

Miss Gillespie is not only noted for song successes but enjoys a name as an older magazine writer, and playwright of wide repute. Her prize winning essay follows:

Until Rhythmic Symphonic Syncopation was given to a dance loving public, the classics of the Old Masters were little known, and never appreciated, except by a select few.

Modern Jazz, on the other hand, becomes very monotonous. There is no thread of melody running through the warp and woot of the orchestration to take away from the flatness of the pattern. No Melodic highlights, in other words. One modern jazz number would never be
distinguished from the other, were it not for the title, and even then the title could be changed and the music be repeated without detection, except in rare instances. "Heart Broken Rose" being one of the exceptions.

While it seems a sacrilege to "rag the classics" Rhythmic Symphonic Syncopation is an entertainment of rare merit, and an excellent education acquainting the thousands with the musical classics of Bach, Brahms and other old masters, by presenting their works in a manner which delight the ear of the masses.

JULY - METRONOME - FRANCE'S BAN ON JAZZ - Vincent Lopez

Syncopation in Symphonies

"In my endeavors to place a finer on the exact spot in music that we can 'jazz,' I have found a process of elimination very convenient. There are many movements in the greatest symphonies that are syncopated, yet by no stretch of the imagination can we call them 'jazz'; the weird music of the North American Indians, based on singsong vocal melodies with tom-tom accompaniment, is bizarre enough, but it is not 'jazz'; the Oriental whine of the musette as used for the dances of the whirling Dervishes cannot be called 'jazz'; the languid airs of Hawaiian origin are not in that category; a Strauss waltz, a Sousa march, the gayest tune of a Gilbert and Sullivan light opera, an Argentine tango, a minuet, polka, quadrille, bolero, none of these are 'jazz'; and yet any and all of them can be made into 'jazz' by the simple expedient of accentuating that beat which the natural laws of rhythm require to be unaccented.

"The whole universe is founded on order and rhythm, on regularity and steady tempo. The music of the spheres rushing through space is undoubtedly in strict time the seasons change on schedule, all astronomical calculations are possible because of the methodical regularity of recurrent events. It is entirely contrary to natural laws to syncopate and only man does it. The music, student has difficulty in acquiring this faculty for he feels that it is inherently wrong. No wild animal gives a long-drawn cry but that it is in time. When a baby does not cry rhythmically a doctor or a mother immediately realizes that something is seriously the matter with the child. When the wrong beat is accented there is an actual physical effect on the hearer, for a law is being broken.
"At the very beginning 'jazz' meant 'without music' or 'contrary to music,' but a great change has taken place in it. The 'jazz' of war times has very definitely departed, although leaving its indelible mark on music as a whole. It fitted a hysterical period when the times were out of joint and a frenzied world sought surcease from mental agony in a mad outbreak of physical gymnastics. There was a time not long ago when anything odd and fantastical in music was labeled ';jab.' The musicians became affected with the glamour of syncopation. The different instrumentalists began to imitate the antics of the drummer. It became a clamor, an uproar. The clarinet whined and whistled; the trombone guffawed grotesquely; the trumpets buzzed and fluttered; the pianist gyrated.


The other day an English school-boy described a fugue as "what you get in a room full of people when all the windows and doors are shut." Although this definition was aimed at another and shorter word, its appositeness has given much joy to musicians. As a professional journal says truly enough, there are quite a lot of fugues that might be spelt one way just as well as the other. Stuffiness, of course, is not confined to fugues; there are periods when it seems to pervade the whole of musical art. But let some hold composer open the windows to fresh musical thought and at once there is an outcry.

At the present time, however, the difficulty is not so much to restrain composers from opening windows as to keep them from taking the proof off. And now come the exponents of ragtime, jazz and symphonized-syncopation, all determined to do their bit in freshening up the musical atmosphere of our staid and stodgy concert halls. The process has actually begun. On two occasions in January, the Savoy Orpheans, the Savoy-Havana Band and the Bos-Augmented Orchestra, assisted by The Savoy Havana Band and The Boston Orchestra marched into the very citadel of serious music in London Queen's Hall and gave a "public concert of syncopated music." Candor compels the admission that a very large public followed them At the second concert the only empty seats were those of certain musical critics who had been at the first.
Improved Programs

Some people believe, not without justification, that the most attractive features of all modern art movements are those nice exciting manifestoes which invariably arouse one's highest hopes, even if later the literary mountain does only bring forth an absurd little mouse. Jazz, using that word in a comprehensive sense, also has its preachers. Here again, by the way, one has to admit that the gaily decorated program of the Savoy-Orpheans was in every respect a more entertaining document than those wretched "analytical notes" which one buys at ordinary concerts to find out the names of the pieces. The brisk, syncopated literary style of its "Quick History" of modern dance music was a determined effort in the direction of brighter concert halls.

Most of us already know by heart everything said for or against jazz by musical critics. What have these cynical syncopators to say for themselves? Apparently it all began with ragtime, which, we are told, "ripped to shreds the sentimentality of the song which preceded it." Next, in order of evolution, came jazz proper, - if that is the right adjective? "Jazz - sheer joy and its expression in music; music which can hardly be whistled and never sung, music which carries you up and gives voice to that love of life which is in everyone, but is so constantly unexpressed. Jazz lets no one stand still. Its melody and its rhythm are infallibly compelling."

"Symphonized Syncopation"

Perhaps this paragraph explains why the "solemn blokes" of music object to jazz. To them there is something undignified, almost, indeed, a savor of impropriety, in hearing their love of life expressed through banjos, saxophones, sousaphones, sarusophones and such barbaric whatnots. And while admitting that a lot may be said for music which abolishes singers, they prefer to stand still and whistle with the proud.

The latest and most alarming phase is called symphonized-syncopation. This, it seems, is "an entirely new musical development. Symphonized-syncopated music today is so specifically written for the orchestra that it has acquired new forms of expression, as related to and compared with ragtime or the old jazz." It, too, is the musical
expression of "the gaiety, the liveliness and the rhythmic power of our lives. To say that it is enthusiastic disorganization of music is rubbish."

But perhaps the most interesting part of this jazz manifesto is that which carries the war into the enemies' camp. "Only a small percentage of the people who support the 'arty' arts really enjoy them. If there must be snobbery about the arts, let us be snobs about the lively and amusing arts. It will repay many times more than the exalted sense of superiority with which we strive to cloak ourselves as compensation for the deadly hours of boredom we spend with some of the 'arty' or fake arts. At many concerts, most opera, some classical dances and nearly all pageants, the spectators are suffering and burning incense before the altar of the 'arty' arts. Must dullness be the hall-mark of all things worthwhile?

Dull Nevertheless

Unfortunately, the present writer read this before listening to various examples of symphonized-syncopation, some of which seemed to prove that dullness can be the hall-mark of things not at all worthwhile - such as "Fragments of the 'New World' Symphony; With an Orchestration of chromatic Lighting." But let us be duly grateful to these composers from the underworld of music who have rediscovered the appeal of two elements often strangely neglected by overeducated musicians -- rhythm and color. Again they have reminded us that the musical atmosphere of our concert halls and opera houses might be less close if only composers would encourage in themselves and their listeners a keener sense of musical humor. At present, their jokes are too often of the unconscious variety. Mr. Clive Bell has pointed out that as Racine, Moliere and Boileau gave an easier and less professional gait to French literature by conforming to the tastes and prejudices of the polite society of their time, so the inventors of jazz went to "La Bonne Compagnie" they found in the lounges of great hotels, or transatlantic liners, in "wagons-lits," in music halls, and in expensive motorcars and restaurants. But even cultured composers have sharp ears. They will take symphonized-syncopation and exploit its possibilities - especially on the harmonic side, scarcely touched as yet - beyond the ken of those who stumbled on a good thing and now obviously do not know what to do with it.
The other day some original jazz, "written by a musician of high rank," and played in a London studio by a pianist whose reputation is world-wide, caused Mr. Robin H. Legge to write: "In my own mind I have no doubt that the pianist and composer of this music that I heard are at the opening of a new era. The compositions are a kind of twentieth-century Chopin. They have the rhythm, in all its endless variety, the charm, the melodic impulse of a latter-day Chopin, a post-war Chopin that is; they are superb piano music, and they are scored for what we call so stupidly a jazz band. After the Gershwin "Rhapsody in Blue," these pieces - I heard seven - are the first serious efforts to bring jazz into line.

Jazz will soon be out-jazzed. And what better compliment can the serious musician pay the joyous jazzer?

July – Music & Letters – Jazz

It is difficult to understand how "syncopation's past" merely anticipated the moment when the spirit not only of America, but of the whole world, would find in it perfect expression. It is plain to anyone with the slightest knowledge of jazz that the supposed "dislocation" of the beat, the "tossing to and fro" of the tempo and all the different kinds of "accent" implies nothing more than taking a puerile little tune written in common time and adopting the childish expedient of trying notes here, substituting quavers for crotchets there, adding accents and so on. The following extract from a Charleston-trot, a new "style" in which the rhythm is "tossed to and fro" more than in any other piece of jazz, will illustrate the meaning at once: -

Surely if jazz composers wanted to reach the zenith of their powers they would give us, say, something in five-four, a few bars of three-four, some six-four and so forth, will all the various instruments playing in different time and in different keys, and so difficult in contrapuntal treatment that, although the result was satisfactory, only really live jazz musicians could play it? It seems that this favourable state of affairs will never come about; jazz is merely a question of experiment by musicians whose knowledge of the art of music is very limited indeed. The publicity expert does the rest......."Jazz .......sheer joy and expression in music .......music which can hardly be whistled or ever sung, music which carries you up and gives voice to that love of life which is in every soul, but is so constantly unexpressed. Jazz lets no one stand still. Its melody and its rhythm are infallibly compelling."
composition of the modern jazz orchestra is worthy of comment. The banjos and tin-whistles have given way to the more cultured 'cello, harp, and other orchestral instruments. The best bands now employ two French horns, and, of course, the saxophone family and the Sousaphone. One or more pianos figure in every band and, together with the banjo, keep a steady accompaniment practically throughout as follows:

AUGUST - PICTORIAL REVIEW - JAZZ AND THE DANCE

The outstanding characteristic of jazz and ragtime is syncopation, which means an accent thrown out of focus, and instead of being on the usual strong beat of the measure is thrown on the weak beat. Just as there are good polkas and bad, good marches and poor, so there are good jazz-tunes and bad ones.

The blues is, to our idea of thinking, a truly melancholy form of jazz; it is a result of that scooping on trombone and wail of the saxophone that drag out the comic tragedy of the unmelodious-syncopated-tempoed delirium.

SEPTEMBER 19 - LITERARY DIGEST - ON WITH THE "CHARLESTON!" "THE DANCE THAT DEMOLISHED a building,"

The orchestration for the new "hoofing" mania is distinctive. According to Emil Coleman, the time and rhythm are the same as in the fox-trot, but the accent, being oddly placed "between beats," makes the curious syncopation that has so violently taken the country by storm. In the fox-trot the accent comes on the first and third beats; whereas in the "Charleston" it occurs on the first beat and an eighth before the third beat. It is that little eighth "off-beat" that fascinates the lovers of jazz so that they just can't resist this latest terpsichorean craze.

The experts whom I have timidly questioned assure me that the time of the pure Charleston is new. The ordinary syncopation of ragtime seems to have been aggravated and the accent falls in between the beats where you naturally expect it. This is what give the Charleston its breath-taking quality; it corresponds exactly to the sharp broken intake of breath when you run into some one coming round a corner, where you make a mistake walking down a flight of stairs in the dark. Accustomed to the off-beat of jazz, we are startled again by this division of time-intervals, startled and exhilarated. It is a variation which multiplies the intricacies of jazz. Until you are accustomed to it
the Charleston tempo is a little unnerving; and trying to follow it, even so distantly as in beating time, is a little maddening. There seems to be no telling when the accent is going to arrive; you are bewildered and excited as you are by the shifting measures of the Sacre du Printemps when you first encounter them. Yet neither the one nor the other is actually irresponsible; it is only the phenomenon of a new pattern that is disconcerting.

Now, jazz can be defined as music written in the meter of the fox-trot. its essence, in fact, contrary to the prevailing notion, is not the syncopation in the melody but the steady plunk-plunk-plunk-plunk of the four quarters of the accompaniment in rapid tempo (one reason for the precision of the orchestras and their ability to play without a conductor). It is not the effect of syncopation that is characteristic of jazz, since one finds syncopation in greater abundance and variety in serious music, but the effect of syncopation in the jazz meter and tempo; and actually one can strip away the syncopation and still have "Bambalina," proof that the syncopated melody, like the scoring or the exciting rapid figuration introduced by pianists to fill in the beats, is mere embellishment. On the other hand, take away the plunk-plunk-plunk-plunk and jazz is no longer jazz.

DECEMBER 9 - NATION - MUSIC - THE PEDANT LOOKS AT JAZZ

Syncopation in one voice when the regular beats in the other are unobtrusive; and above all the varying of the length and style of phrases and of the figuration.

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MARCH - HARPERS
THE ANATOMY OF JAZZ by Don Knowlton. Syncopation in popular music first came into evidence in the old "coon" songs of minstrel-show days. Remember "But I Want Them Presents Back"? Next came such childishly simple attempts as "Under the Bamboo Tree" and "Rainbow," songs that could not attain popularity to-day, which succeeded because they were the first to stress syncopation in a form which could be reached by the masses. Then along came Irving Berlin and we were off. The ragtime piano player and then the jazz orchestra developed, until to-day we have "symphonic" jazz.

Old-timers such as "Alexander's Ragtime Band," "When the Midnight Choo Choo Leaves for Alabam," Omar Kyayyam," and "Maple Leaf Rag" began to establish a conventional form for jazz. Since that time there has been no essential change in its structure, the development having been confined almost entirely to internal elaboration.

The idea of exaggerated syncopation was first presented to America in a more or less respectable way. "Coon songs" and real Negro melodies were not considered damaging to one's social or business reputation. Syncopation itself had a well-developed and honorable lineage at the time. If the socially elect had adopted syncopation it might have been comme it faut from the outset, and we might have heard the Boston Symphony Orchestra rendering a legitimate jazz symphony years ago. But musicians of the radical type were developing scientific dissonance. Strauss discovered new uses for the cymbals, and Bloch conducted a series of fashionable experiments in the receptivity of the human ear. So syncopation was picked up by the dance hall, cabaret, and vaudeville group, who of course turned it toward their particular purposes.

APRIL 17 - THE NEW STATESMAN - WALTZ-KINGS AND JAZZ-KING
One is that the clever attempt of the Jazz-Kings to get away from the designation of "Jazz" by calling their music "Symphonic Syncopation" and their Jazz-bands "Syncopated Symphony Orchestras" is an amusing example of snobbishness. Let them stick to that admirable and excellent word "Jazz." Jazz has merits, symphonic syncopation has none. Moreover, symphonic syncopation is quite
meaningless as a description, since there is symphonic syncopation in all orchestral music from the time of Haydn to the present day.

**JULY 3, - COLLIER'S - WHERE HAVE I HEARD THAT TUNE BEFORE?**

Syncopation where ragtime left off and worked this primitive effect up into a system of rich and complex rhythm worthy of the great masters of classical music. Then it forged ahead on pioneer lines and struck out an original thing that might be called rhythmic counterpoint. Aaron Copland, the brilliant young American composer, feels that the essence of jazz is a steady, formal, basic rhythm, with another rhythm, strange and florid, gamboling fantastically above it, like a small monkey doing stunts on the back of a St. Bernard.

**NOVEMBER/DECEMBER - MODERN MUSIC - JAZZ STRUCTURE AND INFLUENCE**

Syncopation, while a frequent characteristic of jazz, is by no means an essential factor." He concludes: "It is the spirit of the music, not the mechanics of its frame......that determines whether or not it is jazz."

**JULY/DECEMBER, VOL III, #2 - THE GOLD COAST REVIEW**

On the whole I think there is surprisingly little syncopation in African melodies themselves. The reason probably is that there is so much in the gong and small drum parts that it is not necessary in the voice part, and in fact would be wasted, if not actually worse than useless. In may be however that there is a good deal more syncopation than I have detected. The tune "Ya Amponsa", which I have given in a simplified form in Fig. 4, also exists in the following form:-

**Figure 18**

Syncopation implies of course the existence of a regularly recurring accent, and such accent is far less common in African music than in European. To this extent then the term syncopation is inapplicable to African music. But where there is such a regularly
recurring accent it coincides as a rule with the beat of the big drum and with the main notes of the melody. Figs. 19 and 20 show two exceptions; the first a Dagomba song, the second a Fanti.

**JUNE - MUSIC TEACHER - THE JAZZ-MAD PUPIL - by Ronald Cunliffe**

**Syncopation in the Classics**

To begin with, we might point out that syncopation is nothing new. No great composer has neglected to make first-rate use of it. All of us can remember scores of examples in Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, but we might begin our exploration of the standard composers with Schubert, and proceed along the well-worn track of the Romantics.

Schubert's immortal syncopation in the first *Unfinished Symphony* (Ex. 9) comes first. This particular passage, elementary as it seems to a musician, would be revolutionary to the conductor of a modern dance-band—who dare not for the life of him take the accompanying instruments off the plain beats.

Since this tempo reflected the life of the whole nation which was dynamic, happy and energetic, it became the American idiom. Syncopation was one of its devices, but used in an individual way. Syncopation is not new, but its treatment by our native sons is.

The granddaddy of this American music is, strangely enough, a white man from Detroit, named Kerry Mills, *nom de plume* for F. A. Mills, and he set its tempo in a piece called *At A Georgia Camp Meetin’* in 1898. There had been plenty of music written before this in syncopated tempo and even ragtime. But this is the first piece that caught everybody's ear, fancy and feet. It went over a million copies, has sold through the years, and still sells a couple hundred copies a year. Kerry Mills' first cakewalk, *Rastus on Parade*, brought him to New York and started him in business. His next was *Happy Days in Dixie*, and his third, *Georgia Camp Meeting*, was a home run.