INTRODUCTION TO MAUD POWELL'S PROGRAM NOTES

By Karen A. Shaffer, Maud Powell's biographer

Maud Powell's innovations in the concert field extended far beyond recital programming. Her novel introduction of written program notes on her pioneering recital programs added yet another dimension to the concert experience for audiences across the culturally young and naive United States.

Realizing that her audiences were largely unacquainted with classical music, she determined to educate all who came within her sphere. How much more enjoyable and comprehensible were the works of the great masters when a brief explanation was offered before hearing them? At the same time, how much more effective was the concert when avoiding the necessity of oral program explanations that interrupted the flow of the musical experience? And how a little written introduction to the composers she proffered could encourage further study after she had departed for her next destination?

So in addition to the wide panoply of her recital offerings drawn from her enormous repertoire, Powell offered another opening to the world of classical music through her writing. Her program notes reveal a musical mastermind writing with clarity of insight and expression. They speak to Powell's straight-forward understanding of the character of her American audiences, appealing to their imagination and hidden yearning to be uplifted and inspired.

These notes also reveal her very real experiences with uninitiated audiences. Her husband and manager, H. Godfrey Turner asserted that, at the risk of offending some musicians, "the concert-goer must be told that a sonata is chamber music and that it has so and so many movements or the chances are you will hear a remark to the effect of 'Didn't she take up that encore quick'!" ["Continued Success of Maud Powell," Musical Observer, November 1912.]

Music critics were not always acquainted with classical music concert etiquette either. One critic in a city of over 325,000 wrote that the violinist was "over-rated" and "even had to read from the score." ["CONTINUED SUCCESS OF MAUD POWELL," MUSICAL OBSERVER, NOVEMBER 1912.] Powell would usually offer a concerto (or a concerto movement) and a violin sonata on her programs, among a generous variety of other music. Although she performed most of the recital standing, she explained in some of her program notes and demonstrated in person that a sonata is chamber music which is performed with the players seated before a music stand (even though Powell always knew all of her music from memory).

When she originally launched her mission to give recitals in small towns in remote areas as well as the larger cities, the trail-blazing violinist was impressed by her audiences' need for advance preparation. As she related in 1915,

I have found that in some of the smaller towns and in places where the percentage of cultivated musicians in the audience is apt to be small, the public want me to talk from the stage about the compositions I am to play. In many

cases this sugar-coats the pill for them. The old belief that "classical music" is a fundamentally dull thing out of which one can get no pleasure is still broadly prevalent. However, it is remarkable how a little information about the works to be played—just enough to help them form mental pictures—will improve the attitude of the hearers and gain their sympathy.

Yet I entertain an abiding dislike for the spoken word in a musical performance of any kind—it disrupts the existing mood and makes it vastly difficult to reestablish it—and so I have adopted the expedient of employing program notes. These are of the utmost usefulness, I find. I recall the difficulty I had not long ago to win the consent of certain persons in charge of a concert of mine to the inclusion of a Bach piece in my program. Bach, they argued, must necessarily be beyond the grasp of my hearers. And yet when their programs had given them a certain amount of information about the composition, they received it with every sign of pleasure. ["USING PROGRAM NOTES FOR VIOLIN RECITALS," MUSICAL AMERICA, 16 OCTOBER 1916.]

Each summer, Powell planned her programs for the coming season, including some piano solos by her accompanist, and drafted her program notes. These date from as early as 1907 and those reproduced here are from her printed recital programs as well as her own scrapbooks. Notes for the same piece might vary, adapted to concert circumstances, and these variations are included in this collection. Not every piece on her wide-ranging recital programs merited a printed note. She was not above speaking directly to her audience to introduce a number on her program.

The immediacy of Powell's comments reflects her close association with most of the composers whose works she featured. The dates of the composers in her program notes can shock us into the realization that many names now familiar to us were her contemporaries, personally known to her.

At a time when music was heard live or not at all, the American violinist continually performed music that most of her auditors had not heard before. To widen the reach of her efforts to promote classical music, she became the first instrumentalist to record for Victor's Red Seal Label (Celebrity Artist Series) in 1904, at the dawn of the recording era.

She knew that classical music would become popular music once it became familiar and the phonograph enabled that familiarity.

Powell's recordings (1904–1919), although limited in duration by the primitive acoustic technology, began to open the ears of more people, gaining receptivity and widening audiences for classical music. Her recordings gave patrons an opportunity to hear more than once a few short works featured on her skillfully designed programs.

With her ceaseless touring, her engaging programming, her inviting program notes, her superb artistry and magnetic personality, Powell's recitals blazed a trail for others to follow.

Maud Powell was recognized as the "educator of a nation" in classical music as she tirelessly met audiences all across North America until her death while on tour on January 8, 1920.

The notes below include the following composers in alphabetical order and may include more than one note per composer.

Violin/Piano: Arbos, Arensky, Aulin, J. S. Bach, Bauer, Beethoven, Beethoven-Powell, de Beriot, Brahms— Joachim, Bruch, Chaminade, Chopin—Powell, Coleridge-Taylor, Debussy—Powell, Drdla, Dvořàk, Dvořàk—Powell, Foster-Schoolcraft-Work—Powell, Franck, Gilbert, Grainger, Grasse, Grieg, Heckscher, Hubay, Humiston, d'Indy, Mendelssohn, Mozart, Nardini, Ogarew, Poldini—Hartmann, Pugnani-Kreisler, Saint-Saëns, Schmitt, Sibelius, Strauss, Tartini, Tchaikovsky, Valentini, Vieuxtemps, Wieniawski, Zarzycki.

Piano solos: J. S. Bach–Saint-Saëns, Beethoven, Chopin, Liszt, Mendelssohn, Paderewski, Scott.

Further reading:

Karen A. Shaffer and Neva Garner Greenwood, *Pioneer American Violinist*, (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1988). (Biography)

Karen A. Shaffer and Rachel Barton Pine, *Maud Powell Favorites*, Vols. I-IV, (Brevard: The Maud Powell Society for Music and Education, 2009). (Maud Powell's transcriptions and music dedicated to her, Powell's Brahms concerto cadenza and more)

Maud Powell, The Complete Recordings, (1904-1917), Vols. I-IV, (Naxos label, 2000-2004).

Maud Powell's Performance Schedule, her Articles and Interviews, her Concerto Premieres and more are on our web site: www.maudpowell.org/

©Karen A. Shaffer, 2018.

PROGRAM NOTES by MAUD POWELL (1867–1920)

From the Archive of The Maud Powell Society for Music and Education

Enrique Fernandez-Arbos (1863–)

Danse Espagnole (Tango)

[1914 program note]

Señor Fernandez-Arbos is a distinguished teacher of the violin living in London. One of Madam Powell's pleasant recollections is of hearing her colleagues, Señors Arbos and Rubio, play Spanish Dances for a few friends, one evening in London when the formality and restraint of the concert platform were entirely forgotten. The music escaped its shackles of the classic ideal, taking on all the charm and spontaneity of a gypsy improvisation.

Anton Arensky (1861–1906) Concerto, A minor, Op. 54

Allegro, Tempo di valse, Tempo primo, Cadenza, Coda

This work should be given the qualifying title of Concerto de Salon, inasmuch as the graces and intimacies of its style and content appear to far better advantage with pianoforte accompaniment than with the heavier, more unwieldy setting of the orchestra score. This composition conveys no especially profound message, but is nevertheless sufficiently rich in pleasant melodic invention and rhythmic charm to make it worth while as a number for recital programs. It is cleverly constructed, commanding the respect and approval of the musician. In the neat coupling together of short melodic ideas into one fluent train of thought, it reminds one of the Grieg pianoforte Concerto. In form, on the other hand, it suggests the Liszt E Flat Concerto in one movement, a short Adagio section and also a Scherzo being interpolated between two parts of a larger movement. In the Arensky the form is stricter, as the last large division, the Finale, is in fact the "recapitulation" of the first division expounded in Sonata form. The digression, forming the agreeable filling of the musical sandwich, turns the Scherzo into a very pretty valse, the second themelet of which is adroitly culled and recast from thematic material in the main movement. The Cadenza immediately preceding the close and also the Coda itself (again *vide* Liszt) are likewise constructed from material already heard.

Tor Aulin (1866–) Concerto No. 3 in C Minor American Premiere

November 21, 1909 Minneapolis Minneapolis Symphony Popular Concert Auditorium Emil Oberhoffer, conductor Maud Powell, violin

The new violin concerto by Tor Aulin is essentially a violinist's concerto—written for violinists by one who is himself no mean performer on the king of instruments. Tor Aulin's message may not be profound or perhaps of paramount importance, yet it is, in view of the paucity of good violin works in the larger forms, distinctly worth while. Aulin has a poetic vein that harks back to the folk-song of his Norse forefathers; his rhythms are clean-cut and crisp, his themes are spontaneous and of pleasant contour, while his musicianship and his command of orchestral resources are beyond cavil.

Structurally the concerto is cast in much the same mold as the well known G minor concerto by Max Bruch. It holds to simple lines and steers clear of the tendencies of modern German and French schools, and is expressed by Aulin in his own individual way. The result is a work fresh and optimistic in mood, brilliant and spontaneous in effect, poetic and vital in essence, while the fresh exuberant hopefulness of youth is all pervading.

That the work will rank with the favorite Bruch G minor is hardly to be claimed, but it will take its place in violin literature, and will be hailed by violinists as something playable from the mass of unviolinistic effort put forth by the modern composer, who secretly despises a solo instrument and unconsciously clothes his musical thought at birth in full orchestral form.

Maud Powell letter to The Minneapolis Tribune, published November 21, 1909

J. S. Bach (1685–1750) Sonata, E major (for Piano and Violin)

(First and second movement)

Adagio

Allegro

The word Sonata brings to the mind of a musician the perception of the form or set of rules desired by the composer in writing a large classic work, such as a Symphony, Concerto or String Quartet. Like the quartet, the Sonata belongs to the chamber music form of composition. Chamber music, or concerted music for solo instruments, is classic in spirit and intimate in character. Originally intended for the players themselves or a few favored listeners, it has now found its way into the precincts of our modern concert rooms. Bach's music encompasses nearly every emotion and characteristic of every human experience. This particular Adagio is fraught with religious meaning, like a Gothic Cathedral with the spirit of purity and exaltation breathing through its columned aisles. The little Allegro is in direct contrast. It is full of humor and playful charm. One can easily imagine it being tinkled on an old spinet in the king's palace, of long ago, with worthy squires and dames in powdered perukes nodding their heads in pleased sympathy with the dainty rhythm.

J. S. Bach (1685–1750) Sonata, E major (for Piano and Violin)

(First and second movement)

Adagio

Allegro

The word Sonata brings to the mind of a musician a perception of the form or set of rules desired by the composer in writing a large classic work, such as a Symphony, Concerto or String Quartet. Like the quartet, the Sonata belongs to the chamber music form of composition. Chamber music, or concerted music for solo instruments, is classic in spirit and intimate in character. Originally intended for the players themselves or a few favored listeners, it has now found its way into the precincts of our modern concert rooms. Following the trend of the age, the spiritual treasures reserved for the initiated few have become the property of the avidious many. Bach's music encompasses nearly every emotion and characteristic possible to human experience. This particular Adagio is fraught with religious meaning, and is as impressive as a Gothic Cathedral with the spirit of purity and exaltation that breathes through its columned aisles. The little Allegro is in direct contrast. It is full of humor and playful charm. One can easily imagine it being tinkled on an old spinet in the king's palace, of long ago, with worthy squires and dames in powdered perukes nodding their heads in pleased sympathy with the dainty rhythm.

Marion Bauer (1882–) Up the Ocklawaha (Dedicated to Maud Powell)

Marion Bauer, whom Portlanders are proud to claim as their own, is a native of Walla Walla, Wash. Still young, she has nevertheless published a number of songs, most of them in a dramatic or descriptive vein. "Up the Ocklawaha," for violin, is her first attempt at solo writing for the king of instruments. It is probably as good a piece of program music as has ever been penned. It is extraordinary in its literary quality, if one may say so, reproducing with a rare imaginative power, the weird strangeness of the Ocklawaha River Country. The work is conceived in ultra-modern spirit, and will undoubtedly fall strangely on the ears of some, yet it is so individual in its musical speech, penned with such sure intent, that it must hold a unique place in violin literature. The piece is dedicated to Madame Powell.

Ocklawaha River Description -- A boat glides up a swift and tortuous river. The barkstained waters rush darkly through a mighty swamp. Giant cypresses stand knee-deep in the noisome ooze, losing their birthright in the vampire clutch of the deadly Tillandsia (Spanish moss). The trees seem shrouded in death rags. The mournful swish of the dying branches against the *Hiawatha* as she pushes up stream is the primeval forest's last whispered appeal to humanity for release from its awful fate. -- M.P.

Marion Bauer (1882–) Up the Ocklawaha (Dedicated to Maud Powell)

Marion Bauer, is an American girl, a native of Walla Walla, Washington. Still very young, she has nevertheless published a number of songs, most of them in a dramatic or descriptive vein. Up the Ocklawaha, for violin, is her first attempt at solo writing for the king of instruments. It is probably as good a piece of program music as has ever been penned. It is extraordinary in its literary quality, if one may say so, reproducing with a rare imaginative power, the weird strangeness of the Ocklawaha River Country, the soul atmosphere of the dying forest and even the lilt of the boat, as it plows its way up-stream. The work is conceived in ultra-modern spirit, and will undoubtedly fall strangely on the ears of some, yet it is so individual in its musical speech, penned with such sure intent, that it must hold a unique place in violin literature. It is an interesting and curious psychological phase that this morbidly Poe-esque composition was written by as bright, vivacious and wholesome-minded a girl, as one would hope to meet on a summer's day! The piece is dedicated to Madam Powell.

Beethoven (1770–1827) Sonata for Piano and Violin, A minor

Presto Andante scherzoso piu allegro Allegro molto

Of the ten sonatas which Beethoven wrote as duos for piano and violin, this one is perhaps less chosen for public performances than the others. It is conceived in simple architectural lines. It has fluency, charm and delicate humor throughout, while the piano and violin voices are exquisitely balanced. It is one of this great composer's most beautiful compositions.

Beethoven (1770–1827) Kreutzer Sonata

The Kreutzer Sonata has received an unfair notoriety through Tolstoi's book of the same name. This masterpiece of Beethoven's being of such noble, heavenly calibre, musicians naturally prefer to have it judged by itself and not through the pages of a literary light, great master though he may have been.

The Sonata belongs to the chamber-music class. It is intimate in character, and was originally intended for a small number of appreciative listeners but chiefly for the pleasure of the players themselves. To this class of music belongs (besides duos) trios, quartets, quintets, etc. and many other pieces of classical spirit and intimate character. Chamber music or "ensemble" music (music played "together" by two or more artists) is played seated, while the printed page is always used.

Beethoven (1770–1827)

Duo: Theme and Variations from "Kreutzer" Sonata

The "Kreutzer" Sonata has achieved unpleasant notoriety through Tolstoi's book of the same name. Incidentally, it may be remarked that musicians look upon the book as a libel upon Beethoven's immortal work. Kreutzer was a distinguished violinist of his day, and to him Beethoven dedicated his Opus 97, from which these variations are taken. Mme. Powell, by the way, owns, and will use tonight, the famous Tourte violin bow, known as the "Kreutzer Tourte," which the great master used many years. It appeals to the imagination to think that Beethoven may himself have seen this bow.

Beethoven (1770–1827)

Duo: Theme and Variations from "Kreutzer" Sonata

The Sonata belongs to the chamber-music class. It is intimate in character, and was originally intended for a small number of appreciative listeners but chiefly for the pleasure of the players themselves. To this class of music belongs (besides duos) trios, quartets, quintets, etc. and many other pieces of classical spirit and intimate character. Chamber music or "ensemble" music (music played "together" by two or more artists) is played seated, while the printed page is always used.

The "Kreutzer" Sonata was dedicated by Beethoven to the violinist Kreutzer, an excellent artist of his time. Tolstoi also wrote a book entitled the Kreutzer Sonata, which gave Beethoven's wonderful music an unsavory notoriety. Musicians prefer to have the composition judged on its own merits, and not through the writings of a literary light, great master though he was.

Beethoven (1770–1827) – Maud Powell Minuet

Beethoven, b. 1770, d. 1827. The name of Beethoven inspires reverence in the soul of every musician. With the possible exception of Bach he was the mightiest of the mighty in music. The present minuet is but a trivial albeit a charming expression of his genius. The arrangement is Mme. Powell's own.

Charles Auguste De Bériot (1802–1870) Concerto, No. 7, G major

(In three movements)

I. Allegro maestoso

II. Andante tranquillo

III. Allegro moderato

De Bériot, inheriting the best traditions of violin playing, and a purist in the manipulation of his instrument was nevertheless an active influence in changing the manner of fiddling from the old classic severity to a more modern and spirited style. He enriched the literature of the violin and to the delight of his public, for his compositions at one time enjoyed a huge popularity. One can well imagine the surprised delight occasioned by a first hearing of his compositions, bright, sparkling, melodious, speaking with a new but perfectly natural fiddle idiom, constructed to suit the most fastidious taste and carrying withal, popular conviction. The seventh Concerto is the last and probably the best of his compositions in the larger form.

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897) Sonata, D minor, op. 108

This number belongs to the chamber-music class of composition. Chamber music was, no doubt, originally intended for the selfish pleasure of the performers themselves and mayhap a few privileged listeners. It has found it way, however, from the intimacy of the home to the ampler spaces of the concert room. It is music for music's sake, and not for personal display, and is therefore approached by both artist and listener in chastened mood. Some of the best works penned by the masters are included in the repertoire of chamber music, among them the Brahms' D minor Sonata.

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897) – Joseph Joachim (1831–1907) Hungarian Dance, A Major

Brahms arranged and embellished a number of Hungarian dance melodies as piano duets. They have been given orchestral setting as well, while Dr. Joachim arranged them in turn for violin with piano accompaniment.

Max Bruch (1838–) Concertstück

The Adagio of the Bruch Concertstück is an old Irish melody called "The Little Red Lark." The air is in a collection called "Songs of Old Ireland," compiled by the distinguished Irish composer, Villiers Stanford.

The words are as follows:

Oh swan of slenderness,
Dove of tenderness,
Jewel of Joys, arise,
The little red lark,
Like a soaring spark
Of song, to his sunburst flies,
But till thou'rt risen,
Earth is a prison
Full of lonesome sighs;
Then awake and discover
To thy fond lover,

The dawn is dark to me.
Hark, oh hark to me,
Pulse of my heart, I pray.
And out of thy hiding

The morn of thy matchless eyes.

With blushes gliding,

Dazzle me with thy day.

Ah, then, once more to thee

Flying, I'll pour to thee Passion so sweet and gay.

The lark shall listen,

And dewdrops glisten

Laughing on every spray.

Max Bruch (1838–) Adagio ma non troppo, from Op. 44 [Second Violin Concerto]

Max Bruch is best known by his G minor Concerto for violin, a composition that one may safely assert is his master-piece. The first movement of the second Concerto, Op. 44, however, is in itself a masterpiece, and fortunately for the violinist, lends itself to public performance with merely the piano accompaniment. Thus the composition will not be relegated to the archives. The Concerto in its entirety with orchestral accompaniment (as it is intended to be played) has already become a bit old-fashioned. Max Bruch is still living in Berlin, not very well off in worldly goods, but rich in honor and past achievement.

Cécile Chaminade (1857–) Trio in A Minor

Allegro Moderato Lento Allegro-Energico

Madame Cécile Chaminade is one of the most accomplished of the small band of women who possess a musical creative gift. She is of French birth, and her compositions have the fluency and charm of other writers of her nation. Madame Chaminade visited this country for the first time this winter [1908-09 season], and it seems especially appropriate therefore to include her name on the season's programs. This Trio is undoubtedly one of her best compositions.

Cécile Chaminade (1857–) Trio in A Minor

Allegro Moderato Lento Allegro-Energico

Mme. Cécile Chaminade visited this country for the first time this winter. She was greeted everywhere with large and enthusiastic audiences glad to pay homage to the most gifted and popular of woman composers of the day. This A minor trio is undoubtedly one of her strongest works and presents the dainty French woman in one of her most spontaneous and charming moods.

Frédéric Chopin (1810–1849) – Maud Powell "Minute" Waltz

The story runs that Chopin composed this waltz in honor of George Sand's small dog, who had a persistent habit of chasing his tail. Certain it is that the theme proper seems to whirl, and at a dizzy pace, too.

S. Coleridge-Taylor (1875–1912) Concerto, G minor (Written for and Dedicated to Maud Powell)

I. Allegro maestoso
II. Andante semplice
III. Allegro molto

S. Coleridge-Taylor was of Anglo-African parentage. He was without doubt the most gifted composer of African descent that history has produced. His melodies bubble forth as spontaneously as Dvořák's himself. In fact, as Dvořák was dubbed the Bohemian Schubert, so might Coleridge-Taylor be called the African Dvořák. The violin concerto was his last work but one, and was written expressly for the Norfolk (Conn.) Festival and for Madam Powell, who gave it its initial performance last June [1912]. His early death at the age of thirty-seven came as a shock to the musical world. Mr. Coleridge-Taylor had a most charming and lovable personality and he made friends wherever he went, except perhaps in America, where he suffered much insult and humiliation. It is of pathetic interest to know that when he was on his deathbed he sat up suddenly and, making a heroic effort, sang a part of the beautiful second movement of the violin concerto, at the same time conducting an imaginary orchestral accompaniment with great animation. It may or may not interest the public to know that through the bounty and sympathy of the noble patron of art at Norfolk [Connecticut] [Carl & Ellen Stoeckel], some reparation was made for the lack of courtesy shown the gifted, the modest but courtly visitor to our shores.

Claude Debussy (1862–) – Maud Powell "Golliwog's Cakewalk"

The "Golliwog's Cakewalk" was written by the great, modern French composer, Claude Debussy, for his little five-year-old daughter. Mme. Powell has only recently been granted permission to transcribe it for the violin. [March 18, 1910]

The "Golliwog's Cakewalk" was written by the great modern French composer, Claude Debussy, for his little five-year-old daughter. Mme. Powell has just received permission from the publishers in Paris to transcribe the work for violin. [March 24, 1910]

Claude Debussy (1862–) [Maud Powell Trio program note, March 27,1909] En Bateau (In a Boat)

Composer of the Opera Pélleas et Mélisande which has caused so much discussion recently in musical circles.

František [Franz] Drdla (1868–) "Guitarrero"

This composition is by the author of "Souvenir," the record that has made Maud Powell's name a household word in every hamlet of America. The melody of Guitarrero is of a somewhat similar character and equally as haunting. Listen also to the accompaniment, suggestive of the plucked strings of a guitar.

Antonin Dvořák (1841–1904) Slavic Dance

Anton Dvořák, Bohemian composer, lived in New York a number of years as Director of the National Conservatory. He was much interested in the folk-songs of our country, studying them sympathetically, and incorporating their spirit and rhythmic peculiarities in a beautiful Symphony called "The New World." It is America seen through Bohemian eyes, or described with a strong Bohemian accent, yet it is a curious fact that the conductor who has not lived a span in the United States and become cognizant of our national life, fails in his interpretation of this delightful work. The Slavic Dances were introduced by Theodore Thomas many years before Dvořák came to this country or the New World Symphony was thought of.

Antonin Dvořák (1841–1904) – Maud Powell "Songs My Mother Sang"

The melody of "Songs My Mother Sang" is one of haunting beauty, and to the musician, quite one of the loveliest in all song literature. Truth to tell, it tugs at his heart strings as, presumably, the old melody of "Silver Threads Among the Gold" stirs the emotions of the layman. The words of the song speak the thoughts of an old man who sits before the fire dreaming of his youth. He recalls, one by one, the little songs which his mother, long since dead, used to sing to him in her low, sweet voice. As the songs flit ghostlike through his memory, he loses all sense of the present and lives for the moment completely in the past. The gentle presence of his mother, the sound of her voice, pervade the room and become once more a living reality. Tears of sad-sweet recollection trickle down the withered cheek and through the grizzled beard, silent, unnoticed.

Stephen Foster & others (1826–1864) [Luke Schoolcraft (1847–1893) and Henry Clay Work (1832–1884)]

American Tunes [arranged by Maud Powell and published as "Plantation Melodies" and recorded as "Four American Folk Songs" — My Old Kentucky Home; Old Black Joe; Shine On; Kingdom Comin']

As an expression of the patriotism that burns high at this time [December 1917], Madam Powell will close the program with a group of genuine American tunes, the last being that rollicking war song "Kingdom Comin'," [by Henry Clay Work] which seems especially appropriate at the moment. The song will be quickly recognized by the older generation, while the younger generation will be the richer by becoming familiar with its sprightly measure.

César Franck (1822–1890) Sonata, A major, (For Violin and Piano)

(In four movements)
Allegretto ben moderato
Allegro
Recitativo Fantasia
Allegretto piu mosso

A brilliant critic has described Franck as "a Bach who had read the score of 'Parsifal'." Religious devotion and the atmosphere of the church pervade the music of Franck as of Bach, yet the expression of dramatic force and emotional intensity of Franck is of the modern manner. And though Franck knew his Wagner, he broke new paths, branding the way for the younger generation. Indeed, he toiled without other recognition than the filial devotion of the young men who are today the leaders in the French school of composition. The Sonata, dedicated to Eugène Ysaÿe, is built upon most slender and simple thematic material, but the harmonies are of the richest hue. While the development and transformation of motives into beautiful melodies, of short themes into magnificent movements fraught with emotional intensity, leads one to agree with d'Indy that "this sonata is a direct legacy from Beethoven."

César Franck (1822–1890) Sonata, A major, (For Violin and Piano)

(In four movements)
Allegretto ben moderato
Allegro
Recitativo Fantasia
Allegretto piu mosso

César Franck, born in Liege, Belgium, in 1822, is regarded by musicians as the father of the modern French school of composition. His studies were pursued in Paris, and the scene of his activities as practical musician and composer was also in Paris, and it was there that he filled the post of organist at Saint Clotilde for thirty-two years, from 1858 until his death in 1890. The sonata on Mme. Powell's program is a very lovely example of chamber music, written with an intimate knowledge of the possibilities as well as the limitations of both violin and piano. The thematic material is of great beauty, while the workmanship is incomparable. The first movement is surcharged with poetic beauty, while the last movement, which is of infinite charm, is perhaps one of the most spontaneous canons ever written. Note how the violin voice follows that of the piano with mathematical precision, yet with no hint of anything but sheer musical beauty.

Harry Gilbert (1879–) Marionettes

Harry Gilbert, pianist, organist and composer, is a Kentuckian, but is now living in New York City. This little Scherzo is a quaint conceit, picturing in tone the antics of tiny marionettes. The little figures seem to be dancing in unison, or, as at the end of the first section, racing neck and neck, tumbling at last in a wooden heap. In the middle section, some mischievous fairy inspires them to play at being sentimental, but she soon tires of her pranks and the marionettes return to their angular dancing.

Percy Grainger (1882–) Molly on the Shore (By request)

Percy Grainger, the young Australian pianist, who has become the vogue in the east, is intensely interested in the study of folk music. In this respect, as well as in his personal appearance, he resembles his master, Grieg. In his indefatigable research throughout the Celtic Isle, Australia, South Africa, and elsewhere he has made a collection of most interesting phonographic records of the songs of the people. Not the least fascinating of these is his setting of "Molly," slightly revised by Madam Powell with the composer's sanction.

Percy Grainger (1882–) Molly on the Shore (By request)

Percy Grainger, the distinguished young Australian pianist and composer, has been recently adding American laurels to his wreath of European and Australian successes. He is a pupil of the Norwegian Grieg, with Scandinavian sympathies, and like his master, a strong believer in the value of folk song in the development of a national school of musical composition. He has made phonographic records of folk songs all over the world, including those of uncivilized tribes in South Africa and elsewhere. "Molly on the Shore" is an authentic Irish reel, recognizable at once by a native of County Cork. The Grainger setting adheres to the original line of melody while the reiteration, with slight variation each time, is in character. One hears at once that Mr. Grainger has a keen appreciation of the native humor and individual rhythm of the tune.

Edwin Grasse (1884–) Polonaise, C major (recently published)

The works of Edwin Grasse, the gifted young American violinist-composer, have often figured on Madam Powell's programs. This season the polonaise in C major has been added to her repertoire. It is a splendid example of straightforward, effective writing for the violin, in the rhythm that makes a very general appeal. The polonaises by Wieniawski, Vieuxtemps, and (for piano) Chopin come to mind as typical numbers for concert programs.

Edwin Grasse (1884–) Sonata in C, Op. 14 (for violin and piano)

(Two movements)

Andante amoroso

Allegro scherzando

This early work of the young blind musician is a characteristic expression of the lad's happy optimistic disposition, and of his gentle, gracious nature. On the technical side, it exhibits a masterful control of material, with a special knowledge of the compass and limitations of the two instruments. As a matter of fact the young musician is both violinist and pianist. Interesting stories are told of his musicianship and astounding memory. On one occasion, when a horn player did not arrive in time for rehearsal, the pianist and Grasse began work without him, young Edwin humming the horn part through compressed lips imitating the horn quality of tone.

Edwin Grasse (1884–) Scherzo Caprice

Edwin Grasse is an American. He is still very young, but has already composed many works in both the larger and smaller forms. Mr. Grasse has been totally blind since birth, so that it redounds all the more to his credit that he is an accomplished violinist as well as pianist. That he has a very real and exceptional creative gift is not to be denied. In this dainty Scherzo he shows an unusually pretty and refined fancy. The theme is suggested by the four limpid tones of a young woman's laugh. In the course of the composition, one hears the name of the lady most charmingly introduced, "Marguerite," while the pet name "Gei-ge" (German for fiddle) is heard again and again. Mr. Grasse has dedicated the Scherzo to Madame Powell.

Alternative wording in MP scrapbook draft:

In the course of the composition, one hears the name of the lady most charmingly introduced, —a very beautiful name, by the way, of three short syllables. The playful pet-name, of two syllables, is also heard again and again. Mr. Grasse has dedicated the Scherzo to Madame Powell. [handwritten note next to draft: Listen for "Marguerite," "Dea-ree," and "Sweet-heart."]

Edwin Grasse (1884–)
Play of Waves (MS) [Wellenspiel]

Mr. Grasse is a young American composer and violinist living in New York City. Being blind he is obliged to dictate his compositions note by note. This vivid character piece was written during a sojourn at the seashore. Mr. Grasse has also composed many pieces in the larger forms, none of which, however, have as yet been published. [January 20, 1910]

Edward Grieg (1843–1907) Sonata, Op. 13, G Minor For Violin and Piano

Lento doloroso, allegro vivace Allegretto tranquillo Allegro animato

Especial interest attaches to this beautiful Sonata by Grieg, by reason of the great Norwegian Master's recent death. This composition is one of the most interesting examples of modern chamber music. It is written with a thorough understanding of the idiom of both instruments; moreover it is redolent of the Norse romantic spirit and speaks more strongly in the language of the Norwegian folk-song than the two other well known sonatas for violin and piano from the same pen. Like the others this one is written in three movements instead of the usual four of classic custom.

Edward Grieg (1843–1907) Sonata, Op. 13, G Minor (For Piano and Violin)

Lento doloroso, allegro vivace Allegretto tranquillo Allegro animato

Grieg, who speaks to the musical world in his own Scandinavian idiom, has been much beloved by the public and amateurs. The charm of his music lies both in pure melodic appeal and in the Norse harmonic and rhythmic peculiarity of manner. His music breathes the spirit of the Norwegian folk song and dance, carrying one direct to Norway, the land of mountains, fiords and the mid-night sun.

Celeste D. Heckscher (1860–) Suite for Violin and Piano

Celeste D. Hecksher is a native of Philadelphia. Her orchestral Suite, The Dance of the Pyrenees, has been played by the Thomas Orchestra of Chicago and by the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra. The Suite for violin and piano included in this program is a composition of much vivacious charm. The themes are bright and attractive and altogether the four short, crisp movements into which the piece is divided bear a very pleasing message couched in most pleasant terms.

Jenő Hubay (1858–) Hejre Kati

Hubay was a Hungarian violinist and composer who wrote with skill and fancy in the idiom of his chosen instrument. In the Hejre Kati he gives us typical dance rhythms of the Hungarian people—the melancholy introduction ("Lassu"), a rather martial middle movement and the well known "Friska," the latter a lively movement which rushes along in mad excitement, till in the sheer nature of things it must come to a sudden breathless stop.

William Henry Humiston (1869–) Suite, F sharp minor Duo for Piano and Violin

(In four movements)

I. Allegro molto moderato e maestoso

II. Scherzo

III. Andante quasi Adagio

IV. Allegro moderato

Mr. Humiston is an American who has received only American training, having been a pupil of the late Edward MacDowell. The present composition, written in four short, crisp movements is a study in the developmental possibilities of a theme of three notes only. No less a master than Beethoven has utilized the same subject matter, though in a different key, in his wonderful Opus III. Mr. Humiston is now traveling the United States as conductor of an Opera Company.

William Henry Humiston (1869–) Suite, F sharp minor Duo for Piano and Violin

(*In four movements*)

I. Allegro molto moderato e maestoso

II. Scherzo

III. Andante quasi Adagio

IV. Allegro moderato

These four short pieces in form of a suite, by the American composer, W. H. Humiston, are built upon and developed from a short theme of only three notes: F sharp, A and E sharp. No less a master than Beethoven has used the same intervals (in a different key) for the theme of a movement of a piano sonata.

Vincent d'Indy (1851–) Sonata, C major, Op. 59, for piano and violin

(Second, third and fourth movements)

Animé

Très lent

Très animé

Two interesting facts stand out in d'Indy's early life. He was a pupil of César Franck and he played drum in orchestra three years to learn instrumentation. A master in every sense, with strong intellect and a subtle critical faculty, his has undoubtedly been a strong influence in guiding the development of the modern school of composition in France. This sonata is a fair example of his best work, noble in conception and brilliant in mastery of the technique of composition.

Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847) Concerto, E minor, Op. 64

(In three movements)
Allegro molto appassionato
Andante: Allegretto non troppo
Finale: Allegro molto vivace

The popularity of the Mendelssohn violin concerto is deserved. Its spontaneity, its bubbling vivacity, its faultless contour will keep it young for all time. Romantic in spirit though classic in design, as Mendelssohn's music is, this violin work is manifestly a most perfect expression of his genius and appears destined to go down in history as his masterpiece. Its appeal is to the old and young alike, to the musician and to the layman, and all concede that while it may not equal the Beethoven concerto in nobility and exaltation of spirit, it may be regarded nevertheless as the most perfect violin concerto ever written.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791) Rondo

From the so-called Haffner music, written for the wedding of a friend in 1776.

From the Suite written for the wedding of Elizabeth Haffner, 1776. (Modern setting by Kreisler)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791) Concerto, A Major (In three movements) Cadenzas by Edwin Grasse

Allegro aperto Adagio Tempo di menuetto

Born in 1756 and dying at the early age of 35, Mozart was one of the greatest geniuses that the world has ever seen. Much of his music retains its freshness and popularity after more than a century. Light-hearted, industrious, imaginative, but content to work in the forms already perfected and adhering to them with a grammarian's strictness, he suffered the extremes of poverty and was buried in the Potter's Field, his immortal works being for long his only monument. The Concerto in A Major is replete with charm, vivacity, humor, grace. The slow middle movement in particular has the sweetness and angelic repose and simplicity that one senses in the clear gaze of a child. Indeed much of Mozart's music seems like the pure soul of childhood, embodied in tone. The Cadenzas by young Edwin Grasse are in complete spirit with the concerto and seem as spontaneous and pure as Mozart's music itself.

Pietro Nardini (1722–1793) Larghetto

Nardini, violinist, was a pupil of Tartini. He seems to have been admired chiefly for his lyric style and the beautiful purity of his tone. This lovely Larghetto is taken from one of his six Sonatas.

Michael Ogarew (1857?-) Caprice, Op. 51, No. 2

A CAPRICE OF OGAREW (TO MAUD POWELL)

It is a sweet coquetting. I can see

Above the fan the rogue eye's merry leer,

The fitful feigned retreadings that appear

To court pursuit, the cheeks that dimple with glee

Like a lake struck by a light wind, feet that flee

A little way and wait as if for fear

Light love should yield the chase; so sweet and clear

The violin-speech tells its tale to me.

O Art's fair rose-lady! such themes have their part

In beryl-wrought rare delicate interludes,

But give not unto these thy queenlier art.

Rather shouldst thou unsphinx the rarer moods

Of Chopin passioning in a star's red heart

Or Schubert's sighing in the solitudes.

By Richard Hovey (American poet) 1864-1900, b. Normal, Illinois

Ede Poldini (1869–) – Arthur Hartmann (1881–) Waltzing Doll [Poupée Valsante]

The quaint piece, which is well known to pianists, lends itself admirably to the delicate treatment of the violin, perhaps the more convincingly because of Mr. Hartmann's clever transcription. The mechanical doll dances prettily, apparently develops a soul for a moment, but soon relapses into mere mechanism, then almost runs down, but is re-wound just in time to finish her little performance hurriedly and bow herself off the stage.

Gaetano Pugnani (1731–1798) – Fritz Kreisler (1875–) Praeludium e Allegro

Pugnani was a pupil of both Corelli and Tartini. He was a prolific composer, though not much of his work seems to have survived the criticisms of time. The present Praeludium and Allegro, however, are worthy to have been penned by Bach. Fritz Kreisler has still further enhanced their beauty by giving them an eloquent though fitting piano accompaniment.

[NOTE: Kreisler revealed his original authorship in 1935.]

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835–) Concerto for violin, No. 3, in B minor, Op. 61

It is ten years and three days since this concerto was performed at a Friday symphony concert, the exact date being January 5, 1904, when Jacques Thibaud was the soloist for the third concert of the first season. However, it has since been given at two popular Sunday concerts, once during the sixth season and the second time during the eighth. The score of this work is dedicated to Pablo de Sarasate who produced it at a Chatelet concert in Paris, January 2, 1881, Saint-Saëns having composed it the year before.

Felix Borowski prepared following analysis on the occasion of its performance in Chicago five years ago:

"The first movement (*Allegro non troppo*, B minor, 2-2 time) has its principal theme announced by the solo instrument. After much passage work the second theme enters, in E major, in the solo violin. The development concerns itself with the principal theme, which is for the most part worked out in the orchestra against passages in the solo instrument. Following this is a return to the original key and a modified recapitulation and a coda built on the first theme.

"The slow movement (*Andantino quasi allegretto*, B flat major, 6-8 time) has something of the character of a Siciliano. After three measures of introduction the violin enters with the opening theme. Following an extended development of this material a new idea is presented *forte*, by the solo instrument in F major. The first theme then returns in the orchestra, there is a partial repetition of the second by the violin, and a coda (formed of *arpeggio* passages of harmonics in the solo vioin and lower tones of a clarinet) brings the movement to a conclusion.

"The Finale opens with introductory material (*Molto moderato e maestoso*, B minor, 4-4 time). The theme of this is announced by the violin and is short, followed by a second idea of impassioned character, also for the solo instrument. There is some passage work leading into a third subject in D major. Development of the first theme now takes place and is succeeded by a fourth subject in G major, first given out by muted violins and violas, and later by the solo instrument. An elaborate working out of former material now takes place, followed by a shortened recapitulation and a coda."

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835–) Concerto in B minor, (No. 3), Op. 61

Of Saint-Saëns' three violin concertos, the one at hand, dedicated to the famous Spanish virtuoso Sarasate, is the best known. It is a work of unusual beauty and classic lucidity.

The first movement, *Allegro*, B minor, 2/2, is a composition of great breadth, almost symphonic in fact, in its character. It consists of a rather free development of the sonata-form with two subjects, both of which are given out by the solo instrument. The second movement, *Andante quasi Allegretto*, B-flat, 6/8, a sort of pastoral romance, is typical of the French school, fluently and finely wrought. The third movement opens with a slow introduction in B minor, *Molto moderato e maestoso*, leading to the finale proper, *Allegro non troppo*. This is constructed of four themes, three being stated by the solo instrument and the last by the violins and violas, muted and *pianissimo*. In the recapitulation, the fourth theme reappears *ff* in the trumpets and trombones, and is then continued by the solo violin with delicate accompaniment of the strings and woodwind. The movement concludes with a dashing *Coda*, reminiscent of the third solo theme.

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835–) Sonata, D Minor, Op. 75 (For Piano and Violin)

Saint-Saëns, the intellectual, the witty, the eccentric, the widely traveled and the widely read, the critic, composer, virtuoso, pedagogue, commander of the Legion of Honor, Dr. Mus.Ox., honored us with a visit recently, receiving much attention at the Panama Exposition. The distinguished octogenarian has cast his musical thought in all forms, from the opera down. In this sonata he has shown, as always, amazing cleverness, plus a never failing regard for the technical as well as the poetical idiom of the individual instruments. Perspicacity of intent and lucidity of expression are his. This particular work, like so many of his compositions, is its own justification for being, inasmuch as it satisfies the ear, the brain, and, momentarily, at least, the heart. The work is modeled as follows: There are two large divisions, the first including a movement in sonata form, leading through a short episode reminiscent of the second theme, to a melodious adagio of utmost charm. The second division includes the third and fourth movements, namely: a scherzo, and a brilliant Finale.

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835–) Rondo Capriccioso

Saint-Saëns, the intellectual, the witty, the eccentric, the widely traveled and widely read, the critic, composer, virtuoso, pedagogue, commander of the Legion of Honor, Dr.Mus.Ox., honored us with a visit recently and received much attention at the Panama Exposition. Though the distinguished octogenarian has cast his musical thought in all forms, from the opera down, his wonderfully clever Rondo Capriccioso will probably stand the test of time as well as anything he has ever composed. Written in real violin idiom, with rhythmic charm and of crystalline clarity of material it has long been a prime favorite with violinists.

Florent Schmitt (1870–) Berceuse

Florent Schmitt is a Belgian, a modern of moderns, at times even a "cubist" in tone, yet he does not forget that the melody or theme of composition is of first importance, the mastery of manipulation being taken for granted in these days of technical knowledge.

Jan Sibelius (1865–) Allegro moderato from Concerto, D minor, Op. 47

It is ten or twelve years since Madame Powell first introduced the Sibelius concerto to our public. The composition proved to be caviar to all except a scant half dozen musicians and critics. However, in Madame Powell's opinion, although the music is already a bit old-fashioned, especially in the light of our most recent art tendencies, the themes nevertheless possess a haunting grip on the imagination, while the structure of the work serves as a superb vehicle for dramatic expression, vehement, vital, elemental. A vivid story of the Finnish race, originally sprung from the Tartars, is epitomized in this pregnant work, the first movement of the composer's violin concerto. Therein are voiced the spirit of vast northern stretches and forbidding climate. Strong women (who, by the way, had the suffrage long ahead of us) struggle for political freedom side by side with their men folk. Hope and despair [illegible] speak out from every bar of this pulsing music, reflecting the strong, poetic imagination of a people, stern, well-poised, strong-fibred in both mind and body.

Jan Sibelius (1865–) Musette

A Musette was formerly introduced in the middle of the Gavotte by way of contrast and variety. It has a drone-bass accompaniment, in imitation of an old musette, a kind of bagpipe.

Jan Sibelius (1865–) Valse Triste

In the beginning of music there was rhythm and rhythm only. Then came melody, after which harmony developed. But rhythm is at the very basis of the art of music. It is not only the skeleton of its structure, but it is in part its very soul. Certainly it is completely the soul of dance music. Dance rhythms have fascinated all the great composers. They have allowed their musical fancy free play and have idealized the dance to such an extent that some of the most beloved numbers of the artists' concert repertoire are in the idealized dance form.

"This is one of the most popular of the Finnish master's lesser compositions. It is one number from the incidental music to a drama written by the composer's gifted brother-in-law, Arvid Järnefeld, entitled "Kuolema" (Death). The Valse Triste has a programme which accounts for the yearning and shuddering sadness of the music.

"It is night. The son, who has been watching at the beside of his sick mother, has fallen asleep from sheer weariness. Gradually a ruddy light is reflected through the room; there is a sound of distant music; the glow and the music steal nearer until the strains of a valse melody float distinctly to our ears. The sleeping mother awakes, rises from her bed, and in her long white garment, which takes the semblance of a ball-dress, begins to move slowly and silently to and fro. She waves her hands, and beckons in time to the music, as though she were summoning a crowd of invisible guests. And now they appear, these strange visionary couples, turning and gliding to an unearthly valse rhythm. The dying woman mingles with the dancers, she strives to make them look into her eyes, but the shadowy guests one and all avoid her glance. Then she seems to sink exhausted on her couch, and the music breaks off. But presently she gathers all her strength, and invokes the dance once again with more energetic gestures than before. Back come the shadowy dancers, gyrating in a wild, mad rhythm. The weird gaiety reaches a climax; there is a knock at the door, which flies open; the mother utters a despairing cry; the spectral guests vanish; the music dies away. Death stands on the threshold."—Rosa Newmarch

[Richard] Strauss (1864–) Sonata, E flat major, Op. 18, Duo: for piano and violin

Two movements, namely:

I. Improvisation: Andante cantabile

II. Finale: Allegro

Richard Strauss is the most successful of living classical composers, both from a popular and financial point of view. He has fought his way doggedly and has lived to enjoy the financial fruits of his genius. He is the supreme example of the tendency of the modern school, the tendency to juggle with technical knowledge with a fiendish facility. He knows the temper of the public and is past master of the advertiser's art of arousing the public's curiosity. Many of us think he has perpetrated the operas of Salome and Elektra as huge jokes, his tongue in his cheek meanwhile. If not, he is a colossal musical degenerate. The E flat Sonata is one of his earlier works, and may be considered very beautiful. It has a wholesome, amiable spirit while disclosing a truly extraordinary technical efficiency on the part of the then youthful composer.

Giuseppe Tartini (Born 1692) Sonata, G minor (Le Trille du Diable) ("Devil's Trill")

The tradition is that Tartini had a vivid dream in which His Satanic Majesty appeared with violin in hand and played an enormously difficult composition throughout which innumerable trills constantly recurred. The fingers of the apparition were long and bony and they trilled so bewilderingly through such a maze of difficulties that Tartini awoke in a state of breathless astonishment. As soon as his mind cleared he arose and with feverish haste wrote down note for note, all that he had heard, so deep an impression had the music made upon him.

Giuseppe Tartini (Born 1692) l'Art de l'Archet

This composition comprises a set of variations on a Gavotte (old dance) theme, by Corelli, written for the purpose of exploiting the technics of violin bowing.

Concerto for Violin, in D major, Op. 35 Peter Tschaikowsky (Born at Votkinsk, Russia, May 7, 1840; died at St. Petersburg, November 6, 1893.)

I. Allegro moderato, D major 4-4; II. Canzonetta, Andante, G minor, 3-4; III. Finale: Allegro vivacissimo, D major, 2-4.

This concerto was written in the spring of 1878; it was originally dedicated to Leopold Auer, who found the work beyond him. Adolf Brodsky became acquainted with it, and his enthusiasm led him to give its first public performance at a Philharmonic concert in Vienna, December 4, 1881. Tschaikowsky thereupon altered the dedication in favor of Brodsky.

This performance will be in the way of an anniversary, as it is twenty-five years, lacking one month, since Miss Powell brought the work to its first hearing in this country at one of the Seidl concerts in Chickering Hall on April 6, 1888. On that occasion she played only the first movement. On January 19, 1889, she played the entire concerto with the Symphony Society of New York; the first performance in this country of the entire work.

Hanslick [Vienna critic], who could generally be counted on to assail masterpieces of the highest order, said in his review of the first performance: "The violin is no longer played; it is yanked about, torn asunder, beaten black and blue." In the finale "we see wild and vulgar faces, we hear curses, we smell bad brandy." A man with an imagination like that ought to have been writing dime novels instead of musical criticisms. But the concerto is now regarded as one of the great violin concertos; no virtuoso can afford to neglect it.

Valentini, (Died at Rome 1654) [Maud Powell Trio program note, March 27, 1909] Allegro Moderato for 'cello

Miss [May] Mukle has perhaps the only copy extant of a MS found by her master, [Alexander] Pezze, in Rome, while on a visit there in 1860 or thereabouts.

[Henri] Vieuxtemps (1820–1881) Concerto, D Minor, Op. 31

In three movements, namely: Andante moderato Adagio Religioso Finale, Allegro Marziale

Vieuxtemps was one of the great violinists of musical history. He was born in Verviers, Belgium, and studied in Paris with de Bériot. His last visit to America [was] in 1876 when musical taste was still in such an embryonic condition that he threw up his hands in despair, crying: "What SHALL I play for these people?" His Fantasies on "American Melodies" (some of which were Irish!) were what the people liked. It is pleasant to record that appreciation of music has so greatly advanced since that day that a composition like the present Concerto, well-written as it is and in serious form, though in the romantically virtuoso style of his time and school, is now played more for the purpose of showing the possibilities of the solo instrument and the artist's mastery of the peculiar style embodied, than for the intrinsic value of the music.

Henryk Wieniawski (1835–1880) Concerto, D minor, Op. 22

(In three movements)
Allegro moderato
Romance
Finale: a la Zingara

Wieniawski, born 1835, died 1880, was a virtuoso of the utmost distinction. Born in Poland, educated in Paris, he lived later in Brussels and taught there. He is looked upon as the greatest of the so-called Belgian school of violinists. He toured America in 1870 in company with Anton Rubinstein. It is related that they played the Kreutzer Sonata (Beethoven's opus 47) from memory. This is accounted a somewhat sensational achievement as chamber music is generally played from the printed page. Wieniawski's compositions for violin, written in virtuoso style, are well constructed, and show a nice sense of form, as well as keen appreciation of the possibilities and limitations of his instrument. For his time and style, his taste was impeccable.

Henryk Wieniawski (1835–1880) Légende, Op. 17

The principal theme is sombre, sadly contemplative in character with bursts of subdued warmth darting forth as it were from the smouldering ashes of a deep, sad memory. [At the climax of the composition], suddenly a shiver convulses the soul. There is a shriek, the snap of a heartstring, then a long pause. Presently, the spirit of a sweetly sad memory, chastened by the fires of the recent outburst, prevails to the close.

Aleksander Zarzycki (1834–1895) Mazurka

The Mazurka by Zarzycki is an example of "concert jargon" made popular by Sarasate two or more decades ago. It is a refined bit of writing of its kind, showing Polish, one might say Chopinesque influence, in the turn of its themes.

PIANO SOLOS

J. S. Bach (1685–1750) – Saint-Saëns (1835–) (transcription for piano solo) Bourée

This Bourrée, often misnamed Gavotte, is from the violin unaccompanied Sonata in B minor. St. Saëns has given it such a splendid setting for piano that even a violinist is forced to admit that the transcription is justified.

Beethoven (1770–1827) Contre Tanz [Country Dance] (Piano solo)

Beethoven, b. 1770, d. 1827. The name of Beethoven inspires reverence in the soul of every musician. With the possible exception of Bach he was the mightiest of the mighty in music.

Frédéric Chopin (1810–1849) Fantaisie Impromptu, C sharp minor

One of the composer's earlier and less masterful works, yet the beautiful sustained melody of the middle section has not only saved it from oblivion, but has even achieved for it a measure of popularity.

Frédéric Chopin (1810–1849) Nocturne, F sharp major

A divine poem of tenderness, replete with the most exquisite ornamentation—though the middle section speaks in more serious accents.

Franz Liszt (1811–1886) Liebestraum

"A Dream of Love"—an apt title for this tender melody which soon becomes more and more agitated and is swept by the surge of passion to a climax of terrific intensity, only to melt away into a quiet yet ecstatic close.

Franz Liszt (1811–1886) Rákóczy March

This is none other than the Hungarian National March, and every Hungarian's heart beats faster when he hears it. In form it consists of an intensely snappy principal tune, recurring once after a digression to a more measured yet none the less virile contrasting tune.

Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847) Scherzo, E minor

A capricious, though graceful, fairy dance, somewhat reminiscent of the composer's "Midsummer Night's Dream" music. Note the fairy trumpet motive which runs through the piece.

Ignacy Jan Paderewski (1860–) Nocturne [Piano Solo]

Paderewski shows much of the delicate charm in his compositions that one is conscious of in his personality. His works are pleasant to the ear and are moreover very playable.

Cyril Scott (1879–) Etude

Cyril Scott is a young Englishman whose compositions are fast winning their way on English and American programs.