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CELEBRATED MUSICIANS

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NICOLO PAGANINI

A BIOGRAPHY

BY

J. G. PROD'HOMME

Translated from the original
French Edition

by

ALICE MATTULLATH

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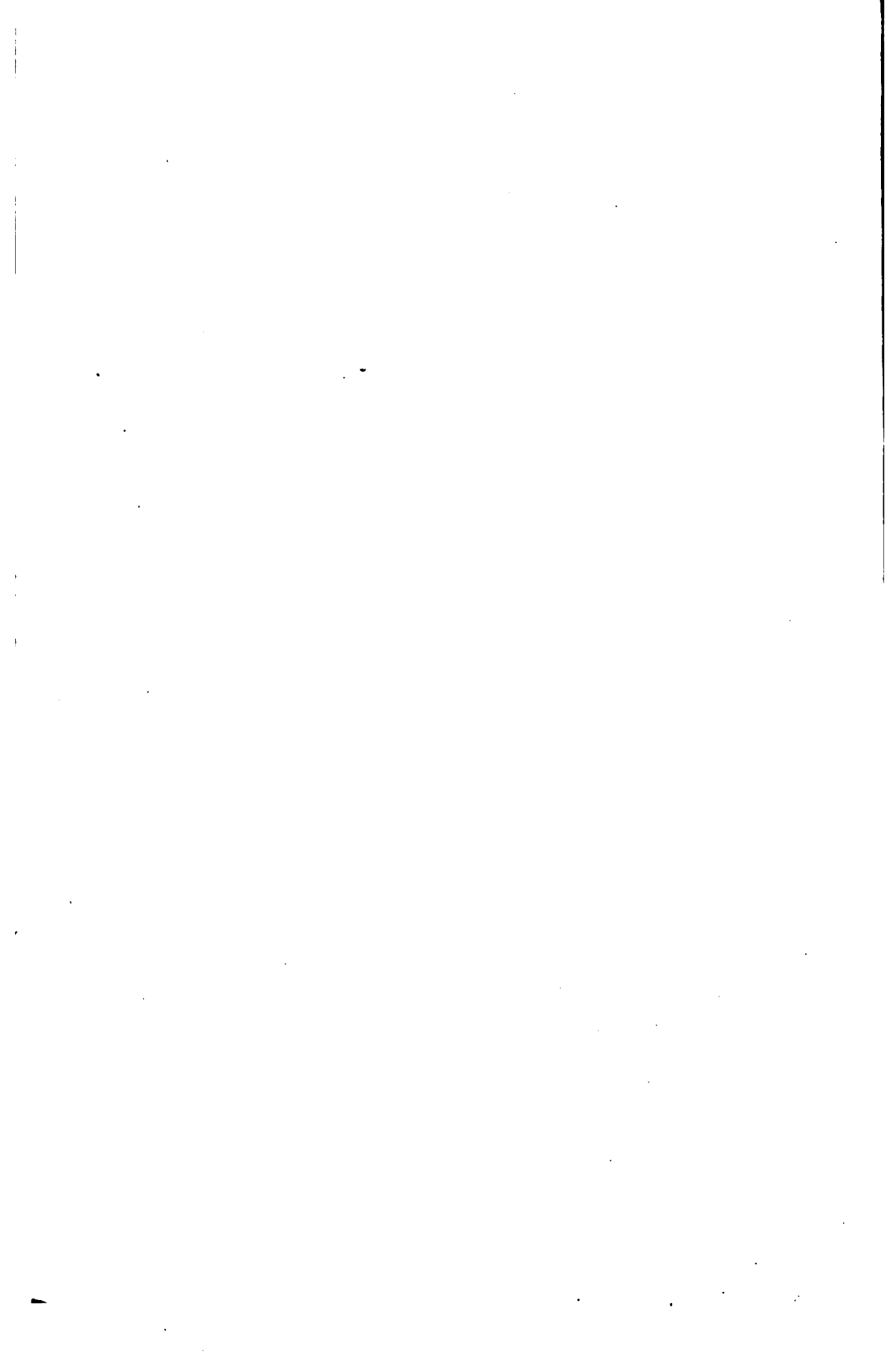
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I.

THERE are certain names in history which attain universal popularity and have the rare distinction of symbolizing a particular art or an entire epoch. Even the ignorant know them and use them to express a definite train of thought. What name more popular than Raphaël's? Does it not typify perfection in the art of painting? Mozart's name in music has an equal standing. As to the name of Paganini—more even than that of Liszt, whose fame as a virtuoso for so long overshadowed that of the composer,—it has become almost mythical. "To play like Paganini," like this Paganini whose memory lives forever, is to the masses the highest praise which can be bestowed upon an executant musician.

It is difficult to determine just when this widespread fame originated, especially in the absence of authentic documents; however, it can be positively stated that up to 1828 Paganini's glory was entirely of Italian making, his first foreign appearance, at Vienna, being the flash which lit the fire of enthusiasm in all Europe. Furthermore, it is difficult to retrace in detail the first thirty years of the artist's eventful life, which, even before he left his native country, had been embellished by anecdotes of more or less authenticity.

* * * * *

Born at Genoa, February 18th, 1784, Nicolo Paganini was the son of Antonio Paganini and Teresa Bocciardi, "both amateur musicians," as he states in a brief autobiography; "when I was five and a half years of age, I was taught to play the mandolin by my father, a broker.⁽¹⁾

"About this time the Saviour appeared to my mother in a dream and told her that a prayer should be fulfilled to her; she requested that her son should become a great violinist and this was granted her. When I attained my seventh year, my father, whose ear was unmusical, but who was nevertheless passionately fond of music, gave me my elementary lessons on the violin; in a very few months I was able to play all manner of compositions at sight."

(1) Fétis says he was a longshoreman, but this is exaggerated (*Revue Musicale*, Feb. 13, 1830, p. 33). According to Escudier he was a small shipping agent.

Nicolo's first teachers were Giovanni Servetto, a man of little merit, says Fétis, with whom he did not remain long, and afterward Giacomo Costa, Musical Director and first violin of some of the prominent churches at Genoa, from whom he took thirty lessons in six months. At the early age of eight Paganini composed a violin sonata, and at eight and a-half years of age he played a concerto by Pleyel in a church. From that time on until he was eleven years old, he had regular engagements to perform works of this kind at religious ceremonies. Paganini looked upon this as of much moment, since the church services forced him to constant practice on his instrument. He also mentions with grateful recognition one of his countrymen, Francesco Gnecco—according to Conestabile, a writer of popular drama, who strongly influenced his musical development.

When young Nicolo was about eleven and a-half years old—or perhaps two years earlier—he gave his first concert at the San Agostino Theatre, assisted by the singer, Teresa Bertinotti, and the male soprano, Marchesi. As for him, he played to his townspeople among other things, variations on the Carmagnole, which was very popular in Genoa at that time, and his success was enormous. The Marquis Di Negro (at whose house Kreutzer heard him about 1795) became much interested in the youthful virtuoso, and it was probably at his instigation that Antonio Paganini began “a search for good masters.” In 1796 he took his son to Parma, bearing letters of recommendation to Court officials, to Rolla and the famous Paër. At Florence he was presented to Salvator Tinti, who was astonished on hearing him play the variations on the Carmagnole. At Parma, he tells us “I found in Rolla's room a new concerto composed by him, which I played at sight; Rolla was much astonished and instead of giving me instruction on the violin, advised me to study counterpoint under Maestro Ghiretti, a Neapolitan court-musician and noted composer, who had also been Paër's teacher.” Thus states Paganini, but it appears, according to Gervasoni, that the young artist actually took lessons from Alessandro Rolla during several months.

As to Paër, who in 1792 to 1797 spent a part of each year at Parma, he gave him “three lessons a week during six months.” Paganini, under his direction, composed twenty-four figures for four hands, and his teacher was highly pleased with a duet which he had given him to set to music. “Ghiretti,” says Paganini, “who had

taken a fancy to me, overwhelmed me with favors and lessons in composition, and under his guidance I composed a great deal of instrumental music. About this time I played two violin concertos at a concert in the leading theatre, after having played at the country seat of the sovereigns, at Colorno, and at Sala, on which occasion I was most generously compensated. The owner of a Guarnerius violin said to me: 'If you can read this violin concerto at sight, I will give you this instrument,' and I won it." After this first tour, during which young Paganini gave twelve concerts, at Parma, Milan, Bologna, Florence, Pisa and Leghorn, he returned to Genoa,—probably during the winter of 1797-1798; there he composed his first etudes, certain technical difficulties of which he is said to have practiced for up to ten hours a day. When he had mastered them, he wrote other concertos and some variations, according to his account. His father presumably forced him to rigorous application to his studies, locking him up for entire days and guarding him closely. Thus he spent the time during the memorable siege of Genoa. However, this severity awakened the desire in the youth to escape the parental surveillance. With his extraordinary mastery of his instrument and having studied the works of all the great masters, Corelli, Vivaldi, Tartini, Pugnani and Viotti, he did not lack resources for making his living. "At twenty-seven years of age," continues the autobiography, "he made a tour of northern Italy; and it was at this time that he left his home and came to the town of Lucca. Here he met with great success at a festival which took place in Nov., 1800, on St. Martin's day. Later he won much favor in several Tuscan towns—especially at Pisa, and remained some time at Leghorn "to write some compositions for bassoon, for the use of a Swedish amateur who complained that he could find nothing sufficiently difficult." The Scandinavian amateur expressed himself more than delighted with the young maestro's work.

The latter, intoxicated by the triumphs with which he met everywhere upon his way, led anything but an exemplary life. No longer under the paternal eye, his leisure hours were spent with gambling and women, and one fine day, having lost everything he possessed at the gaming table, including his instrument, an amateur—whose name he has recorded—a Monsieur Livron,—loaned him a magnificent Guarnerius for his next appearance in public. After the concert the enthusiastic amateur gave the violin to Paganini as a gift. This instrument was left by Paganini to his native city, and

the Guarnerius is to this day kept at the Municipal Palace, at Genoa.⁽¹⁾

After this period—the exact duration of which is not known, but which was doubtless quite lengthy, Paganini informs us that “four years before the coronation of Napoleon, at Milan”—therefore in 1801, he went to Lucca for the festival of St. Croix (September 14th). “Everybody stared at me and made fun of my long bow and heavy strings (he used 'cello strings on his violin) but after the rehearsal, I was so wildly applauded that the other candidates did not venture to be heard. At a grand evening service in a church, my concerto created such a furor that the worshippers rushed out to keep the crowd outside the church quiet.”

At this point all the biographies of the artist show a lapse of three or four years which it is impossible to reconcile. Where was he between the months of September and October, 1801, and the year 1805,—the date of another sojourn at Genoa? The autobiography briefly states that its author “devoted himself to agriculture and took to playing the guitar.” We can merely add that from time to time he lived at the chateau of a great lady who played this instrument. Several compositions, his Opus 2 and 3, comprising six sonatas for violin and guitar, date from this period. Returning to Genoa, he once more took up his violin studies with much zeal, especially Locatelli's “Arte di nuova modulazione” and composed six quartets for violin, viola, guitar and 'cello, Opus 4 and 5,—as well as some brilliant variations—all with guitar accompaniment.

Following his trip to Lucca in 1801⁽²⁾ came his appointment in 1805 at the court of Lucca, where Felix Bacciochi and Eliza Bonaparte ruled since May, and Paganini continues: “The Republic of Lucca made me first court violinist and I remained there three years, giving instruction to Bacciochi. My duties required me to play in two concerts each week, and I always improvised, with piano accompaniment. I wrote these accompaniments in advance and worked out my theme in the course of the improvisation. One day at noon, the court requested a concerto for violin and English-horn that evening; the Musical Director refused on the ground that there

(1) To quote the autobiography—“In my concert announcements, I always volunteered to execute any piece of music which might be presented to me. One day at Leghorn, wishing to pass time and having no violin, I was loaned one by a M. Livron, to play one of Viotti's concertos; and afterward he made me a present of the instrument.”

(2) Niggli gives the time as 1805 and this seems more probable.

was not sufficient time, whereupon I was asked to write it. In two hours I had composed an orchestral accompaniment, and that evening I performed it with Professor Calli, making a great hit.

"Looking for variety in the programs I executed at court, one evening—after having removed two strings from my violin (the 2d and 3d), I improvised a sonata entitled 'Scena amorosa,' the 4th string representing the man (Adonis) and the treble string the woman (Venus). This was the beginning of my habit of playing on one string, as this sonata was much admired, and I was asked if I could play on a single string. I replied: 'Certainly,' and forthwith wrote a sonata with variations, which was performed in a grand concert on Saint Napoleon's day (Aug. 15th). Subsequently I wrote several sonatas in the same style.⁽¹⁾

"The Princess Eliza, who sometimes had fainting spells when listening to me, often retired so as not to deprive the others of the pleasure of hearing me play. I also conducted an entire opera at Lucca, with a violin mounted with two strings, and this won a wager involving a luncheon for twenty-five people. Though still attached to the court, I travelled in Tuscany; during a concert given at Leghorn, a nail pierced my heel so that I came on the stage limping (laughter in the audience); the moment I began to play the lights on my music-stand fell down (more laughter); at the very beginning of the concerto the treble string snapped, and amid the laughter of the audience I went on playing my concerto on three strings, and my success was enormous." Conestabile puts this incident down as happening in 1806 at the time of the second concert given in that town, where Paganini had gone with letters of introduction to the British Consul.⁽²⁾

When Princess Eliza became Grand Duchess of Tuscany, in 1809, Paganini followed her to Florence, where he became an object of fanatical admiration. "His talent," says Fétis, "showed new development every day"; however, he had not yet learned to control it perfectly. In 1810 he performed for the first time at a court concert his variations for the 4th string, having extended its range to three octaves, by means of harmonics. This novelty met

(1) Paganini reports these incidents in a letter published by the *Musical Gazette of Milan*, Oct. 18th, 1846. The scene of Venus and Adonis is dedicated to a lady of the court, of whom he was enamored.

(2) Shortly afterward he appeared at Turin, before Pauline Borghese.

with enormous success, especially when he played it publicly at a concert which he gave at Parma on August 16th, 1811."

During this period Paganini visited Lombardy and Romagna. He appeared at Cesena, at Rimini (Jan. 22, 1810), at Ravenna, Forli, Imola, Faenza, etc. It is almost impossible to follow his migrations, and a number of the earlier biographers hold that from 1808 to 1813 there is another noticeable lapse of five years in his life. The entire ignorance which for a long time existed as to his achievements and exploits, caused a thousand absurdities to be related about him, which later on he had much difficulty to refute. He was accused of being associated with the Carbonari, of having assassinated one of his mistresses, and that it was during a three or four years' term of imprisonment that he acquired his stupendous dexterity in playing on one string, the jailer of the prison, fearing that he would hang himself, having permitted him to play on his violin on condition that he use but a single string. The facts are that Paganini was accredited with an adventure of the Polish violinist Duranowski, or Durand, who as Aide-de-Camp to a French general, was imprisoned some time at Milan up to about 1814. Paganini, moreover, had often heard and admired the Polish violinist.

It is safer to ascribe our lack of knowledge as to Paganini's precise doings during these four or five years to his ill health, due to youthful excesses which brought on a nervous trouble, necessitating an enforced rest of several months. However, he was still attached to the Court at Florence, and his severing of this connection was the result of a rather amusing incident. At Lucca, the Princess Bonaparte had appointed him Captain of Gendarmes, a rank which he still held in the Tuscan capital, and which gave him the right to wear a uniform. Accordingly, he appeared one evening at a court-concert in all his military splendor. The Princess immediately ordered him to resume his black evening clothes; Paganini refused, saying that the title of Captain which had been conferred upon him authorized him to wear a uniform—without restriction or stipulation. After this conversation the bold Captain of Gendarmes actually dared to promenade in the ball-room where the court had assembled after the concert. However, he thought it wise to leave Florence, taking his departure that very night, and in spite of all the efforts made by the Princess to recall him, Paganini never again consented to appear at the court of Eliza Bonaparte.

A theme from a ballet which was being performed at that time (1813) at Milan, "Le Noyer de Benevent," by Vigano, gave him the suggestion for his variations "le Streghe," with which he toured all Italy before the remainder of Europe was permitted to applaud them. In this one city, where up to 1828 he had given thirty-seven concerts, he made his debut at the La Scala Theatre, Oct. 29th, and gave some ten concerts in six weeks. From that time on he was considered the foremost violinist of Europe, more than a hundred concerts in all parts of Italy confirming this reputation. "Every five years I changed my style of playing," says he; "at Bologna (in 1814), I improvised with Rossini at the piano in the house of the Pegnalver family. At Rome I was not permitted to give concerts on Friday during the Carnival, but the Vicar, who later became Pope Leo XII (1829-1830) authorized a single concert, as a special concession. In view of the enthusiasm which I created, he sent me of his own accord, a most flattering edict which authorized me to give a concert every Friday. I was also heard at a concert given at the palace of Prince Kaunitz, the Austrian Ambassador. Prince Metternich, who was then at Rome, could not attend this concert owing to an indisposition, but came to the palace the next morning. To oblige him I took the first violin that came to hand and played something for him, which pleased him so much that he came again that same evening. The wife of the ambassador said to me: 'You are the whole attraction,' and it was on this occasion that Prince Metternich invited me to come to Vienna. I promised to visit that city first after leaving Italy. This tour through Austria was postponed on account of an illness which I contracted and which was unknown to all the medical profession."

March 24th, 1814, he was again heard at Milan, at the Rè Theatre with his pupil, Catarina Carcagno; he was still there in May and in September; later he was at Bologna, at the Communal Theatre, and during this period he met Rossini. In 1815 he toured Romagna and was detained for several months at Ancona by a nervous disease. In March, 1816, he had the encounter with the famous Lafont, of whom he had heard at Genoa. Paganini, eager to meet him, came to Milan, and after a public "tournament,"—both virtuosi playing the Rode concerto, a unisono duet by Kreutzer, and some soli—(Paganini played le Streghe as his final number)—Lafont was declared his equal for singing tone, but Paganini was incomparably superior in technique, brilliancy of tone and style.

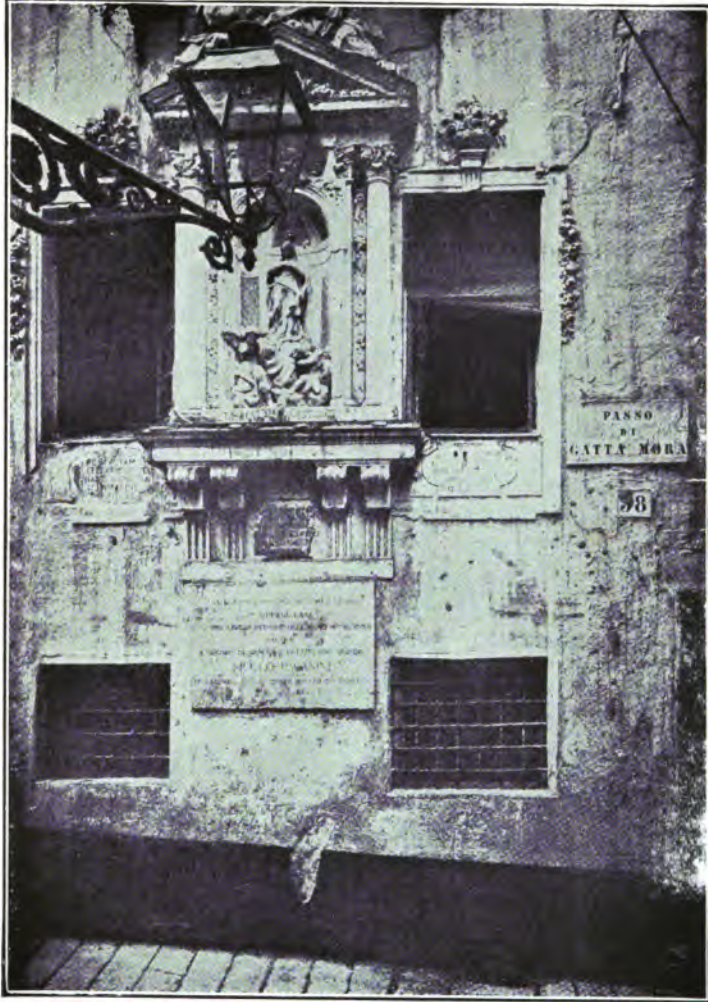
In August, at Parma, he played for the first time a series of variations on the 4th string; later he appeared at Ferrara, with Gandi-Giani of Bologna and Marcolini. While there he came within an inch of being lynched by the crowd on account of a witticism at the expense of the citizens of that place.

In October, Spohr, who was traveling in Italy, met him at Venice.

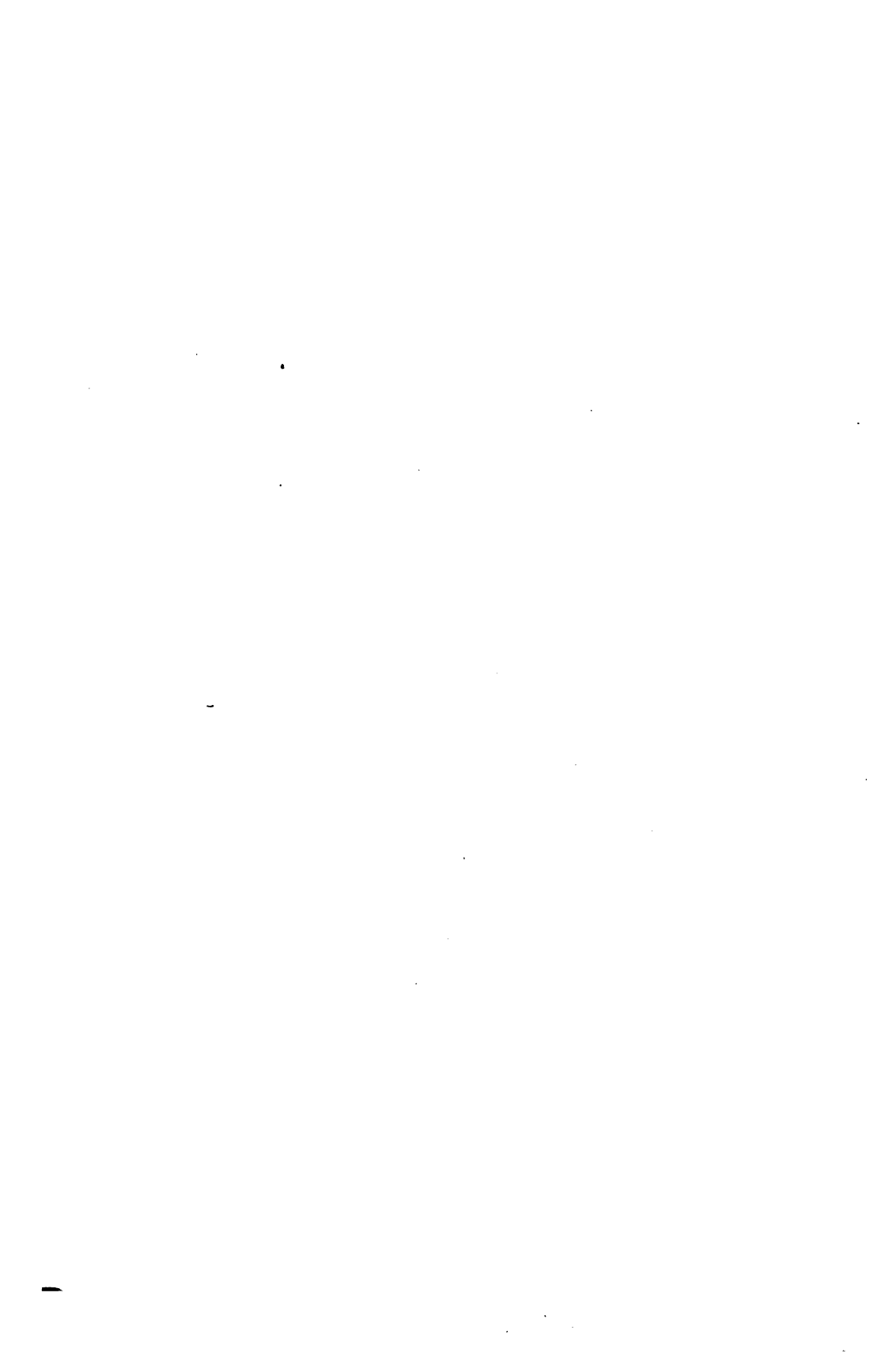
— "Yesterday," he writes under date of October 17th, "Paganini returned from Trieste, and it seems that he suddenly gave up his plan of going to Vienna. This morning he came to see me, and I finally met this wonderful man of whom I had been told every day since my arrival in Italy. No performing musician has ever enthused the Italians to this extent; and although they do not care much for instrumental recitals, he has given more than a dozen at Milan and five here. It is difficult to determine exactly wherein lies the charm which holds his audiences; there are stories afloat about him which in no-wise concern the musician; he is lauded to the skies, he is called a wizard who draws from his violin mystic sounds never before heard by human ear. The critics, on the other hand, although admitting that he shows a marvelous dexterity of the left hand in double stopping and passages of all kinds, consider those qualities which fascinate the general public as inartistic, lowering him to the level of a juggler, and not atoning for his faults, viz.: a loud tone, faulty bowing, and phrasing which was not always in the best of taste."⁽¹⁾

After spending a year at Venice, Paganini returned to Milan and Genoa; shortly afterward, he again met Rossini at Rome, who was bringing out *La Cenerentola*. It was then that he met Prince Metternich and not in 1814, as the autobiography states. Later he visited Tuscany, touching at Piacenza, Turin, Florence and Verona. In the latter city an amusing episode occurred: Paganini was to play some variations by Valdobrani, the conductor of the orchestra at Verona, and at the rehearsal he took such liberties with the composition that Valdobrani scarcely recognized his work. "You need have no uneasiness," he was reassured by the artist, "to-morrow you will recognize them as your own." The last number of the concert program being the variations by Valdobrini, Paganini actually appeared with his violin in one hand and a light bamboo cane in the

(1) Spohr—Selbst Biographie 1, p. 304.



HOUSE AT GENOA, WHERE PAGANINI WAS BORN



other, which he wielded as a bow, to the great edification and delight of the amused audience.

At Florence he took up with Lipinski, his Polish rival, the struggle for supremacy in which he had engaged with Lafont (17th to 23d of April). In December, 1818, and January, 1819, he appeared at the Carignano in Turin, and in February at Florence. He spent the summer in Naples, giving concerts at the Del Fondo Theatre. While there his condition was again critical, as regards his health. The proprietor of the rooms which he occupied in the Petraio quarter, fearing the plague, had him brought out into the street in his bed! There he was discovered by his pupil, the 'cellist Ciandelli, who found more comfortable and sanitary quarters for him, nor did he neglect administering to the barbarous Neapolitan the punishment he well deserved. Having recovered rapidly, Paganini gave a new series of concerts. In March, 1820, he was again at Milan, which had grown as dear to him as his own native city. While there he directed the Gli Orfei concerts, which brought him a medal. At Rome, in December, he conducted the première of Rossini's "Matilda di Shabra," the leader of the orchestra, Bello, having died suddenly at one of the last rehearsals. After having appeared in several concerts at the Argentina (in the spring of 1821) and having shown his mastery of the guitar at various soirées, before a circle of admiring friends, he left once more for Naples, where he played at the Del Fondo and Nuovo Theatres. "At last," writes Candler to the *Morgenblatt*, "I heard and admired at the Del Fondo Theatre, Italy's greatest violinist, Ercole⁽¹⁾ Paganini. The Hercules among Italian violinists has given two concerts here, the first on July 20th, and the second on September 1st; he also gave a third about the middle of this month at the Nuovo Theatre.—Paganini is certainly an artist with a style all his own, who follows no particular method but is guided by rules of his own making, even though they might not all have been approved by Apollo."

After spending the winter of 1821-1822 at Palermo, "where," says Niggi, "he found but few admirers," Paganini returned to Rome about the time of the Carnival, which he spent gayly with Rossini, Massimino d'Azeglio and Liparini. Later, by way of Venice and Piacenza, he returned to Milan (March-April, 1822).

(1) The author of this article erroneously gave the celebrated artist the surname of Ercole, which happened to be that of another Italian violinist of the same name.

It was then that he laid plans to tour Germany, which, however, were not realized until six years later. In January, 1823, just at a time when he was preparing to give another series of concerts throughout the peninsula, he was detained at Parma through illness. Eventually he gave several concerts at Turin and then went to Genoa to recuperate. In May, 1824, he appeared at San Agostino before his compatriots, who received him with enthusiastic demonstrations. He took leave for some time to reap more laurels at the La Scala Theatre on June 12th, and then returned to Genoa to give two concerts (June 30th and July 7th). In the fall he again went to Venice by way of Milan, and there he met Signora Antonia Bianchi, a native of Como, who for several years accompanied him everywhere; a son, Achillino, was born to them at Palermo July 23d, 1825. A sojourn in Sicily had now become actually imperative to fortify his ever delicate constitution; he remained there in 1825 and 1826, appearing in Rome, however (three concerts in 1825), and in Naples (April 15th—concert at Del Fondo Theatre, with La Tosi, Novelli, Fioravanti and Lablache). At Palermo he was coldly received.

Subsequently he went to northern Italy, passing through Trieste, Venice (in the summer of 1826), Rome (spring of 1827), Florence, Perugia, and Bologna, where he was forced to remain eight months, suffering with a trouble with one of his legs; finally, after a farewell trip to Genoa, he returned to Milan toward the close of 1827 before undertaking his trip through central Europe.

II.

IN the course of his career the echoes of his fame resounded throughout Germany, France and England, and myths were woven about the artist, showing him as the weird, phantastic creature which posterity insists on seeing in him. This "magician of the South," this "sorcerer," as the Germans call him, this "king of the violin," as he was christened by all Europe, was then about forty years of age. Doubtless his features were not cast in that sad, misanthropic, almost wretched expression which the portraits of Paganini, engraved toward 1830, show. However, the bizarre appearance which so many writers have described and whose characteristics have been preserved for us in so many drawings and caricatures, had already formed.

"Five feet five inches in height, built on long sinuous lines, a long, pale face, with strong lineaments, a protruding nose, an eagle eye, and curly hair flowing to his shoulders, hiding an extremely thin neck; two lines, one might say were graven on his cheeks by his profession, for they resembled the *ff* of a violin or double-bass. Bright with the fire of genius, his pupils roll in the orbits of his eyes and turn toward those of his accompanists of whom he does not feel quite sure. His wrist is so loose and supple that I would compare the play of his hands to the movement of a handkerchief tied to the end of a stick, and floating in the breeze." Such is the description of Paganini by Castil-Blaze, in 1831.

"He is as thin as anyone can possibly be," writes his biographer Schottky, before Castil-Blaze; "with this a sallow complexion, a pointed aquiline nose, and long bony fingers. He seems barely able to support the weight of his clothes, and when he bows, his body is so strangely contorted that one fears any moment the feet will part company with the rest of him, and the whole frame fall suddenly to the ground, a heap of bones. When he plays, his right foot is advanced and in brilliant passages marks the time with ludicrous rapidity, the face, however, not losing its stony impassiveness except for the shadow of a smile when thunders of applause greeted him; then his lips moved and his eyes, full of expression, but without kindness, flashed in all directions. In repose, his body forms a sort of triangle, bending in an absolutely unique manner, while the head and the right foot are held forward."

A "Physiological notice" published at this period by Dr. Bennati,⁽¹⁾ enables us better than any more "learned" essay, to solve the "mystery" of this almost phenomenal organism; these pathological and scientific observations show this man in a more human guise, about whom the wildest stories were told, circulated by his enemies and envious rivals.

"I will not analyze the features of his face," says Dr. Bennati, "nor speak of the bump of melody, which is strongly developed at the outer angle of his forehead; I will merely show him in his entirety as an organism made expressly, one might say, for attaining the highest perfection as an executant musician, which he has reached, and based on this I hope to demonstrate the truth of an opinion which I have given, *namely*, that the superiority of the celebrated violinist is less a result of continued practice, as has been averred, but rather of special physical fitness. Doubtless many stages of development were required to create this new and wonderful mechanism by which he has been able to put himself beyond comparison; unquestionably his genius pre-existed. Paganini, to be what he is, had to unite perfect musical intelligence with organs of the most delicate sensitiveness to exercise it. His head alone should have made Paganini a distinguished composer, a musician of the highest standing; but without his delicate sense of rhythm, the build of his body, his shoulders, arms and hands, he could never have been the incomparable virtuoso whom we all admire.

"Paganini is pale, thin and of middle stature. Although he is only forty-seven, his thin frame and the loss of his teeth make his lips look drawn, while his chin protrudes, giving him a far more aged look. The large head on a long, scrawny neck, together with his lanky limbs, at first gives a strong impression of disproportion. A high forehead, broad and massive, an aquiline and very characteristic nose, beautifully arched eyebrows, a mobile, malicious mouth, slightly resembling Voltaire's, large protruding ears, standing well off from the head, long black hair falling carelessly to his shoulders and contrasting with his pale skin, gave Paganini's appearance an extraordinary cast, and to a certain degree testified to his undeniable genius.

"It has been erroneously stated that an expression of physical pain gave to Paganini's features a stamp of wild melancholy, attrib-

(1) *Revue de Paris*, May, 1831, pages 52-60. I owe this interesting article to Mr. Adolph Boschot.

uted to weariness of living. I can say that in my intercourse with Paganini I never obtained anything like this impression in regard to his character. I always saw him gay, brilliant, even full of fun when among friends, while with his charming little Achille he was as playful as a child, and I am in a better position than anyone else to form an opinion of Paganini. For more than ten years I was on an intimate footing with him, and had countless opportunities to observe him, first in Italy, and particularly at Vienna, where I had occasion to render him my professional services during several months, and thus no physiological condition during his life is unknown to me. I am inclined to believe that no one but a friend could have obtained the details as to his health or his former illness, necessary to judge of his physiological condition; as he would have given no opportunity to others to examine the various organs and the build of his body and limbs, and they would have had no clue to the phenomenon presented by the wonderful physical mechanism underlying his art. However, before going further into this mechanism, which I believe to be a great part of the secret which Paganini is supposed to possess, I will touch on more important questions."

Paganini was no consumptive, as was at first feared. Bennati, with Dr. Miquel, at Paris, convinced himself of this point; "he is thin," says the doctor, "not on account of tuberculosis, but because it is his nature to be so. The left shoulder is higher than the other, which when he stands erect, with his arms hanging, makes the right one seem much longer. Particularly noticeable is the extensibility of the capsular ligaments at the shoulders, and the slackness of the ligament uniting the hand and fore-arm, also the carpals and meta-carpals and the phalanges with each other. The hand is no larger than normal, but he can double its reach by the flexibility of all his joints. Thus, for instance, he gives to the first phalanges of the fingers of his left hand, on the strings, a remarkable flexion which, while his hand remains motionless, moves them laterally to their natural flexion, and this with ease, precision and rapidity." Paganini's art is simply a result of practice and of his physical fitness. "His cerebellum is enormous. His sense of hearing is wonderfully developed: he hears what is said, even in a whisper, at a great distance, and the sensitiveness of his tympanum is such that it positively pains him to have anyone

close beside him speak in a loud tone of voice. He is then obliged to turn and face the interlocutor. This sensation is far more pronounced on the left ear, which is the one corresponding to the position of the violin. His ears are admirably adapted for receiving sound waves, the cavity being wide and deep; the shell is strongly marked, and all its lines are deeply graven. It is impossible to find a better, more perfectly proportioned ear in all its parts, and one more strongly defined."

"The delicacy of Paganini's hearing surpasses anything imaginable," continues Bennati. "While the largest orchestra is playing with the full strength of its wind instruments he needs but a slight touch with one finger to tune his violin; he instantly detects under all circumstances an instrument which is out of tune, even the less noticeable ones, and this at an incredible distance. On several occasions, he has shown the absolute perfection of his musical hearing by playing 'true' on a violin which was not in tune.

"Paganini is permeated with music; at the age of five the chimes, which are quite frequent in Italy, sometimes made him radiantly happy, and sometimes strangely melancholy. At church he could not listen to the organ without being moved to tears. No matter how weak and ill he may be, the first sound of the bow is like an electric spark which gives him new life, all his nerves vibrate like the strings of his violin, and his brain has no other faculty than to express the transports of his musical soul. His instrument and he are one. For two hours he lives through his violin; his soul is carried far beyond us; calls to us from there, commands us as a sovereign, and it is then that Paganini's body obeys the irresistible power; nature is forced to respond to the demands made, and bring forth the ravishing harmonies which fill his soul."

This is Paganini from a physiological point of view. Others intimately associated with him, for instance his secretary, George Harrys, have aided in studying him psychologically. Morally Paganini's actions were often quite different from the interpretations given them by his contemporaries, who were deceived by appearances. He was often accused of avarice; his stinginess became proverbial, and his fortune, at one time, was estimated at 7 millions.⁽¹⁾ In reality it exceeded this sum, although, without corroborative documents, it is difficult to estimate the fortune to which,

(1) J. Janin, article in the *Journal des Débats* on the death (falsely reported) of Paganini (Feb. 14th, 1835).

in 1840, Achille Paganini fell heir. However, the stories of his wealth were not unfounded. Paganini always demanded a very high price from the public who crowded to hear him. In Austria and in Germany the cheapest seat was 2 thaler (7 fr. 50). Everywhere he doubled and tripled the price of seats; in London alone he had to be satisfied with the usual prices, which, however, were far better than the prices in vogue on the continent. "It must not be forgotten that Paganini was an Italian," says Dr. Kohut, "and that most Italians, with few exceptions, if not avaricious, are at least very economical. Why should Paganini be otherwise? He lived in the best hotels of the towns where he gave his concerts, took the choicest rooms, drank wine, gave generous tips and spent much on charity."⁽¹⁾ His illness, or rather his infirmity, forbade his eating much, and he seemed to live sparingly. "Il poco mangiar e il poco ber hanno mai fatto male (little eating and drinking have never done harm)," said he.

Although he charged big prices for his concerts, he readily gave free tickets to young musicians and poor amateurs who wished to hear him, and many artists borrowed considerable sums from him which he never reclaimed.

We know how Paganini stood with his family; after the death of his father in 1817 or 1818 (about 1825 according to Niggli), he supported his mother and one of his sisters, who lived at home with her; he also loaned 5,000 francs to another sister (which went to pay the gambling debts of her husband, and were never returned). When he parted with Antonia Bianchi, at Vienna, he gave a concert for her benefit, and left her 2,000 ecus (3,731 florins currency). He testated to her a revenue of 1,260 francs after his death. Of course these are not enormous sums, but it would seem that Paganini's much talked of penuriousness was nothing but strict economy, and a careful management of the fortune he acquired, after having dissipated so much in his youth.

On having separated from Antonia, after having lived together for four years, Paganini continued his travels with his little son; he never parted from him and rarely consented to have him out of his sight even for a short time.

Contemporaries have spoken of little Achille-Cyrus-Alexander Paganini as a very beautiful child, with black eyes, long brown hair,

(1) Ad. Kohut, *Aus dem Zauberlande Polyhymnia's*, p. 215-238, *Neues über Nicolo Paganini*.

and a charming, intelligent face; he inherited from his mother a fine voice and at the age of two already gave evidence of an extraordinarily true and sensitive ear. When seven years of age he spoke Italian fluently and also French and German sufficiently well to serve as interpreter to his father, who could not express himself in other than the Italian and French languages. One day Paganini was asked whether he would have his son study music: "And why not?" said he, "if it gives him pleasure, I myself will teach him. I love him dearly and am actually jealous of him. If I should lose him I would be lost myself, because I simply cannot do without him. Day and night he is my only thought."

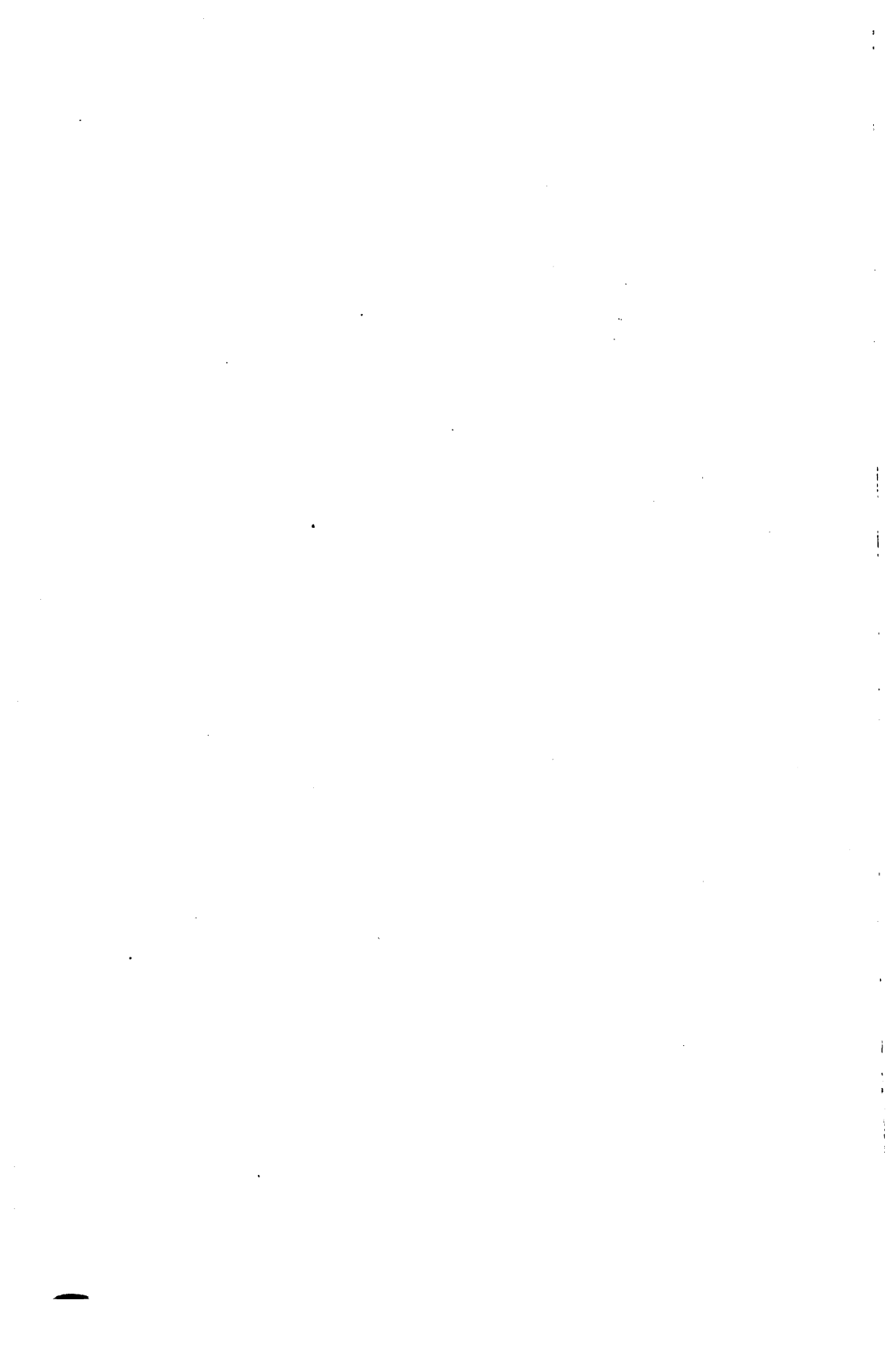
On entering Paganini's room, one could always find Achillino playing with a wealth of toys, lavished upon him by an indulgent father. Sometimes the child amused himself with a violin, on which he played very pretty little melodies. One could die laughing, says an eye witness, to see Paganini in slippers, playing with his boy, who scarcely reached to his knee. Sometimes the child brandished his terrible broadsword before his father, and Paganini in mock fright drew back laughing. "Angelo mio, I am already wounded," he groaned, but the youngster was not satisfied until the giant staggered and fell to the floor.

When Achillino was four years old, he became capricious and unmanageable; above all he had a horror of washing his hands. His father, far from losing patience, did not scold him, but begged and pleaded, overwhelmed him with tenderness and kindness and in this way obtained obedience and submission. He was never impatient or angry with him, but let him do as he pleased. When some one called his attention to the "bad bringing up" of Achillino, Paganini answered: "The poor child is lonesome; I don't know what to do; I have exhausted every kind of game and toy. I have carried him about, I have made him some chocolate; I am at my wits end!" He would leave the care of dressing him to no one else. One morning, before going to a concert which began early, Paganini had forgotten the time while at play with Achillino. When he wanted to dress hurriedly, he could not find his things, which he had laid out the night before; his coat, his tie, everything had disappeared. The child was greatly amused to see his father vainly searching in all the corners, and his expression finally gave Paganini a clue: "Where are my things, angelo mio?" he asked in dulcet tones. The little one feigned astonishment, shrugged his shoulders



NICOLO PAGANINI

(Portrait by Isola, in the Municipal Gallery at Genoa.)



and intimated that he did not understand. After an elaborate search the father finally found his boots, hidden behind some cushions, then the coat tucked away in a trunk, the vest in a drawer. Paganini waved each article, when found, triumphantly in the air, took a pinch of snuff and continued his investigations, followed by Achillino, who was delighted at the proceedings.

While traveling through Europe with his young companion and a secretary⁽¹⁾ Paganini insisted on having his car hermetically closed, and even when the thermometer registered 20 degrees C., he wrapped himself up in his furs, to which he clung as he did to his child. In his rooms, on the contrary, he immediately opened all the doors and windows, which he called taking an air-bath. The violin cases which were not used to hold his Guarnerius were transformed into kit-bags in which he packed his linen and valuables. His accounts were kept in a red note book, receipts and disbursements being noted therein in hieroglyphics which no one but himself could decipher. His rooms were always in the most chaotic state, says his secretary, sheet music, clothes, boots, everything topsy-turvy; he had much trouble in getting the child dressed and putting on his clothes for public appearance.

At rehearsals with orchestra he was extremely severe, going back to the beginning of a solo or tutti a number of times for the slightest error; he looked daggers at the terrified musicians, and if the orchestra had the misfortune to start in too soon, before he had finished his cadenza, he broke into a flood of invective; whereas, if all went well, he expressed his satisfaction emphatically: "Bravissimo!" he would cry in the middle of a concerto, "siete tutti virtuosi"; on other occasions he was satisfied after giving a few tempi, and turning to the orchestra, would say: "Et cætera, messieurs."

Any number of these anecdotes are told, but these will suffice to show us the character of the man whose physiology Dr. Bennati has described. Some of the stories show us Paganini as an extremely nervous, impressionable being, having good traits and fine sentiments in spite of appearances to the contrary. To study Paganini we fortunately have a number of notes made by a careful

(1) One of these, George Harrys, attached to the Hanoverian Embassy, but of English origin, says Niggli, served him in 1830 as manager and interpreter during the tour of northern Germany. From his pamphlet, "Paganini's Travels," the biographers have taken the above anecdotes.

observer, Karl Guhr, himself a distinguished violinist, and musical conductor and manager of the theatre at Frankfort, who published in 1829 the result of his observations and personal experiences.⁽¹⁾

"I was fortunate enough," says Guhr, "during my stay at Paris, several years ago, to hear the greatest masters of the French school: Baillot, Lafont, Beriot, Boucher, and several others, and shall never forget the profound impression which their wonderful art made upon me; still, their playing did not differ much from that of other great masters whom I had heard, and although each one's style was more or less distinct, they were much alike in their manner of bowing, production of sound and execution, and the differences were not really perceptible. With Paganini it is different; everything about him is new—unique—he obtains sounds and effects with his instrument which no one ever dreamed of, and which mere words cannot describe. Rode, Kreutzer, Baillot, Spohr, these stars among violinists, seemed to have exhausted the possibilities of this instrument. They had extended the mechanism, evolved countless ways of handling the bow to make it respond to the most delicate shading; by the magic of this tone, which rivaled the human voice, they succeeded in expressing all the passions—every feeling that stirs the heart. Finally, following along the paths shown by Corelli, Tartini and Viotti, they lifted the violin to the rank which gives it power to sway the human soul. In their way they are and ever will be great and unsurpassed.

"On hearing Paganini, however, and comparing him with other masters, it must be admitted that he surpasses every standard heretofore established. His ways are all his own and distinguish him from those other great artists. Whoever hears him for the first time is astounded, carried away by all he hears that is new and surprising; astonished by the demoniacal power with which he wields the bow; enchanted by the facility of a technique which is adequate to every requirement, at the same time lifting the spirit to unknown heights, and giving to the violin the breath of the human voice divine, which stirs the soul to its very depths."

Guhr goes on to say that he often had occasion to hear Paganini and chat with him, during eight months which he spent at Frankfort, but avoiding any explanation, Paganini invariably said,

(1) *L'Art de jouer du violon*, by Paganini (Paris, 1830). An article by Guhr, on the same subject, appeared in *la Cæcilia* (No. 14 or 41, analyzed by Fetis, *Revue Musicale*, December, 1829, p. 505-512).

when questioned in regard to his methods and the exercises which he practiced: "Ognun'a suoi segreti." These "secrets" the German Kapellmeister resolved to discover. By watching the master's performances attentively, he succeeded in finding a key to several of these, which at first hearing seemed like so many puzzles even to professionals. Guhr concludes:

"Paganini is distinguished from other artists: 1st. By his manner of tuning his instrument. 2nd. By his handling of his bow—which is peculiar to him. 3rd. By the mingling and uniting of sounds produced with the bow and the pizzicato of the left hand. 4th. By his use of harmonics, double or single. 5th. By his playing on the G string alone.⁽¹⁾ 6th. By his seemingly impossible feats.

"Paganini's style of playing requires fine strings for the following reasons: 1st. Because he frequently plays the shrillest tones, which other violinists very rarely use. 2nd. Because the harmonic sounds, especially the artificial ones, carry better on the fine strings in the high positions. 3rd. Because if the strings were heavier, the strength of the second, third and fourth fingers would not be adequate to master them in the pizzicato for the left hand. 4th. He sometimes tunes the four strings half a tone higher, and sometimes the G string a minor third higher, and for this reason the whole mounting must be fine, since heavy strings would not bear the strain without growing harsh and shrill, which would detract from the performance (it is therefore a fact that the fine strings are less sonorous).⁽²⁾

(1) Paganini mounted this famous fourth string beside the treble string, in place of the A string, especially for playing the variations on "Moses' Prayer"; the celebrated violinist, Camille Sivori, a pupil of Paganini, followed the example of his teacher and used this same trick in playing these variations.

(2) "Besides giving less tone than a violin mounted with heavy strings, the fine strings have another drawback, especially in wet weather, when the E string is very apt to slip. This accident happened to Paganini quite frequently, and invariably detracted from the assurance with which he ordinarily played.

"An important factor which enters into his way of mounting the strings, with a view to playing harmonics, is that the strings must be well attuned to each other, or in other words, the fifths must be absolutely true, otherwise a sequence of double harmonics would be impossible."

Guhr states that Paganini carefully selected the fourth string before having it drawn, choosing one of medium thickness if it was to be tuned to G and finer if he intended to tune it to A flat, or B flat.

"After what I have told of him, continues the German author, it is easy to conceive that Paganini, when he plays in public, changes his G as desired, and thanks to the precaution above mentioned, the string remains absolutely in tune. His skill in tuning in the middle of a number seems really quite incredible.

(Footnote continued on page 24)

"Paganini's bowing is above all remarkable for the bounding movement which he uses in certain passages. His staccato is entirely different from what is usually heard. He *throws* the bow on the strings and runs up and down the scales with marvellous rapidity, the cadences rippling out from beneath his fingers like so many strings of pearls. The variety of his bowing is wonderful; I never heard such nicety, such precision, in marking time and sounding the lightest beat in the most rapid movement; and yet what power he can develop in slow passages; with what deep feeling he breathes the sigh of a heart torn with grief."

Guhr states in regard to Paganini's mingling of sounds produced by the bow and the pizzicato of the left hand, that this effect was often used by the old Italian school, especially in Mestrino's time; however, the French and German schools had condemned it and it had fallen into disuse. "Paganini in reviving it added new features, as he did in all branches of his art, and also added to the difficulties. These latter consisted in sharply sounding the D and G strings; the flexibility of Paganini's strings permits him to do in this respect what would be difficult to execute on a violin which was more tensely strung." Besides, Paganini's bridge was less convex than that of other violinists, particularly towards the treble string, which permitted him to take three strings at once in the high positions.

The use of harmonics was one of the most remarkable features of his playing; he employed them with "wonderful skill"; chromatic scales up and down, double and single trills, entire passages in double stops, he rendered all these in harmonics with the greatest ease.⁽¹⁾

(Footnote continued from page 23)

"He has his G finely but tightly wound—he never twists them, as it would be detrimental, but after the string is covered, he draws it tightly between the first finger and thumb, so that the thumb nail lightly scrapes the string covering, which brings out the sound more readily, and takes away that harshness which new strings have."

(1) "A long time ago," says Fétis, "harmonics were discovered and used by violinists, but the leaders in the art, like Tartini, Pugnani, Viotti, Gaviniès, Rode and Baillot, did not practice them because they considered them tricks and cheap expedients for obtaining effects, rather than legitimate means worthy of the highest art. They could not reconcile breadth of style and lofty ideas with effects, which as they were then practiced, required only a certain amount of skill and strings of good quality. Paganini, however, did not look at the art of violin playing in this way. He preferred variety of effects on his instrument to using the usual means for acquiring a grand imposing style, and as he

(Footnote continued on page 25)

Referring to his playing on the G string, which did so much for his reputation, Guhr writes: "Paganini, in order to play entire numbers on the G string, raises it a minor third, (as has already been stated), to B flat, or even B natural, using a very much finer string. The compositions written for this purpose are usually in the form of potpourris; they begin with a recitative, followed by various themes, and end in variations."⁽¹⁾

In closing Guhr explains a few "seeming impossibilities" executed by the great virtuoso, and rectifies an error which was quite generally made, viz.: that people thought that Paganini's hand was unusually large: "Paganini's hand," says he, "is anything but large, but like the pianists who from childhood have exercised their hands to develop reach, he learned to stretch it over three octaves."⁽²⁾ And the German violinist cites examples of this marvellous reach, which enabled Paganini to strike four Cs in octaves, or four Ds, or four B flats, using the four strings, on which he placed the first, second, third and fourth fingers.

Resuming his biography we shall see how the public received Paganini in the numerous towns which he visited in Austria, Germany, England and France.

(Footnote continued from page 24)

played harmonics, they were no longer the easy trick used by the third class violinists to hide the deficiencies of their performances; he exhausted them to their utmost range and introduced difficulties which would have appalled anyone but him, for he was not satisfied with simple harmonics played in the usual way; he introduced double harmonics, combinations of one or the other with natural tones, effects by picking the strings, and by all these variations he obtained novel effects which were no less remarkable as discoveries, than for the skill with which he executed them."—(Revue Musicale, No. 27, 1830, p. 79. Cf. Nov. 20, 1830, and December, 1829).

(1) Of course it takes much practice to play this kind of composition; however, the study is not nearly as difficult as one might imagine, and well within the possibilities of every violinist. Paganini was celebrated among professionals and the general public for his playing on the G string. Was this deserved? I leave the answer to my readers, after they have practiced it for some time; for it cannot be denied that Paganini seeks to surprise the ear with apparent difficulties, which after analysis, can be played by any fairly good violinist."—(Guhr, *L'Art de jouer du violon de Paganini*).

(2) Paganini put the thumb of his left hand in the middle of the neck of the violin, and, thanks to his great stretch, could play equally well in the three first positions without "shifting."

III.

LEAVING Milan the first of the month, Paganini, with Signora Bianchi and his son, arrived at Vienna, March 16, 1828. A week later, on the 23rd, the first concert was given in "Redoute Hall," and the Viennese were in a frenzy of enthusiasm which has never since been equalled.⁽¹⁾ The price of seats was five to ten florins; the receipts rose to 12,000 florins (from 25,000 to 26,000 francs). After the first note from Paganini's Guarnerio the frenzied plaudits of the crowd never ceased. Fétis says in the *Revue Musicale*, "he played his first concerto in B minor, a military sonata which was written entirely for the fourth string, and which was so full of difficulties that it seemed to require at least four strings; also a larghetto, followed by variations on 'La Cenerentola' rendered on a single string. The orchestra went wild with the audience, and overwhelmed the artist with enthusiastic demonstrations of all kinds."⁽²⁾

The Viennese press unanimously ratified the opinion of the public and the musicians.

"What we have heard is past all belief, and words can not describe it," says the *Musiker Zeitung*, May 7; "suffice it to say that his fellow artists are racking their brains to solve the mystery. His is a sublime majesty, together with faultless purity of tone; his octave passages and also those in tenths fly like arrows from the bow, series of demi-semi-quavers, of which one pizzicato is immediately followed by another coll'arco, and all this with absolute precision and nicety, so that the slightest shading is not lost to the listener; strings mounted and unmounted without interruptions in the most difficult and brilliant numbers. Ordinarily all this would seem on the verge of charlatanism, but the execution is so inimitably beautiful that words fail and we listen in mute delight."

On April 13th the second concert of the "Magician of the South" was given, with the assistance of his companion Antonia Bianchi. Three hours before the beginning of the concert the Redoute Hall was crowded; more than three thousand people were there, and seats sold at 5 silver florins. All the members of the imperial

(1) Kohut loc. cit.

(2) *Revue Musicale*, May, 1828, p. 354, Viennese Letters.



PAGANINI ENCORED AT THE CLOSE OF A CONCERT
(“A Paganini recital in 1804,” from the painting by Gatti.)



family who were at the capital attended, which made a brilliant assemblage.

On May 11th Paganini was giving his sixth concert. "We hear from Vienna (from Fétis' *Revue*) that Paganini is creating the wildest enthusiasm and has become the idol of the fashionable world, having, says the 'Austrian Observer,' temporarily dethroned the giraffe recently sent by the Pasha of Egypt, and which heretofore had been the object of much attention. All the society leaders are vying with each other for the honor of having him grace their entertainments with his presence. So far as is known only Prince Metternich has been favored. Be that as it may, he gave his sixth concert on the eleventh of May, which was to be the last, and the program was as follows: 1. Overture from *Lodoiska*, by Cherubini; 2. Concerto by Rode, consisting of an *Allegro Maestoso*, an *Adagio Cantabile* in double chords, specially composed for this concert, and interpolated by the artist, and a *Polacca* played by Paganini; 3. Last air from "*l'Ultimo giorno di Pompeia*," sung by Signora Bianchi; 4. Sonata on "*Moses' Prayer*" (by request) played on the fourth string by Paganini; 5. Variations on a theme from "*Armide*," by Rossini, sung by Signora Bianchi; 6. *Capriccio* on the theme "*La ci darem la mano*," composed for violin, and played by Paganini. This concert, which was to be a matinee, had drawn a big crowd which, as soon as the doors were opened, filled every seat two hours before the beginning of the concert. Only a limited number of seats had been reserved for Her Imperial Majesty, the Arch-Dukes and Duchesses and other members of the Court. The artist renewed the triumphs of former occasions. It was understood that he would leave for Munich." (1)

The enthusiasm of the amateurs spread like wild-fire. Viennese fashions were all "a la Paganini." In the restaurants, when offering what was best and most expensive, the waiters asked the patrons if they wished to dine a la Paganini; there were chops a la Paganini; rolls a la Paganini, shaped like a violin; women wore ribbons, sashes, buttons a la Paganini; men smoked pipes and cigars a la Paganini; snuff was taken from snuff-boxes a la Paganini; people played on billiard tables a la Paganini, etc., etc.

Sonnets and acrostics to Nicolo Paganini were written by Italian and German admirers, and Friedrich August Kanne wrote a poem

(1) *Revue Musicale*, June 1828, p. 452.

consisting of twelve stanzas in his honor. The poet Castelli wrote his *Paganiniana*, a dialogue on the "god of the violin." He invaded even the realm of parody, and the "Theater an der Wien" on May 22, gave "The false artist, or the concerto on the G string," a farce in two acts, by Meisel, music by Kapellmeister Glaser.

Finally Paganini was made "Kammervirtuos" by the Emperor, and the city of Vienna presented him with a medal engraved by Joseph Lang, which bore this inscription: VIENNA, MDCCCXXVIII; the other side shows the master's violin and bow, surrounded by a wreath of oak leaves resting upon a sheet of music, bearing the first ten bars of "La Clochette." There is also an inscription reading: "Perituris sonis non peritura gloria."

Up to the 24th of July Paganini was heard no less than twenty times at Vienna.⁽¹⁾ His programs consisted exclusively of his own compositions; those which were most applauded and oftenest repeated were the variations on "Le Streghe," on "Moses' Prayer," on "Nel cor piu non mi sento" and the rondo from "la Clochette." "None of the Viennese violinists, Mayseder, Janka, Léon de Saint-Lubin, Strebinger, Böhm, etc., could compare with him," says Kohut; "only one or two stars like Treichler, of the Imperial Opera, tried to imitate his methods." On Dec. 26th he gave a concert "a la Paganini" with great success.

The virtuoso's health was never robust, and he had to put himself under the care of the celebrated military surgeon Marenzeller, who gave him the Hahnemann homeopathic treatment and advised him to take the baths at Carlsbad. Paganini left Vienna for Bohemia during the first part of August.

On returning to Vienna towards the end of November, after his sojourn in Bohemia, Paganini, "loaded with laurels and florins" (according to Kohut), repaired to Prague, where he had been invited to come. In three weeks, on the 1st, 4th, 9th, 13th, 16th and 20th of December, he gave a series of six concerts. His reception in this musical city, which takes just pride in the saying with which Mozart distinguished it: "The people of Prague understood me," was no less enthusiastic than at Vienna. However, Paganini there met with severe attacks from the critics, who compared his playing with that of the classical masters, and adversely criticised him for

(1) On June 12th, a concert was given at the Kärnthnertheater for the benefit of Signora Bianchi, who had sung at all the preceding ones. The receipts were 3,000 florins. She also sang on June 24th, 27th and 30th.

often using startling sounds, sometimes exaggerated and harsh; they also called his cadenzas old-fashioned and denounced his playing on the G string as charlatanism, and his frequent use of harmonics as in bad taste. Among Paganini's most bitter adversaries was the correspondent of the "Hamburger Boersenhalle," who wrote to his paper: "I heard one of his concerts, but will never go there again. He has a great agility of the left hand, which can be acquired by practice, without talent or genius, or even brains and intelligence—it is nothing but mechanical dexterity. What he incessantly repeats is an indescribable combination of sounds on the bridge which is in no sense legitimate, but resembles the chirping of sparrows, and at the end of each variation, a quick pizzicato of six notes, with the left hand. His bowing is execrable. Not a single violinist here felt like breaking his violin, as is said to have happened in Vienna, but they are ridiculing him and the Viennese. Of course there are people here also who are dazzled by his reputation and imagine his playing must be fine; no doubt some sentimental lady wept, but as no one besides her melted in tears, there is nothing to corroborate the tale."

This criticism made no impression on the general public. In spite of the fivefold prices of seats, everybody crowded to Paganini's concerts. The last, on Dec. 20th, 1828, was announced as follows by a Prague newspaper:

"The Chevalier Paganini, Virtuoso to his Majesty the Emperor of Austria, on Saturday, Dec. 20th, by universal request, will have the honor to give another concert, which will be his last, and in which will be performed among other things, 'The Tempest,' a dramatic sonata for orchestra, with soli and variations for violin, by Paganini, on the fourth string: 1. The coming of the storm; 2. Rising of the tempest; 3. Prayer; 4. The fury of the sea; 5. The hurricane; 6. The height of the storm; 7. Calm after the storm; 8. General rejoicing."⁽¹⁾

On the same day Prof. Müller wrote in the "Prague Unterhaltungsblätter":

"Anyone who can compare sounds of such remarkable purity as Paganini's, to chirping of sparrows, doubtless considers ee-ha, ee-ha, the sweetest harmony." Professor Max Julius Schottky, taking advantage of the artist's prolonged stay at Prague, gathered ma-

(1) *Revue Musicale*, June 1829, p. 594-595.

terial for his celebrated biography of the king of the violin, a bulky volume which appeared in 1830. Paganini remained in Bohemia longer than was first intended. An unsuccessful operation had caused an injury to his lower jaw, and he was obliged to undergo treatment at Prague; the extraction of his lower teeth was deemed necessary, and was followed by an inflammation of the larynx. About Jan. 15th, 1829, Paganini was finally able to leave Prague. The six concerts which he had given there, netted him 3,650 florins.

He went first to the kingdom of Saxony and played at Dresden, Jan. 23rd, with a success which can be estimated at 1,250 thalers (about 4,700 francs) and was presented with a gold snuff box by the King of Saxony.

On Feb. 12th he was in Leipzig, where he was to play on the 16th; however, owing to difficulties of a financial nature which arose, the concert could not take place. Paganini demanded that the orchestra be reduced by half, and would not accept the singer provided by the management; the price of seats having been tripled, he nevertheless refused to comply with a very praiseworthy custom, which prevailed for the benefit of the orchestra, their pay being doubled whenever the ordinary price for seats was raised. As he could obtain no exception to this rule, Paganini left Leipzig with the reputation of being avaricious and soon after arrived at Berlin.

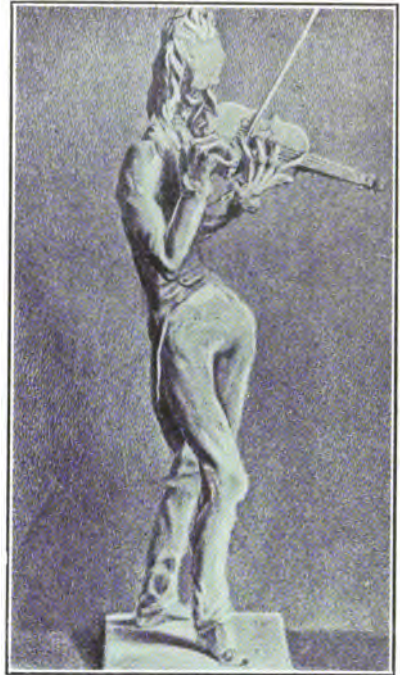
Always in ill health, and suffering from the effects of the German climate besides, he, although having arrived on Feb. 18th, did not give his first concert until March 4th. This was followed by four others in one month, besides concerts and "demi-concerts" at the Royal Opera.

After his first appearance, at the Schauspielhaus, Paganini overcame all prejudice against himself in Berlin. When he had barely finished the first movement of a concerto, composed by himself, the audience gave him a most enthusiastic ovation.

"Paganini accomplishes the incredible," writes Ludwig Rellstab in the *Vossische Zeitung*. "He does not overcome difficulties—they do not exist for him. He does not surpass other violinists; he has created an entirely new instrument which he alone masters; double chords are child's-play to him, he uses them to rest himself; to play two or three parts at a time is another matter. Playing pieces for two parts, pizzicato, at the same time carrying a melody with the bow—that is one of the little wonders that this grand-



(1)

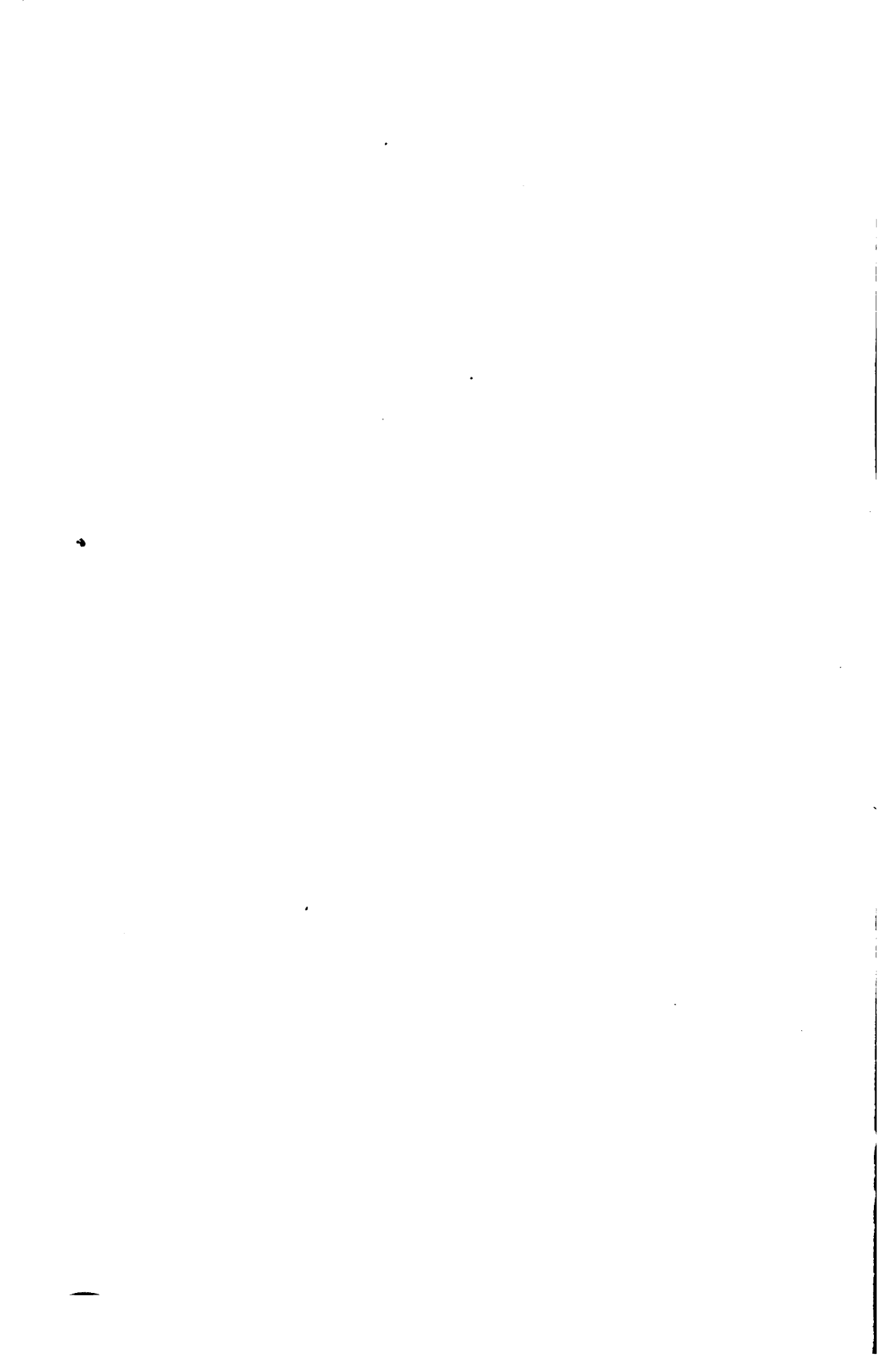


(2)

TWO CARICATURES OF PAGANINI

(1. Lithograph by Mantoux.)

(2. Lithograph by Granville, from the terra-cotta figure by Dantan.)



master of 'Streghe' (sorcery) shows us. What are mere words? Listen! Listen! That is the only answer to this riddle. Come, open your ears, and pay attention, for Paganini solves and creates difficulties which no one has ever dared to undertake. His phenomenal triumphs, such as no artist has ever yet met with, showed to the incomparable virtuoso that the public tried, at least in a measure, to show their appreciation of his achievements."

At the second concert, on March 13th, when no less than 2,000 seats were sold at two thalers, the audience was as enthusiastic as at the first.

In April, the "Magician of the South" gave two charity concerts, on the 6th and 29th, at the Opera House, half the receipts going to the victims of the floods in Prussia. He played a concerto by Rode, and had hardly begun when the E string of his violin broke; he continued playing on the three others without the slightest sign of discomfiture. At the eighth concert, he played "Le Streghe" and "Heil dir im Siegerkranz" (God save the King), on which he had composed variations while at Berlin.

As at Vienna, Paganini inspired the poets; in March a certain Karl Holtei published a poem in his honor. Furthermore, he had the distinction of being the object of various witticisms by the humorist Saphir, who, indignant at not having received complimentary tickets for Paganini's concerts, ironically complained about this in an article in the "Schnellpost": "Paganini, two dollars and I," at the conclusion of which he said: "We are both right, he on a single string (Saite) and I on several pages (Seiten)."

(This word-play cannot be translated.)

From Berlin, Paganini left, towards the middle of May, for Warsaw; in passing through Frankfort-on-the-Oder, he gave a concert there, "a great deal better rendered than was to be expected," says the *Gazette musicale*, "as the artist arrived the night before at eleven o'clock. He excited the greatest enthusiasm."⁽¹⁾ At Frankfort Paganini was the guest of General Zielynski's wife.

Suffering physically, he reached the Polish capital on Friday, May 22nd, and on the following day gave his first concert, for which the receipts were 1,833 Prussian thalers, (about 6,900 francs). Chopin was present. At Warsaw Paganini again met his former rival of 1818, Lipinski. This time, the struggle lacked the courtesy

(1) *Revue Musicale*, June 1829, p. 480, Berlin letter, May 19th.

which had marked it in Turin; Lipinski was openly put up against Paganini; the Pole and the Genoese each had his followers, and the rivalry finally resulted in an open broil.⁽¹⁾

After his last concert, July 14th, a banquet was given on the 19th, at the end of which Elsner, the director of the Conservatory, presented him with a gold snuff box in the name of a number of amateurs; the box bore the following inscription: "To Chevalier Paganini, from admirers of his talent, July 19th, 1829."

Negotiations were begun with Paganini to extend his tour to Russia, but his health absolutely forbade his complying with the urgent requests to visit St. Petersburg and Moscow. He intended rather to visit the springs at Ems, by way of Breslau and Berlin. He returned once more to Germany, where he traveled for two months before settling in Frankfort-on-the-Main for a more protracted stay. Towards the end of July, we find him at Breslau, where he writes under date of July 31st to the Maestro Onorio De-Vito, at Naples, that he "has just come back from Warsaw where he was called for the coronation of Emperor Nicholas as King of Poland, and where he gave six concerts. He is returning to Berlin, having promised the public to do so."⁽²⁾

He arrived about the 15th of August and on that day wrote a letter to Giacomo Trivelli, recommending one of his pupils, Gaetano Ciandelli, a very talented 'cellist. Ten days later the first of his four concerts was given at Frankfort-on-the-Main, for which he received two-thirds of the receipts, which were 9,500 florins. In September he was at Darmstadt, Mainz and Mannheim.

In the three months following, Paganini toured southern Germany, visiting successively more than twenty cities: Leipzig, Halle, Magdeburg, Halberstad, Dessau, Erfurt, Weimar, Gotha, Wurzburg, Rudolstadt, Coburg, Bamberg, Nuremberg, Regensburg, Munich, Augsburg, Stuttgart, Mannheim, Mainz and Dusseldorf.⁽³⁾

(1) Someone had asked Paganini who was the first and foremost violinist of his time, and the artist, after a moment's reflection, replied: "The first—I really cannot say, but the second is undoubtedly Lipinski."

(2) Taken from an autograph letter, furnished by M. Charavay.

(3) A delightful letter from Paganini to Donizetti is dated Leipzig, Oct. 8th. "Achille, my darling Achille," he writes, "is all my delight; he grows in beauty and talent; he speaks German fluently and serves as my interpreter. He loves me dearly, and I simply adore him. To-morrow I give my second concert at the theatre in this city; the third will be next Monday. I shall leave the day after to give a concert at the neighboring town, Halle, then at Magdeburg, Weimar, Erfurt, Nuremberg, Stuttgart, Carlsruhe, Mannheim—" In the letter he mentions several persons, and among others Count Dietrichstein. (Outline of letter furnished by M. Charavay).

His appearance at Leipzig was the subject of a long article in the "Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung": "Paganini is here," says one of the editors, "and has given us the pleasure of three concerts at the theatre." He goes on to review Paganini's life from his own accounts and those of his manager, Lieutenant Couriol, endeavoring to show that the Italian virtuoso's playing was not diabolical in the least, but that, on the contrary, he was very human. On Oct. 9th, 12th and 21st, Paganini was heard at Leipzig. Among other things he played his Sonata Militaire on the G string, his concerto in B-flat minor, a sonata by Rode, the variations on Moses' Prayer, and the "La ci darem," from Don Juan, which were most appreciated by the amateurs. At Weimar, on the 31st of the same month, he played at the Court Theatre, assisted by Hummel; at Nuremberg, his two concerts, on the 9th and 12th respectively, created great enthusiasm, (his variations on the Neapolitan song, "Oh! mamma"⁽¹⁾ and also on Le Streghe met with the most success). The editor of the Allgemeine notes with some pride that Paganini expressed himself pleased with the work of the orchestra at the theatre (he who was so very particular in this respect), and also at the three entertainments which he gave at Munich on Nov. 17th and 25th.

Before leaving the Bavarian capital, on the 27th, the queen invited him to the castle at Tegernsee. "The moment the concert was to begin there was a great tumult outside, and the queen inquired as to the cause of the uproar. She was informed that about sixty peasants from the environs, having heard of the arrival of the celebrated Italian violinist, had come in the hope of hearing him and now demanded that the windows be left open so that they could have the benefit of his playing. The good queen, always ready to please them, did more than grant their request, for she gave orders to admit them to the concert-hall, where they were noticeable not only for the judgment which they showed in applauding, but by their genteel behavior."⁽²⁾

Leaving Munich, where his receipts amounted to 5,500 florins, on the 27th, Paganini came to Augsburg the next day. On Dec. 3rd and 7th he played at Stuttgart, where he received a present of a hundred louis d'or from the King of Wurtemberg. After a last stop at Karlsruhe he returned to Frankfort toward the middle

(1) These are the variations on the Carnival of Venice.

(2) Revue Musicale, Jan. 1830, p. 551-552.

of December. From the 18th on he was heard at the Museum, of which he was made a honorary member; however, he did not play before the general public until much later, if we can rely on the authenticity of a notice addressed to the musical journal of Leipzig.⁽¹⁾

Still he appeared at the theatre shortly after, the orchestra being conducted by Guhr, the careful observer who dissected the master's playing so minutely during his long stay on the banks of the Main;⁽²⁾ he made this city his headquarters in Germany, for his campaign in 1830, before deciding to cross over into France.

All the papers were full of him. It is said that after his first departure from Frankfort, that is, in less than three months, he had made more than 3,000 florins, and had deposited 44,000 Prussian thalers in an English bank. "He is said to be after the money," says the *Revue Musicale*, "for which he can easily be forgiven, when it is remembered that he is amassing a fortune for a son four years of age, whom he seems to love devotedly."⁽³⁾

Through the illness of Achille, Paganini was detained at Frankfort during the winter of 1829 to 1830, and busied himself with writing, among other things a composition "in which he used themes by Spohr, and which he intended to play in Paris only," says the *Revue Musicale*. On Feb. 14th, he began a series of concerts, before going on his journey; the last of these was given on April 26th. According to the *Revue Musicale* this concert drew only a small audience, and he realized only 600 florins as compared to an average receipt of 3,000 at previous concerts. At this time it was repeatedly reported that he would soon leave for Holland, where he was to stay until the end of the year, and go to Paris about the middle of December, remaining there four months. The papers

(1) *Allg. Musik. Zeit.*, Jan. 27, 1830, col. 57.

(2) According to Conestabile, Paganini netted 8,000 florins at Frankfort. It must be understood that this figure includes the concerts of 1829 and 1830, which we will mention later.

(3) *Revue Musicale*, Jan. 1830, p. 551. According to Harrys, Paganini had deposited, in the summer of 1830, the sum of 169,000 florins in a Viennese bank. His last concerts (in Northern Germany) had brought him from 9,000 to 10,000 thalers (37,000 francs). The report that he had deposited 40,000 ducats in London, was false. From Paganini's own statement his receipts in 1828 had been as follows: 11,500 florins at Milan, 12,000 at Bologna, 10,000 at Genoa, 30,000 at Vienna, and 5,800 at Prague, making a total of 68,300 florins or about 140,000 francs.

stated that he had gone by way of Northern Germany, where he visited the small principalities and the "free" cities.

As a matter of fact, after leaving Cologne and Düsseldorf, he was in Cassel during May, having been invited by Spohr. The result of the first concert, however, did not seem to satisfy him, for he wrote Spohr a letter in Italian on the 26th, the contents of which were as follows: "The proceeds of the concert yesterday," he told his colleague, "did not amount to even half of the 1,500 thalers which had been guaranteed to him in the letter of invitation, which he had received while at Frankfort. He asks him, therefore, to cancel the second concert on Sunday, as it seems that foreign artists are little regarded there. He would very much like to have a souvenir of S. A. R., if she would honor him so far, and he will always be indebted to Spohr for giving him the pleasure of letting his violin be heard at Cassel."⁽¹⁾

Nevertheless the second concert took place, on the 30th, as appears in an abstract from Spohr's Autobiography:

"In June, 1830, Paganini came to Cassel and gave two concerts at the theatre, which were of the highest interest to me. His left hand work, as well as his intonation, are marvellous in my estimation. In his compositions as well as in his playing, however, I found a certain mixture of childlike lack of taste and the stamp of genius, so that the total impression, after hearing him repeatedly, did not entirely satisfy me. He was there at the time of the Pentecost holidays, and I invited him to a luncheon on the second day, at Wilhelmshoehe; he was very gay and positively merry."⁽²⁾

On June 3rd and 6th he appeared at the Hoftheater at Hanover.

On the 13th he arrived at Hamburg and gave two or three concerts there, the first being on the 25th, and the second on the 28th; his variations on Moses' Prayer and the Neapolitan song "Oh! mamma!" were most applauded. The Grand Duke of Oldenburg was present. On the 27th Paganini assisted at the St. Peter's church at the religious festivals at Augsburg.⁽³⁾ About this time he visited Bremen, where the people crowded to the Schauspielhaus for the two concerts he gave in this city.

(1) Spohr, *Selbstbiographie*, II, p. 180.

(2) Synopsis of an autograph letter furnished by M. Charavay.

(3) *Allg. Musik. Zeit.*, Nov. 10th, 1830, col. 738-739.

After this tour in Northern Germany, Paganini returned to Frankfort for a rest, where he again joined his dear little Achillino, whom he had left for two or three months in the care of his landlady. It may have been at this time, rather than the preceding year, that he appeared at Karlsruhe.

The *Revue Musicale* of Aug. 14th tells of his visiting "lately at the different thermal springs in the principality of Nassau, and the Grand-Duchy of Baden. He was there as a patient and did not let himself be heard. Nevertheless, he excited so much curiosity that in Ems a travelling artist, who gave a concert, and announced that Paganini would assist, had excellent box-office results."

Several months later he left Frankfort and started for France. Several times a rumor of his being in Paris incognito had been spread, and malevolent stories were added to the wonderful adventures told with Paganini as the hero; a letter from one of his countrymen, Fontano Pino, urging him to put an end to these absurdities, which would surely cause trouble for him, prompted him to leave at once for Paris.

He stopped only once on the way, long enough to give two concerts at the theatre in Strassburg, Feb. 14th and 17th, 1831.

On Saturday the 19th he finally arrived in Paris, and that same evening he went to the "Italiens" to "rapturously applaud Mme. Malibran's wonderful art" in *Othello*.⁽¹⁾

(1) *Revue Musicale*, Feb. 26th, 1831.

IV.



SARCELY six months after the Revolution which had put Louis Phillippe on the throne, Paganini arrived in Paris, on the day following the sacking of Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois and the Archbishopric. Politics were very much unsettled, and inspired violent and lengthy tirades in the press. The literary and artistic world was beginning to boil with the romantic fever; "Notre-Dame de Paris" was to come out on March 15th; and on the 9th Paganini gave his first concert.

Previously, on March 2nd, he was to be presented at the court in the Palais-Royal, which was occupied by the citizen-king. "Signor Paganini," says the *Courrier des Theatres* of the 3rd, "had been invited by M. Paer to play before the king yesterday; a sudden indisposition deprived the virtuoso of this honor." On the day of the audience Paganini had asked his former teacher to make his excuses to the king, as "his cough prevented him, just then, from appearing before his majesty."⁽¹⁾

The concert on Wednesday, March 9th, was his first appearance before the Parisians. After having spent several days looking for a hall (he had not yet chosen on the 5th), he found he could have the "Opera," of which Dr. Véron had just taken charge (March 1st).

"The conditions," says Boerne, "were two concerts a week, on Wednesdays and Sundays; Paganini was to receive two-thirds of the receipts for the Wednesday concerts and, aside from a sum of 3,000 francs, the whole of the Sunday receipts."

In the meantime the artist had attended several performances at the "Opera des Italiens" and the Conservatory concert, Feb. 27th, at which he was said to have been perfectly astounded (among other things the C minor symphony of Beethoven had been played). Finally, on the 8th the *Courrier des Theatres* announced: "Tomorrow the celebrated Paganini will be heard. There will be a special program in honor of the occasion. A ballet will conclude the performance, and it will be a gala night in every way."

It was an evening never to be forgotten in the annals of the Royal Academy of Music. The hall was crowded with celebrities and notables of all kinds; the court, the aristocracy, politics, litera-

(1) Contents of autograph letter, furnished by M. Charavay, March 7th, 1831; to Paer.

ture and fine arts were all represented. The wild enthusiasm of the assemblage might be estimated by the receipts, which amounted to 19,069 francs.

"The violin in Paganini's hands," says Fétis, "is no longer the instrument of Tartini or Viotti, it is something widely different, a thing apart. A body specially suited for this marvellous playing is not sufficient to obtain such results; it requires earnest, deep and persevering study; a happy instinct in solving the problems of his art and his indomitable will, help him to surmount all obstacles."⁽¹⁾

Castil-Blaze (XXX to the readers of the *Journal des Débats*) reported as follows, on the third concert:

"Paganini is doubtless very learned; his compositions, his discoveries, which are the result of thought seemingly beyond the flight of the human mind, prove it. He has paid homage to our musical world by writing a concerto especially for France, and which is not to be produced anywhere except in Paris. It seems another evidence of his wonderful intuition which led him to feel that our taste runs decidedly to noble music, elegant, passionate and graceful, to compositions treated with all the vigor of coloring that harmony can give, and all the charm of dreamy, playful, and heroic moods in turn, and the wildest daring of which melody is capable. This concerto, in D minor, has a most original form and includes some very picturesque effects. The first violin, in the highest register, replies to the trombones, which roar in hollow tones; it takes up the strain where the trumpets have just left it and renders it in harmonics, in such a way that it seems as though the same instrument were still playing; the sound is identical. The skill, the magic of Paganini's playing astonishes me more every day."⁽²⁾

On the first night Paganini had played his concerto in E minor; at the second concert (Sunday, March 13th), he played a concerto which he had reserved for the Parisians: "Lo voglio sverginare a Parigi," he said. On the same evening he played "La Clochette" and the variations on Moses' Prayer. Nourrit, Levasseur, Dabadie and Mlle. Dorus appeared with him. Fétis asserted that Baillot "puts more passion, more delicate sentiment into an adagio by Mozart or Beethoven, than Paganini has in his entire system."⁽³⁾

(1) "Revue Musicale," March 1831.

(2) "Journal des Débats," musical criticisms, Paganini's 2nd and 3rd concerts.

(3) "Revue Musicale," March 1831.

The third concert, postponed on account of a court function, took place a week later, on the 20th; the receipts for this reached the highest figure of the eleven concerts given by Paganini, 21,895 francs. On Wednesday, the 23rd, the receipts were scarcely less (20,869 francs). The artist asked the Duchess of Orleans to assist at his concert on Sunday the 27th, and wrote to Véron: "I want this concert to be more ornamental than useful," and to this end he asked Her Majesty to do him the honor to assist; he also asked the Director of the Opera to have Mme. Damoreau sing: "I would ask, in your interest as well as for my satisfaction, that you advertise her appearance in large letters on your announcements for the week, and I would also like you to put on some pretty ballet."⁽¹⁾ The financial results for this evening were 16,014 francs. The following concerts (April 1st, 3d, 8th and 15th) brought 14,436, 14,113, 16,063 and 9,144 francs respectively. On Sunday, April 17th, an extra concert for the benefit of the poor brought the receipts down to 6,105 francs ⁽²⁾, which did not rise above 11,502 francs at the last concert (April 24th). The total for the eleven was 165,741 francs. Paganini had to give up the Opera on the 10th on account of a charity affair which was to be held there the next day. He then gave concerts at the Theatre Italien. He was accused of having refused to assist in this charitable work, and refuted this accusation in a letter, under date of April 9th, published by the papers. It meant a loss to him, he said, to give up his concert on the 10th, and it was, moreover, his intention, before he left Paris, to give a concert for charity, as he had done in all the foreign cities which he had visited.

Paganini left Paris about the end of April, on his way to England. On the 27th he wrote a farewell letter to Paer, signing himself "his grateful pupil." On the 6th he had written to a Monsieur Guillain that he would be heard at Douai and at Lille.⁽³⁾ We

(1) Contents of autograph letter furnished by M. Charavay.

(2) Besides this sum, says "Le Moniteur," Paganini himself donated 3,000 francs to a charity organization and to a number of needy families. The expenses to the management of the Opera were 3,336 francs 50 centimes, so that there still remained 2,768 francs 50 centimes, to be distributed by the Public Charities Institutions. "Messrs. Nourrit, Dabadie, Al. Dupont and Mlle. Dorus, wishing to assist Paganini in his charitable deed, did not claim their remuneration, which totaled 290 francs" (May 3d). "This time," says the "Courrier des Theatres," "the Italian language was not exclusively used, and a few French words were heard, like an oasis in the desert. Unfortunately, the hall seemed to be this desert. Only 4,000 francs were realized" (May 15th).

(3) Autographs transmitted by M. Charavay.

do not know whether he kept this promise; at any rate, "he received for two concerts, given at Calais and at Boulogne, nearly 10,000 francs, according to a London paper," says the *Moniteur* of May 20th, having refused to play at Dover, making an average of £200 (5,000 francs).⁽¹⁾

On arriving at London Paganini signed a contract whereby he was bound to give six concerts at the King's Theatre.⁽²⁾ The London public, like the Parisians, impatiently awaited the arrival of the great violinist. Several days before the first concert the hall was sold out, although the price of seats was one, two, and even three guineas; it was said that Paganini would receive £2,000 (50,000 francs) per evening.

He was engaged by Laporte to appear for the first time, May 21st, on the stage of the Royal Theatre, but the day before, being indisposed, he was forced to postpone his début.

The musical journal, *The Harmonicon*, reports all the controversies in the daily papers which arose upon Paganini's arrival, and the reports of his exorbitant demands. In general, aside from the artistic question, the English press could scarcely be called favorably disposed toward him. All this noise, these discussions explain better than any indisposition (which may, however, have been real), why the first concert was postponed for two weeks. The *Revue Musicale* echoed the sentiment. "The papers report Paganini as insolent, impertinent," writes a London correspondent; "Leporte, the manager of the Italian Opera, has doubled the price of seats. Never before has the price of the cheap seats been raised in London." Several days after the *Revue* announces that Paganini was compelled to lower the price of seats for his concert. This explains the letter in which he excuses himself for having demanded the raising of prices.

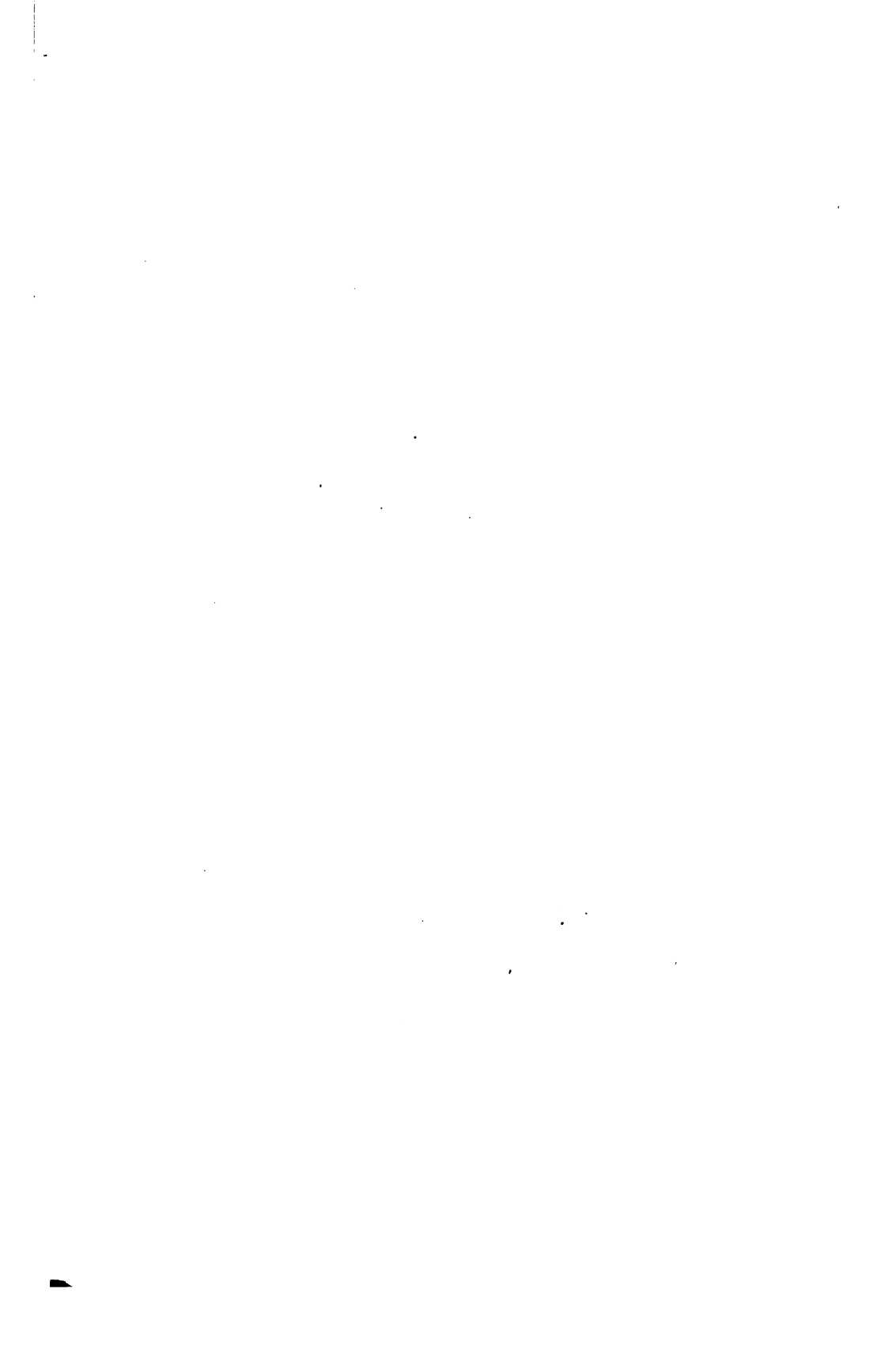
Finally, the first concert took place, on Friday, June 3d, for which the receipts were £700. The concerto in E-flat and the Mili-

(1) "Revue Musicale," May 21st, 1831.

(2) The substance of a letter, written in French, under date of June 1st, to the "Courrier" and the "Globe," and which is part of the collection of Fillon and Bovet, has been given by M. Charavay as follows: "Being in the habit of doubling the ordinary price of seats in all the towns in which he had played on the Continent, he wanted to do the same in London; however, when he learned that ordinary prices were already far higher than on the other side of the Channel, he readily conformed to the English customs." This letter, consisting of two four-page sheets, is signed twice, and was offered for sale March 7th, 1907, by Liepmannsohn, at Berlin.



CAST OF PAGANINI'S HAND
(Instrumental Collection of the Conservatoire.)



tary Sonata on the fourth string found much favor. A week later the second concert brought £1200. Paganini played a new concerto in B-flat minor, the Carnival of Venice, and Moses' Prayer. On Monday he reappeared with a new concerto; the receipts were £900. On the 16th he played a Cantabile which he had composed for two strings, a Rondo Scherzoso by Kreutzer and variations on La Cenerentola; at the fifth concert, which was announced to be the last, the hall was filled to overflowing; but this last concert was followed by ten further ones, announced as "the very last, positively the last, irrevocably the last," etc., (June 27th and 30th, July 4th, 15th, 25th, 27th, at the Opera, etc.) Finally, on August 20th, at his last appearance before the London public, he was "rapturously encored." The receipts for the fifteen concerts were £9000, two-thirds of which went to Paganini.

In the meantime he had appeared at London Tavern (July 13th and 16th), and in several drawing rooms of the highest aristocracy (June 21st at Lord Holland's, etc.), and, moreover, he was not too proud to give special lessons, at enormous prices, to several ladies who were anxious to see him face to face, whom the *Athenaeum* had called "truly a Zamiel in appearance, and without doubt a demon in performance."

Having an engagement at Norwich for assize week, Paganini left London for a few days toward the end of July. His manager, Pellet, "lost money," says the *Harmonicon*; "Signor Paganini pocketed about £800 sterling!" The receipts for the three concerts were £867, according to the same paper.⁽¹⁾

It is said that King George IV. wished him to deduct 50 per cent. of the price of £100 which he asked for an appearance at Court, but Paganini replied that His Majesty could hear him cheaper by attending one of his concerts at the theatre, and he did not care to be bargained with.

At the end of August Paganini was engaged for the festival at Dublin, from where he seems to have visited various towns in Ireland. He first appeared on September 1st at the festival (the receipts were £182 10s.) and subsequently gave several concerts at the theatre, the first of which brought £700. On October 1st he was at

(1) The "Harmonicon," September, 1831, pp. 217 and 226; Paganini also played at Cheltenham on August 6th; circumstances forced him to leave precipitately to avoid the anger of the crowd ("Revue Musicale," November 5th, p. 315.)

York, and several days later he wrote from Limerick to his caro Pacini, "Questa sera daro il secondo concerto e domani partiro per Dublino." He remained at the Irish capital until the middle of the month, and on Monday the 17th "at 1 o'clock the splendid coach of the modern Orpheus stopped at his rooms in Fleet Street, to take the Signor away from the metropolis through the south of Ireland."⁽¹⁾

He then returned to the larger isle, which he toured extensively before crossing to the Continent again. Toward the end of November he played at Brighton (he had been paid 200 guineas in advance to come there). On December 1st, in London, he had to undergo an operation at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, regarding which the *Harmonicon* gives us no actual details, but of which it speaks with unmerciful sarcasm: "Paganini in the surgical Theatre." On December 17th the *Court Journal* announced the reappearance of the artist; Ecce iterum Crispinus, writes the *Harmonicon*, which states that Paganini refused 1,800 guineas from a manager at Liverpool, for six evenings. He demanded £16,000 for fifteen evenings at Vauxhall Gardens.

"It has been proposed to give him the title of Marchese de Cremona; others claim he should be made Duca d'Inghilterra-Stolta."⁽²⁾ Finally, the *Courier* shows us Paganini at Winchester about February 10th, 1832, earning £200 in twenty-eight minutes, or at the rate of £12 10s. per second, "while in certain countries a laborer gets only 4s. 6d. per week!"

Three months later, when the concert given at the Paris Opera House, for the benefit of the poor, was reported, the English musical papers complained, with some reason, it must be admitted, that Signor Paganini had acquired £20,000 in England and had not given a single charity concert there.⁽³⁾

Before leaving London Paganini closed a contract, undoubtedly advantageous, with a manager who, for a certain percentage, or a fixed commission, undertook all the business details of the tours in Belgium and Northern France which he was about to undertake. Paganini was the first, it seems, to thus "hire himself out" to a manager. The matter nearly caused a scandal at the time; it seemed unworthy of an artist to sell his talent to a third party, who under-

(1) The "Harmonicon," November, 1831, p. 332.

(2) The "Harmonicon," January, 1832, p. 21.

(3) Ibid., May, 1832, p. 119.

took to exploit it at his own risk and responsibility. However, in view of the good results, the practical side of this proceeding had to be recognized, which, moreover, was absolutely legitimate, and soon others followed his example.

"Paganini," says Grove, "aroused more curiosity than enthusiasm." He himself, in a manuscript letter dated London, August 16th, 1831, complains of the clamorous and obtrusive attentions with which he was annoyed while in London. "Although the curiosity to see me had long been satisfied, although I had played in public more than thirty times, and although my portrait has been published in every conceivable style and pose, I cannot leave my rooms without collecting a crowd, which is content to follow or accompany me; they walk beside me, ahead of me, they speak to me in English, of which I do not understand a word, they touch me as though to make sure that I am flesh and blood. And this does not apply merely to the ordinary crowd, but to the better class of people."

Be that as it may, he had created a great sensation in England, and although he had antagonized the press, if not the public, by his exorbitant demands and the fabulous sums paid to hear him, the papers recognized his wonderful genius and endeavored to discover the "secret" of his art.

About March 10th, Paganini returned to Paris, where he was more assured of success.⁽¹⁾ After a concert given at the "Italiens," his first public appearance was a charity concert, with which an English paper was soon to reproach him so bitterly. Paganini arrived in a city decimated by the ravages of cholera.

"Deeply grieved by the sorrow which afflicts all humanity," he writes on April 8th, "I should like to give a concert, the receipts from which shall be devoted to the victims of the cruel scourge which has come over the capital."⁽²⁾ "The Minister of Commerce and Public Works has accepted this offer," says the *Moniteur* on the 13th, "and on next Wednesday intends to place one of the large theatres of Paris at the disposal of the distinguished musician." The concert took place at the Opera amid the wildest enthusiasm and applause, "which he acknowledged modestly and sym-

(1) "At last I shall hear a little music again," he is said to have remarked on leaving the steamer at Havre (Galignanus-Messenger). He gave a concert at Havre on March 8th or 9th.

(2) Letter with postscript, contents given by M. Charavay. The addressee was doubtless the Minister of the Interior.

pathetically," says the official paper of the 23d. The box office receipts were 9,728 francs 40 centimes, leaving, after deducting expenses, 9,154 francs 20 centimes for "the poor people afflicted by the cholera."

Other concerts soon followed that at the Opera, on April 27th, Fridays and Mondays, May 4th, 7th, 14th, 21st, 25th and June 1st, for which the receipts are not mentioned in the files of the Opera, but which were probably less than those of the preceding year. Some time later, he was again in London, where he gave a series of concerts of which the four "positively the last" took place in August at Covent Garden. The slight attention which the press pretended to pay to Paganini at this time is noticeable, although his popularity with the public was fully as great as the year before.

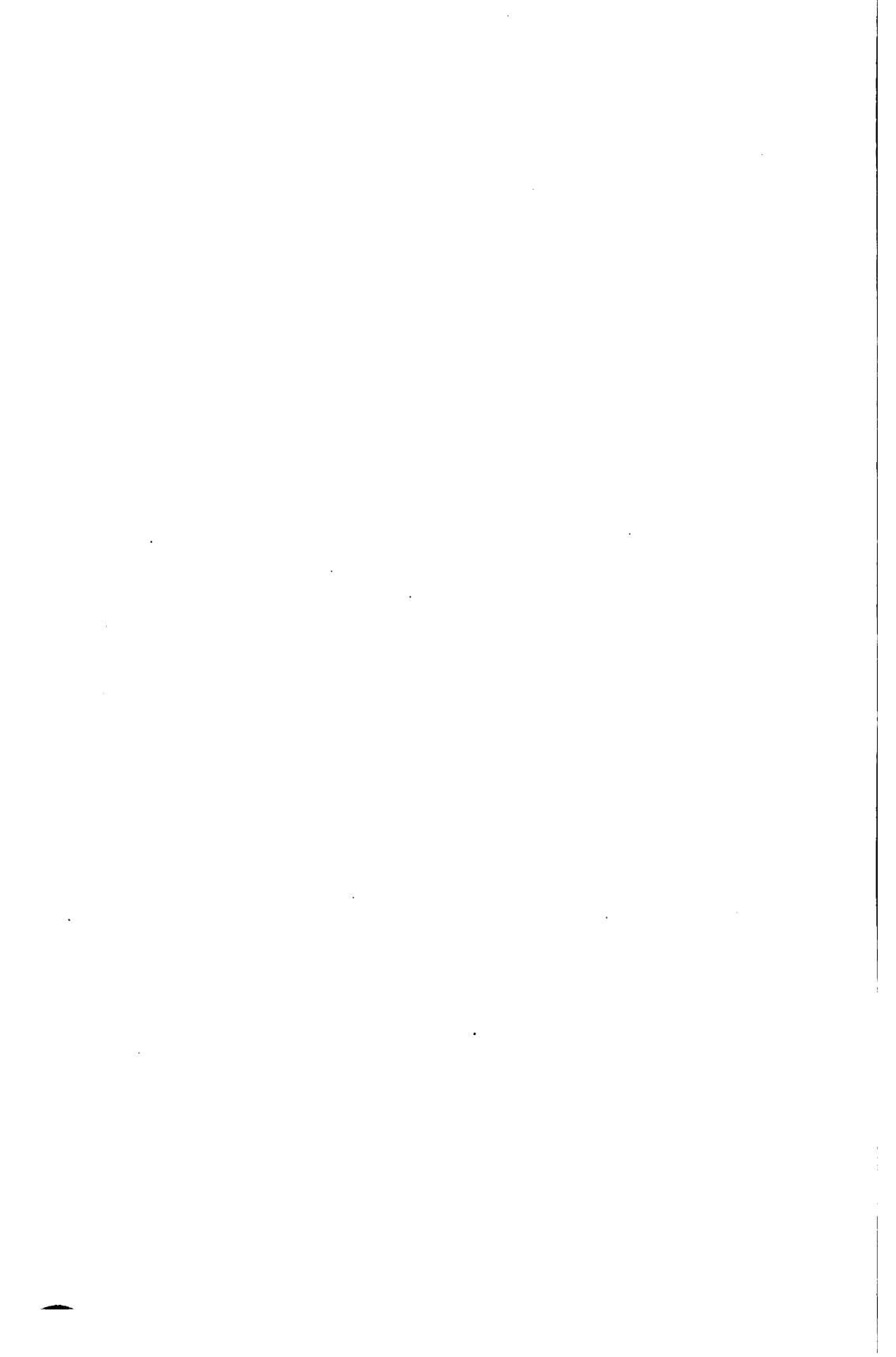
Paganini finished in France in the year 1833. He was dangerously ill about the month of December, but, as the *Gazette Musicale* reports on January 5th, "he is better and will soon be restored to his art and to his admirers." His illness was doubtless of short duration, for Paganini had assisted, on Dec. 22nd, at a concert given by Berlioz, who, about this time, was to write him a symphony with a solo for viola. "Paganini, whose health improved from day to day," again reports the *Gazette* of the 16th, "has asked Berlioz to write him a new composition in the style of the 'Symphonie Fantastique,' which the celebrated violinist intends to produce on his return from England. This work will be entitled 'The Last Moments of Mary Stuart,' dramatic phantasy for orchestra, chorus and viola solo. Paganini will take the viola part for the first time in public." It is known from Berlioz' memoirs that Paganini was not satisfied with the first composition which the composer submitted, and Mary Stuart was changed to Harold and played the following year.

In the beginning of March, without having been heard in Paris during the winter, the virtuoso left for Amiens, Lille, Valenciennes and Brussels.

At Brussels, where he appeared three times, beginning March 15th, after having played at the house of Fétis, Paganini encountered one of the rare defeats of his career. Here and there he had met with hostility, but nowhere had there been the indifference shown at the "Theatre de la Monnaie." As soon as he appeared on the stage a burst of laughter greeted him from the audience;



PAGANINI IN PRISON
(Lithograph by Louis Boulanger, 1832.)



this big, black skeleton-like man provoked the mirth of the crowd before he had touched his instrument, and his playing merely increased the boorish hilarity. At Bruges, which then had 33,000 inhabitants, a subscription for a concert showed only fourteen signatures. It was therefore better to cross the Channel as soon as possible. In London, a series of ten concerts drew the crowds as in the preceding years.

A peculiar incident, of which more than one happened to him in his life, drew attention to Paganini in a scandalous way, on his return to London. He was at Boulogne-sur-Mer in July, when a Mr. Watson, with whom he had boarded while in London, Calthorpe Street, Gray's Inn Lane, imagined that he had carried off his daughter and pursued Paganini, whom he joined first at Dover and then at Boulogne. Watson claimed that Paganini had promised to marry his daughter on the continent, with a dowry of £4,000, and that he had given her in London a tiara worth 50 guineas, and diamonds estimated at 300 guineas. Paganini replied in the *Annotateur* of Boulogne, and his letter made the rounds of the entire Parisian press, about March 15th, 1834. Far from having carried off Miss Watson, said he, she had sought refuge with him, having been ill-treated by her father and step-mother; she had followed him, much against his will, from London to Dover, from Dover to Calais, from Calais to Boulogne. Paganini having proved "not guilty," Watson finally returned to London with his daughter. Meanwhile the musical papers reported that Paganini had invented, some said a contra-violin, others said "a new instrument, which he was trying in London, and on which he claims to imitate the human voice more nearly than has heretofore been done with any other instrument."⁽¹⁾

Returning to Paris, Paganini had to quiet some dissensions of the press. The previous year, the "Europe Littéraire," a paper for which Berlioz wrote, had denounced him violently for having refused to "play even a little air" at the benefit given to Miss Smithson.⁽²⁾ Jules Janin attacked him on Sept. 15th of that year, in an article in the *Débat*, and a week later he returned to the charge with half a dozen columns, an entire editorial: "Paganini and the sufferers from the flood at Saint-Etienne." "Paganini," said

(1) "Gazette Musicale," July 6th, 1834; "Menestrel," May 25th.

(2) "Feuilletons des Débats," Sept. 15th and 22nd; "Figaro," Sept. 22nd. Paganini's answer appeared in "Le Moniteur" of the 24th.

the *Figaro* of the same date, "has not responded to the direct appeal made by J. Janin in a very clever article in the *Débat*. It is an actual fact that the celebrated artist has refused to play for a quarter of an hour, for the benefit of the victims of the flood at Saint-Etienne. Paganini can announce, if he likes, a concert for his own benefit; no one will attend." It was a cross fire of open attacks and attempts at coercion which seemed to justify, or at least to explain, the reputation for avarice which the artist had. A letter from him replying to the attacks, set these facts straight. The substance of the letter was about as follows: "In two or three months I have given but one concert in France. I am returning to Genoa. I have already given two concerts in Paris for the benefit of the poor."⁽¹⁾

(1) "L'Europe Littéraire," April 19th, 1833.

V.



RETURNING to his country about October, 1834, Paganini selected the Villa Gaiona, near Parma, as his favorite residence among the properties which his immense fortune had enabled him to acquire. For some time he had been planning important projects of various kinds; first the publication of his works; during his last stay at London, the Parisian editor, Troupenas, had made him an offer, but Paganini had stipulated a price so high that, under the most favorable conditions, the sales of several years would not have covered the sum; according to Fétis, however, Paganini wanted to be his own publisher, but since he was not yet ready to end his career as a virtuoso entirely, he conceived the queer fancy to arrange his concertos for the piano. Another of his pet schemes was the founding of a conservatory, or rather a school for violin, in which he would teach the "secrets" of his art.

Meanwhile he gave his countrymen an opportunity to hear him once more. On November 14th he gave a concert at Placentia, for the benefit of the poor, and the following month he went to Parma, at the request of Marie Louise; on December 12th he appeared at the court of the ex-empress, and on this occasion she presented him with a ring, bearing the royal crown and his initials in diamonds. She also appointed him Director of the Court Theatre, which prompted Fétis, *Revue Musicale*, to remark: "With much regret we see this king of artists stoop to the level of a courtier."⁽¹⁾ Later, on January 3rd, 1836, Marie Louise made him Chevalier de Saint-Georges.

He spent the year 1835 partly at Genoa or at Milan, partly at his Villa Gaiona. On July 28 Marquis Giancarlo Di Negro, one of his warmest admirers, gave a grand entertainment in honor of Paganini, at his villa on the outskirts of Genoa, which he had named "Earthly Paradise." A marble bust of the artist was solemnly unveiled; there were poetic and enthusiastic speeches, inspired by his recent triumphs in all Europe.

About six weeks after this ovation, in which the best Genoese society took part, a report of Paganini's death was circulated in Paris. As in the case of Liszt in 1825, and, ten years later, of

(1) "*Revue Musicale*," Jan. 25th, 1835.

Madame Malibran,⁽¹⁾ it was a false report. The cholera raging just then, at Genoa, gave credence to the "sad event."

On June 9th, he himself gave a charity concert at Turin, in the Carignano Theatre, with the guitarist Luigi Legnani; and the poet Romani wrote a ballad in his honor.

A month later he was at Paris, where troubles of a different nature awaited him. Two speculators, Tardif de Petitville and Rousseau-Desmelotries, had planned to open a casino on the Chaussée d'Antin, just off the Boulevard. "It is the object of the Company," said the prospectus, "to establish a musical and literary centre, under the name of Casino. In this establishment will be concentrated all the pleasure which music, dancing, conversation, reading and promenades can give the Parisian public and the many strangers who flock there, and it will also enable them to enjoy conveniences and privileges of all kinds."

For the installation of this one might say encyclopediacal establishment, Petitville had bought the residence of La Guinard,⁽²⁾ which, during the Revolution, had gone over to the financier Perre-gaux, and, after the establishment of the Empire, belonged to Ar-righi, Duke of Padua, and was occupied by the Lafitte Bank.

In the enormous grounds, which extended almost to the Rue Mathurins, that is, about the entire length of the actual Rue Meyer-beer, a pavilion was erected, of which a lithograph of the times shows us the general aspect. This pavilion, the old salons and the grounds were to constitute the Casino-Paganini, which was opened to the public for the first time on Saturday, November 25th, 1837. Paganini not only owned a large part of the stock in the Casino, to which he, who was usually so cautious, so lightly gave his name, but he was to be heard there and never played. "The state of his health does not permit him as yet to appear before the public." — says the *Gazette Musicale*.⁽³⁾ Berlioz, in the *Chronique de Paris*, announcing the approaching opening of the Casino, wrote, on October 8th, 1837, as follows: "The part which the famous violinist will personally take in the musical program is to walk about the grounds three times a day, if the weather is fine."

(1) "The Revue Musicale," of Jan. 25th, 1835, had reported her murdered at Milan.

(2) This was Chaussée D'Antin No. 9, the actual location being Meyerbeer street. Escudier gives the numbers 7, 9, and 11. It seems probable, however, that the Casino occupied only the lot numbered 9 or 11 at different times. It was afterwards occupied by the offices of the Orleans Company.

(3) "Gazette Musicale," Dec. 3rd, 1837, p. 529.

The brief existence of the Casino, its principal attraction gone, brought Paganini only law-suits and debts.

The columns of the *Gazette des Tribunaux*, on March 16th, show Paganini sued for failure "to play twice weekly in the drawing rooms of the Casino, to the amount of 6,000 francs damages for each non-appearance," and a warrant was issued.

Paganini immediately appealed. Meanwhile de Petitville and another party named Fleury, formerly an insurance agent, were fined 300 francs for attempting, in November of the preceding year, to bribe the Secretary-General of the Police Department Malleval, and the Chief of Department Simonet. Fleury had sent each of them about ten shares of stock in the Casino, with a view to winning the good will of the administration, who had delayed in granting authority to open the establishment. On March 7th, at the Civil Court, there was some controversy between Petitville and his administrator, Rousseau-Desmelotries. A certain Fumagalli seized and sold all the furniture, for which Rousseau claimed payment. The workmen claimed 200,000 francs for wages due them.

Paganini was forced to appear once more as defendant. He explained that only 64 shares had been issued by the managers of the Casino, de Petitville and Fumagalli; he himself had bought 60 of these, for an amount of 60,000 francs. Action was later brought by one of the attorneys to keep the "Paganini Case" out of the Supreme Court, on March 30th.

The Casino, still bearing the name of the great artist, became a dance-hall under the next lessee. A singer, Mme. San Felice, who had been engaged by the founders, tried to seize the receipts on the evening of the Mardi-Gras. Finally, on August 31st, Paganini was subpoenaed by Mr. Escudier (the same who later brought out the *France Musicale* and wrote two biographies of the artist), who claimed a sum of 2,000 francs for services rendered "as manager of the Maestro's various business undertakings, especially those concerning the defunct Casino. According to M. Coutard, the attorney for Escudier, Paganini had made him wonderful promises, and afterwards refused to consider the numerous services of his manager as anything but voluntary favors. Nevertheless he had made him an actual offer of 400 francs." Finally the court

fixed the amount due as 600 francs, from which a deduction of 486 francs would be made. (1)

Of music there was no thought, after the announcement, in June, of a concert which never took place, and a trip to London which was never carried out. The papers mentioned Paganini's name only to narrate his financial misfortunes. Moreover, the artist's health was in a very precarious condition; his larynx was affected so as to make him almost voiceless, and he was taking treatment at an establishment known as "Les Néothermes," in the Rue Victoire, which was very popular at the time. An absurd story was added to the controversy which the founding of the Casino had stirred up. The *Gazette Musicale* of June 24th published a letter addressed by Paganini to a Mr. Douglas Loveday, father of a young pianiste who had played at the opening concert of the Casino. In this letter, whose "contents and motive" could well look strange to the *Gazette*, Paganini charged Mr. Loveday with a sum of 26,400 francs, for instruction given his daughter. Six weeks after this publication, Paganini explained the story, and addressing Loveday, he said:

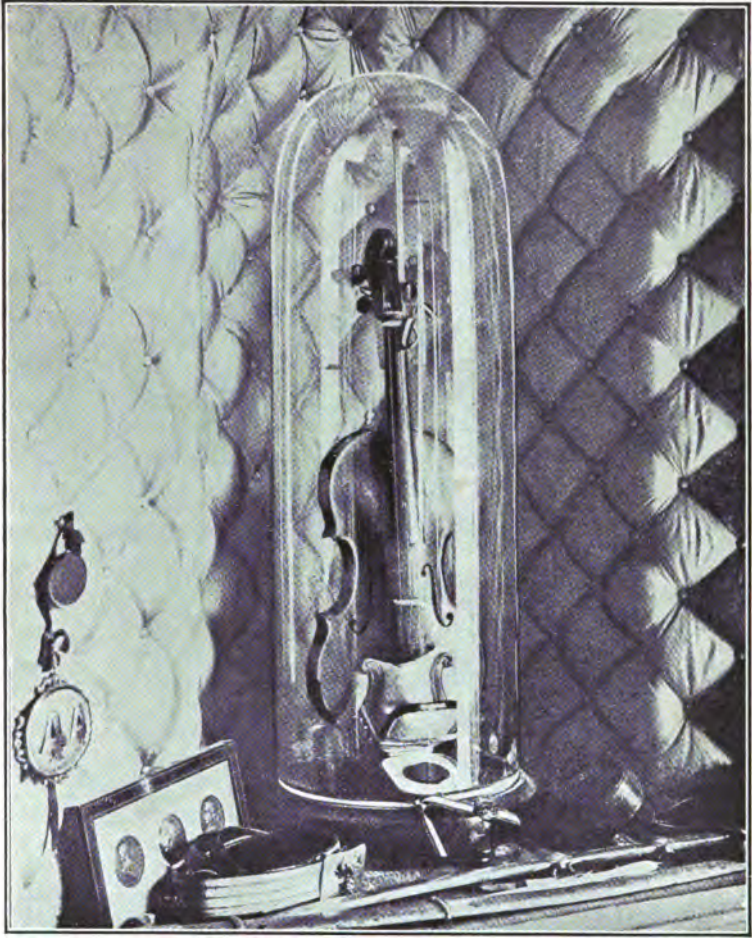
"Sir, you have chosen to publish a letter which you took seriously, and which I wrote to you with the sole aim of showing you how easy it is to cause annoyance to others. My letter was merely a little revenge for the account which you had opened for your friend, Mr. Cr——, 'the celebrated physician,' as you call him. As a matter of fact, in order to let him earn some money at any cost, you have very cleverly transformed into professional visits, a few how-are-you's, which your friend, 'the celebrated physician,' asked me while I lived at your house; a courtesy to which I immediately put an end by closing my door to 'the celebrated physician,' as soon as I noticed that his greetings were becoming serious, and that he was preparing to reinforce them with medical advice which, for the sake of my health, I did not care to follow." (2)

Loveday claimed 37,800 francs for having boarded Paganini during ninety-nine days, and 18,000 francs for piano lessons given by Miss Loveday to Paganini's son. Paganini in his reply ridiculed his adversary's French in a very witty manner, and finally had the laugh on his side.

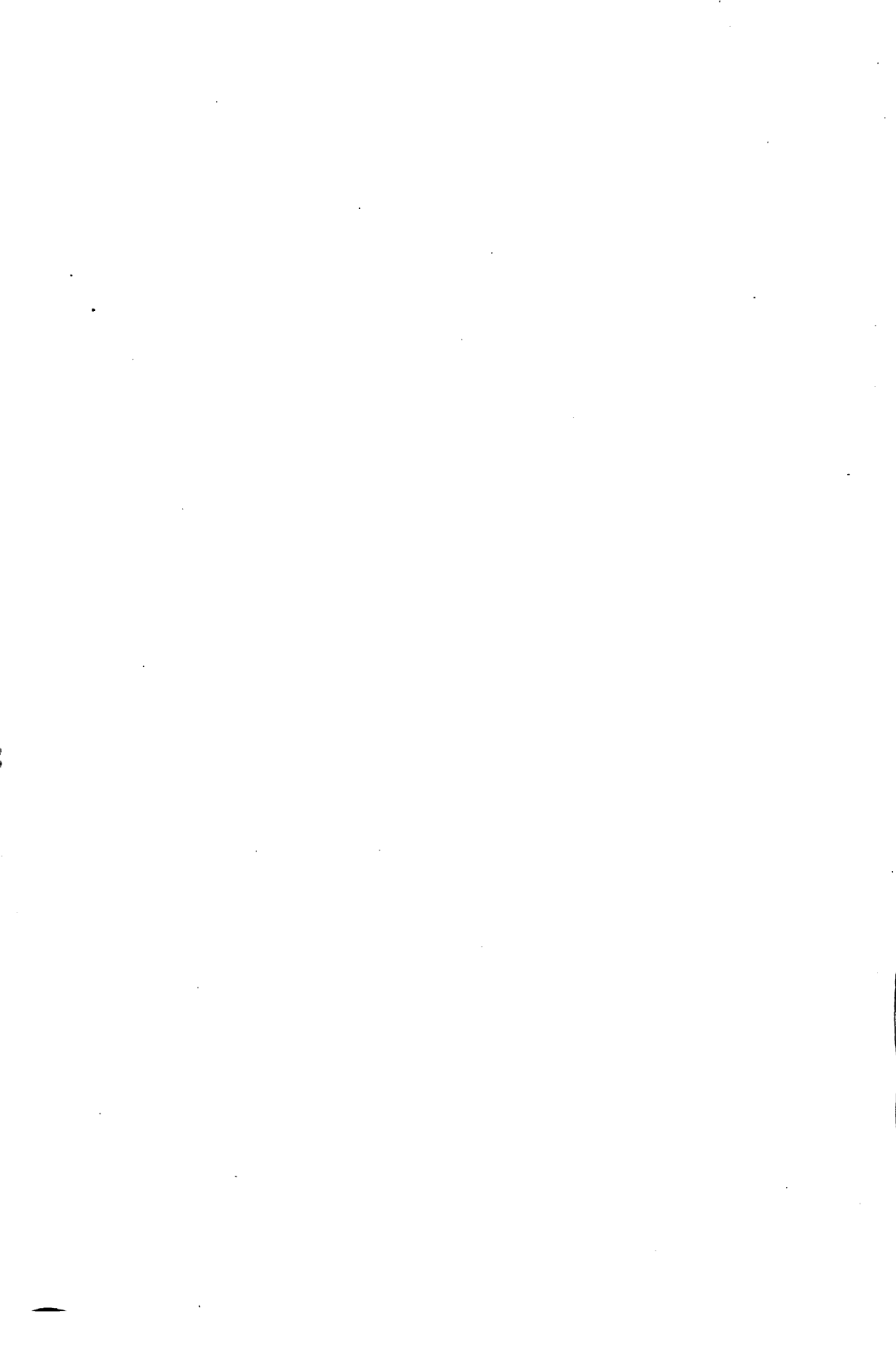
Still, all these incidents, which dealt with money and law-

(1) "Gazette des Tribunaux," Oct. 1st, 1838.

(2) "Gazette Musicale," June 24th and Aug. 12th, 1838.



PAGANINI'S VIOLIN
(Municipal Museum at Genoa.)



suits, only served to confirm the stories of the Maestro's avarice. At this time something occurred which silenced all the ill-natured remarks of the interested and covetous hangers-on of the millionaire artist. On December 16th, Berlioz gave a concert at the Conservatory. The composer of the ill-fated "Benvenuto Cellini," which had been ignominiously hissed at the Opera, reappeared at the head of his "old guard," that day. At the close of the concert, when "Harold en Italie," written at his instigation, had been rendered, Paganini threw himself at the feet of the young composer and cried, with all the voice which was left him: "He is a wonder!"

"After the concert," Berlioz writes to his father, "Paganini, this grand and noble artist, came upon the stage and told me that he was so deeply moved and profoundly impressed that he felt like kneeling at my feet; when I protested against such an exaggerated demonstration, he drew me to the centre of the stage, and there, in the presence of some of the members of my orchestra who had not yet departed, and in spite of my efforts to restrain him, he knelt at my feet, declaring that I had gone farther than Beethoven.

"And this is not all. Five minutes ago, little Achille, a charming child of twelve, came to see me and gave me the following letter from his father, with a gift of 20,000 francs."—Here is the translation of this letter:

"My dear friend,

With Beethoven dead, only Berlioz could make him arise once more, and I, who have heard your divine composition, worthy of a genius such as yours, think it my duty to ask you to accept, as a token of homage on my part, the sum of twenty thousand francs, which will be remitted to you by Baron de Rothschild, on presentation of the enclosed.

"Believe me to be always

Your affectionate friend,

NICOLO PAGANINI."⁽¹⁾

"I am stating the facts, that is all," says Berlioz in his Memoirs. This is the occurrence which astounded the entire press, and was the subject of an editorial by Jules Janin, taking back all the abuse which he had but lately hurled at Paganini, and a letter to Berlioz, which was printed, together with Paganini's, in the *Gazette Musi-*

(1) Letter written by Berlioz to his father, "Dec. 18th, 1838." See Italian facsimile.

cale and later in the *Allemeine Musikalische Zeitung* of Leipzig, and finally made the round of all Europe.

This princely gift was the subject of long and frequent discussions during the lifetime of Berlioz. It was said that because Paganini had refused to play in a concert for the benefit of the poor, by the advice of Jules Janin he had made this present to conciliate the public, as he was about to give four concerts himself; still, Paganini no longer played in public and there is nothing to prove that he intended doing so; his chronic ill-health drove him away from Paris continually. According to another version, he was merely acting in the name of a generous patroness of art, an admirer of the composer, who wished to show her appreciation; the name of Bertin was mentioned, proprietor of the *Débats*, whose daughter had caused the production of "La Esmeralda" at the Opera, brought out by Berlioz in 1836. Moreover, in his note to Rothschild, giving the order to the cashier, Tuesday, the 18th, to "remit to bearer, M. Hector Berlioz, the 20,000 francs which I deposited with you yesterday," does not this word "yesterday" indicate that during the day of the 17th of July, Jules Janin, Bertin and Paganini had planned the sensation of the following day? *Grammatici certant*.—Let us add that the first version is by Liszt, whose word it would be difficult to refute, and who had a very good memory besides. The second, which is plausible and more economical for Paganini, was voiced in the very beginning and circulated joyfully by the enemies of the *Débats* and of Berlioz, who vigorously denied it.⁽¹⁾ Be that as it may, these 20,000 francs secured for the composer "three years of rest, light work, liberty and happiness" (J. Janin), and enabled him to create another master-piece, "Romeo and Juliet." As to Paganini himself, he explained his generous act in this way:

"I did it for Berlioz and for myself. For Berlioz, because I saw a young man full of genius, whose strength and courage might have failed in this struggle, in which he was engaged every day against envious mediocrity or indifferent ignorance, and I told myself 'I must come to his aid.' For myself, because in years to come I will be vindicated in this affair, and when my claims to musical glory are counted, it will not be one of the least to have

(1) See "L'Illustration," March 4th, 1854, July 26th, 1856; "Les Débats," Dec. 8th, 1894, and the works of Consteballe, "Paganini"; Ad. Jullien, J. Tiersot and J. G. Prod'homme on Berlioz.

been the first to recognize a genius, and to have held him up to the admiration of all."⁽¹⁾

Thursday following the concert, Berlioz, being able to leave his room, where he had been confined for two days, went to thank his benefactor. "I found him alone in a large room at the Neothermes, where he lives," writes Berlioz to his sister that same evening. "You know that since about a year he has completely lost his voice, and without the help of his son it is very difficult to understand him. When he saw me, the tears came to his eyes (I confess that I was very nearly crying myself); he wept, this ferocious man-eater, this seducer of women, this escaped convict, as he has so often been called; he wept hot tears as he embraced me. 'Don't mention another word about it,' he said, 'I deserve no credit; it was the greatest joy, the deepest satisfaction I ever felt in my life; you have caused me emotions of which I never dreamed; you have gone a step farther in the great art of Beethoven.' Then, drying his eyes and hitting the table with a strange little laugh, he began to talk volubly, but as I could not understand him, he went to call his son, to serve as interpreter. With the help of little Achille I understood that he said: 'Oh! I am so glad; I am overjoyed to think that all this vermin who scribbled and talked against you, will not be so bold now because they all realize that I, Paganini, know what I am about—I who have the reputation of being hard to please.'"

Shortly after this event, which busied the press for several weeks, Paganini left Paris, which he was not to see again, and went to the South, his health demanding a sojourn in a sunny clime.

He stopped at Marseilles for some time. In a letter from there, dated April 26th, he wrote one of his friends, Aliani, leader of the orchestra at Vincenza, regarding his poor health, and asked him to secure two violins for him, one a Giuseppe Guarneri del Gesu, the other a Stradivarius.⁽²⁾ During the following month, in correspondence addressed to the *Moniteur*, he said he would have liked to have taken part in the benefit given to the sufferers at Martinique.⁽³⁾ In July, he passed through Montpellier, coming from the Baths at Balaruc; "it seems he must be continually under way,"

(1) "Journal de Paris," Jan. 18th, 1839, an article by Aug. Morel.

(2) From an autograph given by M. Charavay.

(3) "Moniteur," May 22nd, 1839, letter of the 16th.

writes a correspondent to the *Moniteur*.⁽¹⁾ "The celebrated artist absolutely refuses to comply with the importunities of the foremost amateurs of our town, to give a concert. This refusal is based on the strict injunctions of the medical faculty." Paganini, as a matter of fact, was never again heard in public. However, at Marseilles he consented to play in some Beethoven quartets, among friends, but that was all.

On August 22nd, 1839, the same paper announced his arrival at Vernet-les-Bains, accompanied by Dr. Lallemand. "Paganini is nothing but a shadow, he is so emaciated; he has lost his voice and only his glowing eyes and angular gestures speak for him. His violin, which led him to fame and glory, was taken from the carriage with him. The patient is to take the baths at the Elisa Spring at 22 degrees heat."⁽²⁾

It is doubtful if these stops at the various watering-places in the Pyrenees benefited him. Returning to Marseilles, toward the end of September, it seems that no improvement was noticeable in his condition.⁽³⁾ About this time he wrote a last letter "before leaving France,"⁽⁴⁾ to Dr. Lallemand. The first of October he was at Genoa; he had a nervous attack soon after his arrival which gave much concern to his "numerous friends."⁽⁵⁾ With the approach of winter, Paganini returned to Nice. "I see M. Paganini here nearly every day," writes a correspondent of the *Gazette Musicale*, on January 11th. "The decision of the courts in the Casino affair has not put him in a very good humor."⁽⁶⁾ However, he is still quite vigorous and I often hear him playing, all alone, using the sourdine. He always speaks of a new method for the violin, which he intends to publish, and which would simplify the study a great deal, as far as technique goes, and would ensure more perfect intonation to those using it. Well, it is up to the publishers now to discover his secrets, and I think it would be well worth while."⁽⁷⁾

(1) "Moniteur," July 28th, 1839.

(2) "Moniteur," August 22nd, 1839.

(3) "Moniteur," October 11th, 1839.

(4) "Autograph Catalog XXVII," Halle, Munich, 1906; the date of this letter is erroneously given as August 29th, 1839.

(5) "Moniteur," October 21st, 1839.

(6) "Paganini had been sentenced to pay damages amounting to 20,000 francs for failure to carry out the contract which he had signed to give a certain number of concerts at the Casino, which bore his name. To-day, however, on appeal by the creditors of the Casino managers, the higher court increased the fine to 50,000 francs and lengthened the habeas corpus period to ten years." ("Gazette Musicale," Jan. 5th, 1840, p. 27-28.)

(7) "Gazette Musicale," Jan. 23rd, 1840, p. 68.



THE PAGANINI CASINO AT PARIS, CHAUSÉE D'ANTIN (1837)
(Lithograph by G. Lavieron.)



The next occasion when the *Gazette*, which published this correspondence, printed Paganini's name, was to announce his death.

— "Paganini died at Nice, May 27th, 1840, leaving a great name and a large fortune to his only son, a young and handsome boy of fourteen years. His body has been embalmed and will be sent to his birthplace, Genoa. We hope that the report of his death will happily prove, like so many before this, a false one."⁽¹⁾

This time the report proved true, and it was Liszt who undertook to write for the readers of the *Gazette Musicale*, the funeral oration of the great artist, whose disciple he was, with countless others.

"May the artist of the future renounce with all his heart," concluded Liszt, "the vain and self-worshipful manner of which Paganini was, we believe, a last and shining example; let him see his goal, not in himself but far beyond; let the mastery of his art be a means—not an end; let him always remember that not only 'noblesse,' but even more so:

'Genie Oblige,'

F. Liszt."⁽²⁾

When on June 1st, 1840, Paganini's will, dated April 27th, 1837, was opened, it was found that his fortune amounted to 1,700,000 francs, partly in real estate and partly in government bonds of France, England and the two Sicilies. Among the beneficiaries were his older sister, who received an income of 75,000 francs; his younger sister one of 50,000 francs; a lady living at Lucca received an annuity of 6,200 francs; the mother of his son, Antonia Bianchi, one of 1,200 francs. Achille Paganini was his sole heir. Marquis Lorenzo Parento, his tutor, Giambattista Giordani, Lazzaro Rebizzo and Pietro Torrigliani, of Genoa, were named as his executors. A little later the *Gazette Musicale*, of Paris, came out with "one of the fantastic reports for which Paganini so often furnished the pretext" and which is repeated "merely to complete the round of absurdities. It is said that Paganini left his eight violins to eight violinists of the first rank, said to be Beriot, Ernst, Lipinski, May seder, Molique, Ole Bull, Spohr and Vieuxtemps."⁽³⁾

However, Paganini's history did not cease with his death, and

(1) "*Gazette Musicale*," June 7th, 1840, p. 334.

(2) "*Gazette Musicale*," Aug. 23rd, p. 431-432; About Paganini on the occasion of his death.

(3) "*Gazette Musicale*," October 25th, 1840, p. 509.

it seemed as if fate had decreed that everything about this man should be strange and fantastic, for the great Genoese artist was doomed to post-mortem tribulations which did not end until 1896, more than half a century after his death.

This posthumous history of Paganini, like his earthly existence, caused numerous and frequent discussions by the press; the earlier ones are dated about 1854, and the most recent in 1905.

Paganini having died at Nice, his son naturally wished to have his father's body taken to Genoa. A letter dated from Nice, June 5th, to the *Moniteur*, stated that the final resting place for Paganini's remains had not yet been decided upon.⁽¹⁾ The trouble was actually begun on the day following his demise, by the Bishop of Nice, and a contemporary paper, the *Journal Historique et Littéraire*, of Liege, speaks of it as follows:

"Paganini died at Nice last year; he was noted for the laxity of his morals and for his irreligion. Not only had he ignored his duties to the Church, but he had refused the holy sacraments on his death bed. These facts caused the Bishop of Nice to refuse him a resting place in consecrated ground. Upon the protestations of Paganini's executors, the prelate inaugurated an investigation, whereupon the refusal of a consecrated grave was confirmed by sentence. The executors persisted, and carried the matter to his Eminence the Cardinal-Archbishop of Genoa, who last August, fully corroborated the decision of the Bishop of Nice. Paganini's body, after having rested a long time, embalmed and open to view, in his apartment, was, by order of the Government, consigned to the cellar, and from there to the pest-house at Villefranche, on account of the fetid odors it exhaled. It will now be interred outside of the cemetery, and Paganini's name will be crossed from the Church register, where a marginal note indicates the cause of the erasure."⁽²⁾

The facts are, that Paganini, "brutally called upon to make a last confession, answered that he did not think himself so near death as yet to require spiritual aid, but that when the time came he would not fail in this supreme duty."⁽³⁾ Christian burial having been refused, in spite of the efforts of Count de Cessole, Count de Maistre, then Governor of the province, and of Achille Paganini,

(1) "Moniteur Universel," June 16th, 1840, p. 1436.

(2) "Journal Historique et Littéraire," December 1st, 1841.

(3) "L'Illustration," March, 1854, article by Frederic Lacroix.

the body was embalmed and exhibited on a platform before which the curious defiled; the head had been dressed in rather a grotesque fashion, with a high stock over which was an enormous tie; he wore a kind of cotton cap trimmed with blue ribbons, ending in a huge rosette, as is shown by a lithograph of the times. After a few days, when the body was put into a coffin, a glass had to be inserted, leaving the face open to view, to satisfy the curiosity of the tourists who flocked to Nice. The public continued to crowd for a glimpse of the great dead, until the Church gave orders to have the body removed, and it was taken to the pest-house at Villefranche a la pointe de Saint-Hospice;⁽¹⁾ this transfer was made at night under military escort. At this time a Jewish broker offered Count de Cessole about 30,000 francs for permission to take the body to England and exhibit it there.

Another version is that the body was taken by boat from the hospital at Nice to that of Genoa, but as the vessel was refused entry at the port of Genoa, on account of the epidemic of cholera which had just broken out at Marseilles, it went to anchor at the Lerins Islands. The captain of this ship had Paganini's coffin landed on the islet of Saint-Ferreol, where it was interred. Six years later, another vessel landed there to get the remains of Paganini and take them to Italy. It is said that an open grave in the centre of the islet Saint-Ferreol still marks the place where Paganini was buried, as it had never been filled in. The amateur fishermen who frequent these latitudes say that the excavation in the middle of the island is universally known, for short, as Paganini's ditch.⁽²⁾

This legend seems rather improbable, although it emanates from a reliable source. If we go by the account of *L'Illustration*, published some ten or twelve years after the events themselves, and confirmed by a contemporary, one of the sailors on the ship,⁽³⁾ Paganini's body was removed from the pest-house at Villefranche during the night of August 15th, 1843, and not in 1846, to be transported to Genoa in a sailing barque.

Nevertheless, Achille Paganini continued his efforts to have his father's remains buried in consecrated ground. In October, 1841,

(1) Some have confused the name of Saint-Hospice with the hospital at Nice.

(2) "Intermédiaire des Chercheurs," June 10th, 1905, col. 871.

(3) Id., April 30th, 1905, col. 645-646.

he arrived at Rome with a lawyer, to obtain a recall from the Pope of the decision handed down by the Archbishop of Genoa.⁽¹⁾ The Pope annulled the episcopal decision, and ordered an inquiry by the Archbishop of Turin and two clerical Genoese, as to the Catholic sentiments of the deceased. The result of this inquiry seems never to have been made public. Thereupon, during the night of August 15th, 1843—in May, 1844, according to others,—a man bearing a paper signed by the Governor of the province, and accompanied by two boatmen and two porters, came to the pest-house at Villefranche. The coffin was removed and put on board a vessel which sailed to Genoa, making stops at Bordighera, San Remo, Port-Maurice, Savone, etc. The body was taken to the villa Polevra, one of Paganini's possessions near Genoa, where the Pope authorized a provisory burial. Again it was exhumed in 1853, whereupon the remains were transported to his villa Gaiona, in the Duchy of Parma. Achille Paganini then had a simple religious service held in memory of his father, who was a knight of Saint-Georges, in the church of la Steccata, which belonged to this order of knighthood. Finally, in 1876, the third exhumation took place from the villa Gaiona, followed by re-interment in the cemetery at Parma. But here again Paganini was not to find untroubled rest, for in 1893 his coffin was opened once more in the presence of his son and the Hungarian violinist, Ondriczek; and three years later, in August, 1896, a last exhumation was necessary owing to the laying out of a new cemetery at Parma. Was this indeed the last? It is to be hoped, though we can not be sure, for it seems as though a pitiless fate denied earthly rest, though well deserved, to him who had been Paganini.

(1) "Gazette Musicale," November 7th, 1841, letter from Rome, October 12th,

VI.



PAGANINI wrote about fifty compositions, according to the catalogue compiled by Conestabile, about ten years after the death of the great artist. However, only a few of these are extant.⁽¹⁾

All violinists know the importance of the twenty-four Caprices, some of which were transcribed for piano by Liszt and Schumann.⁽²⁾ No. 1 is an etude in arpeggios (Locatelli's Caprices begin in the same way.) In this Paganini modulates frequently, as in almost all his etudes. Several passages (for instance, measures 14, 15, 16, 25, 26, etc., p. 2, edition Peters) show that Paganini was a guitar player, as the groups of chords which he uses are characteristic of that instrument.

Guhr says that Paganini played full, clear arpeggios, using less than half of his bow for their execution.

No. 2 is characterized by groups of thirds, sixths and tenths, and wide intervals, necessitating quick changes from string to string.

We know how boldly Paganini modulated, for his times. In the *presto* of No. 3 some of these modulations are to be found, which were then considered to be very audacious.

Guhr states that in No. 7 Paganini played all the staccato passages in letting the bow dance on the strings with a rebound; he always played his staccato with the middle of the bow, rarely beginning with the tip, as other great masters did.

In No. 8 there are innumerable difficulties of intonation.

The original rhythm of the *presto* in No. 11 must be mentioned, the first half of the measure 2-4 often consisting of syncopations and the other half of triplets.

This *presto* is not included in the transcription by Schumann, who considered it unsuitable for the piano and perhaps just a little vulgar.

In No. 15 the melody, in octaves, serves as a theme for a variation in broken chords, as it might be written for the piano.

(1) See list of compositions.

(2) Schumann published, in 1823 and 1835, in two volumes, twenty-four transcriptions of the Caprices by Paganini; also six *Études de Concert*, after the Caprices by Paganini, Op. 10. "The Bravourstudien Nach Paganini's Capricen für das Pianoforte bearbeitet," by Liszt, appeared in 1842. See Schumann's "Gesammelte Schriften," edition Reklam, II, p. 11-12, and III, p. 98-100. The French violinist, Pierre Rode, had already written twenty-four Caprices in the form of etudes.

No. 24 contains in one of its variations an example of a remarkable manner of employing the pizzicato.

"It is certainly strange that the characteristic effect, which in part made Paganini's great success, his harmonics, does not appear in these Caprices."⁽¹⁾

Paganini's most important concert pieces are beyond doubt his concertos. There were eight of these; besides the four for which he wrote the orchestra parts, two only remain, which were published by Schonenberger, at Paris, in 1851, one in E flat (D),⁽²⁾ and one in B minor, op. 6 and 7.

His variations are no less celebrated; the same publisher brought out the variations on "Di tanti palpiti" (Tancrede), "Non piu mesta" (Cenerentola), "God save the King" (or "Heil Dir im Siegerkranz"), the "Carnaval de Venise" ("Oh! Mamma!") as well as the "Moto perpetuo," which comprises 3,040 sixteenth notes without a pause.

Before the time when Schonenberger undertook to publish Paganini's works, his Caprices, op. 1; Sei Sonate, op. 2; Sei Sonate, op. 3; Tre gran Quartetti, op. 4; and Tre gran Quartetti, op. 5, were the only ones which had been printed.

"Paganini's compositions have great merit," says Fétis, "novelty of ideas, elegant form, rich harmonies, and variety of effects in instrumentation. These qualities are particularly noticeable in his concertos. These concertos influenced, in a measure, what was written later in this line. Their form differs in a number of points from the classic form of Viotti's concerto. We find the merit of unity and a growing interest which deserves consideration by other violin composers.

"In general, without detracting the attention from the solo part by too much complicated work, the instrumentation still has enough of interest to combine agreeably with the principal theme, and the attacks are not forced and conventional; in short, the effects are new and varied."

The first concerto, in E flat, of which the violin solo is written in D, is more like the old concertos. "I think I remember," says Fétis, "that he wrote it in 1811." It contains little that is new;

(1) C. Witting, "Geschichte des Violinspiels," p. 43-49.

(2) Paganini wrote the accompaniment for orchestra in E flat, and the violin part in D, the solo instrument being tuned half a tone higher than ordinarily.

Mio caro amico

Beethoven spento non c'era che
Berlioz che potesse farlo rivivere.
Ed io che ho gustato le vostre divine
composizioni degne di un genio qual
siete vedo mio dovere di pregarvi
e voler accettare in segno del mio
omaggio ventimila franchi i quali
vi faranno a mesi dal signor Barone
de Rothschild dopo che gli avrete
presentato l'accluzza
Crediteme toujours

Il Vostro aff. amico

Niccolò Paganini

Parigi li 18 Dicembre 1838

LETTER FROM PAGANINI TO BERLIOZ
(Furnished by Monsieur Charles Malherbe.)



the details, however, stamp this work as one of the highest interest. Paganini therein employs the fourth string in the second solo.

The Adagio (C minor) is a dialogue between the fourth string and the three others. The Rondo, with its bounding staccato, is original. It is noticeable also for the passages in tenths, for the first time used in various combinations, whereby Paganini obtained remarkable effects, through the marvelous accuracy of his execution.

The second concerto, in B minor, begins with a broad, passionate movement; the harmonies are often interesting in their sequence, the instrumentation is bright and effective. The tutti are little developed, and merely serve to join the different soli. The phrase at the beginning of the first solo is grand and broadly treated.

In this Paganini shows great boldness of conception, by the difficulties it involves in bowing and also for the left hand. There is a double trill, descending in thirds, which showed the artist's incomparable execution, his brilliancy as well as his absolutely faultless intonation. The theme of the second solo is entirely different from the first; the melody is expressive and mingled with staccato effects to which Paganini gave an individual character. The passage following this theme is entirely in double chords and very effective; these combinations were of the greatest difficulty, but the wonderful artist rendered them as so much child's play.⁽¹⁾

The Adagio (in D) is a cantabile of the highest order. Being more simple than his other compositions, it was not very effective, because in Paganini one always looked for the sensational; nevertheless the form of the themes is noble, expressive and full of charm. The instrumentation is in very good taste. The Rondo, with obligato accompaniment of bells, is a delightful phantasy which comprises the most incredible difficulties in combinations of the most exquisite taste. The principal motive is remarkably elegant. Everything about this composition is new, as well in detail as in the general outline.

The Allegro of the sonata for violin and orchestra, entitled Moto

(1) "In all his early compositions," says Fétis, "the passages in double chords and with a bounding bow are new and not in the usual form of concertos. Paganini's execution was remarkable in two points; first, the absolute truthfulness of tone in the double chords, the stumbling block of the most skillful violinists, especially in the rapid passages, and second, the marvellous accuracy with which his bow hits the strings, no matter how great the intervals. This evidence of his talent alone would tend to show his predestination for his career, and a life-time of study."

Perpetuo, is only noticeable as a study for bowing, having a very rapid movement without pause to the last measure. This kind of difficulty requires a wonderfully strong and flexible wrist, that will not tire before the end, and perfect unison of the left hand and the bow. This work as a composition is of no importance, but as an etude it is interesting.

The introduction to the "Streghe" is brief; the first variation, all in double and triple chords, is very difficult; it is an excellent study for correct intonation. The second is a mixture of harmonics and pizzicati, resulting in original effects. The third is a dialogue between the fourth string and double harmonic sounds, "a novelty which always met with applause from the public." The finale which follows this variation ends with rapid passages on the fourth string, and harmonics of the utmost difficulty.

The "God Save the King" includes all the new effects discovered by Paganini. The theme is written in three and four parts; the bow sounds the melody and the accompanying parts are picked. The first variation, all in double chords, is a sequence of thirds and tenths. Paganini played it very quickly and lightly, which added to the difficulties. The second variation is in rapid triplets mingled with passages in double chords and a bounding staccato. In the third the canto is sustained by a very slow movement while the accompaniment indulges in a veritable fireworks of brilliancy on the third and fourth strings. The fourth consists of rapid runs of picked notes in the upper register, while the accompaniment is played staccato on the lower strings, with the bow. The fifth variation, written in double chords, has an echo effect, an octave higher; the bass is picked on the low strings. Finally, the sixth and last is all in bounding staccato arpeggios, which are extremely difficult to play on account of the complicated positions of the left hand.

The variations on "Di tanti palpiti" are written in B flat; the solo part is written in A, the violin being tuned to B. In the second variation the fourth string is lowered to low B flat. Paganini made this change of tuning with such skill and nicety that none noticed it in his concerts.⁽¹⁾ The introduction to this composition is a larghetto followed by a recitativo. The theme is played simply, without any combination of effects. In the second variation the passages in double chords present great difficulties in bowing; the

(1) We have already reported the different opinion held by Guhr.

third is the strangest and the most difficult with its sequences of thirds in harmonics, which bring out the theme in runs and arpeggios.

In the variation on "la Cenerentola" (Non piu mesta), in E flat, the solo violin is tuned as before, and is played in D, the same as in the first concerto. The second variation recalls effects already used in the other works of the master. The third, in minor, is almost entirely written in octaves. The fourth is an echo, the echo effect being produced by double harmonics. It is followed by a finale in thirds and octaves, which is very difficult to perform.

The twenty variations on the "Carnival of Venice," on the popular song "Oh! Mamma!" are partly not in the very best taste. Those on the "Air de Barucaba" each represent a special etude for the various kinds of bowing. They are nearly all in different keys.

This is a brief resumé by Fétis,⁽¹⁾ written about half a century ago, when the celebrated musical writer presented the French public with an edition of Paganini's works. To-day, no doubt, since violin technique has made more progress, thanks chiefly to the great Genoese artist, the wonderment of our fathers at these compositions would seem uncalled for. Besides, musical taste has become more serious, and we see nothing but show pieces in compositions which, in their time, excited much admiration and enthusiasm. Nevertheless it must be acknowledged that Paganini, whose works are far more numerous than those that are, so far, known to us under his name, was not only a great virtuoso, but also a composer whose style, if not superior to that of his Italian contemporaries, was certainly not inferior, especially in regard to orchestration.

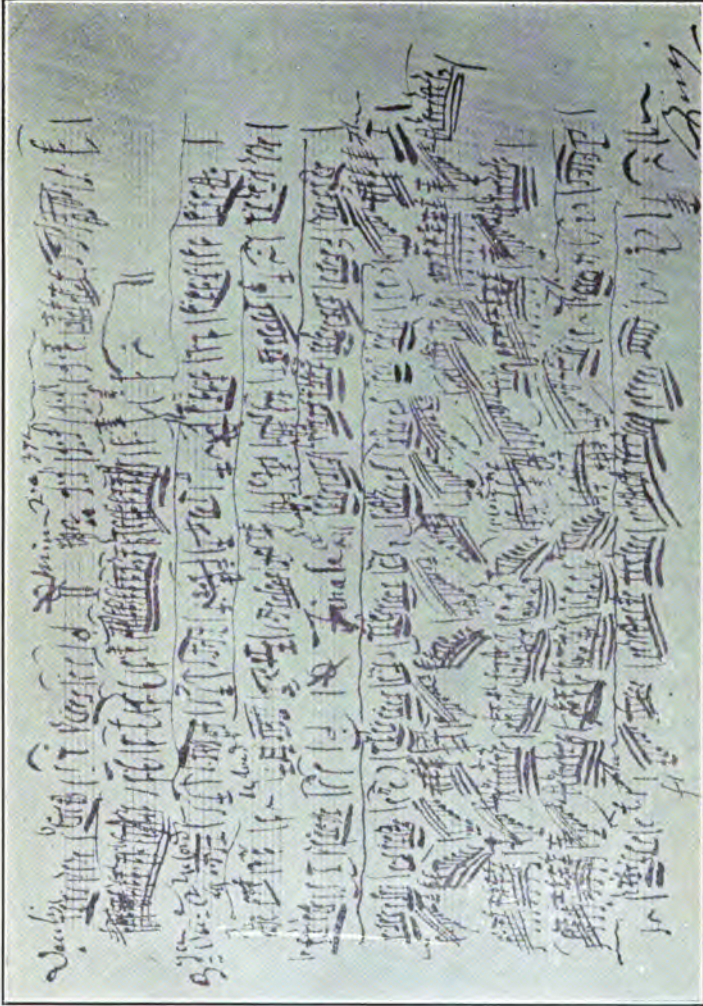
- Paganini did not actually found a school; we know of only one pupil who studied under him, Camillo Sivori, a Genoese like himself, who followed his methods nearly to the present day.

(1) Fétis, Paganini (Paris, Schonenberger, 1851).

COMPOSITIONS OF PAGANINI.

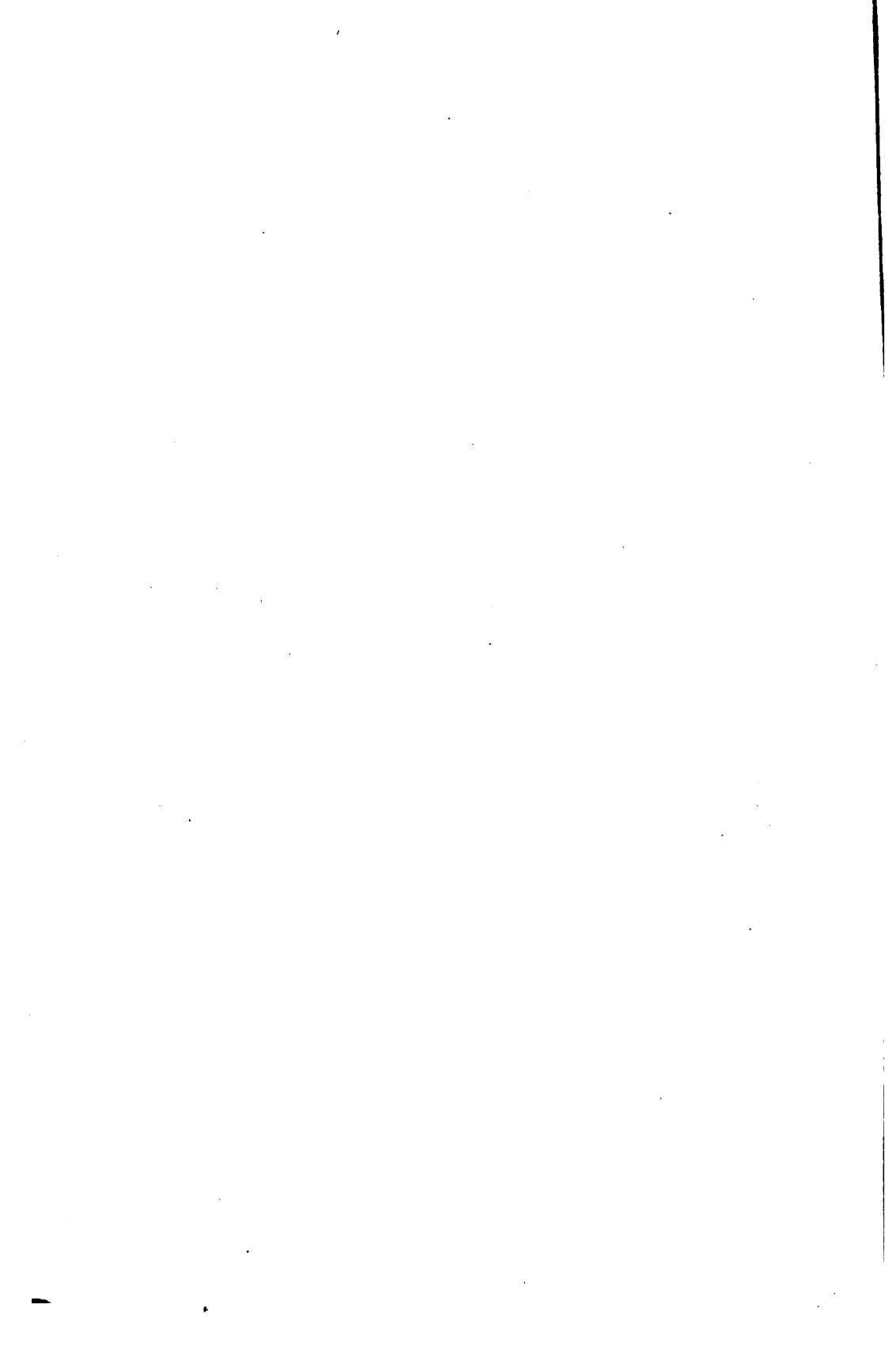
Conestabile was the first to compile a list of Paganini's works, as follows:

1. Four concertos for violin, with accompaniment.
2. Four concertos for which the orchestral parts were never written; the last was composed by Paganini shortly before his death.
3. Variations on a comic theme, carried on by the orchestra.
4. Sonata for viola and orchestra.
5. "God Save the King," with variations, for violin and orchestra.
6. "Le Streghe," variations for violin, with orchestra.
7. Variations on "Non piu mesta," from "la Cenerentola."
8. "Grande Sonate Sentimentale."
9. Sonata with variations.
10. "La Primavera," Sonate without accompaniment.
11. Warsaw—Sonata.
12. "La ci darem la mano,"—variations on an air by Mozart ("Don Juan").
13. The Carneval of Venice.
14. Variations on "Di tanti palpiti" (Rossini).
15. Marie-Louise, Sonata.
16. Romance (Song).
17. Cantabile, for violin and piano.
18. Polonaise, with variations.
19. Vocal Phantasy.
20. Sonata for violin solo.
21. Six quartets for violin, viola, 'cello and guitar (op. 4 and 5, entitled "Gran quartetti a violino, viola, chitarra and violoncello").
22. Cantabile and Waltz.
23. Three duets for violin and 'cello.
24. Other duets and little pieces for violin and guitar.



MUSICAL AUTOGRAPH OF PAGANINI

(Extract from *Le Streghe* (violin part). Furnished by Monsieur Charles Malherbe.)



The following works only are complete and have been published :

The twenty-four "Caprices" (op. 1), not mentioned in the foregoing list; two Concertos, in E flat (D major) and in B minor (op. 6 and 7);—in the latter is the famous "Clochette," or Campanella; twelve sonatas, for violin and guitar (op. 2 and 3); six Quartets (op. 4 and 5); an Allegro de Sonate, with orchestra, called "*Movimento Perpetuo*" (op. 11); "Le Streghe," with orchestra (op. 8); "God Save the King," with variations, for orchestra (op. 9); "Di tanti palpiti," with orchestra (op. 13); "Non piu mesta," with orchestra (op. 12); "The Carneval of Venice," twenty variations on a Venetian popular song: "Oh! Mamma!" (op. 10).

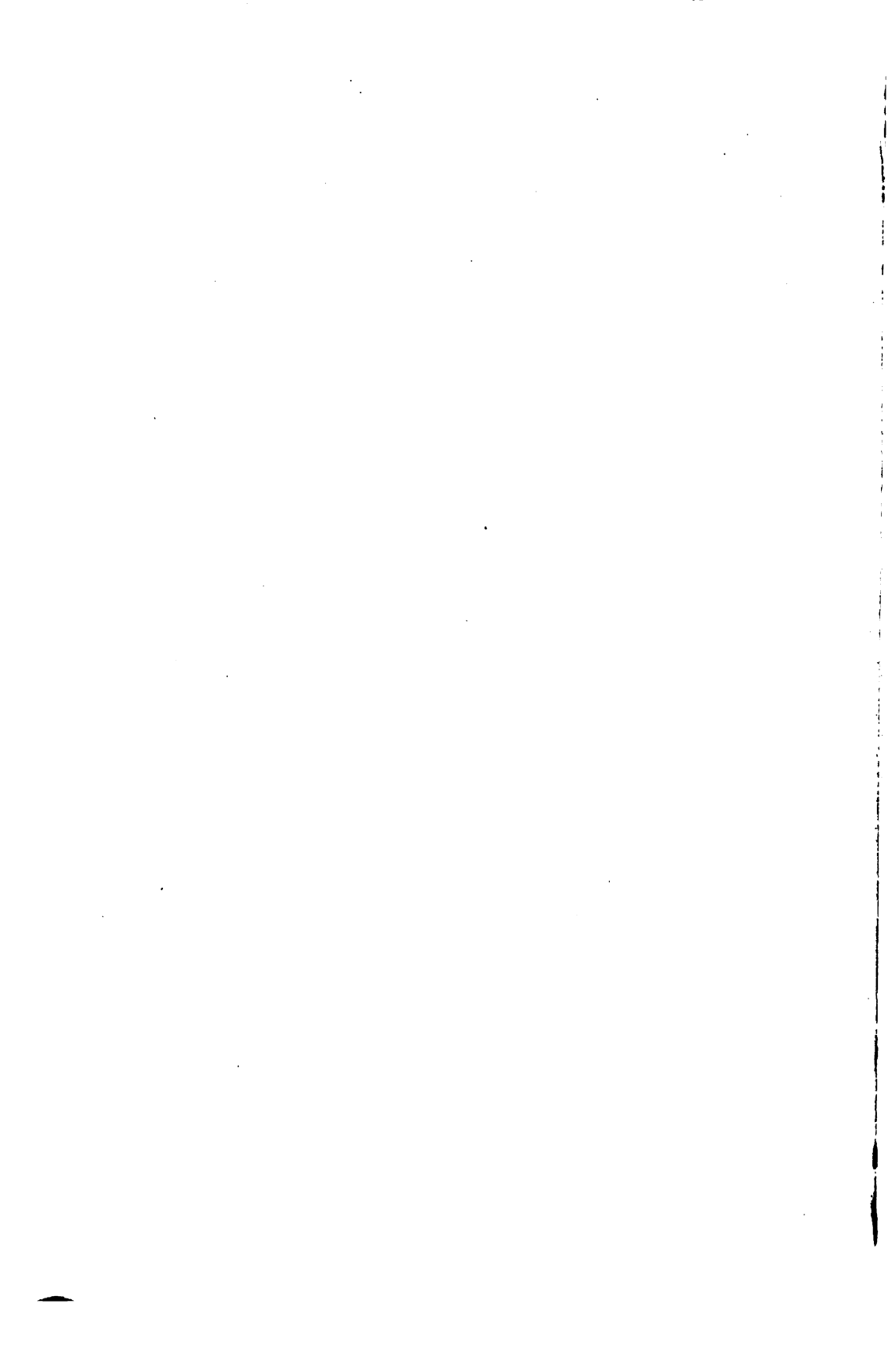
Sixty variations in every key, in three suites, with piano or guitar accompaniment, on the air "Barucaba." This is one of Paganini's latest compositions, which was written at Genoa in 1835, and was dedicated to the attorney, L. G. Germin.

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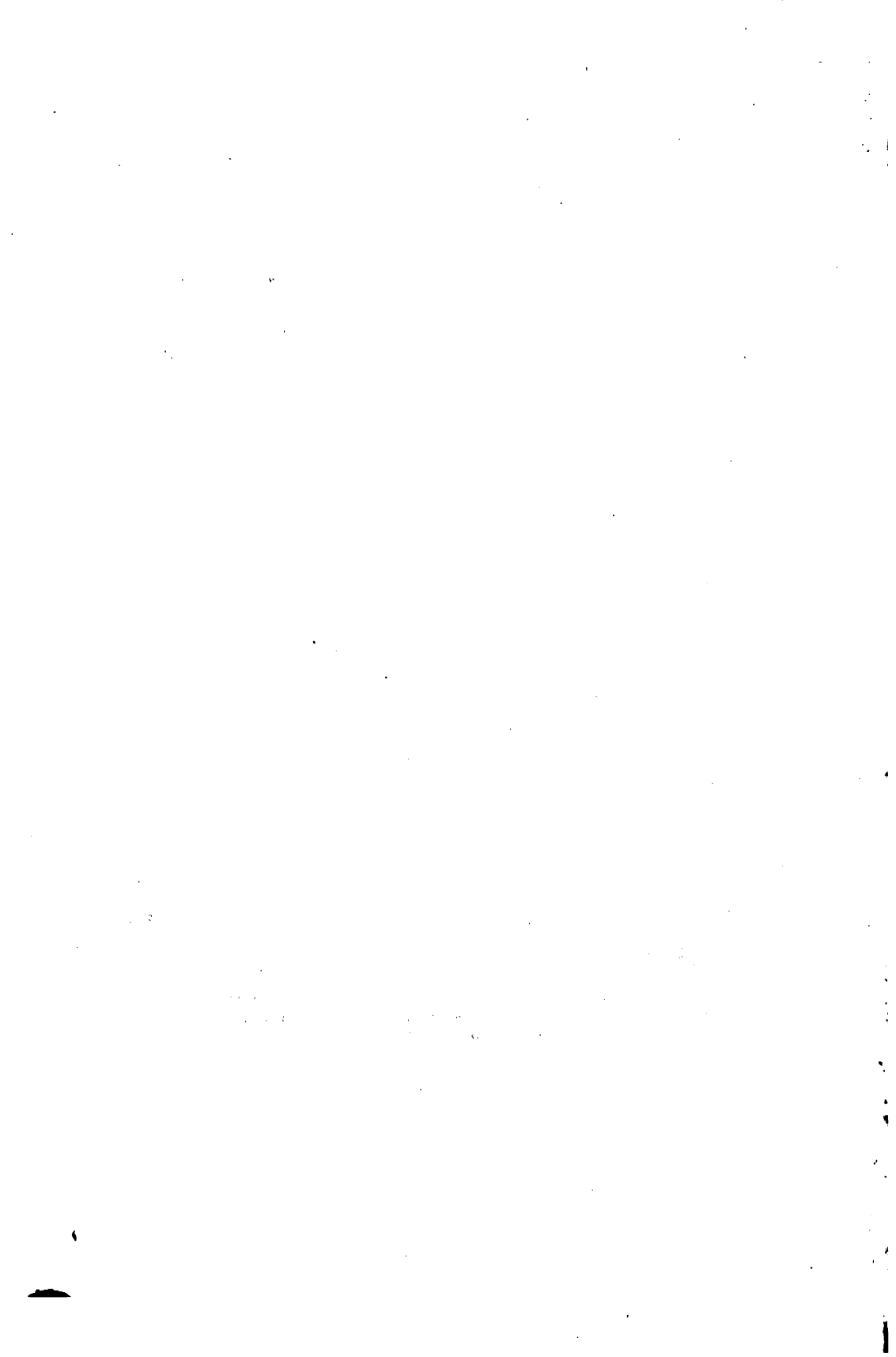
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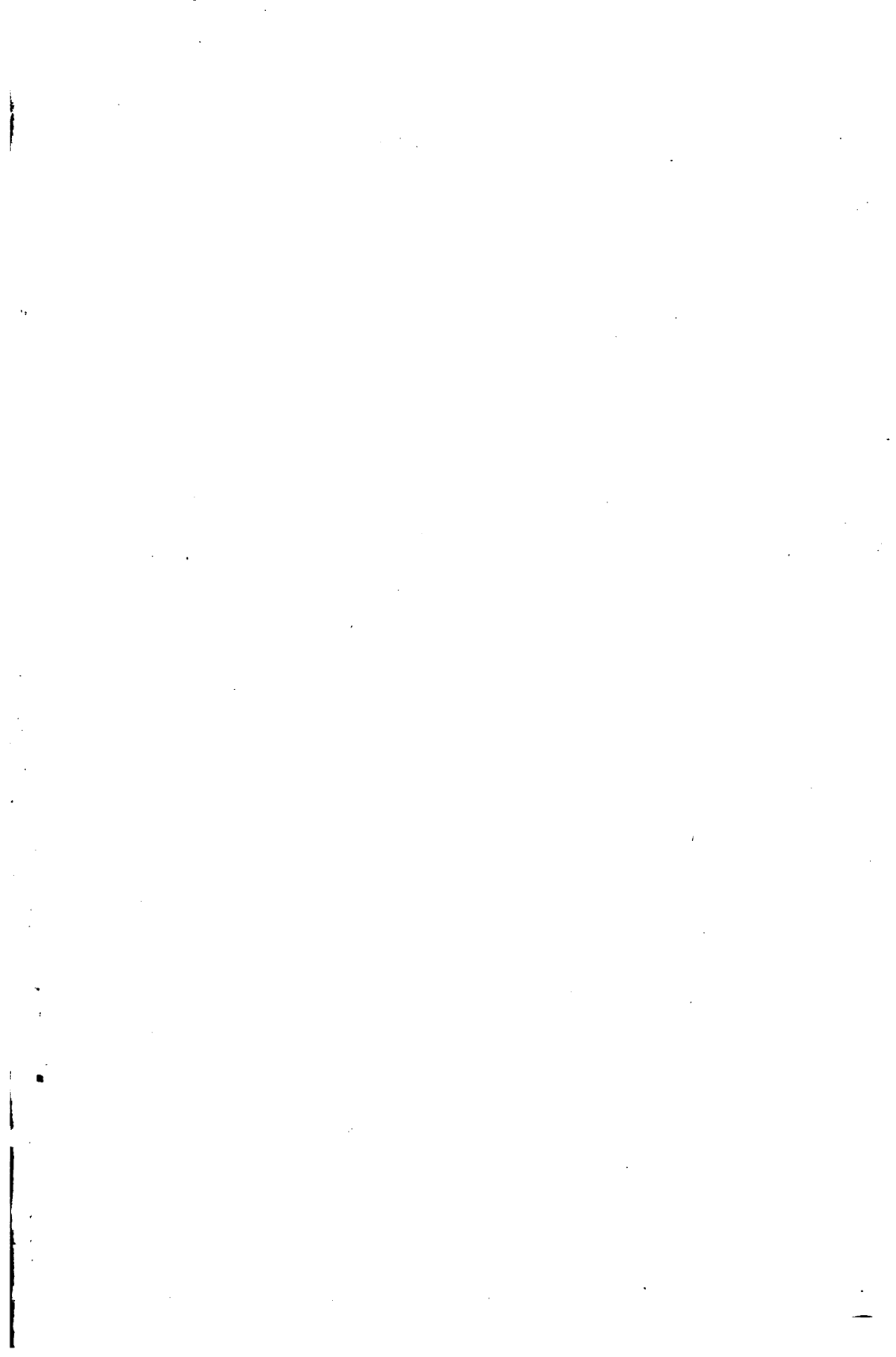
Paganini was represented on the stage in Paris at least twice; in “an up-to-date occurrence in one act, with songs and music,” by Devergiers and Varin, entitled “Paganini en Allemangne,” at the Nouveautés, April 10th, 1831; and in “Rossini’s Room,” an Italian sketch, by Merle and Simonnin, at the Varietés, February, 1834. In the latter play the actor Lherie took the part of the great virtuoso.





PAGANINI PLAYING ON HIS STRADIVARIUS VIOLIN
From a water-color by Peterlet entitled 'The Violin of Cremona.'
(From the collection of A. Morel d'Arleux.)





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