A Descriptive and
Practical Treatise on the
Mandolin and Kindred
Instruments.

Illustrated from
Original Drawings and
Photographs.

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.

A RARE AND PRICELESS PICTORIAL OF THE MANDOLIN, IT'S HISTORY, CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ARTS AND IT'S EVOLUTION. REPRODUCTION OF AN AUTHENTIC ORIGINAL FROM THE TURN OF THE CENTURY.

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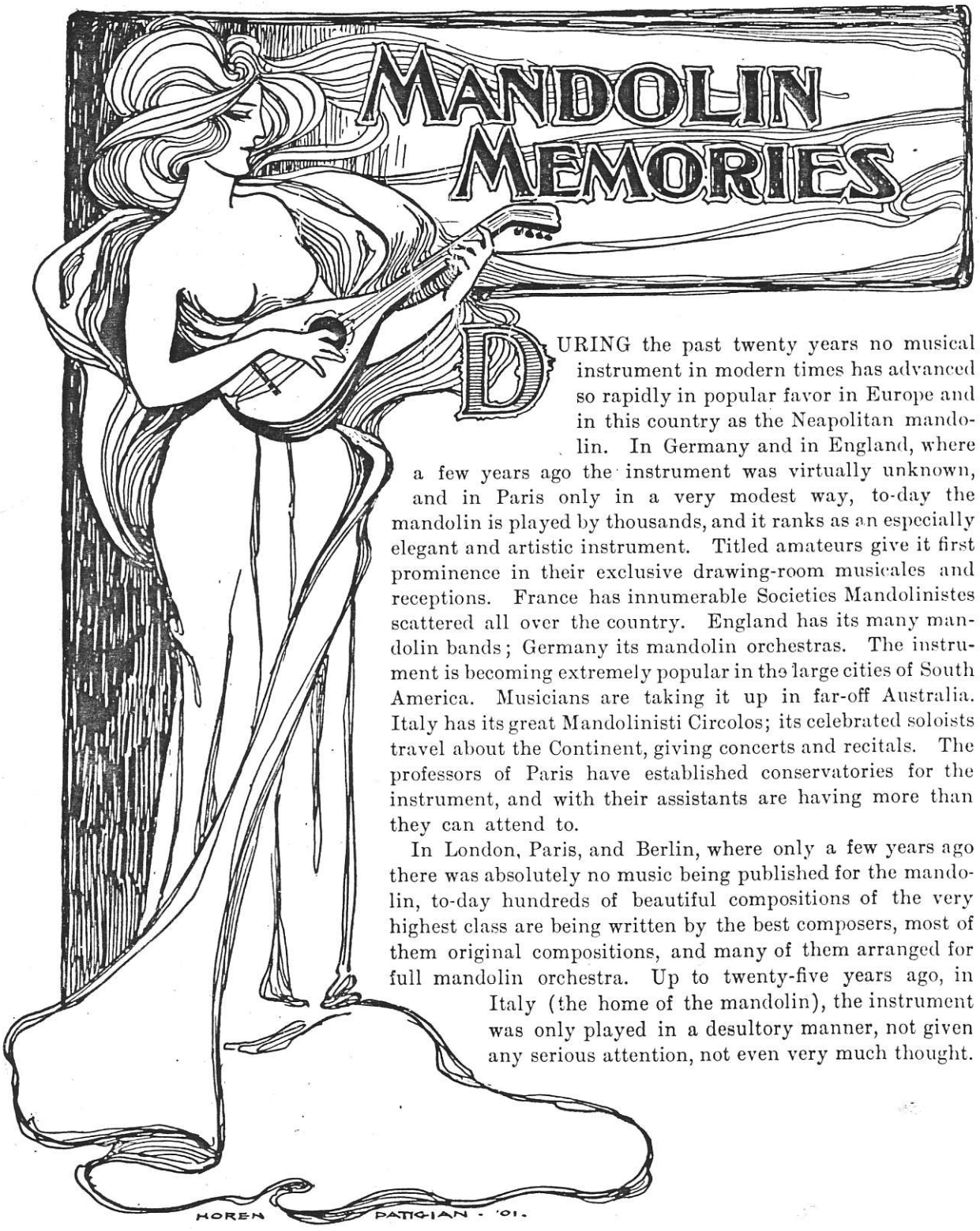


DURING the past twenty years no musical instrument in modern times has advanced so rapidly in popular favor in Europe and in this country as the Neapolitan mandolin. In Germany and in England, where a few years ago the instrument was virtually unknown, and in Paris only in a very modest way, to-day the mandolin is played by thousands, and it ranks as an especially elegant and artistic instrument. Titled amateurs give it first prominence in their exclusive drawing-room musicales and receptions. France has innumerable Societies Mandolinistes scattered all over the country. England has its many mandolin bands; Germany its mandolin orchestras. The instrument is becoming extremely popular in the large cities of South America. Musicians are taking it up in far-off Australia. Italy has its great Mandolinisti Circolos; its celebrated soloists travel about the Continent, giving concerts and recitals. The professors of Paris have established conservatories for the instrument, and with their assistants are having more than they can attend to.

In London, Paris, and Berlin, where only a few years ago there was absolutely no music being published for the mandolin, to-day hundreds of beautiful compositions of the very highest class are being written by the best composers, most of them original compositions, and many of them arranged for full mandolin orchestra. Up to twenty-five years ago, in Italy (the home of the mandolin), the instrument was only played in a desultory manner, not given any serious attention, not even very much thought.

In the preface to one of the best methods published in Italy, the author, a noted composer, and celebrated soloist, writes, July, 1891:

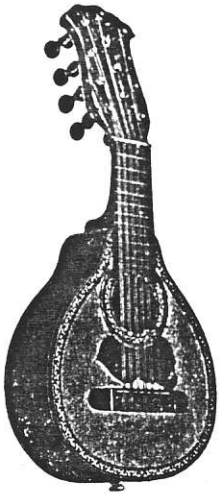
"Ten or twelve years ago the publication of my method would have been useless, the mandolin being little known at that time; while now it forms part of the musical art, and many people study it with interest. Consequently, a complete method is necessary that without difficulty can render a perfect execution."

Up to that time there were not many original mandolin compositions published in Italy, and these of a very mediocre style; but to-day everything is changed. To the few pioneer mandolinists of America, who worked so patiently and conscientiously, can be traced the beginning of the marvelous growth of the mandolin, which has so attracted the public attention and astonished musicians the world over.

Manuel Y. Ferrer, the eminent guitarist and composer; Luis Romero, the late gifted guitar soloist, and the writer, were the three original teachers of the mandolin on the entire Pacific Coast. At that time there was no music published, no manufacturers of instruments worth mentioning, and in comparison to the population, few or hardly any teachers east of the Rocky Mountains. To-day there are hundreds of teachers, dozens of publishers, dozens of manufacturers, and thousands of performers scattered over the length and breadth of the land, who have stimulated all branches of the music trade. Before the American manufacturers reached their present high standard of excellence, the orders that were sent to Italy for instruments and music opened the eyes of the slow-going Italians to the true worth and beauty of their hitherto neglected national instrument, and to-day Italy teems with manufacturers, soloists, and Circolos, and the great publishing houses are printing enormous quantities of mandolin music.

The mandolin was first introduced into this country about twenty-one years ago by the bandurria playing of the Figaro Spanish Students from Madrid. For a long time many people believed that these Spanish Students performed on the mandolin, and that the mandolin was a Spanish instrument.

But this is not the case. During his visit to Spain in 1895, the writer searched diligently in Gibralter, Ronda, Seville, and Cordova, and was unable to find a Neapolitan mandolin. The Spanish instrument (used by the original Spanish Students) akin to the mandolin is the bandurria (the instrument Don Juan thrummed on). The only point of similarity to its Italian brother is that both are played tremolo with a plectrum; otherwise the bandurria is different in every way from the Neapolitan mandolin so popular in this country.



Spanish Bandurria.

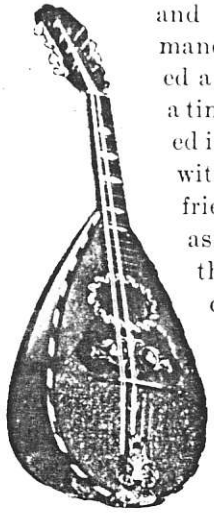
The original Figaro Spanish Students, twenty-two in number, came to America from Madrid in 1879, under the engagement of Henry Abbey. Their leader was Senor Denis Granada, composer of the "El Turia" waltzes and other celebrated compositions. Their instrumentation was as follows: 13 bandurrias, 7 guitars, 1 violin, 1 cello. They returned to Spain in 1881; in 1882 the Figaro Spanish Students again left Spain bound for Mexico. This time they were 18 in number, and under the leadership of Senor Garcia. They also traveled about America and appeared in San Francisco at the old Winter Garden, now torn down. They next went to South America where they disbanded in Buena Ayres in 1885.

The erroneous impression that the Original Spanish Students performed on mandolins was created by the fact that soon after the Spanish Students landed in this country, a number of Italians in New York (who were not professional mandolinists at the time, but were engaged in various occupations, and played the mandolin for pastime among themselves, so that the instrument was practically unknown outside of a little circle of Italians in the Latin quarter) noting the immense success and the furore the Spanish Students were creating, organized and banded themselves under the

leadership of a noted violinist, and formed a spurious Spanish Student organization.

This fraudulent organization took the name of Figaro Spanish Students, adopted similar costumes, and actually took the personal names of the members of the original students. On one occasion, in their travels about the country, the rival organizations happened to meet in the same town, and for a time the warm blood of the Spaniards and Italians came nearly provoking a personal encounter. The Italians used Neapolitan mandolins and also made a great success, and when the original students left this country, the "bogus" ones, after disbanding, settled in various parts of the country.

There were a few mandolins owned by these Italians, and other Italians coming here from Italy to settle permanently, brought their instruments. American tourists returning from Europe also brought mandolins, and in this way the Neapolitan mandolin slowly but surely gained a foothold in America. After a time this most beautifully shaped instrument of the lute family, with its beauty of form, made friends for itself quite as quickly as musicians came to learn of the exquisite melody which could be extracted from it. The quality of the wonderfully sweet tones that were evoked from the silver strings appealed to the sympathies and touched the soul of music lovers.



Neapolitan Mandolin.

Hector Berlioz, in his "Modern Instrumentation and Orchestration," places the mandolin among legitimate instruments, and does right in doing so.

The serenade in Mozart's Don Giovanni, "Deh Vieni," was written to be accompanied by mandolins. Beethoven, too, wrote a piece for the mandolin, and the autograph is preserved in the volume of manuscripts, sketches, and fragments in the British Museum, and is entitled "Sonatina per il Mandolino." Beethoven's friend, Krumpholz, was a mandolin virtuoso, and the writing of this piece was probably due to that fact. The serenade in Verdi's "Otello" is also written for mandolins.

The writer had the good fortune to hear the first production of Niccola Spinelli's new opera, "A Basso Porto," at the Teatro Costanzi, in Rome, on March 11th, 1895. It was a great musical event, the King and Queen of Italy and the nobility of Rome being present. The plot is very tragic, love and jealousy, somewhat on the style of "Cavalleria Rusticana." It created a great success, the music and orchestration being very fine. The most effective and taking number was the mandolin solo written especially for the opera by the composer and performed by the celebrated mandolinist of Rome, Sig. G. B. Maldura, accompanied by the orchestra. It was received with great success, several encores being demanded.

Although the mandolin originated in Italy (deriving its origin from the ancient lute played with the plectrum), in fact up to the last score of years being almost unknown outside its borders, it is only within the past twenty-five years that it has become so popular there.

All Sig. Samuel Adelstein, Ricordo d'Amicizia,
Guiseppe Bellenghi,
Florence.

From an old programme given to the writer by Signor G. Bellenghi, the eminent composer of Florence, it is announced that an "Straordinario Concerto" (extraordinary concert is to be given at the Salla Filarmonica via Ghibel-

lina No. 83, Firenze, Monday, May 10th, 1880, by the violincellista and mandolinista Guiseppe Bellenghi. The principal number on the programme is the playing in unison of ten mandolins and eight guitars, who played "Reverie" and "Fiorintinella" polka, both of which are looked upon as quite easy now.

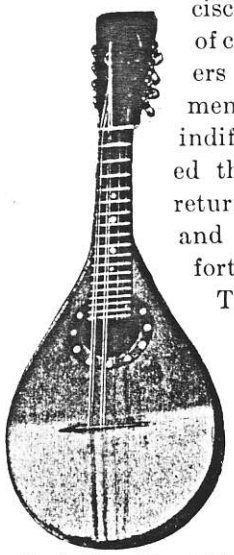
But the mandolin has become extremely popular in Italy and from the poorest ragamuffin to the highest in the land, the Queen, the instrument is played by all classes. From its favor in the Royal family, it has become the chosen instrument of the nobility. There are Circolos composed of the best musicians in all of the large cities, and at stated intervals, the players from the North with their Milanese or Lombardy mandolins, those from the center of the country with their Roman mandolins, and the mandolinists from the South with their Neapolitan instruments come together in friendly rivalry to have their Concorsos or contests as to who shall possess the coveted Gonfalone or silken banner of merit.

In Naples and vicinity one hears mandolins and guitars all day and nearly all night. All of the incoming and outbound steamers in the Bay of Naples are surrounded by these musicians in their small boats, playing their popular tunes, one of their number holding his hat or outspread umbrella to catch the centissimo that are thrown by the passengers. At the principal hotels in Naples the traveler is serenaded at all hours of the night by these itinerant street minstrels, and in the tourist season it is often difficult for one to have an undisturbed night's rest.

On the steamer from Naples to Capri, with its celebrated Blue Grotto, there was a trio of two mandolins and guitar who played and sang their beautiful Neapolitan airs, "Santa Lucia," "Addio ma bella Napoli," "Funiculi Funicula," "Oh Margherita," etc., etc. On the journey over the azure waters of the Bay of Naples, with the city, Mt. Vesuvius and Pompeii in the background, passing charming Castellemare, lovely Sorrento, with beautiful Capri in the distance, the effect of the music on the water, with these romantic surroundings, was so exquisite that one wished he could listen to it forever.

At the Hotel Tramontana in Sorrento, there is a splendid group of Tarantella dancers, who dance to the music of an excellent mandolin orchestra.

About seventeen years ago it was almost impossible to procure a mandolin in San Francisco. It was considered a sort of curiosity, and the local dealers looked upon the instrument with a sort of apathetic indifference. Those who owned them had them brought by returning friends from Europe, and were looked upon as very fortunate individuals indeed.



Writer's First Mandolin
(Flat Back.)

The writer remembers attending a musicale where a mandolin solo was announced. All present were filled with curiosity and wonderment as to how the instrument would sound as a solo. The performer played a very simple air with an execrable tremolo, but the listeners thought the music beautiful. The writer went to a local music store next day to inquire about the instrument, but the only one in stock was a so-called mandolin with a flat back like a guitar, of home manufacture. The clerk knew nothing about it, but by chance the instrument happened to be in tune. The writer, who had played the violin for a number of years, examined it, and in a few moments, to his surprise and delight, found he could finger it without any effort.

In 1887, the late Señor Luis Romero and the writer formed the first mandolin club ever organized on the Pacific Coast. It was named "La Lira de Orfeo" (The Lyre of Orpheus). It was composed of mandolins, guitars, violin, and cello. The organization gave its first concert May 24th, 1888, under the direction of Señor Arrillaga, an eminent pianist. At the concert the following club numbers were rendered:

"Serenade Valse Espagñole".....Metra
"Bella Mazurka".....Waldteufel
"El Turia Waltz".....Granado

"Pizzicati," from Sylvia..... Delibes
"La Gachupina," Cuban danza..... ...Arrillaga
"A los toros" (Ho! to the bull fight).....Arrillaga

In 1885, the writer composed and published "Ill Mandolina Mazurka Espagnole." It was the second original mandolin composition published in America up to that time. This fact is mentioned to call attention to the enormous amount of mandolin music that has since been issued and is being published from time to time.

Since then there have been great strides in point of degree of style and difficulty in mandolin music published in this country. Abt, Siegel, Pettine, Leon, and others, have advanced the duo style of mandolin music. These, with the compositions of Mezzacapo, Christofaro, Pietrapertosa, Jules and Alfred Cottin, Patierno, and Talamo of Paris, Munier, Sylvestri, Bellenghi, Rovinazzi, Branzoli, Graziani-Walter, Matini, and many others of Italy, give such a wide range of mandolin music that one has but to pay his money and take his choice.

From the beginning the writer had applied the down and up bow of the violin to the mechanism of the plectrum movements on the mandolin. Not being satisfied with the result of this self-taught style of playing, and at that time there being no one of acknowledged authority on this most important point (of which more will be said later), the writer determined to go to Italy, the home of all true knowledge pertaining to the mandolin. He made his initial trip in 1890, first going to Paris, where he met Sig. Pietrapertosa. The writer attended a concert given by him where ten mandolins and two lutes performed the serenade from Boito's "Mefistofle." (A few months ago Sig. Pietrapertosa, Fils, composed and dedicated to the writer, "Guillaume Tell," Fantasie Brilliante, for two mandolins, mandola, lute, cello, flute, guitar, and piano.)

A Samuel Adelstein, Souvenir de Sympathique,
J. Pietrapertosa, Fils,
Paris.

The writer went on to Italy with letters of introduction to friends in Florence. He became acquainted with Bellenghi, Munier, Graziani-Walter, Matini, D'Ageni, of Florence; Branzoli, Conti, Tartaglia, of Rome; Raffaele and Nicole Calace and Della Rosa, of Naples. They are among the foremost mandolinists of Italy, and at that time were astonished and expressed surprise that one should come so far for instruction. In Florence, in April, 1890, the writer had the great pleasure of hearing the Royal Circolo Mandolinisti Regina Margherita. (Mandolin clubs are called Circolo in Italy). This Circolo was founded in March, 1881, and has, without interruption, given about one hundred and fifty concerts to the present date. It is under the exalted patronage of Her Majesty, Queen Margherita, after whom it is named. The Queen is an expert performer on the mandolin and has an instrument valued at fifteen hundred dollars.

Queen Margherita.

The Circolo gave a special rehearsal for the writer before he left Florence. The night before the writer's departure, the leading mandolinists tendered him a farewell banquet at the famous Capitani Restaurant.

Each guest brought his instrument, and after a bounteous and delightful repast performed on their mandolins, mandolas, lutes and guitars. Signors Munier, Parini, Matini, and Bizzari performed one of Beethoven's string quartettes on two mandolins, mandola and lute (1st and 2nd violin, viola and cello) in a manner that was a revelation to the writer. One could scarcely believe that such music could be performed with such charming effect on these instruments.

All Amico Professore Samuel Adelstein,
Leo D'Ageni,
Florence.

During this visit Signor C. Graziani-Walter presented the writer with a manuscript copy of his beautiful transcription of Gastaldon's famous melody, "Musica Proibita," for two mandolins, mandola, violin, cello and harp; and Signor D'Ageni composed and dedicated to the writer "T'Amo" Romance sans Paroles, for two mandolins, mandola, flute, cello, guiter, lute and piano.

When the writer first heard the Royal Circolo Mandolinisti Regina Margherita in 1890, there were about seventy members, ladies and gentlemen. But at the Genoa National Exposition in 1892, at the first Nazionali Concorso Mandolinistico (national meeting or concourse of mandolinists) ever held in Italy, there were only forty-five members (evidently their best players). On this occasion their instrumentation was: twenty-four Neapolitan and Roman mandolins, nine Lombardy mandolins, one Lombardy lute, seven guitars, two harps, one cello, one harmonium or organ, timpani or kettle-drums.

Signor Ricardo Matini was the leader (Sig. Matini has composed and dedicated to the writer, "Souvenir di Firenze," Notturno for two mandolins, mandola, guitar and piano). Associated with the Circolo were the best performers in Florence. The Circolo presented to the writer a large photo, 19 x 22 inches, of those taking part in this concorso. It is inscribed "Al Professore Samuel Adelstein, San Francisco, Cal., U. S. A., Insegno di affetuoso ricordo Il Presidente Leonida Giovanetti." It contains the autographs of Guido Bizarri, Luigi Bianchi, Ricardo Munier and Carlo Munier.

All of the prominent mandolinists and mandolin Circolos participated in this concorso, and the first gold medal of the first grade and gonfalone or silken banner were awarded to the Royal Circolo Mandolinisti Regina Margherita. On the photo is printed the names of all those taking part, and on the top is printed, "R. Circolo Mandolinista Regina Margherita, Premiato con Medaglio d'ora di i° Grado e Gonfalone al 1° Concorso Nazionali di Genoa, 1892." In 1897, the writer received from Signor Carlo Graziani-Walter, who was the leader of the Circolo at that date, a programme of the one hundred and thirty-eighth concert. The programme states that the concert is to be given by the Circolo at the Royal Teatro Salvini, in Florence, on May 31st, 1897, in the presence of the King and Queen and the

Affezionati, Samuel Adelstein, Ricardo Matini, Florence.

1 2 3 4 5 6

ROYAL CIRCOLO MANDOLINISTI REGINA MARGHERITA.

1—Guido Bizzari. 2—Luigi Bianchi. 3—Carlo Munier. 4—Cav. Leonida Giovannetti. 5—Ricardo Matini. 6—Amerigo Parini.

Royal Court. Perhaps it may interest THE CADENZA readers to know the Circolo part of the programme. They were all Signor Carlo Graziani-Walter's compositions and directed by the composer, one of the most celebrated writers for the mandolin in Europe:

A Estimo Professore Samuel Adelstein,
Carlo Graziani-Walter,
Florence.

1. Grand Fantasia from Norma.....Circolo
2. L'Esule, cello solo, accompanied by the Circolo.
3. LeggendeVeneziana, Scena Romantica, duet for soprano and tenor, accompanied by a chorus and the Circolo.
4. Suite Villageoise (4 movements)Circolo
   (1) Il Mattino.
   (2) Dolce Incontra.
   (3) Gita in barca.
   (4) Il bachetto.
5. La Boheme (Puccini).....Circolo

The programme is given to show the great strides in the style of music from the time of Signor Bellenghi's announcement of his "Straordinario Concerto" of 1880. (The "Suite Villageoise" was composed and dedicated to the writer by Signor Graziani-Walter, and the original manuscript score presented to him by the author. It is written for two mandolins, mandola, flute, violin, cello, guitar, harmonium, harp, timpani and piano.)

The writer heard an excellent Circolo in Naples, under the direction of Signor Nicole Calace, a very fine mandolinist. With this Circolo are associated Signor Francesco Della Rosa, a famous mandolinist, and Signor Raffaele Calace, the greatest luteist in the world. Fratelli Calace (Calace Brothers) are noted in the mandolin Circolos of Italy. Signors Calace and Della Rosa performed a mandolin duet for the writer that was a wonderful exhibition of skill and perfection of finish. Signor Nicole Calace has composed and dedicated to the writer "Via Lattea," for two mandolins, mandola, guitar and piano; and also presented the original manuscript to him. (In Europe the presenting of original manuscripts by authors is considered a special mark of favor.)

Souvenir Sympathique a mon Ami Samuel Adelstein,
Jules Cottin,
Paris.

While only eleven years ago the mandolin was just coming into vogue in Paris, and the largest orchestra (then under the direction of Signor Pietrapertosa) consisted of but ten or twelve mandolins; a letter received in June, 1899, from Alfred Cottin (of the celebrated brothers, Jules and Alfred Cottin, mandolinists, guitarists and composers) informs the writer that a mandolin orchestra consisting of fifty-eight executants, under the direction of his brother Jules and self, performed the composition, "Alborada" Aubade Sevillane (which has been composed and dedicated to the writer by Alfred Cottin). The instrumentation was: fifteen 1st mandolins, four 1st mandolas, three lutes, one contra bass guitar, two cellos, fourteen 2nd mandolins, four 2nd mandolas, fourteen guitars, and one double bass viol. At this concert there were present the famous French musicians, Dubois, Thomè, Salvayre, Wekerlin and others, and they pronounced the effect "ravishing." At the same concert there were performed several morceaux for eight guitars in unison.

The mandolin furore has even spread to the Orient. While in Cairo, Egypt, in 1895, the writer attended a concert given at the Continental Hotel, on January 28th, by Prof. J. Pugliese, an excellent mandolinist, assisted by the Cercle "Le Sphinx," consisting of twenty mandolins, one mandola, three guitars, one contra bass viol. The following are the mandolin numbers:

1. Piedigrotta 94.....Pugliese
   Cercle "Le Sphinx."
2. Mandolin Solo—Grande Concerto, Op. 104..De Beriot
   Prof. Pugliese.

3. Serenade Espagnole.....Pugliese
Chevaleri Rustique.....Mascagni

Quintettes for two mandolins, one mandola, one bow zither and one guitar.

4. Overture.....Suppé

Quintetto.

5. Il Sogno, melodie.....Palloni

Soprano solo with mandola obligato

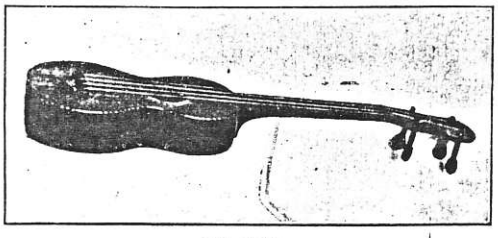
6. La Gran Via, Potpourri.....Pugliese

Cercle "Le Sphinx."

Twenty mandolins, one mandola, three guitars, one contra bass viol, tambour de basque et castagnettes.

The admission was forty piasters, or $2.00.

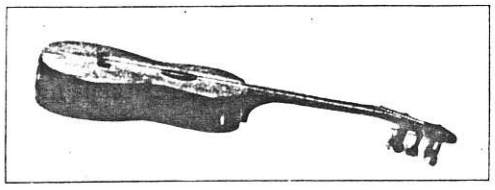
In February, 1891, the writer gave a concert in Metropolitan Hall, the largest in San Francisco, and played a mandolin solo accompanied by the largest pipe-organ in the city. Nearly all thought that the mandolin would not be heard in such a large hall, with such an unheard-of accompaniment, but the organist managed the stops in such a skillful manner that the effect was exquisitely beautiful. Another very effective number was Graziani-Walter's "Musica Proibita," performed as a quintette for mandolin, violin, flute, cello and harp. The writer has frequently played the offertory on the mandolin, accompanied by the organ, in the largest churches in San Francisco, and it has always been received with great favor. In 1892, the writer gave the first public mandolin recital ever given in Portland, Ore. In 1893, while on a vacation trip to Alaska, the writer gave a concert in Sitka, it being the very first time the mandolin had ever been heard in the far North. The summer days being so long, the programme began at 9 o'clock and closed at 11 o'clock. The lights were not lit, it being light enough to read a newspaper in the open air.



Ukelele.

In the Fall of 1893, the writer went to the Columbian Exposition to see the various collections of instruments. In 1894, the writer left for a tour around the world. His first stopping place was the Hawaiian Islands. He spent two months in Honolulu and one month in Hilo, where he visited the world-renowned volcano, which was in active eruption at that time. The writer was in Honolulu on July 4th, 1894, when the independence of the republic was proclaimed to the world.

The writer gave a concert at the Hawaiian Opera House (since burnt down and rebuilt) on Tuesday, July 17th, 1894. Also a concert at the Court House in Hilo, August 4th, 1894. The native Hawaiians are a musical people and passionately fond of music. The national instruments of the Hawaiians are the Ukelele and Taro Patch. A little description may interest guitarists and banjoists. The Ukelele and Taro Patch resemble very small guitars. The Ukelele is the smallest, being but twenty inches long and five and a half inches at its greatest width. Its neck and finger-board are six and a half inches long, and it has twelve frets. It has four gut strings, tuned A, E, C and G.



Taro Patch.

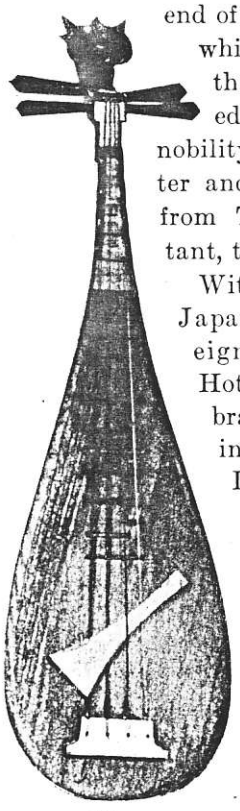
The Taro Patch is a little longer, being twenty-seven inches long and eight and a half at its greatest width. The neck and finger-board are nine inches long, and it also has twelve frets. The Taro Patch has five gut strings, tuned A, E, C, G and D. The reading of these tunings will doubtless sound very strange to musicians, but the peculiar combinations of chords produced on these instruments are only possible with these tunings.

The compass of the Ukelele and Taro Patch is very limited. They are principally used as accompaniments to the sweet, plaintive Hawaiian airs and melodies. Solos are hardly ever played. The right-hand movement is difficult to acquire. It is made somewhat in the manner of the imitation of the drum on the guitar, striking down with the backs of the fingernails and up with the soft part of the finger,

but all with a peculiar, rolling, circular movement of the right wrist. Nearly all of the native dances, Hula Hula, etc., are danced to songs accompanied by the Ukelele and Taro Patch.

The writer attended one of the finest society balls in Honolulu, where the orchestra was composed of native Hawaiians, dressed in spotless white and playing on their Ukeleles, Taro Patches, guitars and flute. They played and at the same time sang their beautiful Hawaiian airs, so that one danced to vocal music, the instruments being only for accompaniment.

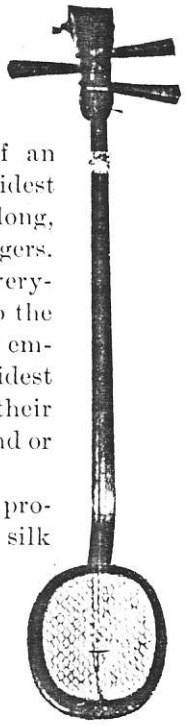
On the 4th of September, the writer sailed for Japan, arriving in Yokohama, September 15th. The writer gave a concert at the Town Hall in Yokohama, October 13th, assisted by local talent from the foreign colony residing in the settlement. Tickets of admission were $2, the concert beginning at 9 o'clock. Although the night was terribly stormy, it being the tail end of one of the awful typhoons which spring up in that part of the world, the hall was crowded. Many of the Japanese nobility and the American Minister and Legation came especially from Tokyo, eighteen miles distant, to attend the concert.



Biwa.

With other foreign ideas, the Japanese are now taking up foreign music. At the Grand Hotel, Yokohama, a Japanese brass band played every evening during the dining hour. Like everything else in foreign ideas, the Japanese are excellent for copying anything, even down to the minutest detail, but are not at all original (except in their own art and manufactures), and in this brass band their foreign (European) music showed no expression or soul.

It is a strange fact, but nevertheless true, that the Chinese and Japanese have instruments that are also played tremolo with a plectrum, and though loud and coarse, their musicians have acquired a tremolo that is remarkably true and even in its rapidity when one considers that on the Biwa the plectrum is of wood six and a half inches in length, and the part that comes in contact with the strings is very thin and two and a half inches wide in a straight line. The part of the plectrum that is held between the fingers is five-eighths of an inch wide and the same in thickness. The plectrum is the shape of an elongated letter V, with the widest part striking the strings, the long, narrow shank held in the fingers.



Chinese Samisen

As the Japanese do almost everything in an opposite manner to the foreigner, that fact is strongly emphasized in their using the widest end of the plectrum, while their Caucasian brothers use the round or pointed end.

The Biwa which the writer procured in Tokyo has four single silk strings. The frets are arranged in a very strange and unusual manner. The first four frets are convex. Then come four more frets about an inch apart, raised from the finger-board like the mandolin.

In general outline and shape the Biwa resembles the ancient European lute. As gunpowder and printing were invented in China, it would be interesting to know if our plectrum instruments of the present day originated in the dim ages of the musty past with our brother musicians of the Far East.

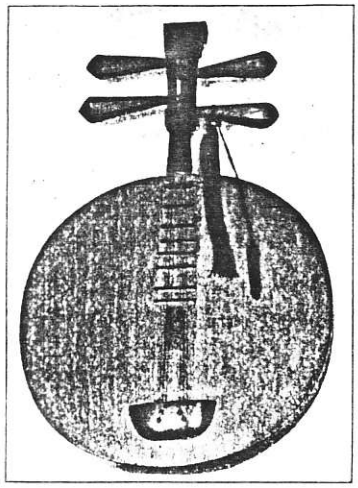
There are two kinds of Samisens, the Chinese and Japanese, that are somewhat similar. In the Chinese instrument the head is of snake skin; in the Japanese it is of parchment. The Chinese Samisen has a movable nut on the finger-board. Neither instrument has any frets. Both have three single silk strings, and both are played tremolo with the plectrum. The Japanese use a long slender piece of tortoise shell, two and one half inches in length, and about half an inch wide, rounded almost to a

Biwa. Koto. With a Japanese Samisen. Gekken.

A LÁ JAPONAISE, JAPAN, OCTOBER, 1894.

point; from the other end is attached a long silken cord and tassel about a foot and a half long.

The Chinese Samisenist uses a small three-cornered plectrum of tortoise shell like some of our American mandolinists. The writer has heard what seemed to be very difficult solos, as regards technic, by Japanese artists in Tokyo.



Chinese Gekken.

Of course, there is no melody to a trained Caucasian's ears, but the Japanese audience was very enthusiastic and repeatedly encored the soloists.

Then there is an instrument called the Gekken, which resembles a full flat moon in shape. It has two double silk strings and ten frets. It also has the same loose gong inside, like the Biwa. All of these instruments are played with plectrum tremolo. All have long wooden pegs that fit into the side of the head in similar manner to the violin.

On the eve of the writer's departure from Japan he was requested to play before the Royal family at a concert given for the benefit of the soldiers wounded in the Chinese-Japanese war (which was then going on) by the Red Cross Society under the direct patronage of the Imperial Court. The writer was also offered a position in the Royal Conservatory at Tokyo, but his Bohemian propensities drove him on around the world accompanied by his faithful friend and companion—his mandolin.

It accompanied him in all his travels, to Hong Kong, Canton, Macao in China. Over the China Sea to Saigon, Siam; to Singapore and Penang in the Straits Settlements; to Maulmein and Rangoon in Burma; over the Indian Ocean and Bay of Bengal to Calcutta, and across the heart of India, including Darjeeling in the Himalayas on the borders of Thibet, Benares on the Ganges, Lucknow, Agra with its wondrous Taj Mahal, Delhi, Lahore, Jeypore, and Bombay with its terrible Towers of Silence of the Parsees. Over the Arabian Sea to Aden; up the Red Sea and through the Suez Canal to Ismailia and Cairo; up the Nile beyond the First Cataract into the Soudan, back to Cairo and Alexandria, and then to Palestine, including Jaffa, Jerusalem, River Jordan, Jericho and Bethlehem, across the Mediterranean to Italy again, to return home by way of a tour of Spain and Morocco, including Gibralter, Ronda, Granada, Alhambra, Cordova, Seville and Tangiers.

In some of these countries the mandolin up to that time had scarcely ever been seen or heard before, and especially in the hands of a professional. Everywhere it was heard the mandolin made friends for itself and its owner. It served to pass many lonely hours and delighted many willing listeners. Everywhere it was remarked the surprising amount of tone power, yet so clear and sweet, that was brought from the little instrument. In the spring of 1895 the writer again arrived in Italy and renewed the pleasant associations of his former visit of 1890.

The violin is called the King of Instruments. The violin and mandolin are so similar that as Pietrapertosa truly says, the latter can lay claim to title of "Eldest Brother to the King." Also, that to a certain extent it is impossible to make a comparison between the violin and mandolin, although there is a certain analogy between the two instruments as regards the tuning, the compass and functions of the left hand.

With the mandolin, as with the violin, this hand has the responsibility of the finger-board, both as regards purity of tone and the rapidity of changing the notes. As the violinist, so must the mandolinist attach great importance to the left hand, which holds the instrument, its flexibility in changing from one position to another being of great importance. Because of the double steel wire strings and the raised frets, the mandolin requires much more physical exertion to properly press the strings to the fin-

A mon cher Ami et Confrere Samuel Adelstein,
J. Pietrapertosa,
Paris.

ger-board with sufficient force to produce clear, distinct tones. Many mandolinists, ignorant of the true weak points of their instrument, struggle doubly hard with high bridges, uneven thickness of strings, warped necks, crooked finger-boards, too high and uneven frets.

There are no such troubles as these with violins; the strings being of gut are soft and yielding to the touch. In portamento or striciato effects in going from one position to another on the same string, the violinist has a great advantage with his smooth unobstructed finger-board. As regards the right hand, although the bow of the violin plays a role for which there is no equivalent in musical mechanism, nevertheless the writer affirms that the plectrum of the mandolin requires much more dexterity of velocity and sentiment to constitute a finished and artistic musical execution.

From years of practical experience and observation and study of both instruments, the writer affirms that the mandolin is more difficult to master than the violin. With the beginner, with its sureness of playing in tune (because of its system of frets) the simple melodies make, apparently, a better showing with the general public. But as the mandolinist goes further on and delves deeper into the serious study of the instrument, with its extremely complicated mechanism, he will find depths that were unthought of, undreamt of, and will unearth beauties of harmony that will both surprise and delight and make him feel well repaid for his work.

With his ability to run off innumerable notes with one stroke of his bow, the violinist has the greatest advantage over the mandolinist, who must strike each and every note separately and distinctly with the different combination of plectrum movements, that are, to say the least, so bewildering to the uninitiated, and of which so little has been written to date.

Where violinists find it easy to finger the mandolin because of their knowledge of the violin finger-board, and its similarity to the mandolin finger-board, and after a time learn to master the tremolo, very few violinists who have not studied the true Italian system of the mechanism of the staccato or plectrum movements, ever learn to thoroughly master its technic.

The proper use of the plectrum is the most difficult part of correct mandolin playing, and it is the rock upon which many violinists (who take up the mandolin unaided) are wrecked in their desperate efforts to master its various intricate movements. In playing single stroke strains they apply the down and up bow movement of the violin (or sometimes all down strokes), not knowing or understanding that the mandolin, because of its double strings and plectrum, requires many different combinations of strokes to permit of smooth, clear rhythm and clear finish, especially in pieces that demand rapid execution.

After the accomplishment of the tremolo, these points are of the very highest importance. It is upon this most vital point that the French methods differ so radically from the Italian authorities. The writer speaks with personal and practical knowledge of both systems, having used the French system (the one used by nearly all violin mandolinists and others), for six years, and the Italian method for ten years. Time having proven the practical good results

gained, he has adopted the Italian system of mechanism of the plectrum.

The French methods will be spoken of first. In all the French instruction books the work and fingering of the left hand is excellent, but the all-important right hand work is neglected in some and entirely wrong in others. Christofaro, beyond marking a few triplets and short fragments, gives very little attention to it.

Cottin, in his excellent method, with few exceptions (and they are the exercises marked all down strokes) makes nearly all the rapid staccato movements as a violinist would down and up bow them. Some important exercises not being marked at all, if one were to stroke them in accordance with previous examples, one would acquire a stiff, jerky style of playing.

Pietrapertosa, in his fine method, has marked, without any exception, all of his rapid staccato movements, down and up strokes, without the least regard to flowing or rhythmic execution. In fact, Pietrapertosa, in his "Methode de Mechanisme," earnestly recommends the unchanging down and up strokes.

QUATUOR MEZZACAPO.

A mon cher Ami et Collegue le Professeur Samuel Adelstein,
Edouard Mezzacapo,
Paris.

The French methods as regards this all-important and least understood matter of the mechanism of the plectrum are literally nothing but violin methods.

M. Edouard Mezzacapo is the only one of the prominent Parisian mandolinists who uses and adopts the true Italian system of the mechanism in his original compositions. His

music is considered among the best of European writers for the mandolin. (M. Mezzacapo has composed and dedicated to the writer "Serment d'Amour" Romance sans Paroles, for two mandolins, mandola, guitar and piano.)

All' Egregio Sig. Samuel Adelstein,
Guiseppe Branzoli,
Rome.

The writer had the honor of reading the Branzoli method with the Maestro himself in Rome. The writer believes it is one of the original methods, if not the original authority on the modern Neapolitan mandolin published in Italy. It is the basis of all modern mandolin methods published in different parts of the world and the fountain head from which all derive the fundamental principles of the art. It has passed through several editions, the last being revised and amplified by the aged author but a few years ago. In it are many examples of the different plectrum movements.

About three years ago, Sig. Branzoli composed his excellent "La Scuola de la Velocita" in two parts. The first contains forty-eight exercises in velocity in all the major and minor keys with the different plectrum movements marked. The second is devoted to forty velocity exercises in the different positions.

Sig. Branzoli is a noted litterateur in Italy, being the author of several theoretical and practical treatises on scientific subjects, and a member of various scientific bodies in Italy. He is quite an elderly man, and the writer is the fortunate possessor of the last autograph photo sent from Rome in 1897. (Sig. Branzoli has composed and dedicated to the writer "Serenata" for two mandolins, mandola, guitar and piano.)

In Florence the writer had the great pleasure of reading with Sig. Guiseppe Bellenghi his celebrated and complete method, which took the silver medal at the Genoa Exhibition in 1892. This method has the most complete and exhaustive left hand work of any published in Europe. Sig. Bellenghi is one of the best and a very prolific composer, and also has the distinguished honor of being "Maestro onorario del R. Circolo Mandolinisti Regina Margherita di Firenze" (Honorary Director of the Royal Circolo of Florence.) His serious works are generally composed under his true name, G. Bellenghi. In writing works of a light character he generally adopts the nom de plume of G. B. Pirani. (Sig. Bellenghi has composed and dedicated to the writer, "Una Stella Serenata" for two mandolins, mandola, flute, cello, lute, guitar and piano, and G. B. Pirani has composed and dedicated to the writer "Do re mi fa" Polka Marcia for the same combination of instruments.)

All' Sig, Samuel Adelstein per Grati Ricordo,
Carlo Munier,
Florence.

The writer had the extreme good fortune of studying daily with Sig. Carlo Munier, the

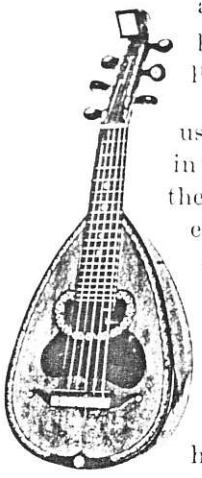
eminent mandolinist of Florence, who at the Genoa Exposition in 1892, took the first prize gold medal and diploma as the best "Mandolinista-Compositore." He is an honorary member of the Royal Circolo Mandolinisti Regina Margherita of Florence, and also of the Circolo in Palermo, and director of the Quartetto a plettro Fiorintino (Florentine Plectrum Quartette): Sig. Luigi Bianchi, 1st mandolin; Sig. Guido Bizzari, 2nd mandolin; Sig. Ricardo Matini, mandola; Sig. Munier, lute.

The writer had the rare privilege of reading with the maestro the manuscript of his new method, which was then about completed. With its large, complete and exhaustive system of plectrum mechanism and its following scale studies, it is one of the best of methods. What will some of our violinist mandolinists say, who know but two or three plectrum movements, when they are told that there are forty different examples in one part of the work ?

To the beginner and uninitiated the various bewildering combinations of movements (all correct, applicable and useful) are nerve-racking and brain-wrecking, until with slow, patient, careful study, one gradually gets into the swing of the different rhythms, and, after a time, that which at first appeared so confusing and puzzling, becomes clear and lucid, and then one realizes the true value of the Italian system of plectrum study as applied to the practical and satisfactory art of finished mandolin playing.

There are three kinds of mandolins used in Italy :—the Neapolitan, so popular in this country; the Roman and Lombardy mandolins; also a new style called the mandolira. Then there is the mandola, mandoloncello, or modern lute, and the liola. They will be described in their order. The Neapolitan mandolin is played in all parts of Italy and other countries of Europe, and is so well known in this country that it needs no description.

The Roman mandolin is used principally in Rome and the central part of Italy. Its body is shaped almost the same as its Neapolitan brother; the back of the neck tapers to a somewhat sharp edge. The head is thrown back at about an angle of forty-five degrees, some having wooden violin pegs (which makes the instrument very hard to tune), and others having keys on the side like a guitar. It is tuned and strung like the Neapolitan mandolin, the only radical difference is that the finger-board is rounded like the violin and extends on the E string side about an inch over the sound hole. The bridge is slanting, being considerably higher on the G string side, and slopes down to the E string. It has eighteen frets on the G and D strings; nineteen frets on the A string, and twenty-three frets on the E string. The D and G are of rough, copper wound wire, and the instrument is often played with a goose quill plectrum.

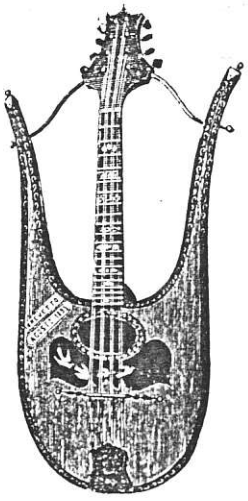


Lombardy Mandolin.

The Lombardy mandolin is used principally in Milan and in the Province of Lombardy, in the northern part of Italy. It is entirely different from the others. It is shorter and wider. It has six single strings, three of them made of gut and three of them covered silk. It is tuned G, D, A, E, B, G. The neck and head are of one piece. The six keys are made of wood like violin keys. Three are on each side of the head and thrust through it and turned the same as the keys on a violin.

The neck is shorter and wider than the Neapolitan and Roman mandolins. The instrument has twenty frets and a compass of three octaves and five tones. The spaces between the frets are concave. The sound hole is heart-shaped and the strings are fastened to the bridge like guitar strings. The back of the body is much shallower than the other mandolins. It is played with the plectrum.

Although a prettier appearing instrument, it does not compare in tone with the Neapolitan mandolin, as the single strings, being of gut and silk and about an inch and a half shorter than the other strings, they do not vibrate so clearly and sweetly as the double steel strings. Also because of the single strings, it is much harder to keep up an even vibrant tremolo

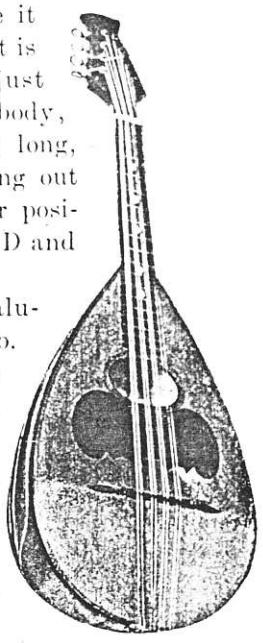


Mandolira.

with any degree of power and sonority.

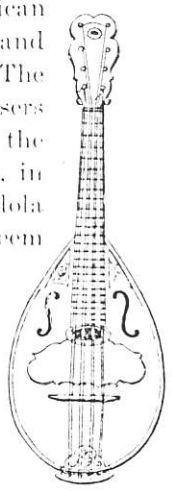
The mandolira is the recent invention of a Neapolitan manufacturer. The back is a perfectly round, bowl-shaped body with a flat top, with two outspread wings (like a lyre), each of which extends up toward the head and some distance from the neck. The heads of these wings are fastened to the head by curved steel rods. It is strung, tuned and fingered like the Neapolitan mandolin.

In fact, it is one of those freak shapes or models that different makers all over the world are trying to have improved on the old model. The maker claims "it is sweeter and more sonorous, and the tone superior to two mandolins played at the same time." To the writer's mind, its great advantage lies in the fact that all its twenty frets can be reached on a perfectly free neck. To make it plain, the twentieth fret is on the finger-board just where the neck joins the body, doing away with the long, cramped reaches to bring out the notes of the higher positions, especially on the D and G strings.



Neapolitan Mandola.

The mandola is invaluable in a mandolin club. Without it the club is thin and lacks body and depth. It makes a wonderful improvement in the general ensemble and greatly benefits the tone of all the other instruments. In some parts, if properly played, it produces beautiful effects, sounding somewhat like the human voice. To bring out the true mandola tone, the E and A strings should be of covered wire. The mandola in G sounds one octave lower than the mandolin. There has been some discussion among American writers as to the proper tuning and stringing of the instrument. The fact that all of the great composers of Italy and Paris write for the mandola in G (octave tuning), in fact writing the second mandola part in the same tuning, would seem to warrant that it was the best and most effective. Many of the American arrangers do not seem to understand the effective points of its compass, either writing too high or very often too low, either extreme not showing off the instrument at its best.



Petroni Mandolin.

Ancient Theorbo.

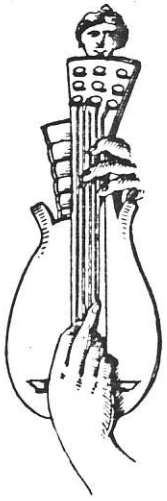
French Lute.

Ancient Lute.

Miniature Models.

The interest that has been awakened in late years in Italy in regard to the long-time neglected plectrum instruments has encouraged the manufacturers to reconstruct the ancient into the modern lute. Although much larger, the modern lute or mandoloncello (as it is sometimes called) is very much the same shape in general outlines as the Neapolitan mandolin.

The ancient lutes were differently constructed and differently tuned, some of them having eight single strings.

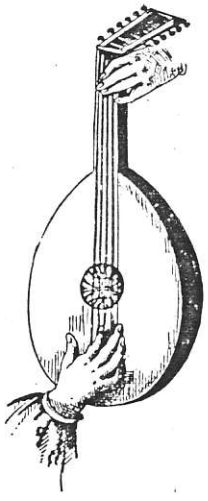


Lute, 1300.

The modern lute has five double strings, the other three being superfluous. The modern instrument as it is constructed and tuned, makes it possible to play more difficult music and to better interpret the classic composers.

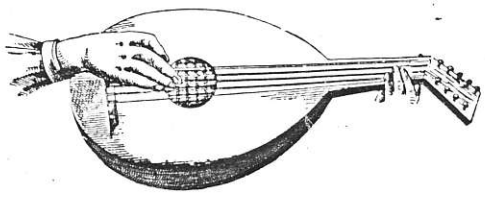
The lute, as it now stands with its five double strings, with its great compass of four octaves, beginning from C below the fourth line below the staff, and extending to C above the fifth ledger line above the staff, makes it possible to play music written in either bass or treble cleff. With its present extended compass, it completes the plectrum string quartet.

The lute has the deep, rich, resonant tones of the cello, and being played with the plectrum, it takes the place of that instrument in the plectrum quartet, and it is absolutely essential in trios, quartets, and other pieces of the same character. Violin string quartets are composed of first and second violin, viola and cello. Plectrum string quartets being made up of first and second mandolins, mandola and lute, make it possible to execute with great effect the string quartets of the old masters.



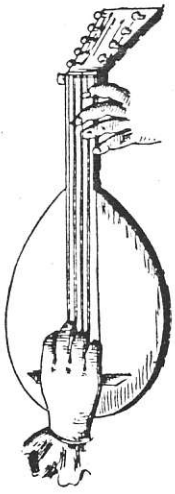
Lute, 1450.

Because of its mandolin mechanism (being played tremolo), the advantage of the lute in these concerted pieces is evident. There are several plectrum string quartets in Italy, the best one being the "Quartetto a plettro Fiorintino." The Florentine Plectrum Quartet of Florence is composed of the finest artists in that city, under the able direction of Signor Carlo Munier, who has presented to the writer several original manuscript copies of their quartets.



Lute, 1400.

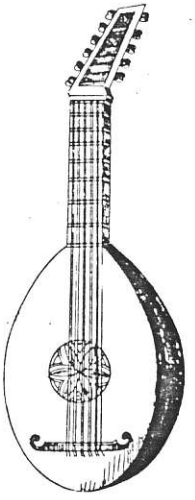
After the lute has become known in this country, and instruments easily procurable (it would be an excellent idea if some of our leading manufacturers would give the lute their serious attention), it is certain that it will not be very long before the lute will be considered an absolute necessity in a first-class mandolin orchestra, as the cello is now in the string orchestra. Because of its being played tremolo and its peculiar, sweet, sympathetic reverberant basso cantante singing tone, it gives a body and depth that can be compared to no other instrument. It binds together and wonderfully improves the ensemble of the entire mandolin orchestra. Cello parts can be used in the original cleff, although European composers are now writing special lute parts, and, in addition, special cello and bass parts, for mandolin orchestra.



Lute, 1350.

With its full, round, rich, sonorous tones, with their wonderful carrying power, rivaling the deep, vibrant, heart stirring tones of the cello, the lute will be the best known as a solo instrument. Mr. Valentine Abt, who heard the lute at the writer's studio, was charmed with its quality of tone. Mr. Farland, who visited the writer, said it was far superior to the mandolin. Everywhere the writer has played the lute, the instrument has been received with great favor.

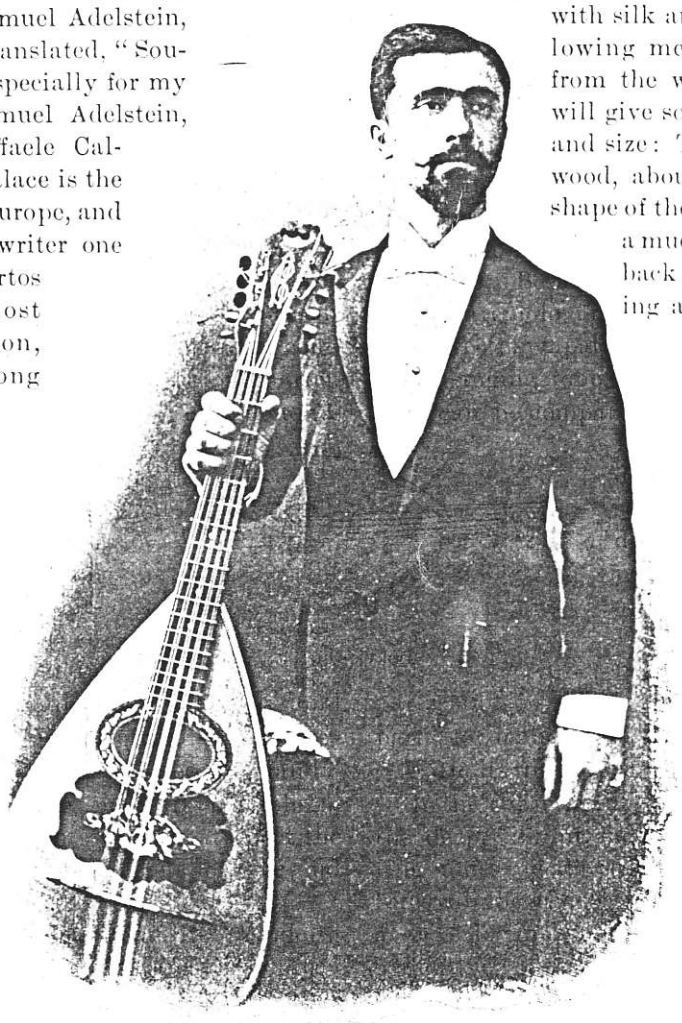
It is only within the last few years that the lute has been made in Italy, and ten



Lute, 1500.

years ago the writer brought the very first lute that ever came to this country. Five years ago, while on a second visit, the writer had another instrument made especially to order (a photo of this instrument accompanies this article) by Raffaele Calace, who inscribed in it "Raffaele Calace, Ricordo liuto fabbricante speciale per il carissimo amico Samuel Adelstein, 1895, Napoli." Translated, "Souvenir lute made especially for my dearest friend, Samuel Adelstein, Naples, 1895. Raffaele Calace." Signor R. Calace is the greatest luteist in Europe, and performed for the writer one of De Beriot's concertos on the lute, a most difficult composition, because of the long stretches and fingering such heavy strings; but the execution was faultless. (Signor Calace has composed and dedicated to the writer "Fantasie Caprice" for lute solo.)

After a few changes in fingering, because of the long stretches (as compared to the mandolin) between the frets, the lute can be easily mastered by a good mandolinist. The right-hand work is the same. In length it is about as long as a concert size guitar, but because of the shape of its body, it is somewhat awkward to hold at first. The player is obliged to cross his left knee. A lady should use a footstool for the left foot.



All Carissimo Amico Samuel Adelstein,
Raffaele Calace,
Naples.

The lute has five double steel strings tuned in unison. The first four strings are tuned E, A, D, G, one octave below the mandolin. The fifth string is C, corresponding to the lowest string on the violincello; that is the reason the lute is sometimes called the mandoloncello, also because the tone is so akin to the cello. The first or E string is steel, the A and D of covered steel, the G and C are of steel wound with silk and silver. The following measurements taken from the writer's concert lute will give some idea as to shape and size: The body is of rosewood, about the same general shape of the mandolin, only on a much larger scale. The back not so rounded, being a little shallower in proportion to its size. Its extreme length is 39 inches from end of head to pins. The neck is 10½ inches long. The finger-board and bridge are a little rounded, somewhat similar to the violin. The finger-board is 17 inches long. Its width at the saddle is 1½ inches; at its widest part (the 20th fret) it is 2½ inches. It has twenty frets, with an adjustable extension finger-board of four more frets on the E string, so arranged as to extend the compass of this especial lute to A on the eighth ledger line above the staff, giving this instrument a compass of four octaves and five tones. The distance between the first and second fret is 1⅜ inches, the others lessening in proportion as they ascend the scale. The length of the adjustable finger-board for the additional

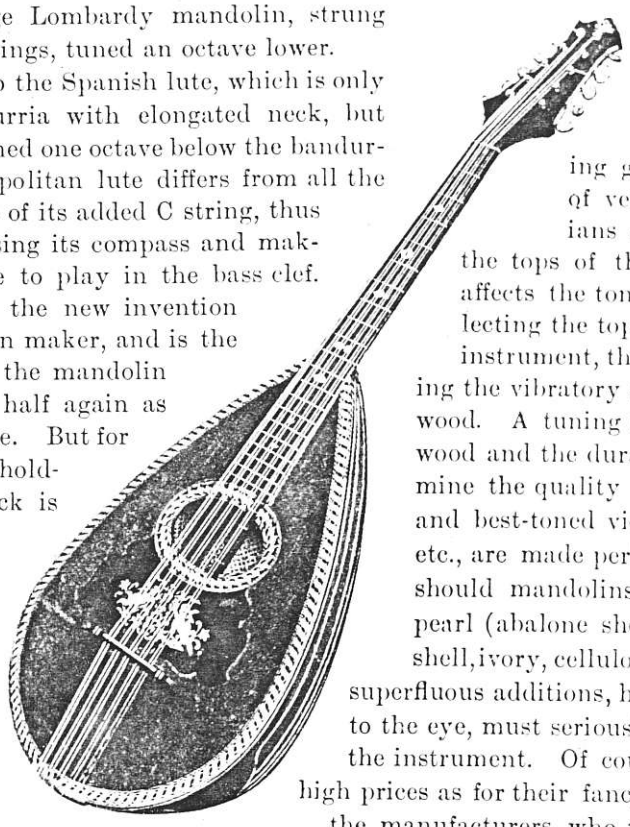
high notes on the E string is 3¼ inches. The length of strings from saddle to bridge is 24 inches. The length of top of body to where it joins the neck is 19 inches. Its greatest width of top is 12⅞ inches. Its greatest depth of body through from top of body to neck is 7 inches.

There are other makers in Naples who make lutes just a trifle shorter in general length, but with larger rounded bodies and perfectly flat finger-board. There is also a style made in Florence of same general measurements, with top of body on general lines of mandolin curves, but with flat back of guitar and violin F holes on side instead of open sound-hole of mandolin.

There is also the Lombardy lute, which is simply a large Lombardy mandolin, strung with heavy strings, tuned an octave lower.

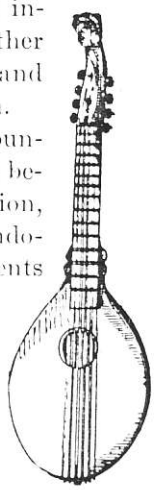
There is also the Spanish lute, which is only a large bandurria with elongated neck, but strung and tuned one octave below the bandurria. The Neapolitan lute differs from all the others because of its added C string, thus greatly increasing its compass and making it possible to play in the bass clef.

The liola is the new invention of a Neapolitan maker, and is the contra bass of the mandolin family. It is half again as large as the lute. But for convenience in holding it, the back is crushed or flat like the guitar. It is tuned and fingered like the contra bass, with four very heavy wound strings tuned A, D, G and C. It is fretted and played with the plectrum. Thus the mandolin family has all the instruments akin to the violin family. Violin—Mandolin; Viola—Mandola; Cello—Lute; Bass—Liola.



Modern Neapolitan Lute.
Property of the Writer.

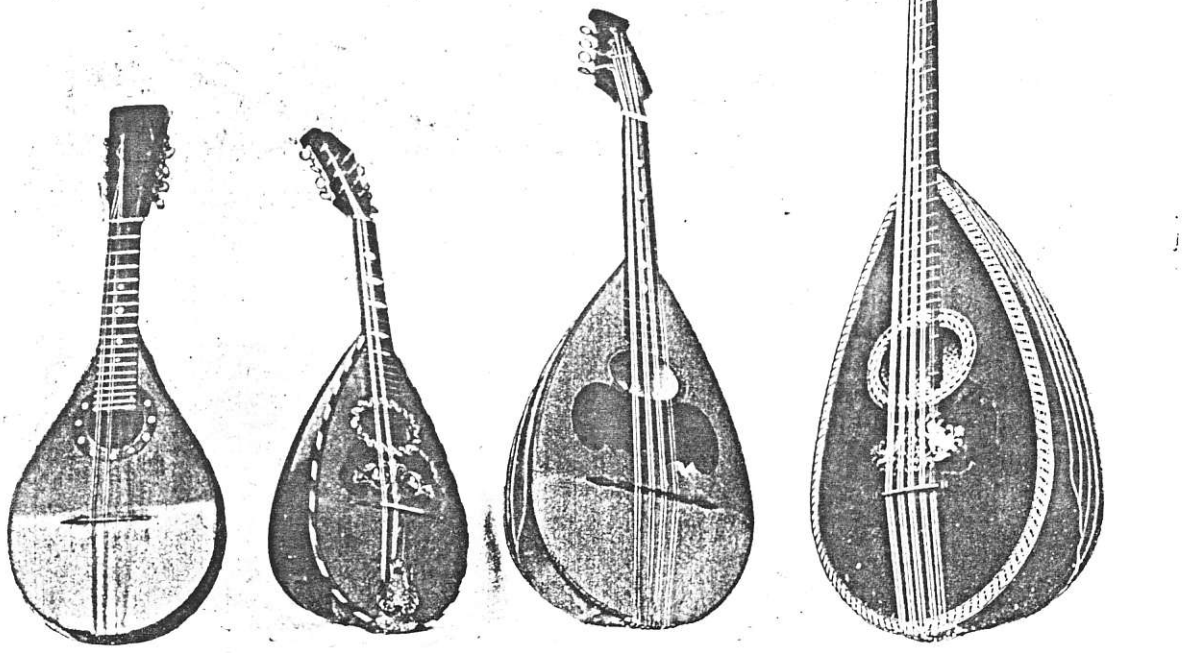
Up to recent times, the Neapolitan mandolin was strung with gut strings and had wooden pegs like the old-fashioned guitar. The instrument was imperfect in tone and the life of the strings was of short duration. The steel strings and modern machine head were invented by Pasquale Vinaccia, father of the present Vinaccia of Naples and perfector of the modern mandolin.



Stradivario Lute, 1700.

It may interest those in this country who value their instruments because of their profuse ornamentation, etc., to know that the Italian mandolin soloists perform on instruments perfectly plain in finish, not the least bit of inlaying or "gingerbread" being permitted. Their best-toned instruments are of fir top and maple body, the neck being generally made of veneered rosewood. The Italians do not believe in polishing the tops of their mandolins, believing it affects the tone of the instrument. In selecting the top before it is made up into an instrument, they have a curious way of testing the vibratory and resonant qualities of the wood. A tuning fork is sharply struck on the wood and the duration of the vibrations determine the quality and value of it. The finest and best-toned violins, cellos, guitars, zithers, etc., are made perfectly plain in finish. Why should mandolins be laden with mother-of-pearl (abalone shell), strips of metal, tortoise shell, ivory, celluloid, inlaid woods, etc.? These superfluous additions, however they may be pleasing to the eye, must seriously affect the tonal quality of the instrument. Of course they would not get such high prices as for their fancy, inlaid instruments, but if the manufacturers, who take so much pains in ornamentation, etc., would be more judicious in the careful selection and take more time in the slow seasoning of the wood, and pay more attention to the joining and finishing, there would be less complaint of absence of tone, and the resulting benefit would be of inestimable value for the reputation and standing of the tonal quality of the mandolin in the musical world.

Of course, there are some people for whose trade the manufacturers in this country (and also in Europe) are obliged to make fancy-finished, inlaid, etc., instruments. There are some manufacturers in Italy who will make to order fancy instruments with ornamentations running up into the hundreds of dollars if the purchaser wishes it. But they also make another style perfectly plain, without the least ornamentation (even the rosette being of ebony), of maple; these are called solo concert mandolins, and are made to order especially for soloists. It would be a most excellent idea for some of our leading manufacturers to follow; and there is not the least question



Flat Back Mandolin. Neapolitan Mandolin. Mandola. Lute.

Plectrum Family.

that a mandolin made carefully, of specially selected wood and entirely plain in finish, would have a far superior tone as to sweetness, quality and carrying power than the same instrument bedecked and loaded down with metal, ivory, abalone shell and colored woods.

One of the great drawbacks to most mandolins is their tonal quality. What they have in power and sonority they lack in sweetness and quality, and vice versa. It is seldom that one hears an instrument in which all these virtues are blended into one. Another great disadvantage the mandolinist struggles with is the limitation in the matter of choice of strings. The violinist with his string gauge has the privilege of selecting of the best Italian, Russian and German makers, rough and smooth, and can gauge the thickness of his strings to a nicety, allowing for every idiosyncrasy of his violin, thus smoothing over the weak and bringing out the strong points of his instrument.

The mandolinist whose instrument is so complex by reason of its being composed of so many different pieces, and being more delicate and susceptible to climatic changes, liability to warping, checking, etc., etc., (the mandolin is without doubt the "crankiest" of instruments to take care of), having hardly any choice, must be satisfied with what is given him. Some mandolins only sound to advantage when strung with thin strings, others require strings of medium thickness, and many instruments must have larger and heavier and particularly heavy D and G strings, to bring out their full tone, especially in solo work. The covered A string is not the success it was hoped for. The

covering is necessarily so thin that it wears off in a very short time, especially with continuous playing; the tone is not satisfactory, being nasal and dull, and lacking the brilliancy and life of a good steel string. It is one of the strange phenomena of the A string of most mandolins that while in continued forte passages on the E, D and G strings the instrument will stay in comparative good tune, it is most provoking to find that the A string will not stand in tune—one, or often both, will become sharp right in the middle of a passage. Violin strings, when they do get out of tune, flatten because of the expansion of the gut. Mandolin strings, being of steel, contract and become sharp. To prove this, place a violin in perfect tune, store it away for two or three weeks, more or less, then take it out. All the gut strings will be found flat, the G sharp (because of its metal covering contracting). Do the same with a mandolin, and all of the strings will be found to have become sharp. No matter what the makers may guarantee as to the strength and stability of the necks of the mandolin, there is such a tremendous strain of the eight short metal strings pulling from the head to the pins, that the instant one string breaks during the rendition of a solo, one might think that the soloist could keep on with the remaining unbroken string, but no; the breaking of that one string will, to a certain extent, relax the tension of the very strongest mandolin neck made, and in an instant all of the remaining strings will become sharp and it will be found impossible to finish the selection in good tune. Many beginners believe their instruments to be false and the frets untrue, and often good mandolins are condemned before a true knowledge of the defect is apparent. All mandolin bridges should be movable, and it will be found in many cases, if the instrument be sharp, especially at the fifths and octaves, moving the bridge a little backward (toward the pins, first unloosening the strings) thus lengthening the vibrations, and, if the instrument be flat, moving the bridge forward (toward the sound-hole), thus shortening the vibrations, will place the mandolin in comparatively good tune. Another complaint is the abnormal pressure required to press the strings to the fingerboard and the hard, unresponsive action of many mandolins, making it especially hard to use the fourth finger, particularly on the D and G strings. This is a serious defect, and is a drawback to facility and ease of execution and a hardship on the beginner. Generally this can be remedied by the instrument being taken to a good repairer. Sometimes it will be found that the saddle (the

Luteiste.

little bridge over which the strings pass between the head and finger-board) is too high. That can be easily remedied by cutting the grooves lower. Often it will be found that the bridge is too high. In that case, it must be cut lower. More often it is caused by a warping or bending of the neck, particularly at about the place where it joins the body of the mandolin. This is a very common occurrence, and when one thinks of the enormous strain and continuous tension of the unyielding short steel strings that are often changed from one pitch to another, and constantly pulling from the head to the pins, one will then realize that the mandolin must be made of the very best material, most thoroughly braced and blocked, and of the finest workmanship to withstand the strain, and it is only a matter of time when it will be found that even the very best instruments will have to be readjusted, and more especially when they are in constant use. A very good way to test the straightness of the neck is to press the strings hard down at the first fret next to the saddle and at the very last fret next to the sound-hole. If the neck is perfectly straight, it will be found that the strings will lay perfectly flat and touch all the frets from the first to the last. If the neck is crooked or warped in the least, the curve will generally show about midway down the finger-board, and the higher the strings are from the frets, the worse the warp. Generally speaking, this defect can be overcome by a good repairer.

Japanese Mandoliniste (Gekken).

Another common complaint is that while playing on a certain fret, the strings strike some other fret higher on the finger-board. In many cases this is easily explained and remedied. The frets are of brass or some other soft metal (generally German silver), and when first put in stand out at equal height from the finger-board. As much playing is done in the first position by many mandolinists, and especially beginners, it will be noticed that continuous playing wears little grooves in the first seven frets (particularly on the E and A strings). In time these become worn deeper and deeper, the frets above the seventh not being used very much and seldom on the D and G strings, stand out higher, as the others are worn down lower. Consequently, as the string is being pressed firmly down, say at the first or second fret, and presuming that the finger-board is perfectly straight and the bridge the right height, the strings, in being played upon, will almost surely strike on one of the upper frets. In that case one should have entirely new frets inserted up to the seventh. Sometimes the strings strike on the frets on new instruments. If a level be laid lengthwise on the finger-board, it will be found that the frets are inserted unevenly. In that event, have the frets filed and adjusted to the proper height. Sometimes in playing portamento, striciato, or glissando movements from one position to another on the same string, it will be found that the frets are so high and the edges so sharp that the skin is torn from the ends of one's fingers, and smooth playing is out of the question. Have the frets filed down as low as possible, seeing that the tops are smooth and the edges are rounded bevel-like. Be sure that when the frets are filed

down have the bridge lowered correspondingly.

Without the tremolo the mandolin as a musical instrument would have little value. Bellenghi truly says "that as the bow is the life of the violin, so is the tremolo of the mandolin, and the plectrum may well be called the tongue of the instrument." The ancient instruments were played with plectrums of pearl or ivory. The old gut-string mandolin was played with a goose quill (as is the Roman mandolin in certain parts of Italy to-day).

The modern steel-string instrument sounds best when played with a plectrum of tortoise shell highly polished and well rounded, which, owing to its elasticity, is superior to all. Celluloid, ivory, composition, silver, aluminum, etc., etc., are not as near suitable as genuine tortoise shell (to detect the counterfeit shell, apply a lighted match and it will blaze up instantly). The thickness must be rather heavy than light. Beginners have some difficulty in holding the plectrum with any degree of steadiness, it having a tendency to slip about. If the upper edge is slightly burned with a match, thus forming a little ridge, it will be found to be of great assistance in holding the plectrum with a certain degree of firmness and yet permitting of a limber wrist movement.

Munier says, and the writer agrees, "that one must not think that a light plectrum will render the tremolo easier." The pupil should accustom himself from the beginning with a rather heavy plectrum. The looseness of the wrist is only gained by continual exercise under the guidance and watchful supervision of a competent instructor. From the very commencement, it is strictly recommended that beginners use the greatest lightness, combined with firmness, in holding the plectrum, because to learn to acquire an even, clear, soft and sweet tremolo, rivaling the bowed tones of the violin, it is necessary and of the greatest importance to learn to play with lightness and delicacy, and not with strength. For the expression from piano to forte and vice versa from forte to piano, gradually hold the plectrum tighter for the crescendo and loosen the fingers very lightly for the diminuendo. One of the most beautiful effects of mandolin playing is the art to be able to express the melody with sweetness and grace, imitating the inflections of the voice that a well-trained singer uses. The pupil shows the benefit of good instruction when he knows how to play a phrase beginning the tremolo very lightly, without jerking the plectrum, and finishing it very softly, making the tone die away. It is very necessary to observe, though, that in the morendo the tremolo loses its loud sound, it must maintain the velocity till the end. In fact, the lighter one plays pianissimo, the greater the speed of the tremolo.

In moving the right hand nearer to the end of the finger-board, sweeter and softer tones may be obtained, while louder but less sonorous tones may be heard, by moving the hand by degrees nearer the bridge. Some beautiful effects may be thus produced by artists, but beginners should exercise the greatest care in moving the arm; otherwise there would be a great risk of moving the mandolin as well. The most satisfactory results are found in playing just over the edge of the sound-hole nearest the bridge. The different degrees of power of tone can be regulated by the sensitive pressure of thumb and index-finger upon the plectrum. Unfortunately, many people do not know how to play softly on the piano without the aid of the soft pedal, nor forte without the use of loud pedal. Up to within the past few years, many people have thought the tone of the mandolin thin and that it needed the background of an accompaniment to show it off to any advantage. The advanced school of American mandolin compositions, with its duo style of mandolin-playing, introducing double stops, pizzicato, melody with accompaniment trio and quartet form of playing, has extended the possibilities of the mandolin so that in the hands of an expert the instrument is practically complete, and in many compositions entirely independent of an accompaniment. Double-stop solos on the mandolin are very effective, and show off the instrument to great advantage, giving it twice the volume of tone and sonority. To acquire an even, clear, tremolo on both strings, requires considerable practice, but it well repays the study. Lange's "Flower Song," arranged by Gutman (dedicated to the writer); Faure's

A CORNER OF THE WRITER'S STUDIO.

"The Palms," arranged by Vincent Leon (dedicated to the writer), are excellent examples of double-stop solos, and when played with the proper phrasing are excellent and very effective solos with or without accompaniment. In the quartet style of playing, Abt's "Sounds from the Church" is an excellent example. The most effective and most beautiful form of composition that shows off the mandolin in a manner that was unthought of a few years ago, and which, although originating with the maestros of Italy, has been brought to its present high standard of excellence and perfection by our American composers, is the duo style. With all musicians who have heard examples of this style well played, it places the mandolin in an entirely different light, and brings out undreamt-of possibilities and opens a future for the instrument that will more than anything else give our beloved instrument the prominence it deserves in the musical world. This style is very difficult to perform, and requires a perfect tremolo and a thorough mastering of the finger-board in all its different positions; also a complete command of the instrument in its various mechanisms. But the result more than repays for the work and years of study, not alone in the approval of one's listeners, but the satisfaction and genuine pleasure it gives the soloist in the fact that in his hands the mandolin is a complete and independent instrument. The most beautiful and exquisite composition published in this style is Hauser's "Cradle Song," arranged as a duo for one mandolin by Valentine Abt. Other very effective numbers in this style are Abt's arrangement of Mendelssohn's "Spring Song" (dedicated to the writer), and "Souvenir de Haydn," arranged by Leon. Abt's "Impromptu" is the finest and greatest mandolin solo written; it can be truly called such because of its beautiful harmonies, its splendid arrangement, its perfect fingering, its varied movements, including the Maestoso introduction with its arpeggio cadenza, its wonderfully sweet Andante Sostenuto movement, with the exquisite harmonies (this particular movement is so beautiful that it would make a splendid solo of itself) so interesting; so fascinating to the performer, that one is tempted to repeat it while playing the piece in its entirety. This part alone establishes Mr. Abt's reputation as a genius in the art of composing for the mandolin and in his particular style he stands at present unrivaled among composers for the instrument. The Moderato movement of the "Impromptu," with the left hand pizzicato accompaniment, is truly original, and when smoothly and clearly performed it always excites wonder among one's listeners in hearing the clear melody played tremolo, with the fingers of the left hand picking an independent

Mandolinetta.

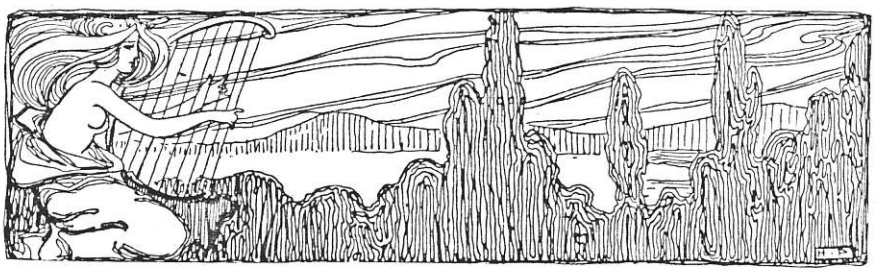
accompaniment. The Allegretto Moderato movement, with its full sweeping chords on three or four strings, with the staccato accompaniment of the D and G strings, makes the mandolin sound as though two or three instruments were playing at one and the same time. Indeed, in parts it sounds like a full orchestra.

The Grandioso movement with its introductory chords, whose clear tones are the best test of the worth of the soloist's instrument; showy, pyrotechnic Chromatique Rapido scale that requires to be firmly and clearly fingered, and the tremendously effective chords of the Presto Finale make Valentine Abt's "Impromptu" the greatest original mandolin solo that has ever been written, and had Mr. Abt done nothing else but compose the "Impromptu" and arrange "Hauser's Cradle Song" in duo form, he would be forever entitled to the gratitude of mandolinists the world over for having contributed two such numbers to the literature of the mandolin.

To properly learn the mandolin, one must have a good method or instruction book, and a conscientious, painstaking teacher. It is often asked if the mandolin cannot be learned without a master, and the answer is emphatically, No! It is a practical impossibility. One might succeed by dint of close study in picking out the notes and positions, but it is most difficult to acquire a good tremolo. Without a master it is impossible to acquire it perfectly. For the proper mechanism of the plectrum, it is absolutely necessary to study under the guidance and supervision of one who thoroughly understands its many different complicated movements. Many individuals, hearing the mandolin played and noting the apparent ease and elegance with which the finished mandolinist invests his playing, and not realizing the years of study and vast amount of work that was necessary to acquire and attain that proficiency, take up the mandolin without any special claim to continuity of purpose. But it is soon found that it is no easy task.

The mandolin is the embodiment of poetry and grace, and should be studied as one seriously takes up the violin or piano. At first slowly and with patience. Constant repetition of the scales and plectrum mechanism and an unceasing practice of the wrist, as the utmost flexibility is necessary, even to the execution of the simplest piece. Do not expect to become an expert performer in a few months—you will be disappointed. It is one of the most difficult instruments to master with any degree of proficiency. One must love the instrument and study conscientiously.

It is earnestly advised to cultivate the taste for the higher class of music, of which there is a large selection to choose from, and after a time of earnest practice and serious study, one has attained a certain degree of proficiency in his art, his acquaintance with the works of the great masters will repay him for the years of hard work.



List of Compositions that have been Dedicated to Mr. Samuel Adelstein.

ABT, VALENTINE (*New York*). . . . . "SPRING SONG," MENDELSSOHN, Mandolin Duo.

BARDUCCI, UGO (*Florence*), ... "GAVOTTA," Mandolin and piano. (*Presented with original manuscript.*)

BELLINGHI, GUISEPPE (*Florence*), . . . "UNA STELLA" CELEBRE ROMANZE, two mandolins, mandola, lute, cello, flute, guitar, and piano.

BRANZOLI, GUISEPPE (*Rome*), ... "SERENATA," two mandolins, mandola, guitar, and piano.

CALACE, NICOLE M. (*Naples*), ... "VIA LATTEA" NOTTURNO SENTIMENTALE, two mandolins, mandola, guitar, and piano. (*Presented with the original manuscript.*)

CALACE, RAFFAELE (*Naples*), ... "FANTASIA CAPRICIO." Lute solo.

COTTIN, ALFRED (*Paris*), ... "ALBORADA" AUBADE SEVILLANE, two mandolins, two mandolas, guitar, and piano.

D'AGENI, LEO (*Florence*), ... "BILLET D'AMORE" MELODIA, mandolin and piano. (*Presented with original manuscript.*)

"DICHIARAZIONE D'AMORE" MELODIA, mandolin and piano. (*Presented with original manuscript.*)

"T'AMO" ROMANZA SENZA PAROLE, two mandolins, mandola, cello, guitar, and piano.

GRAZIANI-WALTER, CARLO (*Florence*), . "SUITE VILLAGEOISE" VILLERACCIA, two mandolins, mandola, flute, cello, violin, guitar, organ, harp, piano, and timpani. (*Presented with original manuscript score.*)

"TOSCA" DI PUCCINI, FANTASIE DRAMMATICA, two mandolins, mandola, guitar and piano.

GUTMAN, F. O. G. (*Cleveland*), ... "FLOWER SONG," LANGE. Mandolin solo (double notes), with piano accompaniment.

LEON, VINCENT (*Brooklyn*), ... "PALMS," FAURE. Mandolin solo (double notes).

MATINI, RICARDO (*Florence*), ... "RICORDO DI FIRENZE" NOTTURNO, two mandolins, mandola, guitar, and piano.

MEZZACAPO, EDOUARD (*Paris*), ... "SERMENT D'AMOUR" ROMANCE SANS PAROLES, two mandolins, mandola, guitar, and piano.

PIETRAPERTOSA, JANVIER (*Paris*), . . . "GUILLAUME TELL" DI ROSSINI, FANTASIE BRILLIANTE, two mandolins, mandola, lute, cello, flute, guitar, and piano.

PIRANI, G. B. (*Florence*), ... "DO-RE-MI-FA" MARCIA POPOLARE, two mandolins, mandola, lute, cello, flute, guitar, and piano.

Autograph Manuscript Scores Presented to Mr. Samuel Adelstein by the Composers.

GRAZIANI-WALTER, CARLO, ... "MUSICA PROIBITA" CELEBRE MELODIA DI GASTALDON, two mandolins, mandola, violin, cello, harp, and piano.

MEZZACAPO, EDOUARD, ... "SERENADE BARCAROLLE," three mandolins, two mandolas, and guitar.

MUNIER, CARLO, ... "LOIN DU BAL," GILLET (PLECTRUM QUARTETTE), first and second mandolin, mandola and lute.

"REVERIE," SCHUMAN (PLECTRUM QUARTETTE), first and second mandolin, mandola, and lute.

List of Compositions and Arrangements by Mr. Samuel Adelstein, for Mandolin, Violin, Guitar, and Piano.

"BELLA" MAZURKA, ... *Waldteufel*
"FLOW'RET FORGET ME NOT" GAVOTTE, . *Giese*
"IL MANDOLINE" MAZURKA ESPAGNOLE.
"LA GRADADINA" MAZURKA, ... *Granada*
"LA PALOMA" SPANISH FANTASIE, . . . *Yradier*
"POMPONETTE,". . . . . *Durand*
"STEPHANIE" GAVOTTE, ... *Czibulka*
"UN BESO" MAZURKA, ... *Arrilaga*

Samuel Adelstein