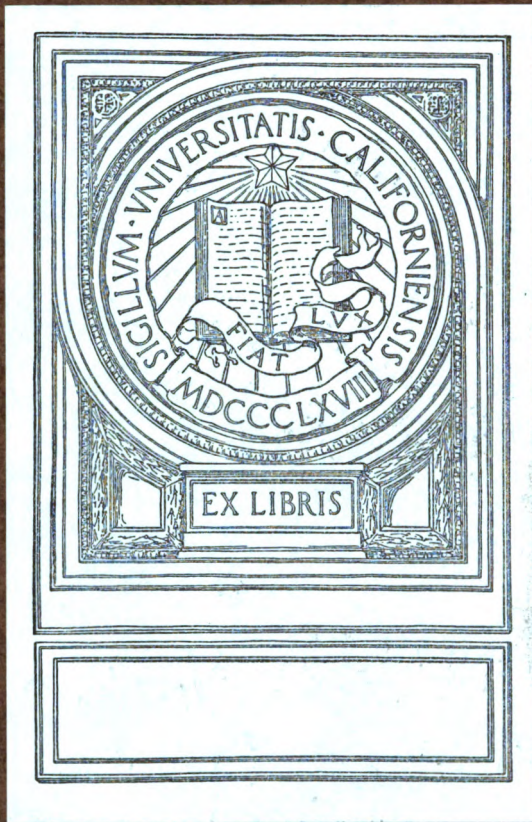


ML  
410  
D99V6

UC-NRLF



B 3 757 655



ccsd  
t. e.  
g.

Vojan,



DR. ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK



Drawing by Hugo Boettinger.

Published by

THE ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE



# ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK



By

Dr. Jar. E. Dojan  
" "

Published by  
THE ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE  
of The Czechoslovak National Council

ML 410  
D 99V6

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
LIBRARY

1999



Rusalka's theme from Dvořák's opera "Rusalka" (The Water Nymph).

The first day of May, 1904, the day of Dvořák's death, brought the first great epoch of modern Czech music to a close. The founder, Bedřich Smetana, died on May 12, 1884. Zdeněk Fibich who gave the finishing touch to the epoch died on October 15, 1900. Now Dvořák who brought it to its climax in symphonies and in chamber music passed.

Dvořák's life presents a story like a fairy-tale. A naive village boy, with a conjuror's wand in his hand, conquers the world. This wand is his genius, — whatever he touches, changes into charming melodies, dancing rhythms and great tonal architectures. Dvořák was a genius of spontaneous directness. In this respect he is related to Schubert with whom he has many things in common. Dvořák's wealth of inspiration is unique in Czech music. Hardly conscious of his wonderful power, he proved that even in this aged world a creative innocence, untainted by scrupulosity and struggles of knowledge, was possible. Smetana and Fibich were fighters, — Dvořák is a Czech musician raised by the gods to the sphere of the highest Art. He goes through life as a herald of the Goddess of Beauty who guides his creative hand. And America is indebted to him forever for the best symphony ever written in this country, the splendid symphony "From the New World."

Antonín Dvořák was born at Nelahozeves upon Vitava, a small village not far from Prague, on September 8, 1841. His father Frank was the village butcher and

innkeeper who when Antonín was 13 years of age moved to Zlonice, a little town three miles from Nelahozeves. At Zlonice Antonín found a good music teacher in the old schoolmaster Antonín Liehmann who taught him elementary theory, violin, viola, piano and organ playing. He called his father's attention to the great talent of Antonín, but the financial conditions of the innkeeper were so bad that he could not make any other decision than to make the son his successor. So Antonín became a butcher's apprentice for two years and on November 2, 1856 was declared a regular butcher journeyman. Next year Liehmann renewed his insistence, uncle Zdeněk promised financial support, and the father allowed Antonín to go to Prague.

In the fall of 1857 the 16-year old boy entered the Organ School in Prague. The New York critic H. E. Krehbiel wrote 35 years later: "The fate which gave the world an eminent composer robbed Bohemia of a butcher." Let us remember that the President-Liberator of the Czechoslovak Republic Thomas Garrigue Masaryk was at the age of fourteen a blacksmith's apprentice.

In Prague Dvořák earned his livelihood by playing the viola in Komzák's private band which in 1862 became the nucleus of the Interim Theater orchestra, the conductor of which Smetana became four years later. Thus Dvořák was the first viola player in the orchestra at the first performance of Smetana's "Bartered Bride" on May 30, 1866.

In 1862 Dvořák began to compose, but he had to wait till 1873 for Fortune's smile. On March 9, 1873, his first great success was won by a patriotic cantata for mixed chorus and orchestra. The words were supplied by Hálek's poem "**The Heirs of the White Mountain**" (site of the battle in which the Czechs lost their independence on November 8, 1620). The same year Dvořák married his pupil Miss Anna Čermák and became organist of St. Adalbert's church, with a yearly salary of 126 florins (\$50.00). In February, 1875, a brighter star appeared in the sky for the striving composer. He received 400 florins (\$160.00 at that time) from the governmental fund for the encouragement of talented composers of limited financial means.



In 1877, when Dvořák applied for the third time for this state stipend, he enclosed his "**Moravian Duets**", delightful little compositions for two sopranos, one of the most characteristic and most poetic works he ever wrote. These 15 duets composed on the words of Moravian folk songs are of an irresistible charm, and no wonder that the great composer Johannes Brahms, one of the jury deciding the stipends, was so fascinated by them that he recommended them to his publisher Simrock in Berlin for publication. Simrock published them in 1878, but simultaneously asked Dvořák to write for him some piano compositions after the manner of Brahms' "Hungarian Dances." On March 18, 1878, Dvořák began to write his "**Slavonic Dances**" without any presentiment that they would mean his world fame. The last of these eight compositions was finished on May 7. Simrock published them at once, and "Slavonic Dances" took the public by storm. These pianoforte duets, full of glittering melody and ravishing rhythm, enraptured Germany and England and in orchestral form found their way into the concert halls of all countries. Theodore Thomas brought them forward in New York in the winter of 1879-1880. Dvořák's name became known to the entire musical world.

Dvořák was the first of modern Czech composers who became famous abroad. One of the reasons for this success of Dvořák lies in the general situation of European music at the end of the 19th century. Europe was becoming tired of the crushing pathos of Wagner's music. In France the reaction was led by Debussy, while Germany and England hailed Dvořák who combined the seriousness of his artistic aims with a spontaneous simplicity in music, and who therefore was appreciated as a fresh and sound relief from one-sided Wagnerism. Dvořák was not opposed to Wagner, he was simply different. He formed a welcome complement to the rest of the music of those days, supplying a need unconsciously felt by the public.

Dvořák was a real man of the people, his music has all the vigor and directness of folk-music. Further he had a passionate and lively temperament which had something elemental in its dash. It was the temperament of

the joy and passion of the common people, hence the characteristic rhythms of Dvořák in his "Slavonic Dances" which cannot fail to create an instant interest and impression. Upon urging of the publisher Simrock for whom "Slavonic Dances" became a gold mine, Dvořák wrote another series of eight "Slavonic Dances" in June and July, 1886. All these 16 "Slavonic Dances" (opus 46 and 72) are now available in the authentic interpretation of the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra in Prague, conducted by Václav Talich, RCA Victor Records, albums M-310 and M-345. The Victor commentator says: "Their appeal is general. To the average music lover they are the quintessence of melodic beauty and infectious rhythms; and to the musical sophisticate they afford added interest in their richness of orchestral color and a style of interweaving of thematic material that is distinctive of Dvořák."

In 1876-1877 Dvořák wrote his monumental work, the grandiose oratorio "**Stabat Mater.**" In this composition two tragic experiences (Dvořák's first son died in September and his second daughter in October, 1877) found their echo. This oratorio, performed at Royal Albert Hall in London on March 13, 1883, Joseph Barnby conducting, won entirely the sympathies of the English public. Dvořák was invited to come to London and to conduct his work personally. This first visit of Dvořák in England was a great triumph. "Stabat Mater" sung by 840 singers at Albert Hall before an audience of 12,000 on March 13, 1884, was followed by two more concerts, March 20 at St. James Hall and March 22 at Crystal Palace, where the overture "**Husitská**", **Symphony in D Major**, "**Slavonic Rhapsody No. 2**" and "**Scherzo capriccioso**" were performed. Tenor Winch also sang some of the "**Gypsy Songs**".

"The Hussite Overture", a dramatic overture for great orchestra, was written in one month (Aug. 9-Sept. 9, 1883) at Dvořák summer home Vysoká near Přeborn. Dvořák's brother-in-law, Count Václav Kounic, who married Josephine Čermák, sister of Mrs. Dvořák, sold him a piece of land at his estate, and Dvořák who felt very happy at Vysoká wrote there many of his compositions, among others also the famous "**Humoresque**" (dated

"Vysoká, August 16, 1894"). Here Dvořák could also indulge in his hobby: the breeding of pigeons.

Two main themes of the "Husitská" are the opening measures of the Hussite war song "All ye warriors of God" from the 15th century, a doric song of an extraordinary energetic character (Krehbiel says: "A phrase for Cromwell's Roundheads — each syllable a blow, each blow implacable, merciless") and an excerpt from the St. Václav chorale, a beautiful phrygian melody from about 1300. This "Hussite Overture" was on the program of the first concert of the Theodore Thomas Chicago Orchestra, Friday, October 16, 1891, and was therefore played at the Golden Jubilee repetition of the first program, January 2, 1941.

"Gypsy Songs" were composed in 1880. Dvořák used for these seven songs the poems which the Czech poet Adolf Heyduk wrote in 1859 after his visit to Slovakia and expressed the love of the gypsies for song and freedom in them. The fourth of these songs, "**Songs my mother taught me,**" dated February 20, 1880, is immensely popular in this country.

"Stabat Mater" was repeated at the Worcester festival in 1884 by which Gloucester, Worcester and Hereford celebrated the 800th anniversary of the Worcester Cathedral. After this second visit to England (Dvořák conducted his oratorio on Sept. 11, 1884) Dvořák became the idol of the English choral festivals. Next year he spent a whole month in England. On April 22, 1885, he conducted his **Symphony in D Minor** at St. James Hall in London (Victor Album M-663) at a concert of the London Philharmonic Orchestra. At his fourth sojourn in England Dvořák conducted his new work, "**The Spectre's Bride,**" a ballad for soli, chorus and orchestra, based on a beautiful ballad of the Czech poet Karel Jaromír Erben "Svatební košile" (Nuptial Gowns). It was written for the Music Festival in Birmingham where Dvořák conducted it on August 27, 1885. There were 400 singers in the chorus, 150 musicians in the orchestra, solo parts were sung by Mme. Albani (soprano), Jos. Maas (tenor) and Charles Santley (baryton). The success was tremendous and was equalled next year when Dvořák conducted at Leeds his oratorio "**St. Ludmila**" on October

15, 1886. The same work was repeated in London on October 29 and November 6.

Dvořák came for the sixth time to London in 1890. He conducted his new **Symphony in G Major** at the concert of the London Philharmonic Orchestra, April 24. This work is known as the "London" Symphony, because it was published by the London firm Novello (Victor Album M-304). Dvořák conducted it personally at the Chicago World's Fair, when he was invited by the Chicago Czechs to the "Bohemian Day," August 12, 1893.

What a change! The composer who in the seventies found it quite difficult to pay 2 florins a month for the rent of a poor piano now won colossal triumphs everywhere. The greatest conductors such as Hans Richter and Hans Buelow in Germany, Anton Seidel in New York, Arthur Nikisch in Boston and Theodore Thomas in Chicago, performed his symphonic compositions, the famous Joachim String Quartet played his chamber music.

Dvořák was the first modern Czech symphonist. His nine symphonies (since 1863) exemplify his entire artistic evolution. The influence of Wagner, Liszt, Schubert, Beethoven and Smetana soon vanishes, Dvořák finds himself, and his own individuality is best expressed in the symphonies G Major (1889), D Minor (1885) and E Minor "From the New World" (1893). An equally imposing musical wealth is contained in Dvořák's String Quartets (twelve Quartets, 1862-1895) which belong to the present world repertoire. The touching adagios and lentos of his symphonies and chamber music works with their tones of deep sentiment are wonderful. His prolific inspiration induced Dvořák to compose all kinds of musical works, and so he created many new forms in Czech music which Smetana avoided. This applies in the first place to so called absolute music, in so far as this word means music other than program music. Smetana, brought up in Liszt's neoromantic ideas on music, saw his proper sphere of creative activities in opera and in symphonic poems, whereas he avoided to write so called absolute music. Even his string quartet "From my life" follows a definite program. But Dvořák, as an intuitive, direct musician who easily let himself be carried away by his ideas, saw his proper sphere of activities everywhere,

where he found the greatest freedom for his turbulent temperament, that is in symphonies and in chamber music. Thus Dvořák became the greatest Czech symphony and chamber music composer. His achievement in this respect was enhanced by the fact that Dvořák had an inborn talent for instrumentation. He loved color effects, keen understanding of popular romance, reflected in folk and if you hear for instance Dvořák's "**Carneval Overture**" (Victor Record 12159), you are fascinated by the lustre of his orchestration.

As a true son of late romanticism Dvořák showed a ballads and in the beauties of nature. These sources supplied Dvořák with material which enabled him to introduce new typical tones into Czech music. Foremost among these compositions rank Dvořák's most beautiful opera "**Rusalka**" (The Water Nymph) which gives an excellent impression of the mysterious fairy-tale atmosphere of the woods, his symphonic poems "**The Water Sprite**", "**The Dove**", "**The Golden Spinning-wheel**" and "**The Noon Witch**" as well as his piano duets "**From Šumava**" (the name of the forests forming the southwest frontier of Bohemia) and some of his piano solo compositions "**Poetic moods.**"

In 1891, on his fiftieth birthday, the University of Cambridge in England conferred upon Dvořák the degree of Doctor of Music, the Czech University in Prague followed with the honorary title of Doctor of Philosophy, and the Austrian government with the elevation to the Austrian House of Peers.

The Old World was conquered, — shall the New World be next?

The American composer and conductor Dudley Buck who met Dvořák in London in September 1884 made the first suggestion that he cross to America. Dvořák was not willing to discuss the question at that time, so bound was he by his love for his native land. But the trips to England operated upon him. He became accustomed to go abroad. In March 1890 he went to Moscow and Petersburg in Russia, on his sixth visit to England he conducted his Symphony in G Major at the concert of the London Philharmonic Orchestra, then came the de-

gree at Cambridge University, June 16, 1891, where Dvořák instead of a dissertation conducted the London Symphony and the Stabat Mater, finally he went to Birmingham where he conducted his new work, "**Requiem**" for four solo voices, mixed chorus and orchestra on October 9, 1891.

In the spring of 1891 Mrs. Jeanette Thurber began her attempts to lure Dvořák to the United States. She offered him the position of the musical director of the National Conservatory of Music in New York with a three year contract and a salary of \$15,000.00 per year. After long negotiations Dvořák accepted. He bid his homeland farewell in a series of concerts in leading towns of Bohemia and Moravia where he played with two friends his beautiful trio "**Dumky**" consisting of six movements of alternating melancholic and joyous moods, — Dvořák played piano, prof. Ferd. Lachner violin and prof. Hanuš Wihan violoncello. Before this farewell tour he finished the composition of three great overtures for symphonic orchestra. He named them "Nature", "Life" and "Love", but later changed these titles as follows: "**In Nature**", "**Carneval**" and "**Othello**". The "Carneval" overture is very popular in this country and is often performed by American symphonic orchestras. He worked also during the last six weeks before departure for America on his cantata "**The American Flag**." Mrs. Thurber sent him the poem of Joseph Rodman Drake written in 1815 and asked Dvořák to write a cantata for the celebration of the 400th anniversary of the discovery of America. Dvořák finished this composition in New York, but Mrs. Thurber did not use it, and only when Schirmer published it in 1895, "The American Flag" was performed at the concert of the New York Musical Society under the baton of Frank G. Dossert, May 4, 1895.

Dvořák with his wife and two of his six children left Bremen on Saturday, September 17, 1892. The steamer "Scale" reached her New York pier on Tuesday, September 27, 3 P.M.

Upon his arrival in New York Dvořák was enthusiastically welcomed. Newspapers and magazines printed long interviews and articles in which Dvořák was looked upon as the man who would help create a national

American music, and he was heartily received by the music circles of the metropolis. There were receptions and several concerts in New York and Boston. At the first of them, Carnegie Hall, October 21, 1892, Dvořák conducted his three overtures "In Nature", "Carneval" and "Othello" and the cantata "**Te Deum.**" Thomas W. Higginson, founder of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, greeted Dvořák in a speech which valued the significance of Dvořák's arrival to America.

Dvořák learned to love New York and was happy during his first year of residence there. His home at 327 West 17 Street, near the Conservatory, was very simple. Since he loved birds, Dvořák took a great deal of pleasure in visits to Central Park where he was mainly interested in a large cage filled with pigeons. Back in Bohemia railway locomotives had held a peculiar charm for him, while in New York he was no less enthusiastic about the great ocean liners docked at the piers. He knew the names of all of them and daily watched their arrivals and departures. One of his dear friends during the days of residence in America, was Joseph J. Kovařík, an American of Czech descent, from Spillville, Iowa, a graduate of Prague Conservatory of Music; he lived with the Dvořáks in New York City and was one of the teachers at the National Conservatory (later he was a member of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra for many years). It was due to Kovařík that Dvořák gave up the idea of spending his first summer vacation in Bohemia, and visited instead Spillville which was settled mainly by Czechoslovak families. He sent for his four children, and as soon as the family was reunited in New York, Dvořák left for Spillville where he spent four months, from June to September, 1893. But the following summer nobody could induce Dvořák to stay in America. He succumbed to homesickness for his native country and returned to Bohemia in the middle of May, 1894, in order to enjoy five delightful months in his summer home at Vysoká. The third year of his residence in New York, August 26, 1894-April 16, 1895, this time with his wife and one son, Dvořák spent in longing for Bohemia and for the members of his family from whom he was separated; evidences of this nostalgia are found in his let-

ters to Bohemia and in the music of his only composition of this period, the violoncello concerto. He was a homeloving man, too deeply rooted in his native soil both as an artist and as an individual to be able to remain long away from it. Although America had enriched him and he felt obligated to it, he welcomed the moment when he could return home permanently in April 1895.

Before Dvořák's arrival newspapers propounded the delicate question as to whether Dvořák would become the creator of a national American music. No such achievement could have been expected of any man. A national American music simply could not be created by a composer going to America in the fiftieth year of his life and only for a short period of three years. He himself was more conscious of this than anyone else, though he was a firm believer in the early birth of an indigenous American music; and wished to point the way which could be followed by native American composers.

Dvořák did not write any articles. But the author of this essay found a remarkable article in the "Harper's New Monthly Magazine," vol. XC, No. 537, pages 429-434, February 1895, and redeemed it from oblivion. The title is "Music in America by Antonín Dvořák." The footnote says: "The author acknowledges the co-operation of Mr. Edwin Emerson, Jr., in the preparation of this article." All Dvořák experts agree today that there is no doubt about Dvořák's authorship of this article. The form belongs to the American essayist, but the contents show clearly the ideas of Dvořák well known to all who were his intimate friends. The article was dictated to Emerson in the first part of March, 1894, because Dvořák mentions there the 300th anniversary of Palestrina's death "celebrated in Rome a few weeks ago," and that anniversary was on February 2, 1894. It was the second year of Dvořák's directorship in New York.

Let us quote here only two last paragraphs of the valuable article: "My own duty as a teacher, I conceive, is not so much to interpret Beethoven, Wagner, or other masters of the past, but to give what encouragement I can to the young musicians of America. I must give full expression to my firm conviction, and to the hope that





Ant. Dvořák in 1901

just as this nation has already surpassed so many others in marvellous inventions and feats of engineering and commerce, and has made an honorable place for itself in literature in one short century, so it must assert itself in the other arts, and especially in the art of music. Already there are enough public-spirited lovers of music striving for the advancement of this their chosen art to give rise to the hope that the United States of America will soon emulate the older countries in smoothing the thorny path of the artist and musician. When that beginning has been made, when no large city is without its public opera house and concert hall, and without its school of music and endowed orchestra, where native musicians can be heard and judged, then those who hitherto have had no opportunity to reveal their talent will come forth and compete with one another, till a real genius emerges from their number, who will be as thoroughly representative of his country as Wagner and

Weber are of Germany, or Chopin of Poland. To bring about this result we must trust to the ever-youthful enthusiasm and patriotism of this country. When it is accomplished, and when music has been established as one of the reigning arts of the land, another wreath of fame and glory will be added to the country which earned its name, the "Land of Freedom," by unshackling her slaves at the price of her own blood."

There is no doubt, — this country which has such a poet like Walt Whitman will have great composers, too, when time will come.

Dvořák's first composition on American soil was the **Symphony in E Minor, opus 95, "From the New World,"** the ninth and last of his symphonies, although it was numbered as the fifth. "Morning, December 19, 1892" is the date of the first sketch in Dvořák's sketchbook for this symphony. Dvořák dated carefully all his sketches and compositions, and therefore we know perfectly when they were begun and finished. The Symphony in E Minor was a spontaneous outburst of Dvořák's musical nature, inspired primarily by the intense first impressions in New York. Its four movements were written in New York between January 10th and May 24th, 1893. In the first (Adagio, Allegro molto) and especially in the fourth movement (Allegro con fuoco) we see how fascinating New York was to Dvořák with its crowded streets, docks, warehouses and its mixture of nationalities. Both of these movements with their violently changing moods have a fast rhythmic tempo, are crowded with joyous lively action, and the fourth movement rises to imposing heights of artistic creation. The celebrated second movement (Largo) is one of the most impelling in symphonic literature. Here and in the third movement (Scherzo) Dvořák was inspired in part by certain sections of Longfellow's "Hiawatha." A fine Czech translation of this poem was made by J. V. Sládek in the winter 1868-1869 on a farm at Caledonia, Wis., and published in Prague in 1872. Dvořák knew it, and therefore the story that traces of the "Funeral in the Forest" are to be found in the Largo and of the dance of Pau-Puk-Keewis at "Hiawatha's Wedding-Feast" in the Scherzo does not sound apocryphally. But surely there are reminiscences

of Dvořák's native land in both these middle movements. The original title of the symphony was simply "Symphony E Minor No. 8." In the middle of November, when Dvořák gave the score to Kovařík to take it to the conductor Seidel, he wrote on the title page "From the New World." And Kovařík declares that Dvořák meant by this title "Impressions and greetings from the New World."

The Symphony E Minor was played for the first time at Carnegie Hall in New York by the Philharmonic Society orchestra conducted by Anton Seidel on Saturday, December 16, 1893 (the public rehearsal took place on December 15). The large audience called for the composer at the end of each movement and Seidel, together with the orchestra, joined in the ovation. It was a great musical sensation, and the American public has remained loyal to the composition to the present day. The Philharmonic orchestra alone played it during the concert seasons 1893-1929, that is in 37 years, 155 times.

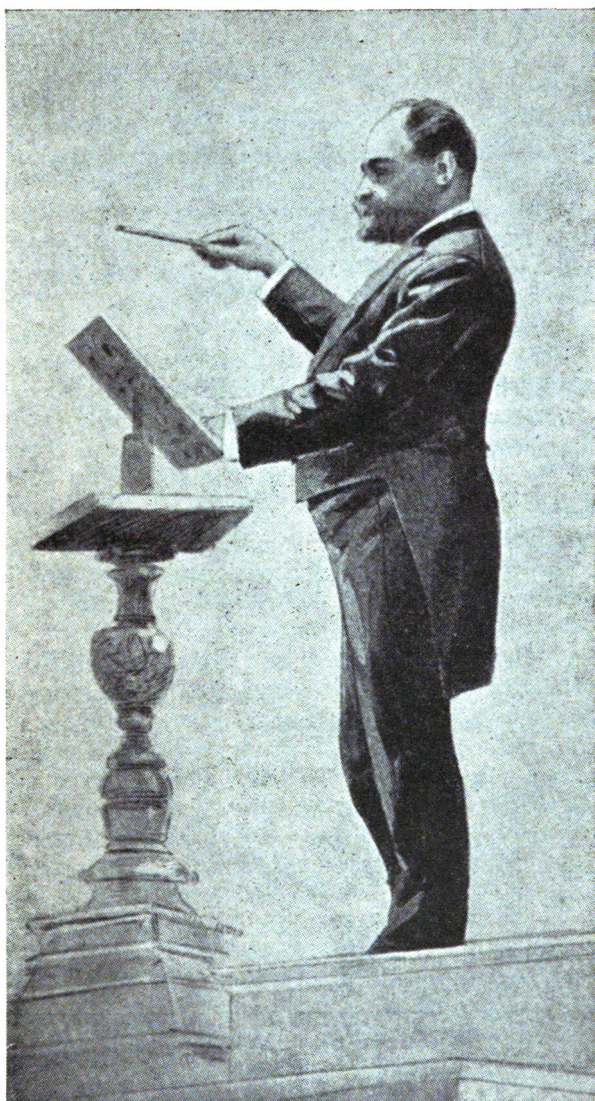
The American public was won by this music, not only because it was filled with the strength of genius and a fresh musical inspiration, but also because it showed evidences of American influence upon Dvořák. This influence, as Otakar Šourek says, was especially noticeable in a series of intonations which in the symphony and later compositions remind one of the characteristic tunes of the American Negro and Indian. Some even said that Dvořák had resorted to copying certain American tunes. This assumption is fundamentally wrong and many competent connoisseurs of music as well as Dvořák himself have repeatedly corrected it. Dvořák in a letter to conductor Nedbal wrote eight years later: "I send you Kretzschmar's analysis of the symphony, but omit that nonsense about my having made use of "Indian" and "Negro" themes — that is a lie. I tried only to write in the spirit of those American folk melodies." This misconception regarding Dvořák's compositions, however, still appears occasionally. In Dvořák's American compositions there are only certain melodic, rhythmic and harmonic evidences of those Negro or Indian melodies which color the musical material of his creations and endow them with their charac-

teristic beauty. There are for instance, the pentatonic in the major line, the soft tone with the diminished seventh and with the omitted sixth, the frequent prolongations or reversion to a certain note, rhythmical accents and syncopations. This was merely an appropriate expression of the essence of new unusual impressions with which his music was filled. For the same reason, despite the exotic touch of some of his themes and moods, the music in all his American works carries the mark of his own creative personality and is always Czech. We must keep this in mind as we consider Dvořák's further American compositions.

In Spillville, Ia., Dvořák wrote two splendid chamber music works, **String Quartet in F Major**, opus 96, and **String Quintet in E Flat Major**, opus 97, with two violas. The slow movement of both compositions, the ardent melodious Lento in the Quartet, and the serious, emotional variations in the Quintet, filled with meditations, are new pearls of song in Dvořák's chamber music. Both were played on January 12, 1894, by the Kneisel String Quartet in Carnegie Hall, New York (Fr. Kneisel, O. Roth, L. Svecenski and Al. Schroeder).

The New World Symphony has been recorded many times. We mention only two recordings: Czech Filharmonic Orchestra, Prague, George Szell conducting (Victor album M-469) and All American Youth Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski conducting, Columbia Album 416. "American" Quartet in F Major: Budapest String Quartet (Victor Album M-681) and Roth String Quartet (Columbia Set M-369).

The Victor commentator said a few years ago: "The New World Symphony is a composition that is musically rich, highly original, completely sincere, and if it is not America's tribute to Music, is surely Music's most beautiful tribute to America." The Columbia commentator wrote recently: "The New World Symphony remains one of the best loved and most played of American favorites, and its clinging melodies have found their way to a wider audience through adaptations and arrangements for almost every solo instrument and voice. Few major symphonic works have so completely endeared themselves to American audiences as has this remarkable tone



## ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK

conducting his Symphony No. 4, "Czech Day", Chicago World's Fair,  
August 12, 1893

Drawing by Em. V. Nádherný (New York Herald)

picture by a Czech. This is readily understood from the composer's unusual command of melody, rhythm and color: all touchstones of success with American musical audiences."

In New York, in November 1893, Dvořák wrote a short, but charming **Sonatina in G Major**, op. 100, for the violin and piano. Its simple outline and fresh musical content are clearly defined in the composer's own words: "It is meant for the young, dedicated to two of my children (15 year old Otilie who later became wife of the Czech composer Josef Suk and 10 year old Toník), but let the grown-ups get as much pleasure out of it as possible." The second movement Canzonetta became very popular in the arrangement by Fritz Kreisler who called it "Indian Lament" (recordings: Indian Lament, played by Kreisler, Victor 7225, and the complete Sonatina, played by Renardy and Robert, Columbia Set X-129).

Two significant works which belong to Dvořák's greatest compositions and which were written in New York are "**Biblical Songs**," ten profound songs on the text of David's psalms (March 1894), and the famous **Violoncello Concerto in B Minor**, opus 104, which was written between November 8, 1894, and February 9, 1895. This beautiful, romantic, vibrant and richly melodious composition is above all a passionate expression of the composer's great longing for his homeland. (A splendid recording: Pablo Casals with Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, George Szell conducting, Victor album M-458). One project conceived by Dvořák during his stay in America, but never completed, was an opera based on the story of Hiawatha. Although urged by Mrs. Thurber to go on with the work, Dvořák never got beyond sketching several themes because of an inadequate libretto.

After his return to Prague Dvořák paid his ninth and last visit to London upon invitation of the London Philharmonic Society. At its concert at Queen's Hall, March, 1896, he conducted his Violoncello concerto, played by Leo Stern.

Among his compositions of the last years of the nineties was his last purely instrumental work, "**Heroic Song**" for great orchestra. It was first performed in

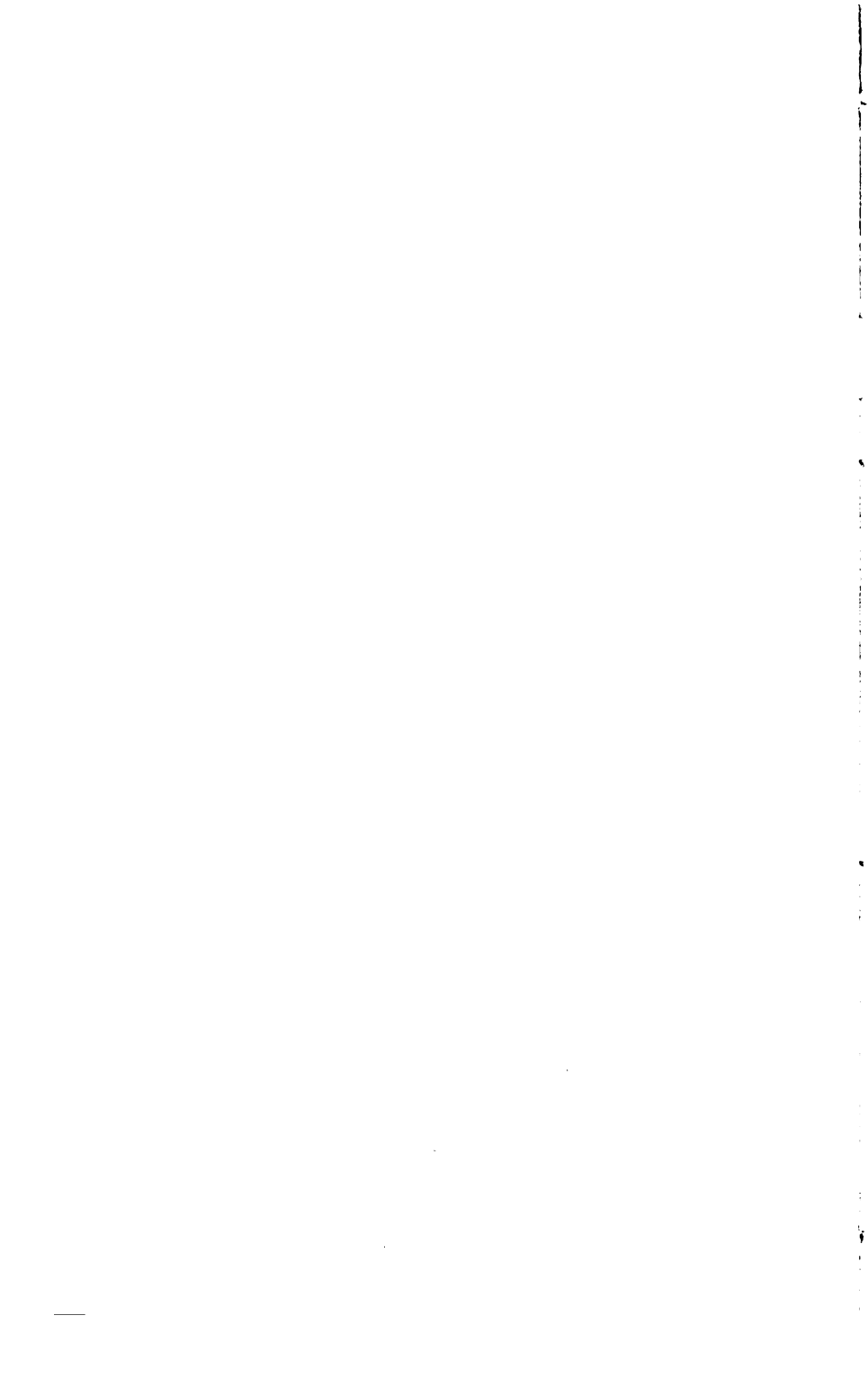
Vienna, where the Philharmonic Orchestra played it on December 8, 1898, Gustav Mahler conducting.

Of Smetana's eight operas America is acquainted with only one, "The Bartered Bride". Of Dvořák's nine operas none is known to the American public. After **"The King and the Collier"** (first performance New Czech Theater in Prague, November 24, 1874) followed **"The Stubborn Heads"** (Interim Theater, October 2, 1881), **"Vanda"** (New Czech Theater, April 17, 1876), **"The Sly Peasant"** (Interim Theater, January 27, 1878), **"Dimitrij"** (New Czech Theater, October 8, 1882, — the libretto of this opera continues where the librettist of "Boris Godunov" by Mussorgskij had ended), **"The Jacobin"** (National Theater in Prague, February 12, 1889), **"The Devil and Kate"** (National Theater, November 23, 1899), **"Rusalka"** (The Water Nymph, National Theater, March 31, 1901), and **"Armida"** (National Theater, March 25, 1904). All these operas are full of high musical values. "Dimitrij", "The Jacobin", "The Devil and Kate" and "Rusalka" would enrapture the American opera-lovers by the wealth of Dvořák's ideas and by the fascination of his tones.

One of the most beautiful of Dvořák's operas, "Rusalka," a wonderfully poetic work, was performed in Czech at the Morton High School Auditorium, Cicero, Ill., Fr. Kubina conducting, on March 10, 1935, in honor of the 85th birthday anniversary of the Czechoslovak President-Liberator Thomas Garrigue Masaryk. Rusalka's charming air from the first act "Oh Moon in the deep skies" was sung by Jarmila Novotná on the first "America Preferred" radio program, July 13, 1941.

Dvořák (ř like English "rzh") was a modest man. On one occasion his admirers gave him a big wreath with a ribbon which bore the inscription: "To the greatest genius." Dvořák took it home and placed it — around a bust of Beethoven.

Dvořák died suddenly on May 1, 1904. His immortal works will be loved by the American public forever.







**FOURTEEN DAY USE**  
**RETURN TO DESK FROM WHICH BORROWED**

This book is due on the last date stamped below, or  
on the date to which renewed.  
Renewed books are subject to immediate recall.

22 May '55 DS	
MAY 8 1955 LU	
NOV 27 1958	
DEC 24 1958 REC'D MUS	
DEC 24 1958	
JUL 15 1963	
JAN 15 1965	
JUL 28 1966	
DEC 6 1966	

LD 21-100m-2,'55  
(B139s22)476

General Library  
University of California  
Berkeley

AMERICA



PRINTED IN U. S. A.

**GAYLORD**

**BROS., INC.**

*Manufacturers*

Syracuse, N. Y.

Stockton, Calif.

ML410.D99.V6

C037203065

U.C. BERKELEY LIBRARIES



C037203065

**DATE DUE**

**Music Library**  
**University of California at**  
**Berkeley**

