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THE NOCTURNES OF CHOPIN

THESIS

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PREFACE

A nocturne is a night piece, or instrumental serenade, usually of a quiet lyrical nature, but sometimes (as in Chopin's Nocturnes) it has a more agitated middle section.¹

The Italian term "notturmo" ("night piece") was used in the eighteenth century to mean music for evening entertainment, and therefore indistinguishable from "serenade." The term "notturmo" appears at least as early as Haydn (1732-1809). In 1790 he wrote eight notturmi scored for two lire organizzate (or flute and oboe), two clarinets, two horns, two violas and a bass. They were composed for Ferdinand IV, then King of Naples. Later Haydn replaced the lira with the viola to enable him to use some of them at Salomon's concerts in London.² Mozart used the term "notturmo" in the title of his Serenade No. 8 (Notturmo), K. 286, written in three movements for four orchestras.³ Instrumentation of each orchestra of this notturmo calls for one horn in D, two violins, one

¹The liturgical use of the term "nocturne" for certain night services of the Roman Catholic Church has no connection with the present study.

²Marion M. Scott, "Haydn," Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 5th ed., edited by Eric Blom (London, New York, 1954), Vol. IV.

³George Grove and Eric Blom, "Nocturne," Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, Vol. VI.

viola, and one basso. The three movements are: Andante, Allegretto grazioso, Menuetto. Einstein says that K. 286 "occupies a place between Mozart's wind serenade and his early Italianate symphonies."⁴

John Field (1782-1837), an Irishman, was the first composer to use the French term "nocturne," and was the inventor of the nocturne for piano. It can be seen with a glance at the scores that the orchestral notturmi by the eighteenth century composers, such as the ones previously mentioned, were very different than what is generally thought of today as a nocturne. Field introduced the idea of the nocturne that has remained much the same since.

Frederic Chopin enlarged and improved the genre invented by Field, but it was Field's originality that brought this type of piece to piano literature. Indeed, John Field is hardly remembered today except as the inventor of the nocturne for the piano and for his influence on Chopin's Nocturnes. For that alone musicians will remain indebted to him.

⁴Alfred Einstein, Mozart, translated by Arthur Mendel and Nathan Broder (London, New York, Paris, 1945), p. 208.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
PREFACE	111
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	vi
Chapter	
I. THE NOCTURNES OF JOHN FIELD	1
II. THE NOCTURNES OF FREDERIC CHOPIN	16
III. CONCLUSIONS	59
APPENDIX I.	61
APPENDIX II	76
BIBLIOGRAPHY	77

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure	Page
1. Chopin, <u>Nocturne Op. 55, No. 1</u> , m. 52	17
2. Chopin, <u>Nocturne Op. 9, No. 1</u> , mm. 2-3	18
3. Chopin, <u>Nocturne Op. 9, No. 1</u> , mm. 15-18	24
4. Chopin, <u>Nocturne Op. 9, No. 3</u> , mm. 88-89	27
5. Chopin, <u>Nocturne Op. 15, No. 1</u> , mm. 23-25	30
6. Chopin, <u>Nocturne Op. 15, No. 1</u> , mm. 17-24	31
7. Chopin, <u>Nocturne Op. 15, No. 2</u> , mm. 1-3	32
8. Chopin, <u>Nocturne Op. 27, No. 2</u> , mm. 42-45	38
9. Chopin, <u>Nocturne Op. 27, No. 2</u> , mm. 62-64	39
10. Comparison of Field <u>Nocturne No. 5</u> and Chopin <u>Nocturne Op. 32, No. 2</u>	41
11. Chopin, <u>Nocturne Op. 37, No. 2</u> , mm. 13-16	46
12. Chopin, <u>Nocturne Op. 55, No. 2</u> , m. 9	53

CHAPTER I

THE NOCTURNES OF JOHN FIELD

There is an extreme scarcity of material written about John Field. W. H. Grattan Flood's book (see Appendix for that work in its entirety) apparently is the only separate study in English. In his book there is an acknowledgment of a German study on Field by Heinrich Dessauer that was presented as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Leipzig (not available for this study). Beyond this there are only brief articles about Field in Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, Fétis' Biographie Universelle des Musiciens, De Bekker's Music and Musicians, Eric Blom's Everyman's Dictionary of Music, Theodore Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians, Percy Scholes' The Oxford Companion to Music, and David Ewen's Composers of Yesterday. Owing to this lack of bibliography on Field, the material for the following synopsis of Field's career has, unless otherwise indicated in footnote citations, been based on Flood's work. When published, Flood's John Field of Dublin was limited to 450 copies, printed from hand-set type. This was in 1920, and it is doubtful that many copies are in existence in America at the present time.

John Field was born in Golden Lane, Dublin, on July 26, 1782. For two or three generations the Fields had been employed as professional musicians and John Field began his studies of music, specifically of the piano, when he was seven. His grandfather taught him, and his father supervised his practice. In 1791 he was sent to the then famous Tommaso Giordani¹ for "finishing lessons" on the piano. He made his first major public appearance at the age of nine in Dublin. In the year 1793 he blossomed forth as a composer and published an arrangement (with variations) of an old Irish air: Go to the Devil and Shake Yourself.

In the summer of 1793, Field's father was invited to become leader of the orchestral concerts at Bath. It was thus that John Field left Dublin. Less than six months later Robert Field, the father, was offered another engagement in London which he accepted. As soon as the Fields were settled in London, John Field began his studies with Muzio Clementi (1752-1832). He also studied violin with G. F. Pinto,² who

¹"Tommaso Giordani," Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians, 4th ed., edited by Theodore Baker (New York, 1940). Tommaso Giordani was born in Naples, 1730, and died in Dublin, 1806. He was engaged in 1788 as official composer and orchestra director of The New Theatre Royal, Dublin. In 1792 he gave a Lenten series of "Spiritual Concerts," at one of which John Field, then eight years old, made his second public appearance as a pianist. Field was nine years old at this time. The advertisements said he was eight years old and apparently Baker accepted their word.

²Carl Ferdinand Pohl, "George Frederick Pinto," Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians (London, New York, 1954), Vol. VI. Pinto was born in London, September, 1786, and died March, 1806. He was a violinist, singer, pianist, and composer.

later dedicated a piano sonata "to my friend John Field." The sonata was published in 1800. On February 7, 1799, Pinto had a benefit concert at the Haymarket Theatre. The chief attraction was Master Field. He played his own concerto, composed for the occasion, and was given an excellent review in The Morning Chronicle (February 9, 1799).

Clementi appreciated the genius of Field but instead of exploiting him as a virtuoso, he had the idea of a European tour, with Field acting as a salesman for the Clementi pianos. In the meantime he published four or five pieces by Field, among which were three sonatas, one dedicated to Clementi. In August, 1802, the two pianists went to Paris, where Field's playing of Bach's Fugues and of pieces by Handel and Clementi took that city by storm. At length they reached St. Petersburg, where Clementi opened a showroom for the sale of his firm's pianos. He was still using Field to display the instruments to the best advantage.³

³"'Clementi,' a man in his best years, of an extremely lively disposition, and very engaging manners, 'liked very much to converse with me (in French, which from my great practice in St. Petersburg I soon spoke pretty fluently)' and often invited me after dinner to play at billiards. In the evening, I sometimes accompanied him to his large piano-forte warehouse, where Field was often obliged to play for hours to display the instruments to the best advantage to the purchasers. The diary speaks with great satisfaction of the technical perfection and the 'dreamy melancholy' of that young artist's execution. I have still in recollection the figure of the pale, overgrown youth, whom I have never since seen. When Field, who had outgrown his clothes, placed himself at the piano, stretched out his arms over the keyboard, so that the sleeves shrunk up nearly to the elbows, his whole figure appeared awkward and stiff in the highest degree; but

When Clementi left St. Petersburg in 1803, Field stayed behind as a guest of General Merkloffski. During the years 1804 to 1807 Field's services as a virtuoso and as a teacher, were much in demand, and he gave numerous concerts which proved highly remunerative. He soon acquired a knowledge of French, German, and Russian, and was a great favorite in the most select circles. He became indolent and frivolous due to so much petting plus the fact that he was very absent-minded and eccentric. He married a young French actress early in 1808 with whom he lived for five years.

Field composed the first three nocturnes in the autumn of 1814 that were published, along with a piano sonata and some concerti, at St. Petersburg in November.

During the years 1815 and 1819 Field gave concerts in St. Petersburg and his reputation as a piano teacher continued

as soon as his touching instrumentation began, everything else was forgotten, and one became all ear. Unhappily, I could not express my emotion and thankfulness to the young man otherwise than by a silent pressure of the hand, for he spoke no other language but his mother tongue.

"Even at that time, many anecdotes of the remarkable avarice of the rich Clementi were related, which had greatly increased in latter years when I again met him in London. It was generally reported that Field was kept on very short allowance by his master, and was obliged to pay for the good fortune of having his instruction with many privations. I myself experienced a little sample of Clementi's true Italian parsimony, for one day I found teacher and pupil with up-turned sleeves, engaged at the washtub, washing their stockings and other linen. They did not suffer themselves to be disturbed, and Clementi advised me to do the same, as washing in St. Petersburg was not only very expensive, but the linen suffered greatly from the method used in washing it." Louis Spohr, Louis Spohr's Autobiography, anonymous translation from German (London, 1865), pp. 39-40.

to grow. His best known pupil at this period was Michael Ivanovich Glinka, the founder of Russian National Opera (Life for the Czar, 1836; Ruslan and Ludmilla, 1842) and of the Russian School of Music.⁴ In 1817 Field composed his Concerto No. 5, known as L'incendie par l'orage (played as The Storm Concerto in London in 1821). The year 1817 was also memorable for Nocturnes Nos. 4 and 5 (in A and in B flat).⁵ Flood regards the Nocturne in A as one of the most beautiful pieces of its kind ever composed. Dr. Ernest Walker in his History of Music in England (1907) pronounces it as not only "a most beautiful thing," but he styles it "Field's masterpiece." In 1820 Field's Nocturnes had not been heard in England or in Ireland. In 1822 the Nocturne No. 6 in F appeared, and was followed by the Nocturne No. 7 in C in 1823. Of the latter nocturne, Schumann wrote in terms of the highest praise (Neue Zeitschrift).

⁴According to Theodore Baker's "Glinka," Biographical Dictionary of Musicians, 4th ed., (New York, 1940), Glinka (1804-1857) had only three lessons with Field.

⁵As it is impossible to determine the edition used by Flood, it is difficult to ascertain of which nocturnes he is speaking. The source of this study is the Schirmer edition of John Field Nocturnes for the Piano, which contains a preface from the original Liszt edition. However, this does not necessarily indicate that the two editions have the same numerical sequence. Any numbers mentioned when referring to specific nocturnes correspond to those found in the Schirmer edition.

In the same year (1822), Field settled in Moscow and became very friendly with Hummel.⁶ During the next six years Field drifted into such reckless Bohemianism as to neglect his professional engagements and to ruin his health.

On February 27, 1832, he played in London. His playing was much admired, especially his performance of his own Concerto in E flat. He also played at the centenary of Haydn's birth on March 31, and his playing was highly praised by the critics. Field's visit to London was saddened by the death of his friend Clementi, who died on March 18, 1832. There too he met Mendelssohn at a reception given by Moscheles on May 6.⁷

Field then went to Paris to play a series of recitals. The critics lauded him which was all the more remarkable because Chopin had given concerts there some months previously.

⁶According to Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians, 4th ed. (New York, 1940), Hummel was Mozart's pupil for two years.

⁷In a letter to his teacher C. F. Zelter (1758-1832) dated 1830, Mendelssohn remarks "Here, in Munich, the musicians . . . believe that good music may be considered a heaven-sent gift, but just in abstracte, and as soon as they sit down to play they produce the stupidest, silliest stuff imaginable, and when people do not like it they pretend that it was still too highbrow. Even the best pianists had no idea that Mozart and Haydn had also composed for the piano; they had just the faintest notion of Beethoven and consider the music of Kalkbrenner, Field and Hummel classical and scholarly. On the other hand, having played myself several times, I found the audience so receptive and openminded that I felt doubly vexed by those frivolities." Apparently Mendelssohn did not rank Field's compositions very highly. G. Selden-Goth, editor, Felix Mendelssohn Letters (New York, 1945), p. 82.

Field did not think highly of Chopin, whom he described as a "sick room talent" ("un talent de chambre de malade").

When Field played at the Conservatoire of Paris on December 25, 1832, Fétis, one of a fashionable and critical audience present, declared his playing astonishing. Another enthusiastic critic on this occasion was Joseph d'Ortigue (1802-1866) of the Balcon de l'Opéra. He wrote at great length about the marvelous qualities of Field's playing.

Throughout the spring and summer of 1833 Field astonished and thrilled such European centers as Brussels, Toulouse, Marseilles, and Lyons, by his virtuosity. He then played in Geneva, Switzerland, and went on to Italy to give equally outstanding concerts. The strain of the year's tour proved too much for a neurotic man of fifty-two. He became seriously ill in Naples in 1834. He had to be operated on for a fistula condition accelerated by his habits of intemperance. After being in the hospital nine months the timely arrival in Naples of the Rachmanoffs, a family of Russian nobles, rescued Field from his unfortunate situation.

He left Naples and traveled with the Rachmanoffs who gradually made their way back to Moscow. When passing through Vienna, Field was guest of Beethoven's pupil, Karl Czerny (1791-1857). Being in congenial surroundings helped him both physically and mentally, and he was persuaded to give three concerts at the Hof Theatre on August 8, 11, and 13, 1835.

While in Vienna he composed a new concerto and a nocturne.

The nocturne is dated August 13.

Field returned to Moscow with the Rachmanoffs during the latter part of August. In November, 1836, he became very ill. His friends tried to help him but by Christmas it was evident that the end was at hand. He died January 11, 1837, and was buried four days later at a public funeral in the Wedensky Cemetery, Moscow.

In regard to the authenticity of the statement that Field invented the nocturne, Flood says there is no doubt that he did invent this type of piece for the piano, and quotes Michel Brenet as writing: "In regard to the invention of the Nocturne it is a fact sufficiently well established. Field was the inventor."

From the Répertoire Encyclopédique du Pianiste--Tom. I, p. 99, Flood quotes H. Parent as saying that "Field's great distinction in the musical world is to have created a genre--the little pieces to which he has given the name of Nocturnes."⁸

Of his pianoforte pieces, his concerti and mainly his nocturnes will perpetuate his name. Owing to the lack of precision on the part of some publishers, the name "nocturne" has been applied to several pieces not intended as such by Field.

⁸Edward Dannreuther, in his article "Field," Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 5th ed., edited by Eric Blom (London, New York, 1954), Vol. III, says that we owe the form, the kind of emotion of the nocturne, and the widespread chord accompaniments of Chopin's Nocturnes, and more, to Field.

For this reason publishers' lists contain various numbers of nocturnes. Field composed sixteen compositions for the piano called "nocturne." Flood says Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7 in Liszt's edition stand out pre-eminently.⁹ It is about these five that Dannreuther writes: "five delicate little lyrics are the very essence of all idylls and eclogues." To these five Flood adds a sixth, No. 8 in E (given as No. 10 in Peter's edition). Most English critics regard No. 4 in A as the best of Field's nocturnes.

As to the value of Field's nocturnes Flood cites the verdict of the German musicologist, Hugo Riemann: "Field may be justly described as one of the most original pianistic phenomena." (For a list of Field's compositions see Appendix.)

Nocturnes of Field--Comparison with Chopin

To the present day musician the name John Field means little more than "the inventor of the nocturnes." His music is hardly ever programmed for public performance and is in danger of being forgotten by future generations. However, the importance of his influence on Frederic Chopin will always remain significant. This influence is mainly seen in these same "nocturnes." Chopin enriched this style of music immensely but the original idea was Field's.

⁹See ante footnote 5.

When Field wrote his nocturnes, not only the name was new,¹⁰ but the whole style and melodic character of these pieces were original. Field introduced a style in which feeling and melody could reign supreme, as they were freed from the boundaries of the established styles and forms.

He opened the way for all the productions which have since appeared under the various titles of Song without Words, Impromptus, Ballades, etc., and to him we may trace the origin of pieces designed to portray subjective and profound emotion.¹¹

In 1859 J. Schuberth and Co. at Leipzig published six of Field's nocturnes. Franz Liszt wrote a preface to go with this collection which he had revised, and which may be found in the present day Schirmer edition. It is very disappointing to read Liszt's remarks about Field's nocturnes. He is one of the few sources of Field's time and, being one of the greatest composers and pianists, one expects some help when reading about one of his elder contemporaries. Liszt can find no fault with Field. He is "appreciative" in such a general way, praising Field's simplicity, then praising his ornamentation, that it is difficult to cull specific points of information of criticism. He makes comments that the first and fifth nocturnes in the collection "are marked by a radiant happiness," and says that "in the second the tints are darker, like those of daylight in a

¹⁰See Preface, p. iv.

¹¹Theodore Baker, Preface to John Field, Eighteen Nocturnes for the Piano (New York, 1893).

shady avenue."¹² This is pretty writing but little can be gained by reading it. Moreover, no great importance can be attached to these flowery statements because it has not been possible to establish that Liszt's numbering corresponds to that of the only edition available for this study. It would be of some assistance if he had at least named the keys of these nocturnes.

The most obvious traits in which Field's influence can be seen in Chopin's nocturnes are their common use of the widespread left hand accompaniments, the use of fioriture, the type of melody and its embellishments.

The general style of Field's nocturnes is much more varied than that used by Chopin. Chopin's nocturnes are all of a rather "poetic" type, though varied internally by a more agitated or a calmer middle section which usually contrasts thematically with the first section.¹³ An example of the variety of mood of Field's nocturnes may be seen in Nocturne No. 12. It suggests a gay rondo of a classical sonata. Perhaps this is one of the nocturnes not originally intended to be so named by Field. Furthermore it is doubtful that the twentieth century listener would think of Nos. 3,

¹²Franz Liszt, Preface to John Field, Eighteen Nocturnes for the Piano (New York, 1893).

¹³The term "section" will be used throughout this work to designate the first large portion of a composition, the second portion, which usually begins approximately a third of the way through the piece, and if there is one, the third portion which is usually at least similar in thematic material to the first portion.

16, and 17, if heard in their entirety, as nocturnes.¹⁴ The first theme of No. 10 suggests at first a simple melodious composition, but as it proceeds it is embellished with so much finger work as to make it sound more like a show piece. No. 7 sounds as suitable for the voice, or even more so, than it is for the piano. This is partly achieved in the first sixteen measures, which, in fact, sound very much like an introduction, and do not occur again in the piece. No. 18 has much the same effect but not to the same extent. On the other hand, in the Schirmer edition, No. 15 has "Song without Words" written under the title "Nocturne."¹⁵ This does not seem to be as apt a subtitle as it would have been for either of the two previously discussed nocturnes.

With the exception of Op. 37, No. 2, Chopin's nocturnes have the common characteristic of the main theme first presented in a single melodic line usually well above a widely spaced accompaniment. This is true of most, but not all, of Field's nocturnes (exceptions are Nos. 3, 13, and 17). Nocturnes which have melodic lines that could be easily

¹⁴This is undoubtedly due to the fact that the twentieth century listener is educated to hearing Chopin's nocturnes. As has been stated, they are music of a more general type. They are romantic "night-music" and without exception have the same sentimental and melancholy mood.

¹⁵The Schirmer edition cites no authority for the occasional subtitles found in Nos. 6, 10, 12, 13, and 15. The title "Noontide" is applied to an unidentified nocturne in Baker's translation of Liszt's preface. However, in the body of music which follows the translation, "Noontide" is applied to Nocturne No. 12 (by Baker?).

recognized--indeed, such as Chopin might have written--are Nos. 1, 5, 8, 9, and 11. Perhaps a fact that makes them all the more alike is the triplet figure used in the accompaniments. Field wrote almost all his nocturnes in triple time (6/8, 12/8, 3/8, 3/4). This of course lends itself well to triplet and sextuplet patterns which are very prominent in the nocturnes. Chopin, too, employed such rhythmic patterns a great deal in the accompaniments of his nocturnes (see Figure 2, p. 18).

For the most part the melodic interest of Field's nocturnes is much less than that of Chopin's. One reason for this is that the second section of the piece is often so similar to the first that it is difficult to distinguish between them (e.g., Nos. 1, 8, 9, 11, 13, and 14). In such cases the effect is that of dull repetition, and in those cases where the first section recurs at the end of the composition the listener is not certain whether it is indeed a reprise of the first section or merely a continuation of the middle section. Then, too, Field sometimes uses themes beyond the limit of effectiveness (e.g., Nos. 11 and 13); after exhausting the resources of the melody, the feeling is that nothing worthwhile has happened. Most of the melodies are pretty, simple melodies, but they are not interesting enough to be used repeatedly for three or four minutes of listening or playing. Field is at his best in pieces in which he confines himself to a simple form on a small scale. One of the

best examples of lack of melodic imagination in Field's nocturnes can be seen in Nocturne No. 11 in E flat major. The piece is 118 measures long and it is made up almost entirely of the first theme. The accompaniment keeps a monotonous eighth note triplet figure going almost continually. The harmonic scheme scarcely varies from the I, IV, V, or V⁷ chords throughout the piece.

One of the important differences and great improvements Chopin made over Field's nocturnes is found in the harmonic element of their nocturnes. Rarely does Field deviate from the simpler harmonic backgrounds, and when there is a more complex harmony it is found not in the body of the nocturne, where it might add interest and complexity to the melodic material, but in the short transitions between sections. In the Chopin nocturnes one finds considerable harmonic variation incorporated within the melodic sections as well as intricate and complex modulations which also make up much of the transitory material.¹⁶ Other examples of a rather unusual harmonic simplicity may be found in Field's Nocturnes Nos. 1 in E flat major, 2 in C minor, and 3 in A flat major.

¹⁶A comparison of the first sections of approximate length, one of Field and one of Chopin, divulges the following information: in the Field Nocturne No. 16 in C major, the following different keys are suggested harmonically: C major, A minor, and G major; whereas, in the Chopin Nocturne Op. 37, No. 2, one hears G major, A minor, B flat major, D flat major, E flat minor, F major, F minor, and E minor.

The form of Field's nocturnes is more varied than that of Chopin's nocturnes. Of those that fit into an established formal type there are seven that can be analyzed as three-part song form (Nos. 1, 2, 7, 9, 10, 11, and 17), four in not very strict rondo form (Nos. 4, 12, 13, and 16), five in two-part song form (Nos. 5, 8, 14, 15, and 18), one in variation form (No. 3), and one in sonata allegro form (No. 6).

From the above it can be seen how Field freed form for later composers. Because of the irregularity of form of the more free nocturnes, they do not emerge as a unified whole.

A particularly obvious similarity between the two composers is found in comparing Chopin's Nocturne Op. 32, No. 2, mm. 27-50, to Field's Nocturne No. 5, mm. 18-21 and mm. 38-41 (see Figure 10, p. 41). Another nocturne by Field that must have influenced Chopin is No. 6 in F major which is melodically similar to the famous E flat Nocturne of Chopin, Op. 9, No. 2. It is interesting to note in Nocturne No. 3 by Field that the first thirteen notes, combining the two upper voices in the right hand, suggest the melodic line of Chopin's Etude Op. 10, No. 11.

Field may have been the inventor of the nocturne but it needed the genius of Frederic Chopin to bring out its great possibilities, and to raise it to the height of poetic music that it has attained today.

CHAPTER II

THE NOCTURNES OF FREDERIC CHOPIN

Frederic Chopin was born in Zelazowa Wola, Warsaw, Poland, in 1810, and died in 1849 in Paris, France. He was "one of the creators of the typically romantic idiom and as such one of the most original and remarkable creative geniuses in musical history."¹

Some influences that can be traced in Chopin's writing are: (1) in the Italian opera of Rossini² (and perhaps Bellini³);

¹Paul Henry Lang, Music in Western Civilization (New York, 1941), p. 814.

²The following is part of a letter from Chopin to Jan Bialoblocki in November of 1825: "As for how things go, that you know from my last letter that the Barber has been praised everywhere on the stage; and Freischütz, which has been expected so long, is to be given. I have done a new polonaise on the Barber, which is fairly well liked; I think of sending it to be lithographed tomorrow." Henryk Opienski, collector, Chopin's Letters, translated by E. L. Voynich (New York, 1931), p. 18.

³According to Gerald Abraham, Chopin's Musical Style (London, New York, Toronto, 1939), p. 61: "That Chopin's melody is heavily indebted to Bellini's is a commonplace of criticism." It is impossible to determine whether Chopin had heard any of Bellini's music before his more "Italianate" traits were developed, but of the nocturnes, the pieces in which this trait is perhaps most apparent, the Op. 9 Nocturnes were written in 1832, one year after Chopin went to Paris. It seems very possible that he had heard some of Bellini's compositions by this time.

(2) in the musical form of Field,⁴ (3) in the national music of Poland.⁵

The influence of the Italian opera is prevalent in the song-like melodies of the nocturnes and nowhere is John Field's influence more apparent. The Polish influence is seen most readily in such compositions as the mazurkas and polonaises. In the nocturnes there is less evidence of this influence, but at least one such example can be seen in the mazurka-like rhythmic pattern that follows:

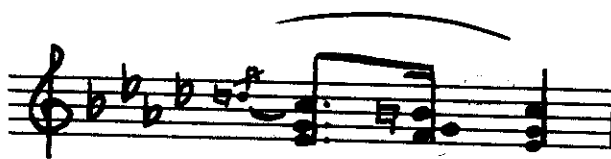


Fig. 1--Chopin, Nocturne Op. 55, No. 1, m. 52

In Chopin's nocturnes we find the composers most intimate writing. They depict moods best described by such terms as "atmospheric," "dreamy," "poetic," and "sentimental."

The melody in the nocturnes is the primary factor. With the exception of one nocturne (Op. 37, No. 2) they invariably have a single melodic line as the first thematic material. This is generally elaborated with great finesse by such devices as the fioriture, mordent, turn, the presentation of the

⁴See ante p. 15.

⁵Arthur Hedley, "Chopin," Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 5th ed., edited by Eric Blom (London, New York, 1954), Vol. II.

melody in octaves, chromaticism, and the use of passing notes and suspensions. Chopin has innumerable ways of keeping the melody interesting.

Some evidences of vocal influence can be seen in the use of coloratura, as is seen in the following example:



Fig. 2--Chopin, Nocturne, Op. 9, No. 1, mm. 2-3

Other examples of this influence can be seen in Nocturne Op. 9, No. 3, mm. 10-11, and Nocturne Op. 15, No. 2, m. 18. Another vocal characteristic can be seen in the recitative-like element used in the coda of Nocturne Op. 32, No. 1, m. 63 (also see second section of Nocturne Op. 48, No. 2, p. 50 of this text). Although the influence of vocal coloratura is prevalent in Chopin's music, it is seen to be of a

nature more suitable for the piano than it would be for the voice. Liszt said:

Embellishments for the voice, although they had become stereotyped and had grown monotonous, had been servilely copied by the pianoforte. Chopin endowed them with a charm of novelty, surprise, and variety, quite unsuitable for the singer but in perfect keeping with the character of the instrument.⁶

Some instances of pianistic coloratura that are not suitable for the voice are found in Op. 62, No. 1, m. 26, and Op. 15, No. 2, m. 51.

As has been stated, Chopin made use of passing notes and suspensions to add interest to his music. Examples of both can be found in one of the earlier nocturnes, Op. 9, No. 2, in the first measure. The suspension of F in the right hand and a passing note D in the bass keep the E flat chord from being heard in its pure form. Distribution of the suspended note by figuration is also seen in Chopin's music. An instance of this can be found in Nocturne Op. 27, No. 1, m. 22.

Although Chopin uses chromaticism in his writing to a great extent, his melody is predominantly diatonic. In most cases the chromatic elements in it are unessential and decorative. Sometimes he uses chromaticism to intensify the melodic as well as the harmonic expression, as in m. 13 of Nocturne Op. 27, No. 1. The harmony calls for D sharp and the flattening of the note is an intensification. Chopin

⁶Franz Liszt, Life of Chopin, translated by John Broadhouse, 2nd ed., corrected (London, no date), p. 10.

stressed it with an accent mark.⁷ An example of Chopin's chromatic use in the melodic line is found in the middle section of Op. 32, No. 2 (see Figure 10, p. 41).

A device used for creating the "soft, veiled," almost impressionistic, effect that is often prevalent in the Nocturnes can be seen in Chopin's manner of using the accompaniment in the left hand to support the right hand melodic line. An example of this is when he establishes a harmonic basis and sustains the root as a pedal in the bass, while the upper notes of the accompaniment and the melodic lines go their separate harmonic and melodic ways. This gives a strong feeling of continuity and the impressionistic effect mentioned above (Op. 27, No. 2; Op. 9, Nos. 1 and 3; and Op. 15, No. 1).

A point of harmonic interest is the fact that seven of the eight nocturnes in minor end on the major triad (the so-called "Picardy third").

Other traits of Chopin's writing are his use of wide leaps in the melodic line (see Figure 3, p. 24. Examples of this may be seen in Nocturnes Op. 9, No. 3, mm. 31 and 78; Op. 15, No. 2, m. 14; Op. 27, No. 2, m. 32; and others), and his employment of cross rhythms (see Figure 4, p. 27).

Chopin used the ternary form almost exclusively in all of his writing (the Etudes, Ballades, Waltzes, Mazurkas, etc.). The middle sections of his compositions are often of contrasting

⁷Gerald Abraham, Chopin's Musical Style (London, New York, Toronto, 1939), p. 69.

material, both in mood and key, to the first theme. This is particularly noticeable in Op. 9, Nos. 1 and 3; Op. 15, Nos. 1, 2, and 3; Op. 32, No. 2; Op. 37, Nos. 1 and 2; and others; indeed, thirteen of the twenty nocturnes have this "trademark" of Chopin's. Three of the middle sections are written in the same key and mode as the first and last (Op. 15, No. 2; Op. 27, No. 1; and Op. 55, No. 1); two are in the tonic minor key (Op. 9, No. 3; Op. 15, No. 1); two are in the relative minor (Op. 32, No. 2--but the second half of the middle section is raised a half-step to F sharp minor; and Op. 62, No. 2); one is in the tonic major (Op. 48, No. 1), and four cannot be classified in a group. Of these four, the middle section of Op. 37, No. 1 is in the key a major third away; in Op. 48, No. 2, an augmented third away; in Op. 37, No. 2, the contrasting material occurs twice separately, first in the subdominant and then, after a recurrence of the first section, in the key a minor third below; and in Op. 62, No. 1, the middle section is an augmented second (enharmonically a minor third) away.⁸

Most of the nocturnes are in ternary form. There are three (Op. 15, No. 3; Op. 72, No. 1; and the posthumously published C minor Nocturne--see pp. 34, 57, and 58) that do

⁸A "third-related" key was often chosen by nineteenth century composers who were striving to get away from dominant, subdominant, and relative major (or minor), as contrasting keys. An example of this can be seen in Beethoven's last sonata, Op. 111, m. 50.

not fit into this classification. Otherwise, the nocturnes vary from the three-part song form to the rondo form to the song with trio. Compared with Field's nocturnes they conform more often to traditional form patterns; nevertheless, there are some that are open to debate (Op. 9, No. 2; Op. 15, No. 3; Op. 27, No. 1; and others). After all, this is one of the privileges of composers of the romantic era of music. The breaking away from established forms, styles, and harmonies, is one of the features that distinguish their music from that of the classical masters.

The nocturnes are representative of all periods of Chopin's life. He composed the first two in 1827 when he was still a boy (Op. 72, No. 1, and the C minor Nocturne not available in present day publications). He composed the last one, Op. 62, No. 2, in 1846, three years before he died. The three opera most often cited as the culminating point of the nocturnes are Op. 27 (C sharp minor and D flat major), Op. 37 (G minor and G major), and Op. 48 (C minor and F sharp minor). It seems generally agreed that the later nocturnes were somewhat anti-climactic to these.

Among the nocturnes are some of Chopin's best known compositions. This is music that reflects Chopin's inner self more than some of his other works. In general they require less technical proficiency than most of Chopin's writing, although, for an adequate performance, they require a singing tone quality, and a sincere feeling for beauty in music.

Nocturnes Op. 9, Nos. 1, 2, and 3

The Op. 9 Nocturnes were probably composed in 1832, and were published in 1833. Chopin dedicated them, his first published nocturnes, to Madame Camille Pleyel,⁹ an able pianist, and wife of the piano manufacturer, Camille Pleyel.

Great advance is seen in the B flat minor Nocturne Op. 9, No. 1, compared with the earlier examples (E minor and C minor) of Chopin's writing in this style.

The accompaniment shows the influence of Field. It is a widespread, broken chord figuration that does not vary its rhythmic pattern of twelve eighth-notes to the measure, with the exception of the last three measures, during the entire piece.

The melody of the first section is one of haunting beauty, and immediately creates a mood of melancholy. It has a simple beauty that has no trace of morbid sadness such as Huneker¹⁰ attributes to many of the nocturnes.

The second section is in D flat major (the relative major of B flat minor). The thematic material is of a more reposeful nature than the preceding section in minor. Here is seen

⁹Marie Pleyel (1811-1875) was a pianist, and the wife of the piano manufacturer, pianist, and composer, Camille Pleyel (1788-1855). She studied with Moscheles and Kalkbrenner. Fétis said she was the most perfect player he had heard. Marie Louise Pereyra, "Marie Pleyel," Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, Vol. VI.

¹⁰James Huneker, Chopin; The Man and His Music (New York, 1900), p. 252.

the "Chopinesque" trait that perhaps has its origin in one of Field's nocturnes (No. 11), the doubling of the melodic line in octaves. This is maintained almost throughout the entire section and gives a melodic contrast between sections, as the melodic line of the first section is a single line melody.

In this nocturne can be seen an excellent example of wide leaps in the melody line.



Fig. 3--Chopin, Nocturne, Op. 9, No. 1, mm. 15-18

There is a short coda after the return of the first section and the nocturne ends with the use of the Picardy third.

The second of the Op. 9 Nocturnes, in E flat, is probably the best known nocturne that Chopin wrote. It has been a favorite with the public since Chopin's time, when he undoubtedly played it in his fashionable salon programs in Paris,¹¹ on down to the equivalent present day programs.

¹¹Herbert Weinstock, Chopin: The Man and His Music (New York, 1949), p. 189.

This nocturne, as Leichtentritt points out,¹² is the ancestor of the "reverie-like" pieces for the violin by Raff, Ernst, and Vieuxtemps, and often appears in the sound track of our motion pictures as background music. It was this nocturne that Chopin played for Clara Schumann when they first met in Leipzig, in September, 1835.¹³

The first and main theme is presented four times during this comparatively short nocturne. The piece is made up almost entirely of this thematic material. The form is similar to Field's in this extensive repetition of the first theme (see ante p. 13). However, Chopin shows his superiority as a composer in the various ways he presents the same material again and again, and by knowing when it has been used to the limit of effectiveness. The melodic material of this piece has a marked similarity to one of Field's nocturnes, No. 6 in F major (see ante p. 15).

The form of the E flat Nocturne is either a two-part song form, AB (A, mm. 1-20; B, mm. 21-34), or it is in rondo form, ABABA (extended) coda (A, mm. 1-8; B, mm. 9-12; A, mm. 13-16; B, mm. 17-20; A, mm. 21-24; coda, mm. 25-34).

It is apparent from the above analysis that this nocturne differs from most of the nocturnes in that it has no contrasting middle section. It is similar to Field's form

¹²Hugo Leichtentritt, Frederic Chopin (Berlin, 1905), p. 99.

¹³Casimir Wierzynski, The Life and Death of Chopin, trans. by Norbert Guterman (New York, 1949), p. 208.

in that the second theme seems to be more of a continuation of the first, rather than having a new musical idea (see ante p. 13). The piece contains the familiar traits of embellishments, wide leaps in the melody line, and the triplet-figured accompaniment.

The B major Nocturne, Op. 9, No. 3, is much longer than the two previous nocturnes. It is so long that it does not hold together well and wears its material thin with the long, though somewhat varied, repetitions of the first theme. The first section is twice as long as the second and, upon its return, the theme is only presented once, but in its entirety.

The melody line is of an attractive, almost coquettish, nature. Chopin makes elaborate use of fioriture in the various presentations of this theme. He uses turns, grace-notes, trills, and wide leaps, to ornament the single line melody.

The second section is of markedly contrasting material. This is the first example of a characteristic of many of Chopin's nocturnes, the agitated second section, in contrast to the quieter first and last sections. The tempo indication of the first section is Allegretto (the only instance of a nocturne that does not have a slower tempo indication such as: Lento, Larghetto, or Andante), but even so, it is not a fast section ($\text{♩}=66$), and the musical content is of a quiet happy mood. The second section is marked Agitato. It is in

the tonic minor,¹⁴ B minor, and the cross rhythm pattern helps to create a turbulent effect as shown in the following example:

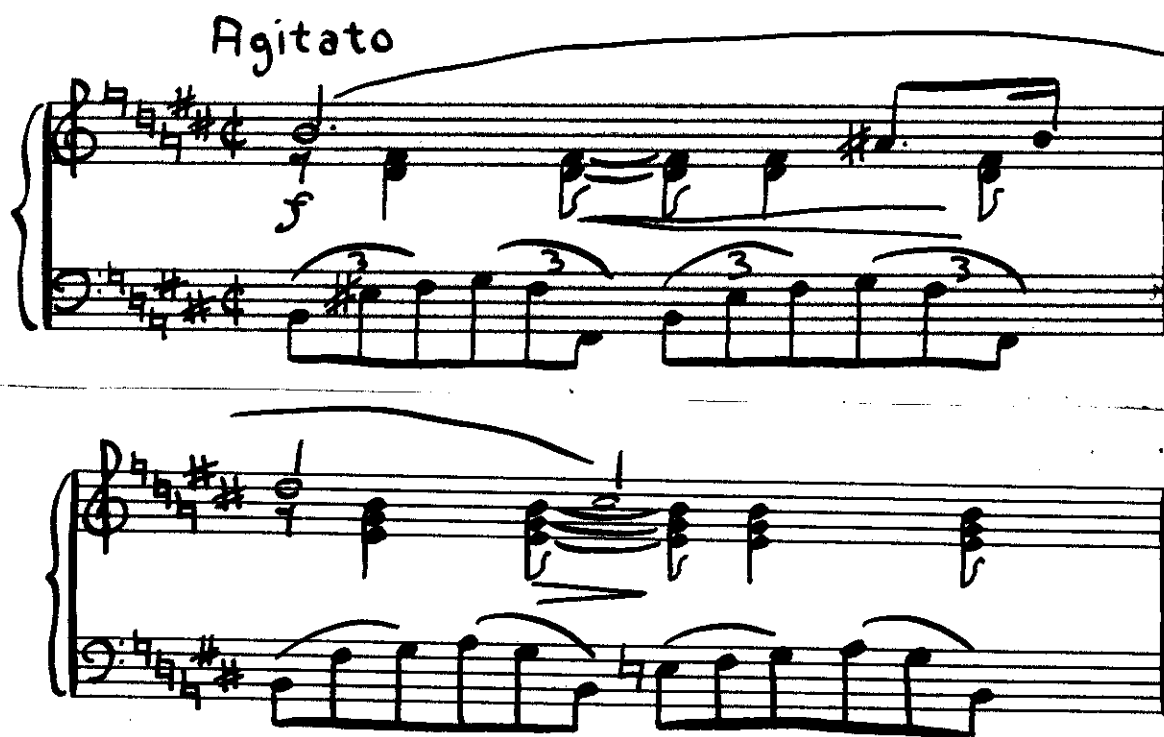


Fig. 4--Chopin, Nocturne, Op. 9, No. 3, mm. 88-89

This effect is increased by the rapid changes of tonality, which are never dwelt upon long enough to be interpreted as genuine modulations. Outside of this section, the harmony is comparatively simple.

An example of truly elaborate embellishment that is suitable only for the piano is seen in the ending of this

¹⁴ See Chopin's Prelude, No. 15 (D flat major)--middle section in enharmonic tonic minor (C sharp).

nocturne. The effect of the cascading chromatic figuration is one that "reads plainly 'Frederic Chopin.'"¹⁵

When these nocturnes were published there was much criticism saying they resembled Field's too much. The following quotation is taken from a criticism by Ludwig Rellstab,¹⁶ editor of the Iris, when he heard the Trois Nocturnes, Op. 9, in Vienna in 1833.

Where Field smiles, Chopin makes a grinning grimace; where Field sighs, Chopin groans; where Field shrugs his shoulders, Chopin twists his whole body; where Field puts seasoning into the food, Chopin empties a handful of Cayenne pepper . . . In short, if one holds Field's charming romances before a distorting concave mirror, so that every delicate expression becomes coarse, one gets Chopin's work . . . We implore Mr. Chopin to return to nature.¹⁷

Instances of such adverse criticism of Chopin were extremely unusual. Rellstab remained a not very ardent fan of Chopin's. He did see what some critics failed to see, the sometimes excessive use of elaboration and sentimentalizing of melodies. However, he failed to recognize the far more numerous and important aspects of genius apparent in Chopin's writing.

¹⁵Frederick Niecks, The Life of Chopin, 2nd ed. (London, New York, 1890), II, 263.

¹⁶Ludwig Rellstab (1799-1860), music critic, founded the musical periodical Iris im Gebiet der Tonkunst in 1830, which survived until 1842. Franz Gehring, "Ludwig Rellstab," Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, Vol. VII.

¹⁷Niecks, op. cit., I, 269-270.

Nocturnes Op. 15, Nos. 1, 2, and 3

The first two nocturnes of Op. 15 were composed in 1830, and the third in 1833. The group is dedicated to Ferdinand Hiller.¹⁸ They were published at approximately the same time, in January, 1834, by Breitkopf and Härtel in Leipzig, and by Schlesinger in Paris.¹⁹

The first nocturne, in F major, is divided into three sections, ABA. Each section is twenty-four measures in length. There is a marked contrast between the first section (Andante cantabile), and the dramatic middle section (Con fuoco). The contrast is achieved by a faster tempo indication, and a definite change of the rhythmic pattern from an eighth note triplet pattern to a six note sixteenth note pattern (see Figure 5 below). The harmonic texture is thicker and the change from major to the tonic minor mode helps to give this middle section a sense of greater agitation.

¹⁸According to A. Maczewsky, "Ferdinand Hiller," Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, Vol. IV, Ferdinand Hiller (1811-1885) was a German conductor, teacher, and composer. He was intimately acquainted with Mendelssohn, Berlioz, Liszt, and Chopin.

¹⁹Weinstock, Chopin: The Man and His Music, pp. 200-201.



Fig. 5--Chopin, Nocturne Op. 15, No. 1, mm. 23-25

The first section is quiet, and is one of the least ornamented sections of the nocturnes. The upper notes of the accompaniment in the left hand are taken from the melody in the right hand and add strength to the melodic line. In this way the accompaniment is of more significance than is sometimes the case in other nocturnes.

Chopin usually uses the four-bar or eight-bar phrase. There are exceptions, as in the following example from the Nocturne, Op. 15, No. 1:



Fig. 6--Chopin, Nocturne Op. 15, No. 1, mm. 17-24

The grouping of five-measure, and three-measure phrases is all the more effective because it follows a series of four-bar

units.²⁰ The interruption of the apparently unfinished phrase by the fermata without the satisfaction of a strong cadence, gives the impression that the piece is to continue, and contributes a sort of immeasurable phrase extension.

This nocturne, perhaps because of the extreme regularity of form, and because of the closeness of key relationships, is not as interesting to hear as some of the other Nocturnes.

The nocturne in F sharp major, Op. 15, No. 2, is performed more often than the two other nocturnes of this opus. The melody is one of rich song-like quality and is kept alive throughout the piece by small alterations in the manner Chopin knew so well, as shown below:



Fig. 7--Chopin, Nocturne Op. 15, No. 2, mm. 1-3

In the third measure the melodic material is repeated, but by substituting five notes for four, and making the fourth of these the first note in the piece which is not native to the key, Chopin quickens interest. The use of vocal-like

²⁰Abraham, Chopin's Musical Style, p. 61.

fioriture, wide leaps in the melody, and slight harmonic changes, helps to sustain this interest.

The middle section offers a good example of cross rhythm, one of the characteristics of Chopin's writing. This section is played at double the pace of the first section. It moves rapidly through a chromatic series of modulations that lead to an exciting climax. After this, the excitement dies away, the tempo retards gradually, there is a pause, and the first section returns. The change of tempo and rhythmic pattern provides a contrasting middle section for this nocturne. The nocturne is one of the few, if not the only one, with a middle section in the original key.

Murphy gives the form of this nocturne as ABAC (extended),²¹ i.e., "a free form." It seems just as reasonable to consider it as a three-part song form, ABA (shortened) coda.

The third nocturne, G minor, of this opus is unusual in its form. According to Weinstock it is written in three large sections of differing thematic material.²² Kelley says it is an unprecedented example of a song-form with trio that never returns to the theme.²³ It may also be called a sectional

²¹Howard A. Murphy, Form in Music for the Listener, 2nd ed. (Camden, 1945, 1948).

²²Weinstock, Chopin: The Man and His Music, p. 202.

²³Edgar Stillman Kelley, Chopin the Composer (New York, Boston, 1913), p. 78.

form, divided into four relatively equal parts. In any event, the most important feature and the one that makes it differ from the other nocturnes, is the fact that there is no return to the first thematic material.

An anecdote about this nocturne is that Chopin wrote on the manuscript "After a performance of Hamlet," then crossed this out, saying, "No! let them guess for themselves."²⁴ There has been no available evidence for this study to substantiate this story.

The nocturne is one of those that best suit the description of being "mysterious" or "morbid." It is in minor tonality, and there is about it a general air of depression and anguish.

There is a lack of motion in the accompaniment. Instead of the arpeggiated or triplet figure accompaniment found so often in Chopin's other nocturnes, the accompaniment in this one does not vary for almost two pages (seventy-six measures), from two quarter notes (a chord and bass note) and a rest. Moreover, there is very little ornamentation and no fioriture. Almost the only "Chopinesque" characteristic apparent is the use of chromatic modulations and a brief change from minor to major tonality.

There is a curious difference of opinions as to the merit of this nocturne. Niecks says, "The third (in G minor) of

²⁴Weinstock, op. cit., p. 202.

these nocturnes is the finest of the three,"²⁵ while Weinstock says that it is "unfortunately not very interesting to hear."²⁶

Nocturnes Op. 27, Nos. 1 and 2

The Nocturnes Op. 27 were composed in 1834-1835, and published in the spring of 1836 by Breitkopf and Härtel and Schlesinger. They were dedicated to Comtesse D'Appony, wife of the Austrian ambassador to Paris, whose guest Chopin often was.²⁷ These are among the finest of the Chopin nocturnes. Kleczynski, the Polish critic and writer on music, thought they marked the culmination of Chopin's creative genius.²⁸

Op. 27, No. 1, in C sharp minor, begins in a black, mysterious sort of atmosphere. The accompaniment is an unusually widespread mesh of arpeggiated chords, and rocks along like the motion of the sea. Until the twentieth measure only the accompaniment and a single-voiced melody are heard. Here a third voice enters and shares a small part of the melodic interest.

The middle section of this ternary form is marked più mosso and moves along steadily. Here the accompaniment is very important because it seems to push the whole musical

²⁵Niecks, op. cit., II, 263.

²⁶Weinstock, op. cit., p. 202.

²⁷Ibid., p. 217.

²⁸G. C. Ashton Jonson, A Handbook to Chopin's Works (London, 1908), p. 166.

content to a climax. The rhythmic pattern is made up of eighth-note triplets and the harmonic changes help influence the rise of tension toward a definite goal. The repetition of notes in a set rhythmic pattern in the right hand melody seems to increase the interest. Through these means the climax emerges in the relative major key (E major). This is only for a short period of three measures, after which there is a change of key to A flat major, and the music again starts to build toward another climax. A new key (D flat), with a change of rhythmic pattern, and new thematic material appears in this second half of the middle section. A dramatic melodic passage of octaves in the left hand brings this departure from all the original material back to the key and an exact (though shortened) return of the first section. The coda is one of the highlights of this nocturne. Except for the same accompaniment pattern, it is made up of new material. By changing to the major mode Chopin lets a little sunlight into the atmosphere of this rather moody and stormy piece, and increases the beauty and effectiveness of the coda. This nocturne is a small masterpiece in the way it is conceived and presented. Of it Hadden says:

The finest of all the Chopin bunch to my mind, is the grand C sharp minor (Op. 27, No. 1). Kleczynski sees in it "a description of a calm night at Venice, where, after a scene of murder, the sea closes over a corpse and continues to serve as a mirror to the moonlight."²⁹

²⁹J. Cuthbert Hadden, Chopin, 1st ed. (London, New York, 1903), p. 224.

Op. 27, No. 2, in D flat major, is a favorite nocturne of the professional pianist. It exhibits an extreme example of the sweetness, the exquisite ornamentation, and luscious melody which Chopin was capable of writing. It demands considerable technique and good taste to give it an adequate performance. There is lavish use of thirds and sixths in the right hand, and much use of fioriture.

The accompaniment of this nocturne is less varied in the figuration shape than that of the C sharp minor Nocturne. The first measure sets the pattern and it is unvaried for seventy-five of the seventy-seven measures of the piece. Above this arpeggiated accompaniment Chopin works such miracles of melody, harmony, and gradations of volume that few pieces are more interesting than the D flat Nocturne. There is a strong Italian vocal influence both in the melodic material and in the embellishments of the piece.

An example of Chopin's giving the left hand accompaniment more importance than mere background, can be seen in the following illustration:

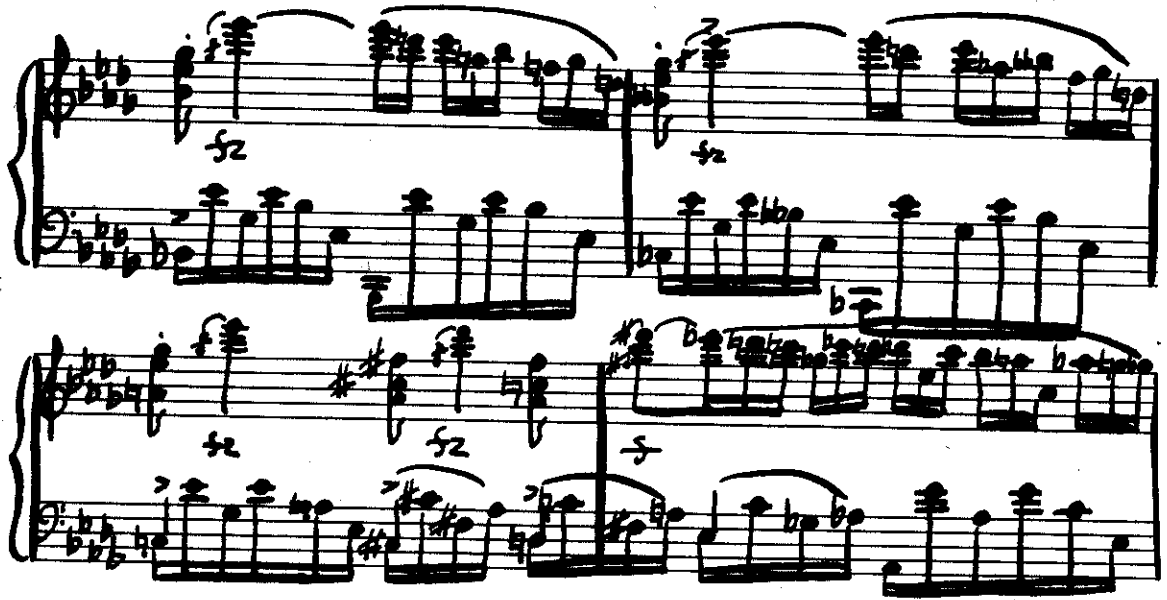


Fig. 8--Chopin, Nocturne Op. 27, No. 2, mm. 42-45

The chord progressions are moved chromatically by half-steps, while the right hand keeps the same melodic and rhythmic pattern. The movement of the bass notes, and the repetition of the thematic material increases the tension and leads to the climax of the nocturne, and back into the original theme.

The use of the semitonal side-slip to temporarily break up the tonal surface is seen in the following illustration:

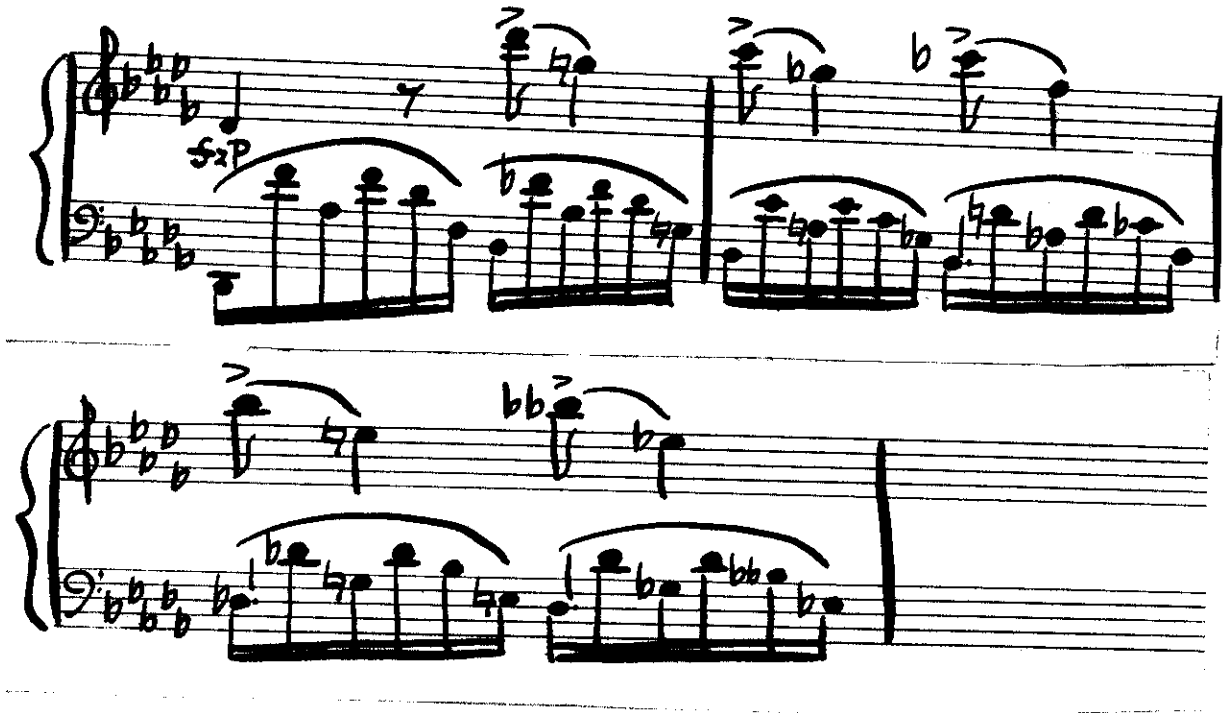


Fig. 9--Chopin, Nocturne Op. 27, No. 2, mm. 62-64

The tonic D flat used much as a pedal helps create an impressionistic atmosphere and at the same time prevents the original key feeling from being destroyed.

Schumann wrote of the two Op. 27 Nocturnes:

And now, as nocturnes are our subject, I will not deny that all the while I have been writing, I have been continually thinking of the two new ones by Chopin in C-sharp minor and D-flat major. For, along with Field's, I consider these, with many of his earlier ones, especially those in F major and G minor, ideal; indeed, as the most heartfelt and transfigured creations evolved in music.³⁰

³⁰Robert Schumann, On Music and Musicians, translated by Paul Rosenfield, ed. by Konrad Wolff (New York, 1946), p. 137.

Nocturnes Op. 32, Nos. 1 and 2

The two Nocturnes Op. 32 were composed during 1836-1837. They were published late in 1837 by Adolf Martin Schlesinger in Berlin, and Moritz Adolf Schlesinger (son of Adolf Martin) in Paris. The opus is dedicated to Baroness de Billing, born Courbonne, probably one of Chopin's Paris students.³¹

The Nocturne Op. 32, No. 1, in B major, opens with a somewhat sentimental melody, which Chopin repeats with slight ornamental changes. The second melody is more or less a continuation of the first, and although portions of the first theme are heard often throughout the piece, the original first theme does not recur.

The movement of the nocturne is constantly being interrupted by the use of the fermata, which gives a curious effect. There does not seem to be any particular reason for these fermatas, and they do not give the dramatic effect one would suppose.

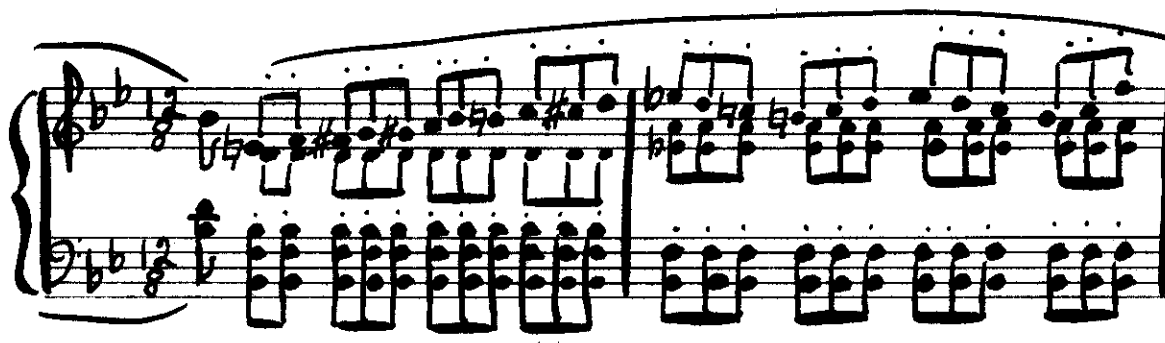
The coda is perhaps the most interesting part of the piece. After all the sweetness of turns, trills, and delicious harmonies, it makes the listener sit up and take note! It is recitative-like material, apparently unrelated thematically to the rest of the nocturne.

The Nocturne, Op. 32, No. 2, in A flat major, might well have been dedicated to John Field, it so closely resembles

³¹Weinstock, Chopin: The Man and His Music, p. 231.

Field's Nocturne No. 5, in B flat major (see ante p. 15).

The resemblance is particularly marked in the passage beginning with the fifteenth measure in the Field nocturne, and that beginning with the 12/8 section in the Chopin nocturne, as shown below in Figure 10:



a. Field, Nocturne No. 5, mm. 18-19



b. Chopin, Nocturne Op. 32, No. 2, mm. 27-28

Fig. 10--Comparison of Field Nocturne No. 5 and Chopin Nocturne Op. 32, No. 2.

As has been stated earlier in this study, the melodic outlines of these nocturnes differ, of course, but in the general texture (broken chord figuration below a cantabile type of melody), and especially in the middle sections (chordal texture with chromatic passing tones and dissonances), the similarity is striking. In this section can also be seen a good example of the use of chromatic progression in the melodic outline.

The melody and accompanying triplet pattern of the first section of the A flat Nocturne, creates an effect of slow dance music. This melody is "incorporated by Glazunov in the famous Chopin ballet Les Sylphides."³²

Lina Ramann, one of Liszt's biographers, thinks that perhaps Chopin was influenced by Liszt's playing in the composing of some of his compositions. One example she cited is the introduction and close of this nocturne.³³ Because of the manner in which the cadence is resolved, the last two measures do have a "Lisztian flavor" when heard.

Nocturnes Op. 37, Nos. 1 and 2

The actual date of the composition of the Nocturnes Op. 37 is a questionable point. A letter to Julius Fontana (Polish pianist and friend of Chopin's), written from Nohant in the summer of 1839 leaves room for doubt that both were written in 1838. "I have a new Nocturne in G major, which will go along

³²David Ewen, Music for the Millions (New York, 1944, 1945), p. 156.

³³Niecks, The Life of Chopin, I, 266.

with the Nocturne in G minor, if you remember such a one."³⁴ Because this is the only opus with two nocturnes in G this gives the impression that the Op. 37, No. 1 had been composed before the summer of 1839, probably in 1838, and that the second of this opus was composed in 1839. These nocturnes were published by Breitkopf and Härtel (May) and by Troupenas et Compagnie (June) in the late spring of 1840. These are the only ones among Chopin's nocturnes that have no dedication. They were later issued by Wessel in London under the title "Les Soupirs," with the result that during his English and Scottish visit of 1848 Chopin was often invited by ladies to play his "second sigh."³⁵

The first theme of Op. 37, No. 1 is a melody of a plaintive, quasi-oriental flavor. The accompaniment, like that of the other G minor Nocturne, (Op. 15, No. 3) is chordal instead of a series of broken chord figurations like most of the other nocturnes.

The whole first section consists of the sixteen-measure double period which contains the complete melodic material of the section, a complete repetition, with slight variations of an ornamental nature, and another repetition of half of this same material. Three chords serve as a pivot to modulate into the second section which is in E flat major (relative of the

³⁴Niecks, op. cit., II, 62.

³⁵Weinstock, op. cit., p. 243.

subdominant). This section is similar to the corresponding section of the other G minor Nocturne in that it is quiet and purely chordal.³⁶ A feature of interest at the end of this section is the use of fermatas,³⁷ which slows down the rhythmic motion and makes a more gradual transition into the last section, which is a partial recurrence of the first section.

There is comparatively little ornamentation in this nocturne. A triplet pattern is used more often as an embellishment of the melody than it has previously been used in these pieces. Otherwise, ornamentation is confined to a few turns and trills, and an occasional fioriture-like passage. This nocturne, therefore, is devoid of many of the "Chopinesque" characteristics, i.e., elaborate embellishments, wide leaps, arpeggiated accompaniment, and the usual

³⁶Adolf Gutmann, one of Chopin's most quoted students, played the middle section at a faster tempo and said that Chopin had forgotten to insert an instruction for a more rapid tempo.. Niecks, op. cit., II, 264.

³⁷"This music recalls the nondiscontinuous melody of the Arabian clarinet which never allows us to feel the moment when the musician takes a fresh breath. There are no longer any periods or commas, and that is why I cannot approve the 'organ points' which certain ill-advised editors and performers have added in the Choralé of the Nocturne in G minor, for the satisfaction of fools. . . ." On another page, Gide prints a letter from Edouard Ganche concerning this quote, January 2, 1932, "Nocturne in G minor. I must say that the organ points are Chopin's, and this one time, if I may say so, it is not possible to incriminate the revisers." Andre Gide, Notes on Chopin, translated by Bernard Frechtman (New York, 1949), pp. 41-42, 123.

frequency of modulation. It is a well-knit nocturne because of its simplicity..

A feature that is peculiar to this opus is that, by the use of the Picardy third, Chopin makes the G minor Nocturne³⁸ seem to end in G major, the key of the following nocturne, making them sound as if they should be played together.

The Nocturne in G major is a different type than its predecessor. It has a sort of barcarolle rhythm (6/8 time) and moves along in contrast to the G minor Nocturne which had a slower rhythmic movement.

In the first section the melodic material is written in double notes, largely thirds and sixths (see p. 12). The outstanding characteristic of this nocturne is in the many implied key changes (see footnote 16, p. 14). Of particular audible interest is the modulation to F major (see Figure 11 below). Without seeing the key signature, at this point of the composition, it would be difficult to ascertain the original key.

Elgar chose this nocturne "to represent Poland of the past in his symphonic poem, 'Polonia.'" John F. Porte, Chopin The Composer and His Music (London, 1935), p. 116.



Fig. 11--Chopin, Nocturne Op. 37, No. 2, mm. 13-16

The change from a constantly moving pattern of eighth notes in the left hand accompaniment, against the sixteenth note melodic figuration in the right hand, to the pattern of a dotted quarter, quarter, and eighth note pattern with a single line melody, constitutes a contrasting rhythmic feeling to that of the first section. The melody of the second section is not unlike that of a folk song. There is a recurrence of both the first (in the original key of G major) and second sections (in E major--an example of the Romantic composer's interest in "third-related" keys as has been remarked earlier), plus transitory material that partly consists of thematic material of the first section. The original key is not felt to be secure until material from the second section

is heard briefly (five measures) in G major at the end of the piece.

There is hardly a melodic ornamental device used in the entire piece. The interest is concentrated purely on the melodic and harmonic elements.

Schumann wrote of the Op. 37 Nocturnes:

To deserve the name of poet it is not necessary to write thick volumes; one or two true poems are enough for that, and Chopin has written such. The above named nocturnes are also poems; they distinguish themselves essentially from his earlier ones through simpler ornamentation and a more modest grace. We know how Chopin formerly comported himself, as though overstrewn with spangles, gold trinkets, and pearls. He has altered and grown older; he still loves jewelry, but of a more distinguished kind, through which the loftiness of poetry gleams all the lovelier.³⁹

Nocturnes Op. 48, Nos. 1 and 2

The Op. 48 Nocturnes were composed in 1841, and published⁴⁰ late that same year by Schlesinger, and in January, 1842, by Breitkopf and Härtel.⁴¹ In regard to the dedication of these nocturnes the following is a quotation from a statement of Wilhelm von Lenz (1809-1883), one of Chopin's students at that time:

I always made my appearance long before my hour and waited. One lady after another came out, one more

³⁹Schumann, On Music and Musicians, p. 142.

⁴⁰In a letter to Julius Fontana, Chopin said he would sell the French rights of these two nocturnes, with the Allegro de Concert, the F sharp minor Polonaise, and the Fantaisie, for 2000 francs. Niecks, op. cit., II, 86.

⁴¹Weinstock, Chopin: The Man and His Music, p. 257.

beautiful than the other, on one occasion Mlle. Laura Duperre, the daughter of the admiral, whom Chopin accompanied to the staircase, she was the most beautiful of all, and as straight as a palm; to her Chopin has dedicated two of his most important Nocturnes (in C minor and F sharp minor, Op. 48); she was at that time his favourite pupil.⁴²

It is perhaps worth noting that Jonson,⁴³ Porte,⁴⁴ and Weinstock,⁴⁵ all find that the two nocturnes of Op. 48 (particularly the first, in C minor) are Chopin's best and most important work in that genre. In regard to performances by de Pachmann and Anton Rubinstein, Porte goes on to say:

The greatest of the Nocturnes is the large and sombre poem in C minor, Op. 48, No. 1. All of the great Chopin pianists approached it with respect and even veneration. It was in this work that, I think, de Pachmann rose naturally to his pre-eminence as a Chopin player. Here he discarded all of his jovialities and ecstasies. His manner was solemn and an indefinable air of shrouded tone and mysterious poetry hung over the piano from the very commencement of his solemn and luxurious entry into the potent key of C minor. As the piece progressed he would become more and more absorbed in its exotic, sombre beauty. . . . Small wonder that his audiences who collected round the piano after his programme had been completed would beg of him to play the Nocturne in C minor.

The middle section of chords, Poco piu lento, develops into powerful octave passages. . . . Anton Rubenstein made the octaves grow to recklessness and sink away as after a storm, yet leaving a restlessness beginning at the Doppio movimento (agitato), in hushed tone, which never recovered. His playing of the great octave passages prepared naturally for the quickening agitato in pianissimo colour, and it so charged the

⁴²Niecks, op. cit., II, 138.

⁴³Jonson, A Handbook to Chopin's Works (London, 1908), p. 229.

⁴⁴John F. Porte, Chopin The Composer and His Music (London, 1935), p. 118.

⁴⁵Weinstock, op. cit., p. 257.

music that there was no recovery of his opening melancholy tranquillity. It must have been a great experience to have heard Rubinstein play this Nocturne.⁴⁶

The first section in the first of these two nocturnes, consists of a single line of melody which is only slightly ornamented, and has comparatively little harmonic variety. The accompaniment is chordal, and provides a close connection with the melody by the manner it is spaced on the keyboard. It prevents the texture from seeming too thin between the low placed bass notes of the accompaniment, and the melody that is usually at least two octaves higher on the keyboard.

The second section in the tonic major begins with widely spaced chords, and supplies a contrasting effect to the first section. From this quiet beginning, a great storm of octaves, reaching a thunderous climax, emerges. This is achieved by starting with a murmuring octave passage in triplets, which grows quickly in volume and intensity. After the climax, this section moves quickly to a return with a variation of the first section. The melody is the same, the same sombre mood is again expressed, but this time, has a more agitated effect. The repetition of this section is one of Chopin's compositional triumphs. He maintains the triplet rhythm that is well established from the previous section, and uses the thematic material of the first as the basis of the section.

⁴⁶Porte, op. cit., pp. 118-119.

This creates a new effect, but at the same time it is so closely connected with what has gone before, as to give the whole composition a structural firmness and unity that is admirable.

The second nocturne of this opus, in F sharp minor, despite its greater length (137 measures, compared with 79 measures), is conceived on a smaller scale than its predecessor. It begins, like Nocturne Op. 32, No. 2, with a two-measure introduction. The single line of melody that makes up the main thematic material of the piece is song-like, and is unusual in its length. It seems to extend, unbroken, over eighteen measures with a sense of continuity which prevents it from conforming to the more common four- or eight-measure phrase grouping. It is an excellent example of Chopin's talent for concealing phrase endings, and seeming to expand phrase lengths. The opening eighteen-measure group is followed by one of eight measures in the same style, and then, the whole twenty-six measures (much the same as in Nocturne Op. 9, No. 3), complete with introduction, with slight variation, is repeated.

The second section is of a dramatic nature and contrasts markedly, in melodic style, rhythm, and harmony, to the previous section. When Gutmann studied this nocturne, he was told by Chopin that the middle section should be played as a recitative: "A tyrant commands" (the first two chords), he

said, "and the other asks for mercy."⁴⁷ By means of an enharmonic modulation (in key of D flat major--V⁷ chord--the seventh remains stationary and changes enharmonically from G flat to F sharp. The other parts move by half steps to the I chord of F sharp minor.), a recurrence of the first section is easily achieved. It is presented briefly in its original form, and fragments of the melodic material are used as a transition into the coda.

Schumann wrote of the Op. 48 Nocturnes: "In their melancholy character, their peaceful movement, the nocturnes rank with Chopin's earlier ones. The second especially will speak to many ears."⁴⁸

Nocturnes Op. 55, Nos. 1 and 2

The Op. 55 Nocturnes were composed in 1843, and published by Breitkopf and Härtel in August, and Schlesinger in

⁴⁷Niecks, The Life of Chopin, II, 265. When speaking of the Op. 48 Nocturnes Niecks refers to the second nocturne (F sharp minor) as the C sharp minor Nocturne. This is either an oversight on his part, or an error of the publishers of the book. Also of interest in the following quote is the fact that Niecks, in contrast to the previously mentioned writers, did not consider Op. 48 among the best of Chopin's Nocturnes. "The two nocturnes (in C minor and C sharp minor) which form Op. 48 are not of the number of those that occupy foremost places among their companions." Niecks, ibid.

⁴⁸Schumann, On Music and Musicians, p. 144.

September, 1844.⁴⁹ They were dedicated to Jane Wilhelmina Sterling,⁵⁰ Chopin's Scotch friend and pupil, to whom he owed the fact that the last months of his life were not spent in poverty.⁵¹

The first nocturne, in F minor, is often played by students because of its rather simple technical and musical demands. The typical single-line melody, with an accompaniment similar to the one used in Op. 48, No. 1 (see p. 49) is repeated four times with very slight ornamental variations during the forty-seven measures that make up this section. Here this seems to be an overtaxing of the thematic material. It is not varied enough by rhythmic, melodic, or harmonic devices to sustain the interest, and becomes slightly tiresome. The second section begins in a more dramatic manner, and, by means of the pattern which forms part of the melodic interest, moves along in contrast to the slower first section. The second part of this section is in A flat major (the relative major) and has a more flowing effect. The recurrence of the first section is brief (mm. 73-76) and is followed by an unusually long coda (mm. 77-101).

⁴⁹Weinstock, Chopin The Man and His Music, p. 270.

⁵⁰Jane Wilhelmina Sterling had a collection of many of Chopin's piano works which Chopin himself had marked and corrected. This collection was made available to Edouard Ganche, and thus at least part of the Oxford Edition of Frederic Chopin's Piano Works was printed. Edouard Ganche, Preface to The Oxford Original Edition of Frederic Chopin Nocturnes (London, New York, 1928).

⁵¹Jonson, A Handbook to Chopin's Works, p. 248.

The second nocturne of this opus, in E flat major, is more elaborately designed than the first. The melody is almost concealed, both visually and audibly, by the accompaniment. This is a prime example of Chopin's widespread accompaniment figures. It covers an unusually large amount of the keyboard and sometimes produces very small intervals between the accompaniment and melody. This often prevents the melody from being heard as clearly as it usually is in the other nocturnes.

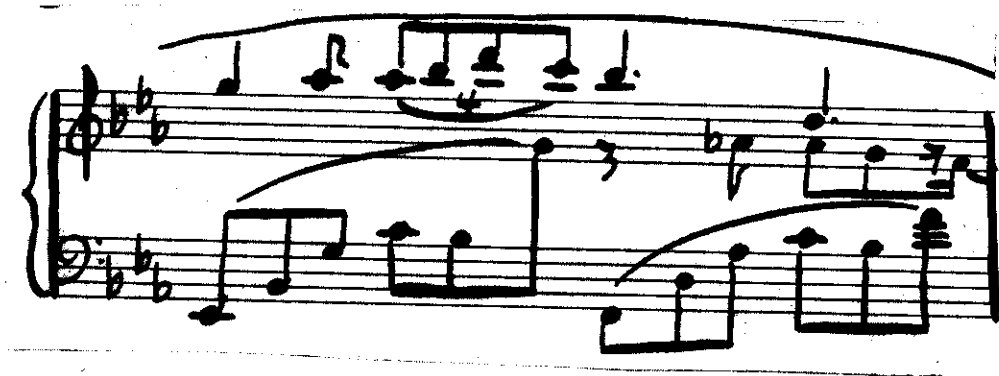


Fig. 12--Chopin Nocturne Op. 55, No. 2, m. 9

There is no contrasting section and the thematic material is so alike throughout, that it is difficult to distinguish between the different sections. Rather sentimental in effect, and having little melodically or harmonically to sustain its interest, the piece grows tiresome before it is finished.

The following is a quotation that is perhaps exaggerated in substance, but shows something of the feeling this piece produces:

The monotony of the unrelieved sentimentality does not fail to make itself felt. One is seized by an ever-increasing longing to get out of this oppressive atmosphere, to feel the fresh breeze and warm sunshine, to see smiling faces and the many-coloured dress of nature, to hear the rustling of leaves, the murmuring of streams, and voices which have not yet lost the clear, sonorous ring that joy in the present and hope in the future impart.⁵²

Nocturnes Op. 62, Nos. 1 and 2

The Op. 62 Nocturnes were written in 1846. They were the last nocturnes composed and published during Chopin's lifetime. Brandus et Compagnie (September), and Breitkopf and Härtel (December) both issued them in 1846. They are dedicated to Mlle. R. von Konneritz, later Mme. von Heygendorf.⁵³

Of the three nocturnes written in B major, Op. 62, No. 1 is the best known (and is sometimes known as "The Tuberose"). It is one of the nocturnes most deserving of a common criticism of Chopin's music: oversentimentality. This quality is accentuated by the use of broken chords in the melodic line in a "Lisztian" manner (see Liszt's Sonata in B minor, m. 163). The nocturne differs from its predecessors in that, for the most part, it has three-or four-part harmony so that the harmonic distances between parts are smaller, and the texture is slightly thicker than it is in most of the nocturnes. Likewise, there results a more linear, quasi-contrapuntal leading of the parts. Although there seems ample opportunity with four parts, the harmonic elements of the piece are not particularly

⁵²Niecks, op. cit., II, 265-266.

⁵³Weinstock, op. cit., pp. 282-283.

interesting, and for the most part consist of simple modulations with comparatively few chromatic alterations.

As the movement of the melodic material is largely stepwise, there are no wide leaps such as are frequently seen in the other nocturnes. With the exception of trills in the recurrence of the first section there is little ornamentation. The accompaniment, though not unusual, differs rhythmically in that it is not a triplet pattern. It moves simply and almost continually in eighth-notes.

In the second section there is a change of key signature (to A flat--enharmonically the key a minor third below) and the rhythm of the accompaniment changes to a syncopated pattern against new melodic material. The texture of this section is not as thick as that of the first, because of the return to a single line melody, and wider spacing, at least, of the outer parts.

As has been mentioned the recurrence of the first section brings an excessive use of trills in the melody. Undoubtedly this is one of the charms of this piece for the public, because quite naturally, the layman is lured into admiration by ornamental devices such as trills, fast runs, and leaps. The trills distinguish this nocturne from others, in that it is the only one in which they are used so extensively. The return to the first section is brief, and with five measures of transition, and a long coda (fourteen measures), the piece is brought to a close.

The second nocturne of Op. 62, in E major, has a single line of melody in the first section similar to those of previous nocturnes; it is varied with harmonic changes and more floriture than its predecessor. The accompaniment is chordal and does not employ triplets.

The second section is in the relative minor (C sharp minor). A contrast in style between sections is produced by this change of mode, and by a change of rhythmic pattern. The accompaniment shifts from a quarter-note to a comparatively rapid sixteenth note figuration. Along with these alterations, there are the facts that the spacing of the parts is comparatively close, and that for the most part, the musical material of this section is in and below the middle register of the keyboard. Because of the lower pitches of the notes, the texture seems heavier and thicker than it actually is. The main thematic material (or fragments of it) is taken into various temporary keys (C sharp minor, E major, E minor, G major, B minor). The brief recurrence of the first section restores the original quiet mood, but it is interrupted by another brief recurrence of the more agitated materials of the second section. After nine measures this breaks off and there is a two-measure coda more in keeping with the first mood of the piece.

Nocturne Op. 72, No. 1

The Nocturne Op. 72, No. 1, in E minor, was composed in 1827, when Chopin was seventeen years old. It was published

posthumously in 1855, which accounts for the late opus number.⁵⁴

Several of the traits that were characteristic of Field's and of Chopin's later nocturnes, are apparent in this piece. The typical single line of melody is seen above a widespread arpeggiated accompaniment. It is presented a second time in octaves, and the triplet pattern accompaniment is heard continuously throughout the piece.

The thematic material of the second section seems to be a continuation of the first, rather than offering anything of a new or contrasting nature. The melodic line of this section is ornamented with trills and runs that resemble, on a smaller scale, the embellishments of Chopin's later works. There is nothing harmonically unusual about the piece, and it is written in a two-part song form. This is a simple melodic piece, and is significant mainly because it was one of the first nocturnes written by Chopin.

Nocturne Op. 72

The Nocturne Op. 72 (No. 2?), in G minor, like the Nocturne Op. 72, No. 1, was composed in 1817. It was published in Poland in 1938. According to Weinstock it is no longer

⁵⁴Julius Fontana collected several of Chopin's works and had them published, although Chopin had requested that they be destroyed. This nocturne was among the works published. Weinstock, op. cit., p. 292.

available other than in his book where it is reproduced in full.⁵⁵

This nocturne is in two-part song form. It resembles some of the nocturnes that Field composed in its complete lack of harmonic interest, and in the melodic treatment of the two sections. The melodic material is so similar that there is no contrast between sections, and this same material is subjected to excessive repetition. However, a feature that was later a characteristic of Chopin's writing is seen in the ornamentation of the melodic line of the second section. It is similar, on a small scale, to the elaborate embellishments found in later nocturnes.

This nocturne is of interest mainly because it is a study of Chopin's early writing, and because it shows that, at seventeen years of age, Chopin's writing could equal some of the nocturnes of Field.

From such pieces as these nocturnes (Op. 72) evolved a far superior form of the "night-piece" than had previously existed.

⁵⁵Weinstock, op. cit., p. 315.

CHAPTER III

CONCLUSIONS

The foregoing study of the Chopin nocturne has shown that the name occurred in secular music toward the end of the eighteenth century, with Haydn and Mozart, as a sort of orchestral serenade, but that as a piano composition it is indigenous to the nineteenth century. Its "invention" is attributed by general consensus to John Field, from whom Chopin clearly adopted the form. How far he carried it, on occasion, can be seen in his great Nocturne Op. 48, No. 1, in C minor. This piece retains little of Field's influence that can readily be recognized in many of the other nocturnes.

Despite the popularity of Chopin's nocturnes, neither the name nor the style has been much cultivated by subsequent composers. Schumann (1810-1856), a contemporary of Chopin's, wrote four pieces for the piano in 1839, which he entitled "Nachtstücke, the German equivalent of Nocturne" (No. 1 in C major, No. 2 in F major, No. 3 in D flat major, No. 4 in F major). These pieces are not similar to the nocturnes of Chopin. They have a strong rhythmic feeling and a thick chordal texture.

In his student days Scriabine (1872-1915) composed four nocturnes for the piano (Op. 5, two nocturnes; Op. 9, Nocturne

for left hand alone; and Op. 61, Poème-Nocturne).¹ Of these pieces the Nocturne for left hand alone particularly bears a resemblance to Chopin's nocturnes.

During the years 1893-1899 Debussy (1862-1918) wrote three nocturnes for orchestra (1--Nuages, 2--Fêtes, 3--Sirènes).²

Considering the amount of music--especially of romantic piano music--written in the 100 years since Chopin's death, the cultivation of the nocturne (at least under that name) can only be called sporadic. We have here, in fact, an interesting example of a kind of piece associated, even among well-rounded musicians, with only two composers. And, among the less learned, the mind automatically reverts only to Chopin, who raised the nocturne to its peak of poetic beauty.

¹Nicholas Slonimsky [?], "Scriabine," The International Cyclopedia of Music and Musicians, edited by Oscar Thompson, 4th ed. revised and edited by Nicholas Slonimsky (New York, 1946), p. 1697.

²Oscar Thompson, "Debussy," The International Cyclopedia of Music and Musicians, edited by Oscar Thompson, 4th ed. revised and edited by Nicholas Slonimsky (New York, 1946), p. 422.

APPENDIX I

JOHN FIELD OF DUBLIN INVENTOR OF THE NOCTURNE

A Brief Memoir Written by
W. H. Grattan Flood, Mus. D.

Publishers: Martin Lester, Ltd., Dublin

Preface

Irishmen have been frequently taunted with being incuriosi suorum, and, in the case of John Field of Dublin, the taunt is not unmerited. Eighty-three years have passed since this wonderful composer, pianist, and inventor was laid at rest in Moscow and yet he has not found an Irish biographer. Had he been an Englishman he would certainly have had his biography published, but being a "mere Irishman" his merits have been relegated to brief and inadequate notices in the Dictionary of National Biography and in the Dictionary of Music and Musicians. Yet, there are monographs on Field in French, Italian, German, Flemish, Danish, and Russian, all of which, however, give the credit of his training to Clementi, whereas he had been known as a musical prodigy in Dublin, and had made several public appearances at the Rotunda before going to London. As recently as 1911 a German memoir of Field was presented as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of Leipzig by Heinrich Dessauer, and was published at Langensalza in 1912. By contrast, one solitary line is devoted to him in Stanford and Forsyth's History of Music (1916), and that solitary line in reference to "Russian" music. Here is the precious gem: "Glinka was a pupil of the Englishman Field, an enthusiastic patriot, and an untiring student of Russian folk-music!"

Recent writers have endeavoured to claim Chopin as the inventor of the Nocturne, and the originator of the genre in the matter of the extended accompaniment of scattered chords and graceful embellishments of melody, with wonderful arpeggio and pedal effects; but it is admitted by all the French and German critics that the Nocturne, and the well-known developments in pianoforte playing,

were due to Field of Dublin. Here it is sufficient to state that Field's first three Nocturnes were published in the early autumn of 1814, when Chopin was but four years old!

For many facts in relation to the early career of Field I am indebted to my old friend, Mr. W. J. Lawrence (the Shakespearian scholar), while for much matter concerning his concerts in Paris I owe my best acknowledgments to the late Michel Brenet, one of the most brilliant of French musicologists. The writings of Schumann, Spohr, Fétis, Liszt, Parent, and d'Ortigue supply ample notes for a biography of Field, and this material I have endeavoured to compress as much as possible in the following pages.

W. H. Grattan Flood

Enniscorthy
Michaelmas, 1920

JOHN FIELD OF DUBLIN

John Field was ushered into the world in the modest residence of the Field family in Golden Lane, Dublin, on July 26th, 1782. For two or three generations the Fields had been professional musicians, the father being a member of the Theatre Royal Orchestra, Crow Street, and the grandfather an organist of one of the city churches. The child was christened at St. Werburgh's Church on September 30th following, and was given the name of John in compliment to his grandfather. His father's name was Robert, a name which was also borne by his great-grandfather.

Here let me mention that though Golden Lane was not an aristocratic locality, it could boast of a goodly number of lawyers, doctors, and musicians--and it is of interest to note that it can claim the honour of being associated with Daniel Roseingrave, who died there in 1727, and of Mrs. Jameson, who was born at No. 36 Golden Lane in 1794. The father and grandfather lived in the one house, which was utilised as a musical academy, the former being a successful professor of the violin, and the latter an equally successful teacher of the pianoforte and organ.

As early as his seventh year young John Field evinced a taste for the pianoforte, an instrument which had then practically superseded the harpsichord, and the grandfather took charge of his teaching, while the father looked after his practice. Neither the father nor the grandfather spared the rod in order to stimulate the musical proclivities of the youth, and both of them rigidly adopted the Solomon-like precedent in regard to his musical training. He himself confided to Fetis, in after years, that the thrashings he had received from his father and grandfather drove him from the parental roof. This episode has been distorted by some writers, who embroider it by adding that: "starvation drove him back both to home and practice, with the result that at twelve years of age he made his first appearance in London." It would actually appear that the severe treatment accorded to John Field as a youth of eight was not a whit more harsh than the experience of choir boys in the 18th century. Certain it is (and the fact has not been alluded to by previous writers) that in the spring of the year 1791 the precocious boy was sent to the famous Tommaso Giordani for "finishing lessons" on the piano.

At nine years of age Field displayed an unwonted virtuosity on the piano, and Giordani prevailed on his father and grandfather to allow the Dublin public to have an opportunity of hearing the youthful prodigy at a Rotunda Concert. Accordingly, with the glad consent of the Field

household, Giordani billed Master Field as an attraction at the series of three "Spiritual Concerts" which he gave at the Rotunda during the Lenten season of 1792.

Field's debut* took place in his native city on Saturday, March 24th, 1792, and Giordani was fortunate in also securing the appearance of Madame Gautherot, the famous lady violinist. It is gratifying to chronicle that the Dublin public gave generous proof of their recognition of native talent, and, in consequence, the advertisement of the second concert on the 4th of April informed the public that "the much-admired Master Field, a youth of eight years of age, would perform on the Piano Forte a new Concerto composed by Signor Giordani." Master Field again appeared at the third concert on April 14th, and his playing elicited the warmest encomiums. It will be noted that Master Field was advertised at these concerts as "a youth of eight years of age," but this "pious fraud" (not yet unknown to advertisers) was doubtless excusable, as, though the youth was in reality close on ten, he looked scarcely eight.

Nor was Field's genius confined to piano virtuosity in 1792 and 1793. In the latter year he blossomed forth as a composer, and published an arrangement (with variations) of the old Irish air: Go to the Devil and shake yourself. He also composed two pianoforte rondos on his master's songs: Since then I'm doomed and Slave, bear the sparkling goblet round--both of which were much admired in 1792-3. These trifles were followed by Signora del Caro's Hornpipe, with Variations--and all four were republished by Longman and Broderick in 1795, and by Clementi and Co. in 1801.

In the summer of the year 1793 Venanzio Rauzzini, the noted singer and composer, who was Director of the Bath Concerts, invited Field's father to become leader of the orchestral concerts at that fashionable resort, and so Master Field bade good-bye to Dublin. Less than six months later Robert Field was offered a more tempting engagement in London as one of the violins at the Haymarket Theatre. Accordingly, the Field household was transferred to the English metropolis in December 1793.

How different is this plain unvarnished tale of young Field's nascent powers from the generally accepted story! I have dwelt at rather undue length on the events of the years 1791-1793, because previous authorities have not scrupled to write that Field "was driven by starvation to

*It may be well to mention that Master Field had appeared as one of the "musical children" at Master Tom Cooke's benefit Concert at the Exhibition Rooms, William Street, on February 14, 1792.

return to his home, with the result that at twelve years of age he made his first appearance in London." As has been stated, Field's early musical training was looked after by his grand [father] and father and was developed by Tommaso Giordani.

No sooner had Field's father settled in London than he apprenticed his son to Muzio Clementi, who at once recognised the genius of the boy. The fact of his father giving a fee of one hundred guineas to Clementi for the apprenticeship of his son is a distinct proof that Field père was anxious to give the boy the benefit of the best piano master in London, and such a large sum must have entailed no small sacrifice upon the struggling violinist.

As early as April, 1794, Clementi announced the young Irish lad as his pupil, and a month later "Master Field, aged ten," performed one of Clementi's Sonatas at Barthelmon's Concert. Haydn, Dussek, and Cramer predicted great things for the young Dublin pianist, but Clementi mainly used him as a hack, for showing off his pianos, and kept the boy at this dreadful drudgery for five years. One can well sympathise with Master Field during these years, 1794-1799, compelled to strum away daily for the delectation of would-be purchasers of Clementi's pianofortes. However, Clementi was very proud of his pupil, who not only practised the piano assiduously, but also studied the violin with G. H. Pinto--a fact which is emphasised by Pinto's dedication of a Pianoforte Sonata "to my friend John Field," published by Robert Birchall in 1800.

On February 7th, 1799, Pinto had a benefit performance at the Haymarket Theatre, and the chief attraction was Master Field, who was announced to play his own "Concerto for the grand forte piano, composed for the occasion." The Morning Chronicle (Feb. 9, 1799) gives the following notice of this concert:--

"The chief source of admiration in the course of the evening was a Concerto on the grand piano forte by Master Field, a pupil of Clementi's. This young gentleman, though only fifteen years of age, has been esteemed by the best judges one of the finest performers in this kingdom, and his astonishing display of ability on this occasion proved how justly he was entitled to the distinction. The Concerto was, we understand, wholly of his own composition, and one more calculated to display rapidity of execution, attended with characteristic musical expression, we never heard."

Two years later, on February 20, 1801, Field, now described as "the late pupil of Clementi," played between the "Acts" of Mozart's Requiem and Handel's L'Allegro and Il Penseroso at the Oratorio Concerts at Covent Garden

Theatre, and created quite a furore by the performance of his own Concerto, as is stated in the following day's issue of the Morning Post. He also played the Rondo on Since then I'm doomed, which had been so popular in Dublin.

Messrs. Clementi and Co. wrote to Pleyel of Paris on December 9, 1801, apprising that firm of many new musical works ready for publication, including "some very valuable scores of Clementi, Dussek, Viotti, and Cramer." But of particular interest, it is added, there are some new compositions by Field, "a pupil of M. Clementi, a very promising genius, and already become a great favourite in this country both in respect to composition and performance: it is likely you will soon see him in Paris."

Clementi fully appreciated the genius of Field, but instead of exploiting him as a virtuoso, he had in view an extended European tour, with Field as salesman for the Clementi pianofortes. Meantime, he published four or five pieces by Field, including the three Sonatas in A, E flat, and C minor (dedicated to Clementi), but the rush of business delayed his visit to Paris. At length, in the early part of August, 1802, the two pianists set forth for the French capital, where Field's playing of Bach's Fugues, and of pieces by Handel and Clementi, took Paris by storm. At Vienna Field scored a similar triumph. Towards the close of the year 1802 Clementi and Field arrived in St. Petersburg, where the former with true commercial instinct opened a showroom for the sale of his firm's pianos, retaining Field to display the instruments to the best advantage. Under date of December 22, 1802, Spohr, in his remarkable autobiography, describes his visit to the music showrooms. He waxes most enthusiastic over the superb playing of the young Irishman. Poor Field--at that date twenty years of age and still in an Eton suit which he had much outgrown--a pale, shy individual, unacquainted with any language save English; and yet, as Spohr assures us, the moment that he started to play the piano, "all his gaucheries were ignored and the real artist displayed."

When Clementi left St. Petersburg in the early summer of the year 1803, he left Field behind him as the guest of General Merkloffski; and the young Irishman soon formed a large and aristocratic clientèle, being also in much request for concerts. When Clementi returned to Russia in 1804 he found that his former pupil was on the ladder of success. Evidently about this time Clementi sold a grand piano to Field in exchange for certain musical compositions, as appears from a letter written by the former to his partner Collard, dated Vienna, April 22nd, 1807:--"Has Field sent you the Concerto, the Quintet, and something more, as I had agreed with him for his grand piano? If not, pray write by Faveryear to him."

From 1804 to 1807 Field's services both as virtuoso and teacher were in much request; and he gave numerous concerts which proved highly remunerative. He soon acquired a mastery of French, German, and Russian, and was in high favour in the most select circles. He got petted so much that he became indolent and frivolous, added to which he was very absent-minded and eccentric. Like so many other artists he was improvident and lived like a true Bohemian, leading a life diversified with various love affairs. To complicate matters he became infatuated with a young French actress, whom he married early in 1808.

It has been stated by more than one writer that Field married "a Mademoiselle Charpentier," and that "they were separated within a year." Neither statement is true. The name of the actress whom Field wedded was Mademoiselle Percherou, and the marriage ceremony was performed by a parson called Syuruk. As a matter of fact the ill-assorted pair lived together for five years, for we find them both taking part in a concert at Moscow on Sunday, March 10, 1812, for the benefit of the orchestra of the Imperial Theatre. Four days later Field and his wife gave a grand concert at the residence of Princess Trubitzky "opposite the Evangelical Church."

While in Moscow he gave lessons to Charles Mayer, who was ever afterwards an ardent champion of his Irish master. At this time, also, Field became very friendly with Steibelt, one of the great musical stars in Moscow. Another friend was Dr. Quinlan, of Templeorum, Co. Killenny, who was Head Physician for 35 years to the Royal Hospital at Moscow, where he died on July 19, 1827.

The year 1812 is memorable for the composition of a Grand Marche Triomphale "en honneur des victoires du General Comte de Witgenstein," quickly followed by a Premier Divertissement an Air Russe Varié (duet), and a Fantasia.

In the autumn of the year 1814 Field composed the first three Nocturnes, and a Pianoforte Sonata, as well as some Concertos--all of which were published at St. Petersburg in November. A month later appeared an extremely popular trifle, Rondo Ecossais, issued by Peters, founded on an Irish air, or more correctly an air composed by an Irishman. Strangely enough this air, Speed the Plough, is called Air Ecossais from its supposed Scotch origin, but it was undoubtedly composed by John Moorehead, an Irish violinist, as a dance in the Naval Pillar--a musical piece produced at Covent Garden Theatre on October 7, 1793. This dance tune became all the rage and was again introduced into Morton's comedy of Speed the Plough, performed at Covent Garden on February 8,

1800. Moorehead's aria was the tit-bit of this latter musical piece (which gave its name to the dance tune)--a comedy memorable for the fictitious character of Mrs. Grundy.

Between the years 1815 and 1819 Field gave numerous concerts in St. Petersburg, and his reputation as a piano teacher was rapidly growing. His best-known pupil at this period was the famous Michael Ivanovich Glinka, the founder of Russian National Opera and of the Russian School of Music. Glinka subsequently wrote of his Irish master: "Field's playing was at once sweet and strong and characterised by admirable precision. His fingers fell on the keys as large drops of rain that spread themselves like iridescent pearls. Here let me say--and I am sure that my opinion is shared by many who have heard Field--that I do not share the view of Liszt who told me on one occasion that he found Field's playing "sleepy." No! the playing of Field was not sleepy, on the contrary it was strong, capricious, and improvised. In particular, he never descended to charlatanism to produce his effects."*

In 1817 Field composed his charming Concerto No. 5, known as L'incendie par l'orage, with accompaniment for full orchestra, dedicated to Her Excellency Madame de Rosenkampf, and published by Breitkopf and Hartel. This great work was soon heard all over Europe, but the first performance of it in England was not until 1821, when it was played by Mr. Charles Hargitt as The Storm Concerto at Hanover Square Rooms, London. The same year (1817) was memorable for his Nocturnes No. 4 and No. 5 (in A and B flat). The Nocturne in A is one of the most exquisite pieces of its kind ever composed. Dr. Ernest Walker in his History of Music in England (1907) pronounces it as not only "a most beautiful thing," but he styles it "Field's masterpiece." Yet, in 1820, Field's Nocturnes had not got a hearing in England, nor yet in Ireland! These two Nocturnes were followed by four Concertos, a Quintet, two Divertissements, a Polonaise, a Grand Valse (duet), an Air Russe, and several exercises.

Field did not lose sight of his old master, Clementi, and in 1822 he published, through the firm of Clementi, Collard and Collard, a Vocal Duet, The Maid of Valdarno, words by Mr. W. F. Collard. In the published score he is described as "John Field of Petersburg." In the same year appeared his Nocturne No. 6, in F, followed by his

*Glinka d'après ses memoires--by Oct. Fouque (1880).

Nocturne No. 7, in G, in 1823. Of the latter Nocturne, No. 7, Schumann wrote in terms of the highest eulogy, almost bordering on extravagance (Neue Zeitschrift). A year later (1824) he issued his Polonaise in the Harmonicon; and let it be borne in mind that Chopin had not at this date entered the Lyceum, nor had he published anything--his Op. I not appearing till 1825.

Early in 1822 Field settled in Moscow and became very friendly with Hummel. He realised large sums by his concerts, and had a most extensive teaching connection. Among his pupils were: Werstowsky, Gurileff, Frackmann, R Rheinhardt, de Kontski, and Madam Szymanowska, also the English pianist and composer, Charles Neate.

Between the years 1822 and 1828 Field's erratic nature led him into many excesses, and owing to his intemperate habits he drifted gradually into reckless Bohemianism, to the neglect of his professional engagements and the undermining of his health. His death was reported on two occasions, first in 1828 and secondly in 1831. On the latter occasion Field wrote to the press a characteristically Irish denial of the obituary notice (anticipating the "exaggeration" story of Mark Twain), whereupon the Harmonicon for June 1831 made the following graceful amende from its Moscow correspondent:--"The report of the famous John Field's death at the beginning of the year is unfounded. This great virtuoso on the forte-piano still lives; and if his love of retirement can be conquered Europe need not renounce the expectation of being gratified by hearing him; but it is with difficulty he can resolve on any exhibition of his powers."

Towards the close of the year 1831 Field accepted the invitation of the Philharmonic Society of London to play at their Concert on February 27, 1832. His playing on that occasion elicited the warmest admiration, especially his rendering of his own Concerto in E flat. At the Hadyn Centenary on March 31st he played an Andante with Variations, his performance being highly praised by his critics, although Cramer and Moscheles also assisted.

Field's visit to London in 1832 was saddened by the death of his old friend Clementi, who passed away on March 18th, and who was accorded a public funeral at Westminster Abbey on March 29, Field being one of the chief mourners.

On May 6, 1832, Field was one of the honoured guests at a reception given by Moscheles, and he had the pleasure of meeting Mendelssohn, who was charmed with the playing of the Irish virtuoso.

Numerous friends in Paris urged Field to give a series of recitals in the French capital, and accordingly he went thither. His reception in Paris in the winter

of 1832-3 was even more brilliant than that in London, and the critics were unanimous in praising his technique and virtuosity--all the more remarkable as Chopin had been giving a series of concerts some months previously. As is well known Field did not think very highly of Chopin, whom he described as un talent de chambre de malade. This sharp criticism was even eclipsed by Berlioz's remarkable sneer: "il se mourait toute sa vie." And apropos of Berlioz, it is worth while mentioning that Field made the acquaintance at this period of Miss Smithson, the Irish actress, who subsequently (Oct. 3, 1833) became the wife of Berlioz.

The salle of the Conservatoire of Paris on the 25th of December, 1832, was crowded with a fashionable and critical audience to hear the Irish inventor of the Nocturne. Fetis, who was present, declared his playing simply astonishing: "Whoever has not heard this great pianist can form no idea of the marvellous mechanism of his fingers--mechanism such that the greatest difficulties seem to be the simplest things, and that his hands do not appear to move. He is not less astonishing in the art of attack, and of producing an infinite variety of nuances, whether as regards breadth, sweetness, or accent. An enthusiasm impossible to describe, a veritable delirium was manifested by the vast audience who were present to hear his Concerto, full of charm, rendered with a perfection of finish, precision of neatness and expression, which would be impossible to surpass and which very few pianists could hope to equal. If I merely consulted my own taste I should say that the two Rondos and the delicious Andantes which preceded them were excellent morceaux, but, evidently, the public taste was more captivated by the more showy and less tranquil movements." Joseph d'Ortigue, in his Balcon de l'Opera (Paris, 1883), writes even more enthusiastically:--"At the Conservatoire Field was accompanied by a full orchestra. Even as Paganini, Field is not less remarkable by reason of his compositions as by his playing. It is thus a double study for the listeners.

"As a pianist Field has no rival, whether as regards genre or method. He has no adopted system and is of no school: neither the school of Dussek, nor of Clementi, nor of Steibelt: Field is Field--a school of his own. His is a native and original talent. His playing is a sheer delight--exquisitely spirituelle, coupled with surprising aplomb and coquetry. He sits at the piano even as if at his own fireside, with no attitudinising. At first one imagines that his playing is a little ponderous, then gradually it becomes animated, delicate, and inconceivably neat, amid the most intricate mazes. In

his case the style is the man, His music is the music of the fairies."

Equally brilliant was the reception accorded to Field at the Pape Salon on June 20, and on February 3, 1833. Regarding these latter concerts Joseph d'Ortigue wrote a glowing account: "Never did the beautiful Salons of M. Pape present a more numerous and a more brilliant appearance than at Field's second Concert. Field was ably assisted by Drouet and Baillot, but his own playing of the four items was delightful, although the impression it gave me was not comparable to that which I had experienced at the Conservatoire."

In the Spring and Summer of 1833 Field astonished various European centres by his virtuosity, including Brussels, Toulouse, Marseilles and Lyons. At Brussels he was announced as "Chapel Master of the Emperor of Russia and celebrated Pianist." His concert of February 18, as reported in Le Belge was a huge success, and he subsequently gave a more select concert, which realised 1,200 francs. At Toulouse the amateurs and professionals thronged to the Athenaeum, and were delighted with the Irish pianist. His selections included a Concerto, a Rondo, and a Polonaise, and he was given a triple recall. At Marseilles, in August, a similar triumph awaited him, and he was styled "the Racine of the Piano." His Lyons reception was even more cordial, and the audience did not know what to admire the most, that is to say whether his compositions or the playing of them was the more remarkable.

The Journal de Genève, of September 4, announced the arrival of Field in Switzerland in the most complimentary terms. His concert at Geneva on September 30, in the Salle de Casino, was most brilliant, and he had the assistance of Domange and Sabon, with M. Bloc as leader of the orchestra. His selections included his Concerto No. 6, Nocturne in A, Rondo, and Pastorale and Rondo (Midi), with a quartet accompaniment. By request he gave a repetition performance on October 14.

At Milan, in November and December, the leading Italian critics lauded Field as an incomparable genius. From Milan Field wrote to Breitkopf and Hartel, of Leipzig, on November 20, offering them his Concerto No. 7, on the same terms as No. 6--an offer which was accepted.

Florence applauded Field, as also did the music-loving centres of Venice and Naples. However, the strain of over a year's tour proved too much for a neurotic man of 52, and he fell seriously ill at Naples in 1834.

This "blaze of triumph" (as Bunn would write), for over a year, as attested by the Continental press, gives the lie to the statements of English writers who have not

scrupled to defame Field both as regards his brilliant powers as composer and pianist; and, as regards his character, the following excerpts from a popular English essayist will prove how history is written:--

"Field's genius was passing into night with no star to illumine it. The morning of deeper harmonic utterance, of technical wonders, was dawning. With all the beauty of his touch and elegance of execution, though his music came with his heart between his fingers, Field lacked spirit, energy, and vigour. He roused no depth of passion, swept his hearers with no force. Such a school was rising. New possibilities of technique were developing. Hummel, to all the grace, refinement, and pure taste of Field added firmness, strength, and speed. . . . So Field, driven before the wind, passed into Switzerland, thence to Brussels, and in 1833 into Italy. But neither in Milan, Venice, or Naples could he recall the old spell. Curiosity was cold, applause unheard, and failure stood gaunt in his path. He sank under the bitterness. Crushed by disease and despair, the lonely man crept into a Neapolitan hospital, where he lay nearly a year unknown. Here, by merest chance, a Russian student discovered the old master."

As has been seen, it was a case of "roses all the way" from London to Naples, that is, from February, 1832, to May, 1834. Dannreuther tells us that not long after his arrival in Naples Field became seriously ill, and had to be operated on for fistula, a disease accelerated by growing habits of intemperance. He lay in hospital for nine months, and was reduced to a pitiable condition, but his sensitive nature was such that he refused to write to any of his friends in Moscow, to let them know of his serious condition. However, by a fortunate accident, in June, 1835, the timely arrival in Naples of the Rachmanoff family--Russian nobles--rescued Field from his sad state. A few weeks at the health-giving resort of Ischia had a good effect on the Irish composer, and thence by easy stages he journeyed on to Venice with the Rachmanoffs.

At Vienna Field was the guest of Karl Czerny, who taught Liszt, Madame Oury, Döhler, and other famous pianists. The congenial surroundings helped to light anew the old fires, and Field was induced to give three concerts at the Hof Theatre on August 8, 11, and 13, 1835, delighting fashionable audiences by his beautiful playing. As Dannreuther writes, his exquisite performances "elicited transports of admiration." Whilst in Vienna he composed a new Concerto and a new Nocturne, the latter being dated August 13.

Towards the close of August, Field returned to Moscow with the Rachmanoffs, and in November, 1836, he became very ill. His friends and old pupils did all they could to alleviate his distressed condition, but at Christmas it was evident that the end was at hand. Early in January it was suggested to the dying musician that he might wish to have spiritual consolation from a minister of religion, whereupon the following dialogue ensued:-- "Are you a Catholic?--No! Are you a Protestant?--No! Are you a Calvinist?--Not that either, said Field; not a Calvinist but a Pianist."

So passed away John Field of Dublin, on the 11th of January, 1837. Four days later he was given a public funeral, and was buried in the Wedensky-Kirchhof, Moscow. His immediate circle erected a fine monument to his memory, on which was engraved the following inscription:

JOHN FIELD

BORN IN IRELAND IN 1782,
DIED IN MOSCOW IN 1837,
ERECTED TO HIS MEMORY

BY HIS GRATEFUL FRIENDS AND SCHOLARS.

So much for the biographical data of Field. It only remains to mention his works. But first of all, some reader may ask, did Field really invent the Nocturne? The answer is most decidedly in the affirmative. True it is that a number of musical historians, mainly English, have sought to credit its invention to Chopin, but this great Polish pianist and composer came long after Field, and merely developed this genre. M. Brenet of Paris thus writes: "In regard to the invention of the Nocturne it is a fact sufficiently well established. Field was the inventor." H. Parent, in his well-known work, says that "Field's great distinction in the musical world is to have created a genre--the little pieces to which he has given the name of Nocturnes."--(Répertoire Encyclopédique du Pianiste--Tom. I, pp. 99). Again, Dannreuther, in the new edition of Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians (1906), admits Field's claim:--"The form of Chopin's weird Nocturnes, the kind of emotion embodied therein, the type of melody and its graceful embellishments, the peculiar waving accompaniments in widespread chords, with their vaguely prolonged sound resting on the pedals--all this and more we owe to Field." More recently still, Dr. Ernest Walker, in his History of Music in England (1907), acquiesces in the ascription to Field of the invention of the Nocturne. "These slender piano pieces are indeed curiously original

for their date. It is easy to see their deep influence on the nocturnes of Chopin, as regards the types of melody, and also, especially, the methods of writing for the instrument. It is by a handful of the nocturnes that Field really lives . . . The best of these exquisitely polished little miniatures, with their delicate melodies and their shy, fugitive gracefulness, will long serve to keep his name fragrant. They and Wesley's motets--a curious conjunction--are by far the most artistically self-subsisting specimens of English music of the period." Comparing the work of Clementi, Cramer, Moscheles, and Czerny, as artistes, Dr. Walker concludes that "we could give up all their studies for a single one of the best Nocturnes of Field." But, more emphatic still is the verdict of Henry Davey, author of the History of English Music. (1895): "Here at last we meet with a musician who invented, who had a style of his own--a composer and performer of European celebrity. As a player, Field is reckoned among the very greatest that ever lived. He is said to have kept the fingers almost perpendicular, and his touch was distinguished by an unprecedented richness and sostenuto and by the subtlest details of expression. . . . He made an important addition to existing means of expression by his new form of Nocturne . . . and we owe it entirely to Field. Chopin, a man of far greater intellectual power, applied deeper science and richer poetry to the Nocturne; but he did not altogether eclipse Field, the original inventor."

Field's principal piano compositions are as follows: --Seven Concertos (No. 1, E flat; No. 2, A flat; No. 3, E flat; No. 4, E flat; No. 5, C ("The Storm" or "L'incendie par l'orage"); No. 6, C; No. 7, C Minor); two Diver-tissemanti, with orchestral accompaniments; a Quintet and a Rondo for piano and strings; 16 Nocturnes; Variations on a Russian Air for four hands; a Grand Valse for four hands; four Sonatas, three of which are dedicated to Clementi; two Airs en Rondeau; three Fantasias; Polonaise Rondo; several Rondos, Russian Airs, Irish Airs, English Airs, Romances, and three Exercises; also two French Songs and an English Duet.

Of this output, his Concertos and Nocturnes will perpetuate his name. Not all his Concertos, indeed, but at least two. Nor yet all his Nocturnes, but probably six. Owing to the eccentricities of publishers the name of Nocturne has been applied to several pieces not intended as such by Field--and hence the usual publishers' lists contain variously 17, 18, and 20 Nocturnes. This number must be reduced to 16, and of these 16 there are five that stand out pre-eminently. These five are the Nocturnes given as Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7 in Liszt's

edition--an edition prefaced by a delightful appreciation of the great Irish inventor by one who was himself a pianist and composer of European fame. These five Nocturnes, "five delicate little lyrics," as Dannreuther writes, "are the very essence of all idylls and eclogues, 'Poesies intimes' of simple charm and inimitable grace, such as no undue popularity can render stale, no sham imitation nauseous." To these five I would add a sixth, No. 8 in E (given as No. 10 in Peters' edition). As before stated, Schumann raved about the beauty of No. 7 in A, while most English critics regard No. 4 in A as the gem. Dr. Ernest Walker in appraising these six Nocturnes says that they "are full of singularly refined and limpid music which has very real distinction of manner--distinction, indeed, of a kind that very many little piano pieces by composers far greater on the whole than Field, fail to display." He adds: "Indeed, the seventy or eighty years that centre round 1800 are the nadir of English musical composition; a few things here and there, as we have seen, served to rescue the torch of our art from utter extinction, but still almost all the really finest work owes its quality to more or less close adherence to the great models of the past--only in the Nocturnes of Field is a modestly new note struck." Nor must I omit to mention that the latest American History of Music by Tapper and Goetschius (New York, 1915), gives due credit to Field, "one of the most refined and poetical of Chopin's direct predecessors, both in style and spirit," and it avows that "His Nocturnes were a direct inspiration to Chopin."

Finally, as to the value of Field's Nocturnes, let us hear the verdict of one of the most distinguished of modern German musicologists, Dr. Hugo Riemann, of Leipzig University, whose Musiklexikon has gone through seven editions:--"Field may justly be described as one of the most original pianistic phenomena."

To sum up, John Field of Dublin enjoys the triple distinction (1) of having been the Inventor of the Nocturne; (2) of having been an incomparable virtuoso on the pianoforte; and (3) of having been the teacher and friend of Glinka, the founder of the Russian School of Music. These three distinctions are more than sufficient to ensure for him a place among the immortals in Music. He inherited the musical traditions of the Irish School of Music so lauded by Giraldus Cambrensis, and worthily carried on by Garland, Power, Dowland, Campion, Costello, Purcell, Madin, O'Carolan, Hempson, Mornington, O'Neill, and Moore, and which in more recent times has been honourably represented by Balfe, Wallace, Sullivan, Holmes, Stewart, Herbert, Stanford, Harty, and Hay.

APPENDIX II

LIST OF KEYS OF THE CHOPIN NOCTURNES

<u>Op. 9,</u>	<u>No. 1</u>	B flat minor
	<u>No. 2</u>	E flat major
	<u>No. 3</u>	B major
<u>Op. 15,</u>	<u>No. 1</u>	F major
	<u>No. 2</u>	F sharp major
	<u>No. 3</u>	G minor
<u>Op. 27,</u>	<u>No. 1</u>	C sharp minor
	<u>No. 2</u>	D flat major
<u>Op. 32,</u>	<u>No. 1</u>	B major
	<u>No. 2</u>	A flat major
<u>Op. 37,</u>	<u>No. 1</u>	G minor
	<u>No. 2</u>	G major
<u>Op. 48,</u>	<u>No. 1</u>	C minor
	<u>No. 2</u>	F sharp minor
<u>Op. 55,</u>	<u>No. 1</u>	F minor
	<u>No. 2</u>	E flat major
<u>Op. 62,</u>	<u>No. 1</u>	B major
	<u>No. 2,</u>	E major
<u>Op. 72,</u>	<u>No. 1</u>	(Posthumous) E minor
<u>Op. 72</u>		(Posthumous) C minor

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