

# OLE BULL'S GRAND CONCERTS

AT

## STEINWAY HALL,

Wednesday Evening, March 18th,  
Friday Evening, March 20th, and  
Saturday, March 21st, Matinee.

### OLE BULL'S CONCERTS.

This distinguished violinist who has watched the world with his noble instrument for nearly half a century, returns here this week after a triumphant tour of ten weeks through the West. Had Ole Bull been a hero returning after some great conquest the ovations could hardly have been greater than those which were tendered him in the Western cities. Torch-light processions awaited him at the various railway stations, serenades at the hotels, and complimentary addresses awaited him at the various places on his route. These were not empty ovations, they were genuine demonstrations of respect and esteem, for he is remembered lovingly through the West, and the people through his concerts to see Ole Bull, but they remained to hear him, for all felt that he was a greater artist than ever, and that his playing was more than ever inspired.

While every other musical organization has failed, Ole Bull has made a remarkable money success, clearing in a few weeks many thousands of dollars. In some places he was compelled to give two concerts the same day, for the reason that people for miles round had poured into the town to hear the great violinist, and found every ticket sold to the inhabitants of the place. Coming so far their disappointment was great, so to relieve it, a concert was improvised in the afternoon, and at one place four hundred dollars were taken from those who could not get a ticket for the evening.

A reception so brilliant Ole Bull could hardly have hoped for, and its spontaneity must have gratified him deeply, proving, as it did, that tradition had embalmed the reputation which he earned so long ago, and had preserved a popularity which was second to that of no artist who ever visited the country. By the public he was everywhere received with acclamation, so that each appearance was an ovation. But, if the public welcomed him cordially, the press was not a whit behind in its enthusiastic recognition of his artistic efforts. Our endorsement, given after having heard him several times in private, prepared our critical friends in the West for what they were to hear, and they found that our remarks were all just, and that our giant Norseman had renewed his youth, and was grander and purer

in his style, while still preserving his wonderful technique, than at either of his former visits, the first dating back nearly a quarter of a century.

The following criticism from a Chicago journal is a sample of the written opinions of all the papers of the West, and indicates the impression which Ole Bull's playing made upon all who heard him:

"The grand, fascinating element of Ole Bull's playing is his identification of his own personality, in all its varied wealth of resource, with his instrument. The instrument is but his longer arm, his more supple fingers, his all-assimilating imagination, and lively, charming fancy, his depth of human feeling and inspired reach of human thought—all made vocal as if by a more than human tongue, voiceful with aims of Paradise. With all previous violinists—even Viennese—the phrase, "the violin speaks," seems far-fetched and empty. There is a deep gulf between the reality and it. But in Ole Bull's hands the violin does literally speak—not, of course, in articulate words, but no less potently and intelligently and inspiringly, in the articulate language of passion and sentiment and cunning art, which voices our heart's profoundest thoughts, most ardent imaginings and deepest feelings, and reveals to us with something more than an echo of sound of nature and song of bird. This is what he does. How he does it would lead us too far, and quite uselessly, into the trite realm of the technical; and after we had told all,—by what art every trill and run, every speaking melody and rich harmony was effected,—neither we nor our readers would know any more about it than before. Do we ask how heaven's breezes blow? No; we cannot tell whence they come, nor whither they go. Do we ask how the running brook is voiceful, and how singing birds in nature's execution? No; we are content to hear and enjoy. No sooner should we think of telling how Ole Bull produces his effects; nor should we any more think of criticising them than of criticising Zölian murmurs, ripple of running waters, or carol of bird. These are all simply above criticism, as being out of its domain. All that water or bird or breeze can do it does; all that string and bow and sounding board can do, they do in Ole Bull's hands.

"Then, separating in thought the instrument

from the performance, what a personality is that which stands at the back of the instrument, and creates a soul under the ribs of death! The man is "great with" the instrument; but he is also greater than it. When you once come to know him—his manliness, his tenderness, his graciousness—what possibilities, beyond and greater than mere art, but in which true art is involved, do you find! And how, still separating instrument from performer, does he for the moment lavish all these upon and infuse them all into his violin. He looks upon it as though he loves it, and it returned love with equal love. His eyes half closed, half in ecstasy, half in watchfulness, he yields to it, and he commands it. The melody which he creates enraptures him; and from hence comes inspiration for diviner strains."

Ole Bull gives his first Concert at Steinway Hall on Wednesday evening next, the 18th instant, assisted by his concert company, Madame Varian Hoffman, Mr. Ignace Pollak, and Mr. Edward Hoffman. His second Concert will take place on the following Friday, and his last will be a matinee, on Saturday morning the 21st, also at Steinway Hall. We need not advise our readers to attend, for we believe that the announcement alone is sufficient to crowd the Hall on each occasion.

### OLE BULL IN THE WEST.

(FROM WATSON'S ART JOURNAL.)

TRIUMPHANT RECEPTION AT MADISON.

Since we first announced the arrival of the great Norwegian in this country, some three months since, he has been taken up warmly by the press all over the country; has been received by the people of a dozen cities with positive ovations, and has attracted larger audiences than any artist who has travelled the same route, for years past. The critics, without exception, pronounce him a grander, more refined and more effective performer than when he was last here, a dozen years ago. He has been greeted with torchlight processions, deputations and bouquets, and has, in simple truth, pursued a career of triumph, artistically and financially. Ole Bull gave a concert at Janesville on Saturday evening, to an audience of between 500 and 600, who expressed the most unbounded delight, and the performers regretted that they

were not able to respond to repeated encores, but time would not permit. At the conclusion of the concert, Ole Bull, his son Alexander, T. Turnbull, and Mr. F. Widdows, his agent, took a seat in a sleigh, and were driven at good speed to Milton, where they arrived in time to take the night train to Milwaukee. On arriving at that city, a detachment of Norwegians and a crowd of about 200 persons were assembled at the depot, and called for Ole Bull, who appeared on the platform and thanked them in a few appropriate words for the respect shown him. On his arrival at Madison, Wis., a company of about 100 torch-bearers, exclusively Norwegians, and including some of the most respected citizens, were drawn up in line on the depot platform, the light and smell of their torches being strongly suggestive of the Milwaukee campaign of 1860. As he alighted from the platform, Ole Bull, evidently much surprised and pleased, uncovered his head and advanced to greet his countrymen, the leaders of the demonstration explaining to him the programme. The baronche sleighs, which had been engaged from Kentzier's, by some mistake were not on hand, and the hero of the occasion was invited to a seat in the omnibus, but preferred to march with his countrymen, who accordingly formed in line, surrounding their guest, and marched up Washington avenue to the music of the City Band, Roman candles and other fire-works being frequently discharged by the way, the sleighs which had been sent for bringing up the rear. The procession marched around the city, and finally entered the Capitol Square by Carroll, Mifflin, Pinkney and Main streets, to the front of the Vilvas House, people in several places coming to the windows of their bed-chambers to see the spectacle, and a number of gentlemen from the balcony of the United States block cheered the procession as it passed by. Arrived at the Vilvas House the procession halted, and Ole Bull, with uncovered head, his gray locks floating in the wind, and his sunny face, so full of good will to men, lit up by the torches of his countrymen who clustered around him, with pleasant voices, like friend familiarly talking to friend, addressed his countrymen in their native tongue.

His concerts here were highly successful, and he was feted by the citizens of the place. Of the effect of his playing, one or two brief extracts from the Western journals will convey some idea:

"Ole Bull then appeared amid prolonged applause, and repeated the splendid Recitative and 'Carnival of Venice,' which he gave the first night, eliciting wild applause and an enthusiastic encore, to which he responded, by request, with 'The Mother's Prayer,' in which the violin so wonderfully is made to imitate the human voice and you could almost see the anxious mother before you, wringing her hands and pleading with the Father. As the last notes of the magic instrument melted on the air, there were very few in the audience who did not feel a pang of regret that they should have so sweet voices no more. Our poor pen is utterly inadequate to any description of the great master's playing."

"The audience were reluctant to disperse, and there were loud cries for Ole Bull, in answer to which he appeared and bowed his thanks," was called out again, again acknowledged the mark of favor and finally joined hands with the other performers, and all ad-

vanced to the front of the stage, and bowing low, thus expressed their thanks for the favor shown them. Sheriff Main then called for three cheers for Ole Bull, which were given with a hearty good will, and the crowd slowly left."

Another writer says:

"We believe Ole Bull has performed and is still capable of performing greater feats on the violin than ever Paganini did. Those glassy harmonic sounds for which Paganini was so famous, and which it is said Duranowski invented, have been made time and again by the great Norwegian, and that too with the most startling effect imaginable. We had an August sample of his splendid talents in this particular in his rendition of the 'Adagio Expressivo Rondo Campanella' last evening. This celebrated piece was composed by Paganini, but Ole Bull's performance was so masterly and so wonderfully grand that if his great instructor could have heard it he would undoubtedly have accorded him the highest palm of excellence. We do not believe Ole Bull could play anything whatever without improving the original composition. Indeed, we will go further, and say that it is utterly impossible for him to play anything without recreating it—without making it peculiarly his own."

"But Ole Bull's genius shines out in its fullest splendor when he plays pieces of his own composition. His Mother's Prayer has been termed his greatest creation as well as his greatest performance. It is, however, difficult to decide among so many masterly productions which is peculiarly one should have the preference. The first note of the 'Mother's Prayer' seemed to unlock the casket of memory, and whisper to us in accents of sweetest harmony of by-gone days, of joys and sorrows, never to return again on earth."

"I never heard a more exquisite production, nor a more artistic one. It was, indeed, a sublime idealization of a sainted mother's prayer ascending on the wings of love to the home of the blest. What a sweet, and tender, and gentle, and calm, and heavenly influence it seemed to breathe o'er the common mortals of earth. From the beginning to the end the attention of the audience was chained. A pin could have been heard to drop during its rendition. The breath of life seemed temporarily suspended. When the great musician played the 'Schlomo' and 'Tarantella,' the audience was brought up to the highest pitch of enthusiastic delight. He was obliged to appear again upon the stage to calm the tumultuous applause."

The enthusiasm which Ole Bull excites in his hearers everywhere, is, however, a more positive evidence of the electric power of his performances than all the criticisms that could be written, and is a key to the extraordinary success which everywhere follows him.

#### OLE BULL IN CHICAGO.

OLE BULL'S CONCERTS.—Farwell Hall was well filled on last evening, the occasion being the first concert of Ole Bull since his return to this country. His selections were exclusively of his own compositions, and consisted of a "Cantabile Arioso Rondo;" a fantasy upon a Russian legend, called "The Nightingale," and the "Polacca Guitriera." Never was there a more cordial reception given an artist than that which Ole Bull received on

last evening. His appearance was the signal for unanimous and hearty applause, the seas of gratification to him as it was earnest on the part of those who gave it. In his old-school politeness, he bowed profusely to all, including the members of the orchestra, but very gracefully, before he proceeded. There is something magnetic in Ole Bull's presence, as well as in his playing, and it is little wonder that the audience should have been so enthusiastic throughout the entire evening.

Ole Bull seeks and finds emotions in the violin, which he develops and communicates to others. There is none of the meaningless conversation about his concert pieces that we discover with the greater number of our leading violinists. He could not better have illustrated the truth of what we have said than in the contrast afforded by his first selection, and that which he played for an encore. In the first piece there was an exquisite sweetness, a delicacy and plaintiveness of sound, and the violin may be made to utter in the hands of a master! For the encore he gave a melody of our national airs, including "Hail Columbia," "Yankee Doodle," and the "Arkansas Traveller," and the lament was changed to a gay and happy movement, playful in the humor of the variations, and positively comical in the rendition of the melody. Such is the command which Ole Bull has over the violin, and so thoroughly does he understand the resources of his instrument.

The second selection, called "The Nightingale," was even more charming than the first. There was a delightful melody running through it, and it was as if it were, and again the violinist coming back it up, runs, in harmonies, in trills and double trills. The imitation of the bird notes was wonderful, and the attuned tones of the flute and violin, the latter in semblance to the former, could scarce be distinguished one from the other. This movement was one of those which told its own story and excited an interest that mere artistic execution can never secure. In his playing of two parts one would almost imagine that Ole Bull takes all the parts of an organ. He masses the forces of the instrument as a conductor does those of an orchestra. He shades and tones them down in the same way. The most delicate of his strokes are as clear as a bell, and his echoes are sweet and soothing. For a second encore, he repeated a portion of "The Nightingale." His third piece was to a peculiar march time, with brilliant accompaniment, and elicited a third encore.

#### OLE BULL'S GRAND CONCERTS.

(From the Washington Intelligencer.)

The fashion and distinction of Washington came out in thronging and bright array again to see the great Norwegian last night, and to revel in the spells of his magic inspirations. Metzertoll Hall was never more densely thronged than on these two festive evenings, nor more irradiated with the beauty and refinement of our select musical circles.

The musical taste of the American people is immeasurably higher than it was when Ole Bull first visited our shores—nearly a quarter of a century ago—and virtuosos concerts do not now command the fervor that they awakened before music in its high forms of opera and orchestra became so familiar to the tastes of the people. Under these circumstances

even an approximation to the audiences which formerly greeted him would doubtless have been quite satisfactory to the great master of the violin. The fact, however, is that he was never met with ampler throngs—nor more critical and exacting in this city—than on this occasion, and we hazard nothing in the assertion that audiences more thoroughly cultivated and appreciative than these have been, gathered in no music hall in America. Years and vicissitudes have tinged with gray the head of the great musician since his first visit here, and driven some furrows into his brow, but very gently withal; and his tall, erect, and symmetrical person is wonderfully preserved in freshness and vigor. It is in his violin and in his wondrous art that he is perennial, showing not the slightest signs of growing old; and that this is the judgment of the musical circles of this city pertaining to his powers, their warm and abundant recognitions of his efforts unmistakably on both evenings manifested. His cultivated audiences, while listening to his efforts, could not avoid recalling the memories of the many eminent violinists who have stood in the presence of audiences in this city within the last twenty years, and it is scarcely necessary to add that all such memories only served to lift him who was then in their presence high and unapproachable above them all. Beneath his touch, the violin, the nearest approach to the human voice of any instrument of human invention, sends up its inspired melody more nearly resembling that from God's own handwork than has ever been heard since the days of Paganini, whose mantle he wears. One of the most marvelous features of his playing consists in the perfection of his tremolo notes, which are drawn forth with such unerring truthfulness as to make one almost believe them to be the actual beatings of the organ of which they are the imitation; and this is unquestionably one of the most difficult species of execution, especially upon a violin.

Another astonishing feature of his performance is observable in the ease and beauty with which he furnishes his own accompaniment, giving the air with his bow, and the guitar accompaniment with the fingers of his left hand upon the strings. Every piece he performed on both evenings infused fervor through the house, and as often as he would yield to the persistent demonstrations, called out an encore. His melody is characterized by the same wild, fantastic notes, modified somewhat, perhaps, by years, as was the mark of his romantic and individualized genius in his earlier periods, and there is much of the same personation and magnetism apparent which those will well remember who saw him when first he sought the American shores, whose people and in situations he has always admired.

#### “HOW WE LOVE THEM”

Ole Bull, Camilla Urso, and Miss Alida Topp met at a party a few evenings since. “You play beautifully, my child,” said the Norwegian to Miss Topp, “but you can't do the greatest music. No woman can; it takes the beeps of a man.” “My arm is strong enough,” answered the brilliant young pianist, laughing; “I break my pianos as well as a man could, and Steinway has to send me a new one every week.” “You see,” responded Ole Bull, turning to Madame Urso, “you see how these people treat their pianos. They bang them, they

beat them, they smash them to pieces; but our fiddles! how we love them!”

#### OLE BULL.

[From George D. Prentiss's Louisville Journal.]

It gives us exceeding pleasure to be able to announce that this great violinist, the greatest in all the world, will give concerts at Weisiger Hall, in this city, on Friday and Saturday evenings. His advertisement will be found in our paper of to-day, and it will be seen that he is to be aided by other great celebrities.

Ole Bull was greater at his last visit to this country than at the first, and all say that he is even greater now than ever. The crowds that he attracts wherever he goes are immense and most enthusiastic. He is achieving at present the greatest success of his life. He was cheated out of two hundred thousand dollars, expended by him several years ago in founding a colony in Pennsylvania upon a magnificent site, but, by the wondrous magic of his violin, he is rapidly retrieving his fortunes. We rejoice to know it, for he is not only the best violinist of our generation, but one of the very best of men. He has myriads of personal friends in this country, and is almost idolized in his own. He is Norway's pride and glory. *Watson's Art Journal*, of New York, the highest musical authority in our land, says of him:

“Time has dealt with him most unfavorably, for it has denied him the usual privilege of looking old. He looks younger to-day than when we last saw him a dozen years ago. His massive frame is still tall and erect—his step is firm and elastic, and his intelligence as clear and vigorous, as when he made his first bow to an American audience at the Park Theatre, twenty-five years ago. And above all, his smile is still as true and genial as ever, proving that the heart has lost none of those kind and generous impulses which of old dictated a thousand generous actions, which have made the man loved and respected throughout the whole country.

“As a man we find him unchanged, save inasmuch as the heavy troubles and afflictions which darkened his life in the past, being passed away, he is a hundred times more hopeful, contented and free in spirit—mentally and morally a new man. As an artist he is head and shoulders above his former stature. His tone is larger and grander, and his power over the characteristics of the instrument is simply extraordinary. There are really no difficulties in the violin to him—those he mastered long ago—but we find him now far more matured; his thoughts are more connected; his execution and intonation more clear and positive, and in passionate expression his delivery is broader, and more refined and intensified. His style is as fresh and vigorous as when, thirty years ago, he followed Paganini to England, and won success after success in the very footsteps of that marvellous performer. Such is Ole Bull to-day, and as we listened to his wonderful mastery of the soul of the violin, we felt satisfied that his career in this country will be more brilliant, than at any period of his eventful life.

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“Ole Bull, 'go on thy way rejoicing.' Thou great Norse giant, strong in thews and sinews, and strong in brain and hand, with more youth in each than when we shook

thy hand (O! the grip!) a dozen years ago. Go thine own way, and thy success is assured.”

#### OLE BULL IN AMERICA.

A CHAPTER OF “UNWRITTEN HISTORY.”

Ole Bull returned to Chicago last evening, and was received by his countrymen, who received him *en masse* at the depot, escorted him to his hotel, serenaded him with native airs, and honored him with vocal performances of his own national compositions.

It has been a quarter of a century since Ole Bull's first visit (Nov. 1843) to this country. His stay then lasted two years. The farthest western point visited was St. Louis,—Chicago, then an insignificant town, being passed by. In 1852 he again visited the United States, and remained several years beyond what it was his purpose to do. The causes of his protracted stay and the circumstances attending it were so remarkable, and are, moreover, so unfamiliar to the present generation of Americans, that we are sure we can do our readers no greater service than to revive one of the most instructive, most romantic and most impressive episodes of our history. We never shall forget the hours passed in Ole Bull's presence, when we received from his eloquent lips,—to whose aid came every winning grace of action, and every spontaneous outburst of sweet sentiment and tender pathos,—the sad, picturesque recital of those impressive events; and we can only wish we could give them to our readers, *verbatim et literatim*, just as we received them. Inexorable conditions of “time and space,” however, compel us to condense the stirring record into brief compass, and to translate it into matter-of-fact language.

In the winter of 1852, Ole Bull made a tour of the present “Interior,” and of the Southern States. At various points he was visited by his countrymen, who had become dissatisfied with residence in the South, partly on account of the ravages of the yellow fever, and especially on account of the fact that they had left the free Norse lands to settle in a country and help to build up a society in which a white man must own slaves and grow rich on their forced labors, in order to be regarded as a man. They were equally unwilling to live in the South, and ashamed to return to Norway in their destitute and forlorn condition. Information which Ole Bull received from other sources convinced him that these persons represented the average condition and sentiment of his countrymen in the South. He began by charitably attending to individual needs; but the work soon grew beyond his powers and his purse. In the course of his long journeys, in which he passed through vast unsettled regions rich in every natural resource, it finally occurred to him that a tract might be selected, and obtained at small cost, to which his discontented, needy countrymen might come and enjoy again the happiness and reward of free labor.

His attention at length settled on the rich mountain regions of Pennsylvania; and frequent counsel with esteemed friends in the East confirmed the impression. Prominent among these was a New York lawyer, John Hopper, son of the Quaker of philanthropic celebrity. Hopper knew of a company of gentlemen who owned an extensive tract on the Susquehanna river in Potter county,



