

CHAPTER V.

Classical and Post-classical Violin Makers.

THE reader will find the following alphabetical JL arrangement easy of reference. He will be able to turn at once to the name of the maker, and find there explained such points of his work as I have found it possible to differentiate. There is a very large number about whom little or nothing can be said, and these have been excluded from this list, and given in one later on, but the latest particulars are given in all cases where any particulars were available. I have excluded certain names which are found in tickets in old violins sold at the present day, because in the meantime, I am inclined to the belief that they are absurd concoctions of violin dealers and others. Such names are *Raccomodes*, *Revisto*, *Renisto*, etc. I have seen *Renisto* gravely described as a pupil of Carlo Bergonzi. To me all these names appear to be concoctions suggested in the following fashion. Italian makers, when they repaired a violin, have occasionally put in a ticket intimating that circumstance as follows, generally in handwriting, but now and again printed, "Revisto da me," followed by the repairer's name. This means in our idiom, "overhauled by me," literally, "revised by me." I have seen a ticket of Carlo Bergonzi's— which is, I think, reproduced somewhere— containing this expression, "Revisto da me Carlo Bergonzi."

Sometimes these inscriptions are not very legible, and I daresay an enterprising man coming across one of the half erased tickets, and not, perhaps, acquainted with Italian, might readily think *Revisto* was a maker's name and that *da* meant, in this case, "from" and not "by." I could conceive him, then, in the interests of his art, getting a few tickets printed to put into violins which he was absolutely certain were made by the same hand. Having accomplished this, these tickets might, in their turn, become partially illegible, and some other dealer might very readily misread *v* for *n*, and feel that he also had a duty to perform to society, and hence we have *Renisto*. At any rate this is my present view with regard to these names, but, of course, I am quite open to change it on proper evidence being adduced that persons bearing them, and who were fiddle makers, really existed. There are many queer names in the world. I have the same opinion with regard to "*Raccomodes*," which appears to be a corruption of the French *participer accomode*, and which signifies "repaired."

Acevo and *Sapino* have long been suspected as fabricated names, and I have not included them either. They were at one time supposed to have been pupils of Cappa. The first name appears to be a corruption of *acero* which, in Italian, means maple, and *sapino* means pine, the two woods of which a violin is generally made. Of course we have, in this country, both these names, the owners of which both work in wood, the one in fiddles, the other in furniture, but there is an air of mystery in addition attached to *Acevo* and *Sapino*—

which has never been dispelled, and there seems to be little ground for supposing them to be the names of actual makers.

ACTON W. J. Contemporary. One of our good native makers. Violins.

AIRETON E., London, 1727—1807. A very good maker who made for Peter Wamsley and afterwards for himself in Piccadilly. Model Amati.

ALBANI M., Botzen, 1621—1673. An old Tyrolese maker. Good quality, but tubby Stainer model.

ALBANI M., Botzen, 1650—1712. Son of preceeding maker. Totally different style of work from that of his father. In some cases it is really of a very high class, and might very readily be mistaken for Cremonese work. Beautifully figured wood.

ALBANI M., Gratz. I know nothing of this maker. ALBANI P., Cremona, 1650—1670. I know nothing of this maker. He is supposed to have been a pupil of Nicolas Amati, and to have made instruments of that model and of good workmanship.

ALDRICH Paris, 1792—1840. Some of the work of this maker calls for the highest praise. He made beautiful copies of Stradivari, not only in model and arching, *but* in some cases succeeded in getting the Cremonese quality of tone to quite a marvellous degree. His varnish is sometimes very spiritless and common-looking, but one might say it is his only defect. The heads of his violins are strong and massive-looking, and finely designed. The grain of the belly is sometimes irregular in width, which in some people's eyes indicates carelessness in selection, but the tone tells a different

tale. His sound holes are prettily cut, but just a little pot-bellied. His arching is very fine, and his ribs of a full height. His finest varnish is of a dark reddish brown, and a perfect specimen of this maker's work might be played along with many a fine Stradivari and not suffer much by the comparison.

ALLETSEE, PAUL, Munich, 1726—1735. A very artistic and in some respects—chiefly in matters of design—an original worker. Sometimes has beautifully grained wood, such as even A. and H. Amati might have been proud of. Made large instruments mostly. Tickets generally in German letters "Paulus Alletsee Geigen-macher in Miinchen."

AMATI, ANDREA, Cremona, was the founder of this family of violin makers. The date of his birth is not known. It is conjectured that he was married to his first wife in 1554, and that his sons Antonio and Hieronymus were born in 1555 and 1556, respectively. By this marriage he had also a daughter, Valeria, who was herself married for the first time on 3rd May, 1587. This is the earliest fixed date regarding the Amati family that has been ascertained from documentary evidence. The father, Andrea, was married a second time in 1609, and of this union was born another daughter, Candida, who did not survive a month. Of the work of Andreas it is only possible to speak in very limited fashion. I have only seen two specimens which could claim to be from his hand. One was the famous "King Andreas Amati" 'cello which, it is said, was presented by Pope Pius to Charles IX. It is a magnificently decorated instrument with somewhat narrow but finely finished margins, and

having beautiful golden-brown varnish over wood of which it is not very easy to see the quality, or to say anything that could not be said of its very clever copy by John Betts. The purfling certainly is of exquisite quality, but there does not appear to have been the same care in the selection of wood as makers displayed later on. The second was another of the same suite, but a violin, the outline of which did not strike me as being particularly good. Instruments by this maker are scarcely known, and are chiefly of antiquarian interest.

AMATI, A. and H., Cremona. Antonius and Hieronymus Amati were the sons of Andreas, and are supposed to have been born in 1555 and 1556 respectively. Hieronymus died on the 2nd November, 1630, and there is no trace of his brother Antonius either having lived or died. There is an Antonius mentioned in the documents of another parish in Cremona as having died in 1595, but those who have carried out the researches believe that he was only distantly related to the fiddle family. The instruments of this firm are of the highest merit in their class. They are finished in the most perfect manner, and covered with varnish passing from a warm maple brown to a beautiful golden brown with a tinge of red. The wood selected is of the finest character, and the sizes of the instruments are generally small. The arching is somewhat high, but finely and gracefully carried out, and has, of course, nothing of the grotesque and tubby character displayed in imitations. All the work is of a refined and delicate nature, and harmonises well with the choice of wood, which may be described as fine, and delicate too. I. have seen some

of this firm's wood of a nice open grain, but it is usually close. Many of their two-piece backs are beautifully matched, and have a clearly defined figure. The sound holes are graceful, and well placed, and have a slightly peculiar look which has given rise to certain extremely odd effects in the imitations. The inner side of each sound hole being, to a certain extent, on the rise of the long and graceful arch, these have a slightly misleading appearance given to them, as if they were in fact, just a little knockkneed, so to speak. The result of this misapprehension is that in so cutting them in many of even the best imitations, the grossly exaggerated arch of the copies gives to these sound holes quite a ludicrous appearance in the eyes of a connoisseur, although it might not be so easily observed by anyone not acquainted with the originals. Some of their work, like that of Andreas Amati, was painted and gilded, and otherwise decorated—or abused—as many might not think it unseemly to say. The tone of the A. and H. Amati violins is generally exceedingly rich and sweet, although it is not usually very powerful.

AMATI, NICOLAS, Cremona. This maker was the great artist of the family. He was a son of the Hieronymus Amati previously mentioned, by his second wife, Madonna Laura Lazzarini, who died of the plague some six days before her husband, on the 2yth October, 1630. Nicolas was the fifth child of the second union, his brothers and sisters by the two marriages numbering in all thirteen. He was born on the 3rd December, 1596, and died on the 12th April, 1684, being buried in the Carmelite- Church of Saint Imerio. His work is very

rare, although one would not readily suppose so from the number of instruments claiming to be original specimens from his hands. He somewhat flattened the model of his father's firm, and brought the arching nearer to the margins. Indeed I have seen late specimens of his work in which the contour of the arch might almost be described as quite rounded. In work again dating forty years before his death, the arch is quite high, but all his work is, of course, fine. That goes without saying. One peculiar characteristic of his early period may be seen in the very pronounced corners. They are so fully developed that they are not unlike a dog's nose. Later, that peculiarity almost disappears. At any rate, it ceases to be so strongly in evidence. The figure of his wood, both back and ribs, is generally very full. The sound holes are narrow in early work, and in later a little wider. His varnish is a beautiful golden yellow, through brown, to golden red. The model of a Nicolas Amati of the grand pattern has a distinctly solid look about it. The width of the upper portion of the violin is much nearer that of the lower portion than in the work of his predecessors in the firm, namely, A. and H. Their violins have a more tender, less robust look, chiefly because of this difference between the width of the upper and lower portions. The sound holes—that is, the main stems of their design—in a fine specimen appear as if infinitesimally drawn toward each other at the lower half of the stems. They are, in reality almost parallel, and that delusive appearance is the will o' the wisp which leads copyists astray. Nicolas Amati was married on 23rd May, 1645, to Lucrezia Pagliari, who

was his junior by thirteen years. They had nine children, of whom only one followed the father's calling. Among the pupils who resided in the house of Nicolas Amati, as is evidenced by extracts from the parish records^a may be mentioned, in 1641 Andrea Guarneri, fifteen years old. Five years afterwards, Andrea Guarneri is not mentioned. Then, in 1653 ^a reappears, and is described as being then married, and next year disappears for good from the house of his master.

AMATI, HIERONYMUS, Cremona. Born 26th February, 1649, died 21 st February, 1740. This was the only member of Nicholas Amati's family who followed the father's calling. He appears to have done so chiefly as a dealer, for the styles of the instruments bearing his name are of such remarkably varied character as to leave one strongly doubting that they were all made by one man.

AMBROSI, P., Brescia, Rome, 1730. Reputedly somewhat common work.

ANSELMUS, P., Cremona and Venice, 1701. Very little known about him. Described as good work.

ASSALONE, G., Rome, 17—. Poor work.

AUBRY, Paris, 1840. A nephew of Aldric, already referred to, and who succeeded to his uncle's business, but not to his skill or fame.

AUDINO, NICOLA, Paris. An excellent French maker, born in Mirecourt in 1842, and trained by his father, who was established there. He was afterwards employed by Sebastien Vuillaume (who was a nephew of the great J. B. Vuillaume) and was in business in Paris. His instruments are of great merit.

AUGIEREA very good Parisian maker, established about 1830.

BAGATELLAANTONIOPadua, 1786. Chiefly known as the author of a work on violins which is of great interest even yet. He was a fine repairer of old violins, and was employed by Tartini.

BALESTRIERT., Cremona and Mantua, 1720—1772. A very good maker indeed. Some of his work is remarkably like that of Stradivari in almost all points, except finish. Powerful and good quality of tone.

BALESTRIERP., Cremona. Brother of preceeding. Poor work.

BARNIAFIDEEVenice, 1760. A Milanese trained maker, who was established in Venice. Fairly good, neat work, yellow varnish.

BANKSBENJAMINSalisbury, 1727—1795. One of our finest English makers. Quite equal in style, finish, and tone to many of the fine Italian makers. His margins are splendid. His edges beautifully rounded. His corners full, and of true Nicolas Amati early style. His arching is exquisite, and the tone of his violins fine and ringing. The grain of the wood is generally remarkably equal, and of medium width. His varnish is decidedly rich, of a beautiful purplish cherry colour, and fairly transparent. His bigger instruments are also superb, and grand in tone.

BELOSIQANSELMOVenice, 1720—1780. A pupil of Santo Serafino, but a mediocre worker. Dull, thicker varnish than his master's.

BARRETTJ. London, 1714—1725. A copyist of Stainer whose model he has much exaggerated, like

dozens of other makers who have tried it. It may indeed be said that the bulk of Stainer copies are so exaggerated as not to merit the title of Stainer copies at all. They are caricatures. Barrett's work is, however, by no means bad. His tone is of fairly good quality with a certain amount of breadth in it. His sound holes are quaint looking—the lower turn having a long sweep. Varnish a warmish yellow. Edges round ; purfling not particularly good.

BERGONZICARLO Cremona, 1716—1747- This maker is one of the finest of the Cremonese artists. A member in fact, of the quartet *par 'excellence*, Amati' Stradivari, Guarneri, Bergonzi. It is not known yet when he • was born, but he began working on his own account in the year first mentioned, and- died in 1747. He was a pupil of Stradivari when the latter was doing his finest work, as seems to be borne out by the grand outline of Carlo's own work, which is akin to the best of Stradivari, and of Nicolas Amati. The sound holes are very pure, and sometimes approach the style of Nicolas Amati, except that they bend slightly outwards at the lower turn. The model is grand, although his violins are sometimes small, being slightly under fourteen inches. There is that approach towards equality between the upper and lower portions of the instrument which gives that magnificent appearance to what is called the " grand " pattern of both Stradivari and Nicolas Amati. His arching is flat, and his varnish of rich quality, and exceedingly fine in colour. In many of his violins it is of a beautiful, rich, transparent brown on reddish orange, and is occasionally rather thickly laid

on. In some instruments it has crackled all over, not unlike the manner of the famous *Vevnis Martin* on some old French pieces of furniture. His scroll is very fine. There is a marked peculiarity about the ear, or eye, as it is sometimes called. More properly it would be the *boss* of the volute, or terminal stem, which shows itself on each side sticking out at the last turn. This last turn comes suddenly out, although the immediately previous turn is almost parallel to the vertical axis of the volute viewed from the back. The tone of his instruments is generally splendidly full, broad, smooth, and magnificently equal.

BERGONZI, M. A., Cremona, 1720—1760. This maker was a son of Carlo. His work is not equal, by many degrees, to that of his father, but that is not saying a very great deal against him, for his father, as has been said, was one of the greatest 'of the Cremonese. Michael Angelo Bergonzi's style is, however, heavy, and perhaps many fastidious judges would not appreciate him on that account, but he employed good wood, both in back and front, and plenty of it. His work is solid and massive, and not so artistically finished, but there is no doubt about the quality of his tone being of a high character. His sound holes are after his father's style, but longer—of very fair design, but slightly unequal. Purfling not particularly good, but his varnish is of good quality. His outline is not so good as his father's, and his middle bouts are set in much deeper, but with all that there is a sense of strength and individuality about his work which, when combined with the quality of his tone, makes a fine specimen of his something to be cherished.

BERGONZI, NICOLAUS Cremona, 1739—1765. Son of Michael Angelo Bergonzi, made better finished instruments than his father, and much after same model, but worse varnish, and as far as I have been able to judge, I do not like them so well.

BERGONZI, ZOSIMO Cremona, 1765. Another son of Michael Angelo, made somewhat highly arched instruments for a Bergonzi, but having a pretty enough tone.

BASSO, JOSEPH Paris, from about 1788. This is reckoned a good French maker. Anything I have seen of his did not strike me as being of very high class, but it was of sound construction and the tone of good quality. Model somewhat high and boxy. Varnish ordinary.

BERNARDE, SEBASTIEN PHILIPPE Paris. Born at Mirecourt in 1802. He learned violin making there and went to Paris, where he got employment from the famous Nicolas Lupot at first, and afterwards from Charles François Gand, another famous Parisian maker. He is called in the trade Bernardel pere, and many of his violins are of a class reckoned only inferior to Lupot. Bernardel indeed made instruments very like those of his first employer, as was to be expected. They are highly esteemed in France, but not much appreciated here. He retired from business in 1866, and died on 6th August, 1870. Previous to his retirement, his two sons were taken into the business, and the firm became Bernardel and Sons. After his retirement in 1866, the late Eugene Gand became a partner of the two brothers, and the firm was changed to Gand and Bernardel Bros.

BETTS, JOHN, London. He was born at Stamford Lincolnshire, in 1755, and died in 1823. This maker and dealer has become famous chiefly through two things, the first being his copy of the King Andreas Amati 'Cello before referred to. This copy is certainly a fine production, which, besides showing paint in what was apparently the primitive abundance, also shows the wood, a very great advantage over the original, which is rather ancient now, and dingy-looking. The second circumstance was that singularly fortunate, and most exceptionally lucky windfall—as it might be named—in his direction of the now famous " Betts Strad," one of the handsomest of Stradivari violins. Nothing definite appears to be known about the date of this transaction, but it occurred probably between seventy and eighty years ago. Some person sold a violin over the counter to one of the Messrs. Betts, in their shop at the Royal Exchange—No. 2—one of the shops, probably, which at present face the front of the Bank of England. The price asked, or agreed upon, for the instrument was twenty shillings, the person selling it, not having, of course, the slightest idea of its value. Mr. Betts, however, knew what it was, and bought it, keeping it beside him for years, and declining very handsome offers of as much as five hundred guineas for it. The story is a striking one, but it is not without its parallel, even in recent times. John and Arthur Betts are said to have made a copy of this Stradivari. These were descendants of the original John, who does not seem to have been a prolific violin maker. This copy has very handsome wood in the back, as it ought to have, in order to match

its original, but the sound holes appear rather weak, and the volute of the scroll just a little topheavy. Anything I have seen of the original John Betts was good, solid, square work, without any great display of taste, and with rather bad sound holes. There was an Edward Betts, who did better work as far as concerns appearance. They were both pupils of Richard Duke, but they chiefly employed other people to make for them, and, as far as I can judge, a considerable quantity of rubbish passed through their shop along with a great deal that was good, and much that was splendid, and which will be referred to under the actual makers.

BOQUAY, J., Paris, 1705—1735. This maker was famous in his day, and many people like him yet. His model is high, and his varnish is not bad, of a reddish brown, tending to yellow. I do not think much of the tone.

BACHMANN, C. L., Berlin. Born 1716. Died 1800. One of the best German copyists in Amati and Stainer models. He was a professional musician at the Prussian court, a distinguished connoisseur of his time and the inventor of the system of screwing the double bass pegs, which led to the adoption of machine heads. His instruments are soundly made, and covered with a kind of oil varnish.

BRETON, F. " Brevete de S. A. R. Me La Duchesse D'Angouleme a Mirecourt," so runs the ticket of this maker who seems to have worked in Mirecourt from about 1800 to 1830, or later. His instruments frequently have a light brownish yellow varnish, not unpleasant to look at, though of rather common type, and such as one might expect to see on a good class of trade instru

ment. The tone is not without breadth, and is, to a certain degree, sympathetic. The arching is flat, and altogether the work is by no means bad, but is what people think common-looking, no fault at all in a good violin.

BRIGGS JAMES W., Leeds. Contemporary. A pupil of William Tarr of Manchester. Violins, violas, and basses.

COLLINGWOOD JOSEPH London, 1760. A fine old English maker of considerable originality. Fine wood, and pleasing, light yellow varnish. His sound holes are well designed, but very wide Amati-Stainer model, with remarkably good quality of tone.

CAMILLI SCAMILLI Mantua, about 1740. A maker who copied Stradivari to a certain extent, and employed good wood and fairly good varnish.

CAPPA JOFFRIDI Saluzzo. This was a Piedmontese maker, about whom a good deal has been written without much foundation. Fetis had authoritatively said that he was born in Cremona, and had been a pupil of A. and H. Amati, giving other apparently well ascertained particulars regarding him which very naturally led people to suppose that he had acquired them in some specifically authentic fashion. An Italian connoisseur of much distinction also took some trouble to find out a little about this maker, but failed. Conjecture appears to have been very busy with him and his work. It now seems that he was at work in Saluzzo and in Turin during the first half of the seventeenth century, and this information is derived solely from tickets found in instruments claiming to be by him. Anything that I

have seen which I could be persuaded to admit might possibly belong to the period in which he is supposed to have lived, although of fairly good style, showed poor care in the wood, a generally tubby look, and rather tasteless sound holes. Other examples equally claimant for the honour of his parentage showed discrepancies in style, varnish, model, and everything else, which were so palpably absurd, that I think him one of those dummies in regard to whom the fiddle-fancier should be particularly cautious. There are some very fine instruments bearing this name, whether they are by Cappa or not. He had sons who followed the business, but whose work is of little importance.

CARCASSI, LORENZO and TOMASSO, Florence, 1738—1758. I have seen a number of instruments professing to be by these makers. A few of them were fairly good. This is a name which is, unfortunately, largely used to put into any kind of absurd rubbish which it is thought may be got rid of in a sale room.

CASTAGNERI, GIAN PAOLO. An Italian maker who settled in Paris, and whose violins appear to be remarkably rare and of mediocre quality to boot.

CASTAGNERI, ANDREA, Paris, 1735—1741. This maker was a son of above, and made somewhat better instruments than his father. The dates given are those found on two of his instruments.

CASTRO, Venice, 1680—1720. Poor work.

CASTELLO, PAOLO, Genoa, 1750. Poor work.

CERUTI, GIOVAMBATISTA, Cremona, 1755—1817. This maker is, in Italy, supposed to have been a pupil of Storioni, on what ground it is difficult to guess. He

succeeded to Storioni's business in 1790, or, at least, removed into the premises previously occupied by Storioni at No. 3, Contrada Coltellai, near the square of Saint Domenic. Perhaps this circumstance may have given rise to the notion, for there is very little in common between Ceruti and Storioni. The instruments of Ceruti are very good, chiefly of the Amati model, but having a tone quite French in style. The varnish is of a soft and elastic character, but not particularly spirited in appearance, and not very transparent. It is frequently of a dull, cherry colour, rather scumbly. Guiseppe and Enrico were son and grandson of Giovambatista, and carried on the traditions of the house with credit. Enrico, the last of the Cerutis, died on 20th October, 1883—his father, Guiseppe, having predeceased him in 1860—and thus the direct line of communication which had subsisted between makers of modern times, and the last of the more important Cremonese artistes was severed, as Giovambatista was the depository, through Storioni, of much of the traditionary lore regarding the greatest of the Cremonese School. As the irresponsible talk to which that kind of information gives rise has something to do with the confusion of knowledge regarding the subject, the drying up of such a stream of gossip is not so much to be regretted as the disappearance of the firm of Ceruti itself from the contemporary annals of fiddle lore.

CHANOT, FRANCIS. Born at Mirecourt, 1788. Died at Rochefort, 1828. He was a naval engineer, and a scientist who distinguished himself greatly in the study of violin acoustics and construction. He invented

a new violin which did not succeed permanently, although it made a considerable sensation at the time. He continued to make and sell specimens of it for about seven years from 1817. They differed almost wholly from the classical shape and in their principles of construction, but are now interesting in many ways. Guitar-shaped, they had no protruding margins, no blocks; back and front were in single pieces, sound holes parallel, bass bar in the centre, and so on. A specimen was tested by a commission of distinguished musicians, and pronounced superior to the best known Stradivaris.

CHANO, GEORGE Brother of preceeding, was born at Mirecourt in 1801. Learnt violin-making there and went to Paris in 1819. Became one of the finest makers of his time, and worked first for his brother, then on the regular fiddle with Clement, a Paris maker. Then in 1821, with Gand for two years. In 1823 he began on his own account, and continued until 1872, when he retired. He was reputed the finest connoisseur in Europe, and his instruments have a very high reputation. He died in January, 1883. ^{As son} George, learnt his business with his father in Paris, and afterwards came to* London, where he has been a maker and dealer for upwards of forty years. One of the finest modern copies of Joseph Guarnerius that I have seen—as far as outward look and wood goes—was made by this latter George, who has also sons (F. and G. A.), worthily carrying on the family name and reputation in London and Manchester.

COMBLE, AMBROISE DE, Tournay, 1720—1755. This

maker has undoubtedly high claims to acknowledgment. He has the reputation of having been actually at Cremona under Stradivari. His work is of a very high character. The outline of his larger instruments is extremely beautiful, and bears quite recognisable evidence of having been guided by a Stradivari *motif*, but his sound holes are cut much lower than in Stradivari instruments, which is a curious circumstance in a maker who came so directly under the influence of the great Cremonese. Oddly enough, they do not detract much from the fine feeling of the ensemble. There is not that sense of entire compactness with which a Stradivari 'cello inspires one, but that is all. De Comble's scrolls are very beautiful specimens of sculpture. Varnish a fine brownish red, pretty closely resembling Italian.

COMINS, JOHN, London, about 1800. A very good worker who, it is said, was a pupil of Forster. Made instruments pretty deep in the ribs. Light yellow-brown varnish. Fine wood.

CONTRERAS, JOSEPH, Madrid, 1745. Very good style and work. Not very many specimens about.

CROSS, NATHANIEL, London, 1700—1750. I cannot say that I greatly admire this maker's work. Somewhat large and deep-sided, his violins have rather tasteless sound holes, very short corners, and common outline. They are covered with a light yellow varnish. He worked in conjunction with Barak Norman. His scrolls are certainly fine.

DERAZE, H., Mirecourt. From about 1820. A good copier of J. B. Vuillaume in outward appearance, especially in the figures of the backs of some of his

violins. The varnish on the back is a little crackly sometimes, more like that of the elder Gand than of Vuillaume. His scrolls are also not unlike those of Gand pere, but not nearly so powerful looking, and not so wide at the bottom. His varnish is a red, slightly inclining to purple. Tone fairly good, but decidedly nasal.

DUKE, RICHARD, London, 1754—1780. This is a magnificent maker. His outline is very pure—Amati or Stainer. The sound holes in the Stainer models are, curiously enough, not particularly fine, but those in Amati copies are better. The latter are cut a little narrower at the top than at the bottom turn, which gives them a slightly quaint look. His scrolls are very fine, and the tone of his instruments is of a most exquisite character. I consider that he is quite entitled to walk in line with the Italians of importance in everything except his varnish, and that chiefly excepted with regard to its colour, but not in regard to its pate. It is of a beautiful soft, but dull brown, with little or no life in it. Richard Duke violins are, it hardly need be said to experienced fanciers, very rare indeed.

DODD, THOMAS, London, 1786—1823. This was a clever man who did not make violins himself, like so many others, about his time. He employed first-class men to deliver them to him unvarnished. Among these workers were such as Bernard Fendt and John Lott, both men of the highest skill. Dodd varnished the instruments himself. It is a nice oil varnish, but nothing to set the *temse* on fire. The instruments, such at least as were made by Fendt, are splendid examples of violin making. Dodd professed to be "the only

possessor of the recipe for preparing the original Cremona varnish." This statement appears on his tickets, and may be quite true, but he certainly never seems to have used the recipe.

DUIFFOPRUGCAR, GASPAR, Bologna, Paris, Lyons, 1510—1540. This is an early lute and viol maker, who, having once got into books about violins, seems destined never to get out of them. Every now and again some person starts the discussion as to whether or not he made violins. The latest fight was in May, 1891, in a *L'Épique* paper, where a writer took the trouble to review the whole question, because a Mr. F. Niderheitmann, of Aix-la-Chapelle, believes that he has discovered three violins by this splendid old viol maker, although everyone to whom he has shown them, and who professes to know anything about the subject, has told him that they are modern French reproductions—that is, modern in the sense that they are probably some of J. B. Vuillaume's clever—fac-similes—as I suppose they should be called. The whole question has been threshed out over again, and the fever of battle has spread to New York, where an esteemed correspondent of my own has taken the trouble to translate the article and reproduce it in the form of a small brochure of seven or eight pages, "Was Caspar Duiffoprugcar really the First Violin Maker ? " I never saw any violins by the great Bolognese.

EBERLE, J. U., Prague. About 1750—1759. A clever maker of the old style ; fine finish, /but thin, poor quality of tone. High model and good quality of varnish, but somewhat dark in colour. All the Eberles

—there were several of them—appear to have been of a highly artistic turn. Such work of theirs as I have seen was of a refined and decorative style.

ERNST, FRANK ANTHONY. Born in Bohemia, was a musician, writer and violin maker who did good service to the art in Germany by teaching Jacob Augustus Otto how to make instruments. I have not seen any by either master or pupil. Ernst began business in Gotha about 1778 as a musician at Court, and having a little leisure he turned his attention to making violins and succeeded, as is reported, in producing very good ones.

FENT, Paris, 1763—1780. This maker has the reputation of being one of the highest class in France of his day. I have never been able to understand why his violins have not ranked above those of *any* French maker, unless the circumstance that he has been so unfortunate in the matter of worms has told against him, and, perhaps, in addition, the darkening down of his varnish. In all other respects his work is of the finest. His model was Stradivari. He spelt his name " Fent " in his tickets and his calling " lutier."

FENDT, BERNHARD. This maker was, it is supposed, a nephew of the Paris Fent. He was born at Innsbruck in 1756 and died in London in 1832. His name is spelt differently from that of his Parisian relative,, who was not particularly good at spelling either in his own or in his adopted language, as may be seen by reference to last article. Bernhard learnt violin making with this uncle in Paris, and at the time of the French Revolution came to London, where he found employ-

ment with Thomas Dodd already mentioned. His instruments are beautiful specimens of his art, having a tone which is exquisite in quality and may quite truthfully be described as Cremonese in that respect. The varnish which Dodd put on, although not exactly what he professes it to be, is a very fine varnish, and might readily mislead people who have not seen examples of Cremonese. Bernhard Fendt also worked for John Betts.

FENDT, BERNARD SIMON London. Born in 1800, died 1851. He was a son of the previous maker. He spells "Bernard," as will be observed, without the letter "h." Like his father, he was a splendid maker, and has produced work which will rank with some of the finest Italian. Indeed, in the prime matter of tone, his earlier instruments are now almost quite in line with the best of the Italians for quality. There is a rich roundness on all the strings which is rarely found in any instruments other than Cremonese. His work is of fine Italian style, having a brilliant orange varnish, spacious margins, full and handsome sides, elegant arching, and very good and neat purfling, while his scrolls are exceedingly fine. Altogether his earlier instruments are splendid productions. He also made a number of excellent double basses and 'cellos, and in 1851 he displayed at the great International Exhibition in London a quartet consisting of violin, viola, violoncello and double bass, which, in the opinion of almost every competent judge in the country, surpassed anything exhibited in that show. The most competent judges did not, however, happen to be the jury on that occa-

sion, and although B. S. Fendt got a prize medal, the one which he should have had—the grand council medal—went to J. B. Vuillaume, of Paris. The jury on the violins in the 1851 Exhibition consisted of Sir H. R. Bishop, Sigismund Thalberg, W. Sterndale Bennett, Hector Berlioz, J. R. Black, Chevalier Neukomm, Cipriani Potter, Dr. Schaffthauk, Sir George Smart and Professor Henry Wylde. They were assisted by the Rev. W. Cazalet, James Stewart and William Telford. Only one of these gentlemen could even play the violin when he was a young man, namely, Sir George Smart. The others were general musicians, pianists and organists—distinguished, of course, in high degree, but who knew little more about the question of fiddles than the man in the moon. One was a pianoforte maker, another an organ builder, a third a geologist and metallurgist, a fourth a physician, a fifth a clergyman who happened to be superintendent of the Royal Academy, and the rest were professors there, or elsewhere, of the piano and organ. The very same gentlemen, in fact, who awarded prize medals to successful competitors in barrel organs or big drums distributed the honours for the most wonderful instrument in the world, and it is not, therefore, surprising that the object rewarded in this case was, in the words of Sir Henry Bishop, "New modes of making violins in such a manner that they are matured and perfected immediately on the completion of the manufacture, thus avoiding the necessity of

•keeping them for considerable periods to develop their excellencies." That is the deliberate statement of the chairman of the jury as to the reason why they gave the

Council medal to J. B. Vuillaume. A decision like that was quite enough to take away any violin maker's breath for all time, and it is not in the least astonishing that B. S. Fendt died that same year! Seriously, however, that decision will remain a curious comment on the astonishing ignorance of fiddle matters which prevailed in distinguished musical circles forty or more years ago. I yield to none in my admiration of J. B. Vuillaume's fine violins, and I also know that B. S. Fendt in his later instruments tried somewhat similar ways, but to accept an honour for processes of that kind, argues as much ignorance on Vuillaume's part at that time as the jury themselves displayed, or else an unusual amount of hardihood in the arts of self advertisement.

The instruments of almost every member of the Fendt family have for years back been steadily advancing in public favour. The beautiful character of the tone which they possess is sufficient to account for this, but apart from tone, there is a style about Bernhard, Bernard Simon and Jacob, which so forcibly recalls the finest efforts of the greater Cremonese, as to make one almost realise, in the latter's absence, what it is to have a fine Cremona violin. The varnish on his later instruments is occasionally a little dull. In his tickets his name is printed "Bernard S. Fendt, Junr."

FENDT MARTIN London. Born 1812. This maker was another son of Bernhard Fendt, and was in the employment of the Betts firm. I have not seen any instruments which were made by him, and it is probable that he was chiefly occupied with repairs.

FENDT, JACOB, London. Born 1815. Died 1849. Another son of Bernhard Fendt. The whole conception of his instruments is generally higher than the work of other members of his family. His wood is generally very fine and regular, while some of his backs are really, in regard to figure, most beautiful. In his Guarnerius copies, the sound holes are rather exaggerated reproductions of that great maker's style, but in this respect he is in very good company, as the best copyists that ever lived have failed in exactly hitting off the striking peculiarity of Joseph del Jesu's sound holes. I have heard it urged that these great makers, both English and foreign, did not try to "slavishly copy" the individuality of Joseph Guarnerius, but I cannot say that I have great faith in the validity of this kind of reasoning. I believe that they tried to copy him and Stradivari, as well as Nicolas Amati, in the most minute particular, and that they simply failed to do it perfectly. When Vuillaume turned out, under stress of circumstances, his reproductions of the old masters, and put in imitations of the old tickets—and very clever imitations too—we may be absolutely certain that he left nothing undone that he could have done, and so it is with any maker, who has set himself to copy the old masters in that fashion. With the exception of putting in old tickets, discolouring the wood by artificial means, and otherwise imitating the aged appearance—barring, perhaps, the artistic breaking up of varnish—makers could not do better than "slavishly" copy such productions as the Cremonese masters have left us. Like Vuillaume, Jacob Fendt, in order to live,

was constrained to turn out the modern antique, and the man's genius is visible in the circumstance that he could do the latter thing, and at the same time turn out a splendid violin. In tone, style, and everything, a good specimen of Jacob Fendt is magnificent.

FENDT, FRANCIS, London. This was another son of Bernhard, of whom little is known.

FENDT, WILLIAM, London. This maker was a son of Bernard Simon, and was employed with his father. He did not make many violins, but was at work with his father in the making of double basses.

FORD, JACOB, London, 1790. A very clever maker, who imitated in a remarkable manner the great favourite of most 18th century workers, Jacob Stainer. His scrolls are a little stiff-looking, and in other respects, the model is not really Stainer, but borders very closely on it. For example, Stainer's margins, which few English, or even Continental makers, have copied well, are very faithfully reproduced by Ford. Stainer's margins, though not so large as the Italians, are much less niggardly than the great majority of his imitators would have us believe, and although there is no great credit, . perhaps, in the mere reproduction of the design of a fiddle, when we find a man doing this in a faithful manner we have reason to cherish the hope that he may have his head screwed on properly with regard to other things. The sound holes are not Stainer, nor is the arching, and one may well ask, " What is there about the work that is Stainer ? " Just the general look and tone feeling, the finish of the work, which is great, and the choice of wood. Varnish a deepish tinted yellow.

FORSTER, JOHN Brampton. Born 1688. Of interest chiefly because it is supposed that he was the father of William Forster, who follows. It is understood that John Forster made one violin.

FORSTER, WILLIAM Brampton. Born 1713—4. Died 1801. He is chiefly of interest because he was the father of the next Forster.

FORSTER, WILLIAM Brampton. Born about 1738. He was a spinningwheel maker, violin maker, and violinist, celebrated throughout the country side in * Cumberland for his performance of Scotch reels. He also composed and published reels. He came to London in 1759, and tried spinningwheel making in Commercial Road, East, but not successfully. Then he manufactured gun stocks, and occasionally a violin for the music shops. By-and-by, after some hardship, he entered the service of a maker in Tower Hill named Beck. There is no trace of this Beck anywhere except in the biography of the Forsters. William Forster was successful with Beck, and asked an advance of wages, was refused, and left. In 1762 he began business on his own account in Duke's Court, St. Martin's Lane. Success came there in the form of aristocratic patronage, and between last date and 1782, he added music publishing to his business, and at this time used the title page of one of these works as a label. In 1781, he was in St. Martin's Lane, and three years later in the Strand—No. 348. Royal patronage now came, and the climax of his success was attained. He negotiated with Haydn for the publication of his works, and among his customers were the famous engraver, Bartolozzi, and the

no less famous litterateur, Peter Pindar (Dr. Walcot). This William Forster (called in the trade "old Forster") died in 1807. That he made instruments of high quality goes without saying. His violoncellos are very good, and much coveted. I confess I do not altogether admire the style of his tenors and violins—that is, of course, judging them by the highest standard, and his violoncellos do not always appear to me to be very graceful instruments as far as outline goes, but rather broad at bottom, and narrow at top ; but their tone is decidedly good. His varnish is dull, staid, but of a refined character, if one may employ such expressions with regard to varnish. The colour of much of it is like a reddish brown, not too dark, with an almost entire absence of polish on its surface, but having an air of eminent respectability, like the surface of a well-worn piece of dull grain goatskin leather. His wood is always fine. About 1762 he adopted the Stainer model, and worked on it for ten years, when he turned to Amati—(A. and H. and Nicolas). What I have said about his varnish refers to his later work, from about 1780, or a year or two before that. In the early work he appears to have stained the wood before varnishing. On these it is dark red with a blackish tinge. He made only four double basses. His commoner violins, etc., had no purfling. Labels, William Forster, Violin Maker, in St. Martin's Lane, London.

FORSTER WILLIAM London. Born 1764. Son of above. He began to make violins early, his first one being entered when he was fifteen. His work is generally highly finished, but is not of equal merit in other respects,.

and is inferior to that of his father. He only made two or three violins of any worth, and about a dozen common ones. His varnish is same as his father's best. He died in 1824. Added "Junior" to his name in his labels, and "Music Seller to the Prince of Wales and Duke of Cumberland."

FORSTER WILLIAM London. Born 1788. Died 1824. Son of above. Made very few violins. I have not seen any.

FORSTER SIMON ANDREW London. Born 1781[^] Died 1869. Made few instruments personally, and not of great merit, as far as I can learn. He is best known; as the joint author, along with Mr. Sandys, of a "History of the Violin" which contains a deal of valuable information regarding the English School of Makers. He states in this work that he made fifteen violins, four violas, thirty-eight violoncellos, and five double basses, all of the best class, and that he also made other forty instruments, of all classes, of an inferior quality. That would be in all over a hundred instruments. I have, only seen two or three claiming to be by him, and they were violins of rather poor quality. But I am not in a position to say that I recognised his work in these.

FURBER London. A family of violin makers regarding the early members of which very little is known. They have been chiefly employed making for others. The first was David, of whom nothing appears to be known. His son, Matthew, died in 1790. A subsequent Matthew and a John Furber worked for the Betts' firm, and Mr. Hart states that this John made fine copies of the "Betts' " Stradivari, while that instrument remained

with the firm. There should therefore be some excellent copies of this famous fiddle about, and for which time will have done some service—all other things being equal. The last-mentioned Matthew died about 1830, and John sometime after 1841. The present representative of the family is Henry John Furber.

GABRIELLIA Florentine family of violin makers from about the beginning of last century. Christoforo, Bartolomeo, Gian-Battista, and Antonio. Gian-Battista is the best known, and has sometimes attractive looking wood in his instruments. Of second and third rate quality, but carefully made. Yellowish varnish, and somewhat tubby model.

GAGLIANO ALESSANDRO Naples. Born about 1640. The biographical details regarding this maker coruscate around a duel, which he is said to have fought, and which drove him to the manufacture of violins. The story has taken various shapes, the most recent being that from his youngest days he studied music, and amused himself by making mandolines and lutes. That in his time the Kingdom of Naples, being under Spanish Dominion, was affected by an unusual disregard of the value of life. That duelling was constantly practised—which is quite correct—and that the inhabitants, in order to be able to defend themselves, or from a love of fighting, learnt and taught their children assiduously the art of fencing, and the general management of lethal weapons. Alexander Gagliano, in this way, acquired consummate skill in the art of duelling while yet he was young, and one evening he had a quarrel with a Neapolitan gentleman, a member of a family called Mayo. They had no

sooner crossed swords, when Gagliano's opponent received his death wound. The duel occurred in the little square of New St. Mary's, near the Church of the Franciscan's, which was sacrilege according to the bull of Pope Gregory XIV. The friends of the murdered man were sufficiently powerful with the viceroy of the Kingdom, and Gagliano, alarmed at the possible consequences of the deed, sought asylum with the brotherhood, and put himself under their protection. The viceroy—one Count Penneranda—was vehemently opposed to the practice of duelling, and missed no opportunity of treating offenders with the greatest rigour. The murdered man was, in this case, one of his most intimate friends, and naturally, his resentment was considerably accentuated. The Spanish Government made determined efforts to upset the privileges of the monastical establishments, the inmates of which had more than once, however, shown themselves to be powerful defenders of their rights, and Penneranda had, at last, to retire repulsed. This, of course, increased his anger, and he at length threatened to assault the convent if, within a given date, the culprit were not delivered up to him. In the meantime, the Neapolitan Cardinal, Ascanio Filomorino, had mixed himself up in the affair, and supported the brotherhood in their efforts to keep Gagliano safe by getting him out of the way. Rearranged all the means, and by night and accompanied by a well-armed escort, he dispatched him to Mignamillo, in one of his districts, from whence, he sent him off to Rome. Gagliano, from this point, directed his steps northwards, and it is not unlikely that: