

**AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF
ANTON RUBINSTEIN,
1829-1889**

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Autobiography of Anton Rubinstein, 1829-1889 by Anton Rubinstein & Aline Delano

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ANTON RUBINSTEIN

1829-1889

TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN

BY ALINE DELANO

BOSTON
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1890

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PREFACE.

ON the 18th of November, 1889, Russia celebrated the Jubilee of her greatest living pianist and composer, Anton Rubinstein. Although from time to time various articles and criticisms on the life and works of the famous musician have been published, the biographical details, often inaccurate, possessed little or no value. It is a well-known fact that Rubinstein has always shown a reluctance to talk about himself or about his musical career. The idea suggested itself that it would be well to ask him to contribute materials for a brief biography. Having gained his consent, a stenographer was engaged to take down from the musician's own lips the story of his life. These notes were afterward read to Rubinstein and corrected

under his supervision. We are all familiar with his activity during these latter years. Von Bulow once called him the Michael Angelo of music; and Rubinstein has said of himself: "I play as a musician, not as a virtuoso." It is this very sincerity that has won for him an exclusive position among the pianists of the world. When beneath his fingers the piano alternately sings like a human voice or thunders with all the force of an orchestra, it is not easy to realize the limited compass of the instrument. The accounts of the enthusiasm aroused by his playing seem almost fabulous. In Spain and in Italy he was cheered in the streets. His first appearance in America marks a new era in its musical history. In all the great cities of Europe the crowds that collected around the ticket offices, even when fourteen successive concerts had been announced, were so great as to require the presence of the police to preserve order. Among the delighted audiences of St. Petersburg and Moscow, who enjoyed the privilege of listening to his historical

concerts, no true lover of music can have failed to appreciate that educational significance which lent to them a double value. His programmes were for the most part made up from the noted works of the great European composers; and his lectures on the history of piano-playing, illustrated as they were by his own incomparable rendering of the masterpieces of every land, won universal admiration. The Russian people can never forget its debt of gratitude to the famous composer, philanthropist, and patriot; and if illustrious men be the chief jewels in a nation's crown, then Russia may well be proud to claim as her own a man whose name will stand inscribed among the foremost in the history of Russian music of the nineteenth century.

The stimulating example of genius quickens the pulse of the nation, and Russia, the cradle of giants, still mourns the loss of Pùshkin, Lèrmontov, Skòbelev, Glìnkà, Daragomìjski, Seròv, and others, all of whom died in the full tide of their vigor and activity. In 1887 Rubinstein was re-

appointed to the directorship of the St. Petersburg Musical Conservatory, where he still continues his valuable labors.

The supplement consists largely of what may be called the echoes of musical criticism. They are taken partly from the Russian journals, and partly from a pamphlet printed on the occasion of the Rubinstein Jubilee, an event celebrated by all classes of the vast Russian empire.

ALINE DELANO.

BOSTON, August, 1890.