

VIOLIN TONE AND VIOLIN MAKERS

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Violin Tone and Violin Makers by Hidalgo Moya & Towry Piper

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HIDALGO MOYA & TOWRY PIPER

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DEGENERATION OF TONAL STATUS. CURIOSITY VALUE
AND ITS INFLUENCE. TYPES AND STANDARDS OF
VIOLIN TONE. IMPORTANCE OF TONE IDEALS.
ANCIENT AND MODERN VIOLINS AND TONE.
AGE, VARNISH, AND TONE. TONE AND
THE VIOLIN MAKER, DEALER,
EXPERT AND PLAYER

BY

HIDALGO MOYA

TOGETHER WITH AN ACCOUNT, BIOGRAPHICAL
AND CRITICAL, OF THE PRINCIPAL VIOLIN MAKERS OF
THE VARIOUS SCHOOLS AND THEIR WORKS

BY

TOWRY PIPER,

JOINT EDITOR OF HART'S "THE VIOLIN, ITS FAMOUS MAKERS
AND THEIR IMITATORS"

LONDON
CHATTO & WINDUS
1916

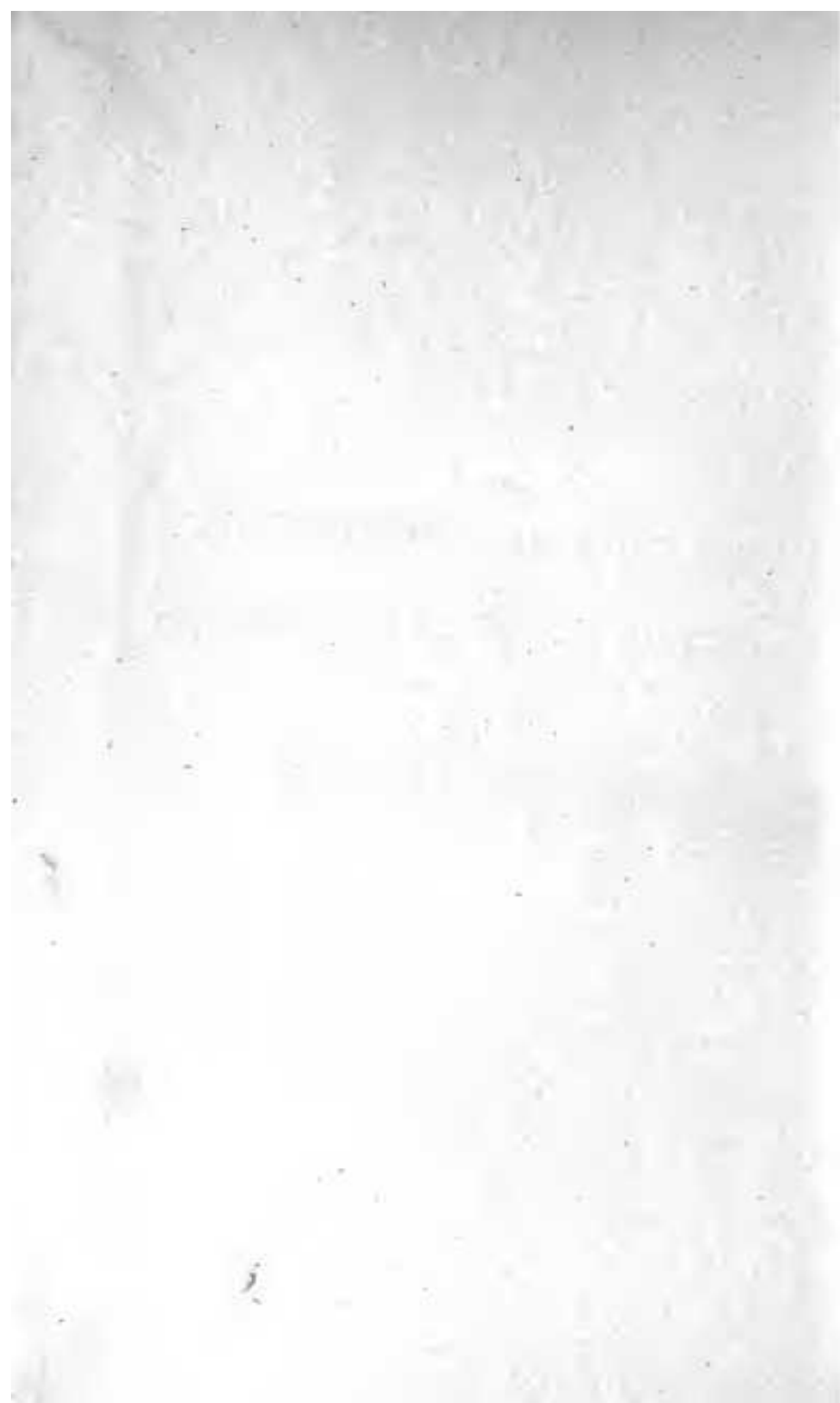
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Music
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TO
THE KING OF INSTRUMENTS
AND
HIS FAITHFUL SUBJECTS IN ALL COUNTRIES
THIS HUMBLE EFFORT ON BEHALF OF
TONE
IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED BY
THE AUTHOR

1828338



INTRODUCTION

FOR many years those who advocate the principle that Tone is the only thing that matters in a violin have been few in number, but earnest in purpose, and it would appear their efforts have not been barren of result when we find it admitted, where one would least expect it, that the day of the toneless old fiddle has passed for ever.

But this is not enough. Players of the violin, and especially those who seek refinement of tone in the instrument, still remain under the thrall of systems, methods, influences and errors which must also pass away before the road to tone is freely open.

An understanding of the relationship between tone and the instrument, and between the instrument and the various toneless interests by which it is surrounded, is vitally important to the player or the buyer of a violin—unless the instrument is being acquired as a curiosity, in which case tone need not, of course, concern the purchaser to any marked extent. But to the player these relationships

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matter very much indeed, and the understanding of them is rendered difficult owing to the invisible nature of tone, there being no material evidence to indicate its presence in one violin or its absence from another, a fact of which full advantage is taken in certain quarters. In the classifying of violins according to present methods, tone finds no place, having neither status nor any standard by which it may be judged; well may the player be uncertain whether he is acquiring a musical instrument or merely an antique. The very reason why the violin possesses a tone has not yet been satisfactorily explained, present opinion on the subject being near to chaos, some holding that it is due to the wood, others that it lies in some secret of construction, a few that it results from varnish, and many that it is created by age — but none, so far as I am aware, thinking it is due to an Ideal; material and construction being merely the means through which it finds expression. There is enough here to explain the uncertainty which surrounds the subject of tone and its connection with the violin, a connection which I shall attempt to explain in these pages by dealing with the instrument and its makers, whether ancient or modern, and with its history, manufacture, sale and use, solely from the point of view of Tone.