

Life of the Late J. K. Mertz.

GUITAR VIRTUOSO.

By Josephine Mertz, nee Plantin, widow of J. K. Mertz, deceased.

(This is the only history in this country of J. K. Mertz, the noted guitarist and composer. It was addressed to Mr. J. M. Miller, a guitarist of ability, now of Vinton, Iowa, by Mrs. Mertz. The original is now in Mr. Miller's possession, he having translated it from the German especially for "THE CADENZA.")

Joseph Kaspar Mertz was born on August 17th, 1806, in Pressburg, Hungary, from poor parents, and was obliged at an early age to give music lessons. He left his birth place in 1840. Arriving at Vienna he took part at a concert, given for benevolent purposes on Nov. 29th, 1840, in the Court Theatre under the protection of her Majesty the Empress Carolina Augusta, after which he went on a concert tour through Moravia, Telesin, and to Cracow, Warsdau, Medlin, (A Russian fortress) and then to Breslau, Berlin, at which place he played in the Royal Theatre.

In 1842 he came to Dresden, gave concerts in the Royal Theatre, and at Board of Trade Building. At that time I was travelling giving concerts, and arriving at Dres-

den from Carlsbad and Teplitz, I met and became acquainted with Mr. Mertz, whom I married, and then we continued our concert tours, going to Chemnitz, Attenburg, and Leipzig. At this place he was taken sick, and was compelled to cancel his engagement at the Gewandhouse concert. On his recovery we gave a concert at the Booksellers Board of Trade Building, Nov. 13th, 1842, then went to Dresden and Prague, where after a successful concert, he was obliged on account of his broken health to return to Vienna, where we arrived in February, 1843, and were induced to play at a concert at the Musical Society in the presence of her Majesty the Empress Carolina, after which we settled down to give music lessons.

In 1851 we gave three concerts at the rooms of the Musical Society, and also a concert at the palace of the Grand Duke for benevolent purposes. In 1853 we took a trip to Salzburg, and had the honor to play at the residence of her Majesty the Empress, and in the presence of the King of Bavaria, and Grand Duke of Hessen-Darmstadt, and other notable persons, on which occasion we performed with great success several duetts for guitar and piano, of our own composition, and were invited by the President Ritter Von Scharschmidt to give a concert at his mansion, to a very distinguished and select audience. At this place we subsequently played for a concert given for charitable purposes. On our return to Vienna the health of my dear husband grew much worse. He suffered from heart troubles; and undertook a trip for his health to upper Austria, but was obliged to return, and died on October 14th, 1856.