

How to play Cammeyer's "Valse Penchant"
by Bernard Sheaff
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"VALSE PENCHANT" is a comparatively recent publication, but it has apparently made many friends.

It is not, of course, intended as a waltz for dancing, for the composition is somewhat in the French style, which necessitates its being played rather fast to obtain the correct effect. About M.M. 80 equaling one bar (a dotted minim) is a good maximum speed, which it is not advisable to exceed.

The solo is written from start to finish without any double bars, but it will be found that there are what could be called three different movements. The 2nd movement commences with the last note - D sharp - in the 4th stave line, and it is in the key of G, the same as the preceding part. The 3rd movement begins in the 6th bar of the 8th stave line on the 2nd top G.

This movement, although the key signature of one sharp is not changed, is in the key of B flat major. Up to this change of key there should be no varying of the pace or rhythm. But the 3rd movement is an opportunity for introducing a complete contrast to the vivacious character of the preceding two, the instruction "Slowly" under bar 7 (stave 8) meaning that the pace is immediately changed to about one half - about M.M. 112 to a crotchet. The run in bar 5 (stave 8) should be played exactly to time, of course, and on the top G minim in bar 6 a pause, as indicated, must be made, an appropriate length being about the time value of two bars (of the quick time).

With the *crotchet G* in the same bar 6 we commence the slow time, which is continued until bar 4 stave 9. The 3rd and 4th bars should *rallentando* and a pause, as indicated, made on the note C. Then, under the 5th bar, stave 8, there is another instruction *Tempo I*. This means that, commencing from the first beat of that bar, a change back to the original quick pace is suddenly and unexpectedly made.

This *tempo* should then continue until the 3rd bar of stave 10, then a pronounced *ritardo* introduced in bar 4, culminating at the 10 P.B. chord in bar 6. Then after another pause we play "slowly" again up to the pause in bar 2, stave 11, after which a swift change back to the original *tempo* should once again be made. Note also the *rallentando*, and pause just before the commencement of a shortened version of the first movement used as a finish to the solo. In the D.C. to the 2nd movement the 4th string D sharp is played, of course, on the 3rd beat of the last bar at the bottom of the page, instead of the rest as printed. This would have been clearer had the editor of the manuscript made 1st and 2nd time bars here.

The playing of the Valse as a whole should be brilliant and full of life, the contrasting very slow passages being treated very expressively.

It will be seen that the opening movement partly consists of a rolling treatment of three-note chords. The first thing to *avoid* when playing such *rolls* in waltz time is *any tendency* to make these groups of six notes sound like six-eight time. *i.e.*, ta, ta, ta, - ta, ta. ta. The group should be phrased in three pairs, thus : ta, ta - ta, ta - ta, ta. There is not, of course, any pause between the beats.

The difference between the right and the wrong way is a very subtle one, and difficult to explain in writing. But the wrong way is always so obvious to the listener, for it is not waltz metre at all. The right hand alone must be looked to for the correction of this fault.

In the 2nd bar, A is played on the 2nd string. This note is stopped with the 4th finger, and it should be noticed that it is not necessary to raise the previously stopped 3 - 2 - 1 chord to do so. There are several other instances in this first movement where a rolling passage of quavers is followed by a note on the 2nd string and in every case it is more practical to hold down the chord that precedes while the 2nd string note is changed by a "spare" finger; and it also helps to make the phrasing more fluent.

The note A mentioned (2nd bar) and other similar 2nd string notes in the movement are much more effective if played with the thumb, instead of the 1st finger. The use of the thumb in this way on accented 1st and 2nd string notes adds greatly to the tonal effect of a solo, but it must be very judiciously employed.

At bar 7 the 1st and 2nd fingers placed on C and A should be held down until bar 5, stave 2. The melody notes on the 4th and 3rd strings should stand out from the softly played

accompanying chords. The notes on the bass string which open the 2nd movement (commencing last bar of the 4th stave) are best played with the thumb entirely, but E may be alternately played with the 1st finger, if preferred. When playing an up scale of this nature each finger should remain down until the next note in front is stopped. In this case, the 4th finger can remain stopping F sharp (which note will then remain sounding) whilst A, E and D following are played. This will enhance the harmonious effect.

D sharp in the and bar (stave 5) should be stopped with the 1st finger, then the 3rd finger used for E following, which will allow the C and A accompanying chord to be easily stopped afterwards.

The right hand fingering of the triplet in bar 7 stave 7 should receive some attention. To get this in at the quick pace of the solo requires a little practice. The notes may all be struck, but I think it much more practical if the snap is used once. This would make the right hand fingering of this bar •• • snap + ••. The use of the thumb, of course, is for the 2nd string D sharp. The 1st finger, stopping E in this bar should remain down until 5th string G is played in the next bar.

The chords in bars 3 and 4, stave 8, are cut off short at the 2nd beat by raising the left hand chord formation so that the *strings leave the frets*, but the *fingers do not leave the strings*.

The first bar of the 3rd movement (bar 7, stave 8) is at the 13 P.B. which should be held down for this and the succeeding bar, the 3rd and 2nd fingers being placed down in bar 8 without disturbing the 1st finger. In bar 1, stave 9, the F sharp and G are made on the 3rd string, the 2nd finger on the latter note sliding to G sharp in the next bar; and the 1st finger barre placed on the two upper notes at the same time. The thumb can once again be used on the 2nd string, to play C sharp, in this bar.

The indication 12 P.B. is shewn in the score to apply without a break to bars 2 and 3 (stave 9) but I think it better to place the 4th finger on F in bar 3 and readjust the P.B. again as this note is being played. This helps to keep the melody notes singing, which is important. In bar 7, stave 9, the 2nd barre (on two strings) should slide back to the first fret in bar 8, and the 2nd finger at the same time be dropped on A.

In bar 3, stave 9, the 2 B is fingered "2". The more general 1st finger may be used if preferred. The 3rd, however, is the best to stop F.

The 9 P. chord in bar 7 stave 10 is changed for the next bar by placing the 3rd finger as a barre on the 1st and 2nd strings C sharp and B flat, the 1st finger not moving from 3rd string E.

In bars 1 and 2, stave 11, the 8 P.B. is held down during both bars. In the remaining few bars of this movement a number of effective slides can be made, which are all indicated in the score.

Players should find the Vocalion Record of the "Valse Penchant" as a duet very interesting. The composer plays the solo part.