

OBITUARY
(NICROLOGIA)
Januário da Cunha Barbosa

Asks the justice we consecrate some reflections to the memory of a Brazilian benefactor, who a few days ago descended into the grave, laden with more merits than years.

This small tribute of our longing for the death of a patrician, who honored us so much for his decided excellence in the profession he embraced since he was a boy, will not be lost to the Brazilians, who love to see him recommended to posterity, and to the knowledge of the enlightened world, the name of the one who make himself celebrated, cultivating with growing zeal and perseverance, the talents which nature had endowed him.

There is no longer Father José Mauricio Nunes Garcia, Master of the Imperial Chapel in this Court; the music has lost in him one of those geniuses that retain its charms, and an undisputed mastery over even the hardest hearts; and Rio de Janeiro, a son, who, having never left the parental nest, did reach the fame of his great compositions, and his astounding dexterity in the use of many instruments, to remote countries, and to the fair appreciators of this Divine Art. But if his glory, looking well-established on these bases, makes the admiration of the nationals as well of the foreign, looms much other merits he earned to acquire, which cannot be left to the silence of the dead, especially when by recalling them one can know that this great musician, who now appears to leave vacant, and for long times, the place he so righteously occupied among the most celebrated, knew how to gather other equally reputable knowledge to those of his favorite occupation, that made him to be a ecclesiastic worthy of all worship, and a Brazilian Citizen lender of a honorable memory from all his countrymen.

A slight view now launched on his life, will prove that we are not exaggerating in this voluntary tribute to our friendship, and that the epitaph that should be on his grave, where there are only modesty and poverty, exists in the hearts of nostalgic patricians, who know how much he

honored his Homeland, and how much had he deserved from the lovers of Letters and Fine Arts.

José Mauricio was born in Rio de Janeiro City, on September 22, 1767; and his parents were Apolinário Nunes Garcia, and Vitória Maria da Cruz, both of Minas Gerais. Losing his father at age six, he found in the virtue of his poor mother an unveiled director, who forwarded his career of life to the point where he later found bread and glory, and very quickly paid the debt incurred in childhood, exercising, not only for her, but also for a respectable and poor aunt, the sensitivity of a heart so full of tenderness, and love to the studies.

The desire to help in the expenses of home, ill-provided due to the scarce income of his mother, in addition to the innate talent to music, made him take long strides, by listening to the lessons then given by José Salvador, of whom still many disciples are among our best musicians, and just untangled of the rudiments of a resourceful art that only a sustained exercise improves, he sought the Class of Father Elias, Master of Public Latin Grammar, to acquire the knowledge needed to understand the sages of antiquity, yet without losing his care with music, which was already helping to sustain the author of his days. His progresses in this boring study were so rapid, and so to the satisfaction of his Master, that sometimes he deserved to hear him say that José Mauricio was able to replace him in his chair.

This honorable statement was also made by Doctor Goulão, with whom he later studied Rational and Moral Philosophy, and he even tried to appoint him as substitute, to which José Mauricio nodded no, to not interrupt his application to music.

He studied rhetoric with equal enjoyment, listening to the lessons of Dr. Manoel Ignacio da Silva e Alvarenga, and he later proved to be lord of the precepts of eloquence, and that he knew how to use them in the explanatory arguments

of theology, which he also applied in many of his excellent Sermons, that he preached after being ordained presbyter in the year 1792. José Mauricio joined to all these studies, which made him worthy of priesthood and of the protection of the rich merchant Thomaz Gonçalves, who helped him in his career, knowing his application and probity, a vast and deep knowledge of geography and history, both profane and sacred, and of the French and Italian languages, not being fluent in Greek and English, which he also studied, but not so hard.

Let's consider however José Mauricio on the sphere to which his musical talents lifted him; and let's see how, without taking the taste of an art so delicate, in these schools of Italy, France, and Portugal, he could, only by the impulses of his genius, and by a thorough exercise of Piano, Organ, and Fiddle, reach a perfection hard to find in other more cultured countries, and almost impossible in our country. However José Mauricio was a proof of how much can a man with studies improve himself, and how much can the Brazilians, whom nature is scarce their treasures.

With the death of Father João Lopes, Chapel Master at the Cathedral of this city, was José Mauricio elected to perform this job by Bishop José Joaquim Justiniano; and, besides this work, which already at that time overloaded him, he taught many ladies to play the Piano, with the general approval of the most distinct families, which invited him, and he opened a Music Class in his home with no breach in his first duties, sharing his time, and without any stipend, began instructing many disciples, resulting this work, undertaken by the love of an art, that both marries the Brazilian genius, in many good musicians, and even some composers.

With the establishment of the Court in this city, in the year 1808, and the union of the Cathedral and the Royal Chapel, José Mauricio exercised his job much to the satisfaction of Mr. D. João, then Prince Regent, who commissioned him many compositions, and in a sign of appreciation caused by his rare talents, honored him by his own hands, with the medal of the Order of Christ; and, knowing that his Chapel Master was not only a great musician, but also an excellent speaker, attended to the church hear him in one of the functions (to the Holy Innocents) and found true what have been told of this

distinguished Brazilian.

José Mauricio began to suffer from diseases, greatly worsened by the work in the performance of his many obligations, losing often whole nights in long compositions, which Mr. John VI wanted to see completed with the utmost promptness; his life gradually weakened, until in a stronger and almost sudden attack, had his term on 18 April this year.

This ornament of our country; this luminary for Brazilian musicians; this respectable ecclesiastical; this honorable citizen, instructed, and lover of the glory of its patricians, disappeared from us, leaving alive his memory in the nostalgia of his innumerable friends, and immortalized his admirable genius in many works, in which teachers of both worlds will find great merit. Among his compositions are the most celebrated - Funeral Symphony, performed on the occasion of his funeral; the Requiem Mass; Mass, Te Deum, and Matins for the Feast of St. Cecilia; 12 of his Nocturnes only for wind instruments; and an *ouverture* of dramatic encomium for the anniversary of Viceroy Fernando, later Marquis de Aguiar.

José Mauricio, according to the confession of those who can judge his merits, did resonate in the Temples their proper music, separating all the ornaments which do not adjust to the respect due to divine service. So agile, when he strummed an organ, such as when he took the sweetest voices of a Piano; as safe when conducted the orchestra of a great temple, as composing some of the pieces, giving glory to his name, was always a Master worthy of the respect of the greatest teachers, and the admiration of those reigned by the charm of harmony.

May these few expressions, that friendship takes us out of the lips, and that our failure certainly shy, in view of his recognized merits, animate the genius of so many Brazilians, to whom the glory of the Fine Arts is waiting in the career of their studies; and to whom the frankness of our current government system loose the shriveled wings to fly on a sphere full of light and honor. The name José Mauricio will be eternal in the memory of Brazilian, lovers of their Fatherland; of his tomb, on which is now launched this little crown, will always come his genius, recommending us to the honored Homeland, as a stimulus able to call us up to study and glory.

Sit tibi terra levis.