

The Washington Post
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MUSIC AT THE EXPOSITION

**Miss Powell Tells Why the Thomas
Concerts Were Failures.**

PRICES WERE FAR TOO HIGH

**Sightseers Didn't Want to Be Instructed in Classical Music at \$1 a Head--Preferred
Popular Airs at a Nominal Cost--The Directors Saw Their Mistake Too Late.**

After an extended visit to the World's Fair, Miss Maud Powell, the distinguished violin virtuoso, has returned to her home, No. 1702 F street northwest.

Miss Powell is a daughter of Supt. Powell, of the public schools. She is almost universally regarded as the first woman violinist of this country, and only recently was accorded the greatest honor ever conferred upon any one—the privilege of playing as a soloist of the World's Fair orchestra. No other female violinist has been heard in the great music hall of Chicago, and none will be.

Miss Powell assumes her laurels with the becoming modesty which has been one of the most conspicuous characteristics of her career.

"I, of course, fully appreciate," said Miss Powell, in an interview with a *Post* reporter last evening, "the honor bestowed upon me by Mr. Thomas and the directors, and like most Americans, I greatly regret the outcome of musical matters at the Fair."

"What was the trouble, in your opinion, Miss Powell?"

"Nothing in the world but the admission prices. Mr. Thomas, I think, was perfectly right in every thing he did. When the directors first began to consider the subject of music for the Fair it was agreed by them to make the programmes such that they would be handed down to posterity as examples of classical and really great music. Mr. Thomas succeeded in doing this, which few artists in this or other countries could have done. The programmes, as representations of the music of the day, were marvels in their way, but the people that visited the Fair declined to pay the exorbitant price of admission.

"You see it costs 50 cents to get in the grounds and then another dollar to hear the music. This the people would not stand. There were too many other attractions to draw them away. It is a great pity, however, for the concerts were really wonderful in their way, everything from the acoustic properties of the hall down to the smallest detail being well nigh perfect. When it was

too late the directors saw their mistake, and after Mr. Thomas had resigned, they were anxious to get him back. It was natural that he should refuse to return to the directorship after what had happened.”

“Wasn’t the music a bit too heavy for the masses, though?”

“Not near as heavy as the prices of admission, yet I do think that Mr. Thomas’ last plan, that of giving concerts at a nominal price of admission, was the best one. His idea was to charge a small fee, say 50 cents, and have the concerts on the Wooded island.

“It is a beautiful spot for such an object, and the plan, I think, would almost certainly have been successful. When one has traveled around those grounds for any length of time they do not care to be educated in a musical or any other way, and Mr. Thomas’ idea was to soothe and refresh his audiences with the lighter and more popular music.”

Miss Powell will play in nearly all the large cities of the country during the coming season. She will practice here for several weeks before her return to New York.

From the Archive of The Maud Powell Society for Music and Education