**1 January 1851** Leopold III replaces Leopold II as Prince of Lippe.

**8 January 1851** In the basement of his Paris home, Jean Foucault uses his pendulum to become the first person to demonstrate that the Earth rotates.

**10 January 1851** Richard Wagner (37) completes his essay *Oper und Drama.*

**11 January 1851** In Kwangsi, Protestant Christian Hung Hsui-ch’uan declares himself King of the Heavenly Kingdom of Great Peace, thus beginning the Taiping Rebellion.

*Neujahrslied* op.144 for chorus and orchestra by Robert Schumann (40) to words of Rückert is performed for the first time, in Düsseldorf.

**14 January 1851** Juan Bravo Murillo replaces Ramón María Narváez Campos, duque de Valencia as Prime Minister of Spain.

**15 January 1851** Mariano Arista Luna replaces José Joaquín Antonio Florencio de Herrera y Ricardos as President of Mexico.

**19 January 1851** Johanna Kinkel (40) boards ship and departs Bonn to join her husband in exile in England.

**20 January 1851** *Die vornehmen Dilettanten, oder Die Opernprobe*, a komische Oper by Albert Lortzing (49) to his own words after Poisson (tr.Jünger), is performed for the first time, in the Stadttheater, Frankfurt-am-Main.

**21 January 1851** Gustav Albert Lortzing dies of a stroke at Luisenstrasse 53 in Berlin, Kingdom of Prussia, aged 49 years, two months and 29 days.

Giacomo Meyerbeer (59) is elected a member of the Philharmonic Society of St. Petersburg.

**24 January 1851** After many problems with censors and many revisions, *Rigoletto* receives the approval of the Venetian Director General of Public Order.

Gaspare Luigi Pacifico Spontini dies at Maiolati of a heart ailment, aged 76 years, two months and ten days. His mortal remains will be buried in the Church of Santo Stefano in Maiolati, later to be transferred to the Church of San Giovanni, as was the composer’s wish.

The mortal remains of Albert Lortzing are laid to rest in the Evangelische Friedhof der Sophiengemeinde II in Berlin. Among those paying respects is Giacomo Meyerbeer (59).

**27 January 1851** Nathaniel Hawthorne dates the preface to his *The House of the Seven Gables* in Lenox, Massachusetts.

John James Audubon dies in New York at the age of 65.

**1 February 1851** Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley dies in London at the age of 53.

**3 February 1851** Jean Foucault presents the results of his pendulum experiments to the French Academy.

**4 February 1851** *Maskenfest-Quadrille* op.92 by Johann Strauss (25) is performed for the first time, in the Redoutensaal, Vienna.

**5 February 1851** A series of articles about Frédéric Chopin (†1) written by Franz Liszt (39) begins appearing in *La France musicale*. They will run through 17 August. Next year they will be put together into the first biography of the composer called simply *Frédéric Chopin*.

**6 February 1851** Symphony no.3 “Rhenish” by Robert Schumann (40) is performed for the first time, in Düsseldorf, directed by the composer.

**10 February 1851** *Orakel-Sprüche* op.90, a waltz by Johann Strauss (25), is performed for the first time, in the Sophiensaal, Vienna.

**12 February 1851** Gold is discovered by Edward Hargraves near Bathurst, New South Wales. This precipitates an influx of immigration into Australia.

**15 February 1851** Federal authorities in Boston arrest Frederick “Shadrach” Minkins as a runaway slave. A mob storms the courtroom and rescues Minkins who will eventually get to Canada.

**17 February 1851** *Slaven-Ball-Quadrille* op.88 by Johann Strauss (25) is performed for the first time, in the Sophiensaal, Vienna.

**18 February 1851** *Aurora-Ball-Tänze* op.87, a waltz by Johann Strauss (25), is performed for the first time, in the Sperl Ballroom, Vienna.

**20 February 1851** Giacomo Meyerbeer (59) conducts at a concert to benefit the family of Albert Lortzing (†0) in Berlin. It is well attended.

**26 February 1851** *Rhadamantus-Klänge* op.94, a waltz by Johann Strauss (25), is performed for the first time, in the Sophiensaal, Vienna.

**28 February 1851** Incidental music to Maquet and Lacroix’ drame en vers *Valéria* by Jacques Offenbach (31) is performed for the first time, at the Comédie-Française, Paris.

**4 March 1851** The 32nd Congress of the United States convenes in Washington. Opposition Democrats continue to hold majorities in both houses.

**6 March 1851** Hector Berlioz (47) composes his application for the chair vacated by Gaspare Spontini (†0) at the Institute.

**11 March 1851** *Rigoletto*, a melodramma by Giuseppe Verdi (37) to words of Piave after Hugo, is performed for the first time, in Teatro La Fenice, Venice directed by the composer. It is a great success and runs for 13 performances.

**12 March 1851** A review of *Rigoletto* appearing in the *Gazzetta di Venezia* reads in part, “Yesterday we were almost overwhelmed by its originality...originality in music, in the style, even in the form of the pieces; and we did not comprehend it in its entirety...Never was the eloquence of sound more powerful.”

**13 March 1851** Two new works by Robert Schumann (40) are performed for the first time, in Düsseldforf: *Nachtlied* op.108 for chorus and orchestra to words of Hebbel, and the overture *Die Braut von Messina*. The overture is not successful and Schumann’s originally warm reception in Düsseldorf is beginning to erode with criticisms of his conducting.

**15 March 1851** The French government enacts a law named after Minister of Education Le comte Frédéric Alfred Pierre de Falloux du Coudray which brings back Church control over education.

**16 March 1851** A concordat between Spain and the Vatican allows government expropriation of church property under previous liberal regimes in return for state payment of secular clergy and a legalized basis for its operations. The Church also gains control over education and the press.

**22 March 1851** Ambroise Thomas (39) is elected to Gaspare Spontini’s (†0) chair at the Institute. Hector Berlioz (47) comes in third.

**24 March 1851** A Piano Trio op.15/1 by Anton Rubinstein (21) is performed for the first time, in Bernadaki Hall, St. Petersburg, the composer at the keyboard.

**25 March 1851** The Pleyel piano factory in Paris suffers a devastating fire, throwing hundreds of people out of work. A benefit concert for the workers will be organized by Louis Moreau Gottschalk (21).

*La belle voyageuse* for female chorus and orchestra by Hector Berlioz (47) to words of Gounet after Moore is performed for the first time, at Salle Ste.-Cécile, Paris along with the premiere of Berlioz’ *La menace des Francs* for double chorus and orchestra to anonymous words. Both are conducted by the composer

Violin Sonata no.2 op.39 by Louise Farrenc (46) is performed for the first time, in Paris.

**27 March 1851** Paul Marie Théodore Vincent d’Indy is born at 45 rue de Grenelle in Paris, Republic of France, the first child born to Antonin d’Indy, a wealthy aristocrat, and Matilde de Chabrol-Crousol, also of an aristocratic family. Matilde, age 21, does not survive the birth. Antonin d’Indy will marry again in 1855, a union which will produce three more children.

**3 April 1851** Mongkut (Rama IV) replaces Nangklao (Rama III) as King of Krung Thep (Thailand).

Hector Berlioz (47) writes in the *Journal des débats*, “Monsieur Gottschalk (21) is one of the few now living who possess all the different elements which make a pianist of sovereign power.”

Thomas Sims, a runaway slave from Savannah, is arrested in Boston on a charge of disturbing the peace and he is turned over to federal marshals.

**4 April 1851** Abolitionists arriving at the federal court house in Boston, intent on freeing Thomas Sims, find the building an armed camp and the entire city police force surrounding the building.

**10 April 1851** Léon Faucher replaces Alphonse Henri, Comte d’Hautpoul as Prime Minister of France.

**12 April 1851** Thomas Sims is marched to the Boston waterfront by 300 police armed with sabers. They are there to thwart any rescue attempt by enraged abolitionists. He is put on a ship and sent back into bondage.

**16 April 1851** *Sapho*, an opéra by Charles Gounod (32) to words of Augier, is performed for the first time, at the Paris Opéra. The audience is generally pleased, but it will be a financial failure.

**26 April 1851** António José de Sousa Manuel e Meneses Severim de Noronha, duque de Terceira, marques e conde de Vila-Flor replaces António Bernardo da Costa Cabral, conde de Tomar as Prime Minister of Portugal.

Franz Liszt (39) takes over sole direction of the Weimar Hofkapelle.

*Messe de l’orphéon* for four male voices and orchestra by Adolphe Adam (47), Fromental Halévy (51), Ambroise Thomas (39), and Antoine Louis Clapisson is performed for the first time, in the Cathedral of Meaux.

**1 May 1851** While at his Bologna home entertaining friends, Gioachino Rossini (59) is visited by the Austrian governor Count Nobili. As the count enters, Rossini’s friends leave and the composer receives his guest alone.

The Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations is officially opened in London by Queen Victoria. For this event, the Crystal Palace was built.

João Carlos Gregório Domingues Vicente Francisco de Saldanha Oliveira e Daun, duque, marques e conde de Saldanha replaces António José de Sousa Manuel e Meneses Severim de Noronha, duque de Terceira, marques e conde de Vila-Flor as Prime Minister of Portugal.

**3 May 1851** 23:00 Fire breaks out in San Francisco. Over the next ten hours, 2,000 buildings are destroyed, which constitutes most of the city. The flames are so bright they can be seen in Monterey, 140 km away.

**5 May 1851** Gioachino Rossini (59) leaves Bologna never to return.

**6 May 1851** John Gorrie of Appalachicola, Florida, is awarded a US patent for his ice making machine.

Linus Yale, Jr. of Newport, New York receives his first of 20 US patents for improvements to locks.

**10 May 1851** Hector Berlioz (47) crosses the Channel into England as one of twelve official French delegates to the Great Exhibition in London.

**12 May 1851** Press censorship is reintroduced in Prussia.

**15 May 1851** Prussia recognizes the German Confederation again.

**16 May 1851** *Zerline, ou La corbeille d’oranges*, an opéra by Daniel-François-Esprit Auber (69) to words of Scribe, is performed for the first time, in the Paris Opéra.

**18 May 1851** Franz Schubert’s (†22) male vocal quartet *Naturgenuss* D.422 to words of Matthisson is performed for the first time, in Vienna.

**22 May 1851** *Ascribe to the Lord* for chorus and organ by Samuel Sebastian Wesley (40) to words of the Bible is performed for the first time, in Winchester Cathedral, the composer at the keyboard.

**23 May 1851** *Promenade-Quadrille* op.98 by Johann Strauss (25) is performed for the first time, in the Volksgarten, Vienna.

**26 May 1851** Four people are killed and dozens wounded as a nativist mob attacks German immigrants in Hoboken, New Jersey during Pentecost celebrations.

**31 May 1851** *Für solchen König Blut und Leben*, a song for chorus and orchestra by Giacomo Meyerbeer (59) to words of Rellstab, inserted into the composer’s opera *Ein Feldlager in Schlesien* on the day of the unveiling of Christian Daniel Rauch’s monument to Friedrich the Great, is performed for the first time, in Berlin. Meyerbeer and Rauch are called to King Friedrich Wilhelm’s box after the performance and are highly praised by the monarch.

**5 June 1851** *Raymond, ou Le secret de la reine*, an opéra comique by Ambroise Thomas (39) to words of Rosier and de Leuven, is performed for the first time, at the Théâtre Favart, Paris.

**8 June 1851** Hector Berlioz (47) gets into the annual Charity Children’s service in St. Paul’s, London on a pass from the organist, John Goss. He pretends to be a member of the chorus and proceeds to the organ loft. He is given a surplice and a bass part. He is overwhelmed by the experience.

**9 June 1851** *Steht auf und empfangt mit Feiergesang* for solo voices, chorus and orchestra by Giacomo Meyerbeer (59) to words of Kopisch is performed for the first time, in honor of the sculptor Christian Rauch who created the monument unveiled 31 May 1851. Meyerbeer conducts his composition.

**13 June 1851** *Idyllen* op.95, a waltz by Johann Strauss (25), is performed for the first time, in the Volksgarten, Vienna.

**14 June 1851** *Herrmann-Polka* op.91 by Johann Strauss (25) is performed for the first time, in the Sperl Ballroom, Vienna.

**15 June 1851** Serialization of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe begins in *National Era*, Washington.

Jacob Fussell opens the first large-scale ice cream producing factory, in Baltimore.

**1 July 1851** The act of the British government separating Victoria from New South Wales goes into effect.

Serial killer Hélène Jégado is arrested in Rennes.

**3 July 1851** *Florinda*, an opera by Sigismund Thalberg (39), is performed for the first time, in London. It is not well received.

**4 July 1851** About 50 men in Puerto Principe declare Cuba’s independence from Spain.

**6 July 1851** *Der Rose Pilgerfahrt* for solo voices, chorus and orchestra by Robert Schumann (41) to words of Horn is performed for the first time, privately, at the Schumann home in Düsseldorf.

**7 July 1851** *Kaiser-Jäger-Marsch* op.93 by Johann Strauss (25) is performed for the first time, in the Bierhalle Fünfhaus, Vienna. Also premiered is Strauss’ waltz *Gambrinus-Tänze* op.97.

**8 July 1851** At a farewell party for Lowell Mason (59) and his wife at Winter Street Church in Boston, Mason gives a speech on his work in church music. The Masons are moving to New York.

**10 July 1851** Louis Daguerre dies in Bry-sur-Marne at the age of 63.

**14 July 1851** The steamer *Prometheus* departs New York at the beginning of the first run of a route to the Pacific Coast via an overland journey through Nicaragua. The capitalist responsible for the venture, Cornelius Vanderbilt, is on board.

**15 July 1851** Giacomo Meyerbeer (59) is appointed to the senate of the Berlin Academy of Arts.

As part of the Great Exhibition in London, the first international chess tournament concludes. Adolf Anderssen of Breslau is the victor over 15 international stars, and thus is given the title of unofficial world chess champion.

**19 July 1851** Robert (41) and Clara (31) Schumann begin a pleasure journey along the Rhine as far as Switzerland. He will remember it as the best trip of their lives together.

**20 July 1851** *Jerusalem* for two pianos by Louis Moreau Gottschalk (22) is performed for the first time, in Bordeaux.

**23 July 1851** In the Treaty of Traverse des Sioux, two bands of Dakota Indians turn over all of their land in Iowa and most of their land in Minnesota to the United States in return for $1,665,000 in cash and annuities.

**28 July 1851** Camille Saint-Saëns (15) wins first prize in organ at the Paris Conservatoire. He so outdistances his competition that neither second prize nor honorable mention are awarded.

Hector Berlioz (47) departs London for Paris.

A photographer named Berkowski makes the first photographic image of a solar eclipse, at the Royal Observatory in Königsberg (Kaliningrad). It is a daguerreotype. (Berkowski’s first name is unknown)

**5 August 1851** In the Treaty of Mendota, two bands of Dakota Indians cede parts of the Minnesota Territory to the United States for $1,410,000 in cash and annuities.

**6 August 1851** Richard Wagner (38) and Theodor Uhlig complete a walking tour from Brunnen, Switzerland which included the Surenen Pass. It is at this point that he adds *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre* to his Nibelung concept.

*Les nations*, a cantata by Adolphe Adam (48) to words of Banville, is performed for the first time, at the Paris Opéra.

**11 August 1851** General Narciso López leads an expedition of about 435 Spanish expatriates and Americans to Cuba to attempt to interest Cubans in insurrection against Spanish rule. They land at Bahía Honda, about 65 km from Havana.

**12 August 1851** Isaac Merit Singer receives a US patent for a sewing machine.

**13 August 1851** Spanish troops defeat the North American “invasion” of Cuba at Las Pozas.

**16 August 1851** 51 Americans from the López expedition are executed by firing squad in Havana.

**19 August 1851** Capt. Gennadi Nevelskoy discovers that the Amur River flows directly into the Pacific Ocean. He raises the Russian flag on Sakhalin Island, directly across from the river’s mouth, thus claiming the island for Russia. For his efforts, he will be demoted for acting without orders. However, the Russian government keeps the island.

**20 August 1851** Proclamations in Vienna vest supreme power for the Austrian Empire in the Emperor as autocrat.

**21 August 1851** A mob, angry at the executions of 16 August, destroys the Spanish consulate in New Orleans.

**22 August 1851** A sailing race takes place around the Isle of Wight for the prize of a large, gaudy cup to be named after the winning boat. The victor, over all 14 British entries, is the *America*.

*Viribus unitis* op.96, a march by Johann Strauss (25), is performed for the first time, in the Volksgarten, Vienna for the 21st birthday of the Kaiser.

**23 August 1851** The Diet of the German Confederation abolishes fundamental rights granted in 1848.

**27 August 1851** *Frauenkäferln* op.99, a waltz by Johann Strauss (25), is performed for the first time, in Ungers Casino, Vienna.

**31 August 1851** Franz Liszt (39), Carolyne Sayn-Wittgenstein, and her daughter Marie arrive in Düsseldorf and meet with Robert (41) and Clara (31) Schumann. They will meet each of the next three days. Clara tells her diary, “He played, as always, with truly diabolical bravura--he masters the piano like a demon (I can’t put it any other way...)--but, oh, his compositions, they were simply too dreadful! When a youngster writes that sort of stuff he can be forgiven because of his youth, but what can one say when a grown man is still so blind...It is really depressing and made us both feel quite sad. Liszt himself seemed taken aback when we said nothing, but one cannot say anything when one feels so profoundly indignant.” (Williams, 276)

**1 September 1851** Narciso López, who led filibusters to invade Cuba, is executed in Havana.

**4 September 1851** A hurricane strikes Puerto Rico killing more than 100 people.

**14 September 1851** James Fenimore Cooper dies in Cooperstown, New York at the age of 61.

**15 September 1851** Richard Wagner (38) begins a cure at Dr. Zacharia Brunner’s Hydrotherapy Institute at Albisbrunn, south of Zürich. He will stay here until 23 November during which time he will work his “Siegfried” project into the idea of four separate works and begin writing the prose sketches of the first two.

**18 September 1851** The *New York* *Daily Times* publishes for the first time.

**21 September 1851** Gyula Andrássy is ceremonially hanged in effigy by the Austrian government for his part in the Hungarian uprising.

**23 September 1851** Louis Moreau Gottschalk (22) gives his first concert after crossing from France into Spain, at San Sebastian.

**25 September 1851** The Taiping army attacks out of its defensive positions and lays siege to the city of Yung-an (Yong’an), west of Foochow (Fuzhou).

**27 September 1851** The Théâtre-Historiques, Paris, after refurbishment, is reopened for opera as the Théâtre-Lyrique.

**1 October 1851** *Old Folks at Home*, a song by Stephen Foster (25), is published. Better known as *Swanee River*, Foster will sell the authorship rights to EP Christy. See 25 May 1852.

**3 October 1851** *Vivat!* op.103, a quadrille by Johann Strauss (25), is performed for the first time, in the Volksgarten, Vienna.

**9 October 1851** Jules Massenet (9) takes his entrance examination at the Paris Conservatoire before a panel of judges including Daniel-François-Esprit Auber (69), Fromental Halévy (52) and Ambroise Thomas (40). He is not admitted. See 10 January 1853.

**10 October 1851** Naturalized British subject Paul Julius, Baron von Reuter opens a telegraph office near the London stock exchange in order to transmit stock quotes from London to Paris by way of the new undersea cable being laid across the English Channel. It is the beginning of Reuter’s News Agency.

**12 October 1851** *Mephistos Höllenrufe* op.101, a waltz by Johann Strauss (25), is performed for the first time, in the Volksgarten, Vienna.

**15 October 1851** The Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations closes in London. In the six months it was open, over 6,000,000 people visited the site.

**23 October 1851** Louis Moreau Gottschalk (22) arrives in Madrid on his Spanish concert tour.

**24 October 1851** English astronomer William Lassell discovers Ariel and Umbriel, two moons of Uranus, from his private observatory near Liverpool.

**31 October 1851** Peter II Petrovic Nejegos, Prince-Bishop of Montenegro dies and is succeeded by his son, Danilo II Petrovic Nejegos.

**1 November 1851** The railway between Moscow and St. Petersburg officially opens.

**4 November 1851** Incidental music to Sandeau and Regnier’s comédie *Mademoiselle de la Seiglière* by Jacques Offenbach (32) is performed for the first time, at the Comédie-Française, Paris.

**8 November 1851** Mikhail Ivanovich Glinka (47) signs and registers his will. He leaves all of his worldly possessions to his sister, Lyudmila Ivanovna Shestakova.

**9 November 1851** With the blessing of the Governor of Indiana, officials from Kentucky kidnap Rev. Calvin Fairbank in Jeffersonville and remove him to their state to stand trial for aiding the escape of a slave. He will be sentenced to 15 years in prison.

**13 November 1851** The first submarine cable link is completed from Dover to Calais. A telegraph may now be sent directly between London and Paris.

The group of settlers led by Arthur Denny lands at Alki Point on Puget Sound, beginning a settlement which one day will be called Seattle.

**14 November 1851** *Moby Dick* by Herman Melville is published in New York.

**16 November 1851** Georges Bizet (13) is presented with the Second Prize in Piano at the Paris Conservatoire.

**17 November 1851** As part of an attempt to cool tensions between Spain and the United States after the events of last August, Louis Moreau Gottschalk (22) is invited by the royal family to a soiree at the palace in Madrid.

**18 November 1851** King Ernst August II of Hannover dies in Herrenhausen and is succeeded by his son Georg V.

**21 November 1851** Louis Moreau Gottschalk (22) gives his first recital in Madrid, to an invited audience.

When *Prometheus*, owned by Cornelius Vanderbilt, tries to leave the British port of Greytown (San Juan del Norte, Nicaragua) without paying harbor fees, *HMS* *Express* fires three shots across her bow, forcing her to pay. Vanderbilt is aboard the *Prometheus.* The US will protest.

**24 November 1851** In Berlin, Giacomo Meyerbeer (59) is informed that he has been attacked by Richard Wagner (38) in his *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft*. He is “deeply demoralized” and finds a manuscript copy of an essay that Wagner gave him ten years ago called *Über den Standpunkt der Musik Meyerbeers* in which he praises Meyerbeer’s music.

**25 November 1851** A railroad opens between Moscow and St. Petersburg.

**1 December 1851** Clara Schumann (32) gives birth to a seventh child, Eugenie, in Düsseldorf.

**2 December 1851** On the 47th anniversary of the coronation of Napoléon I and the 46th anniversary of the Battle of Austerlitz, French President Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte effects a coup d’etat. Nearly all republican leaders are arrested and the National Assembly is dissolved. Only sporadic resistance takes place.

**3 December 1851** French soldiers fire into a crowd of mostly women and children in Paris. What republicans are left flee the country.

**5 December 1851** By this date, Louis-Napoléon has succeeded in eliminating all opposition to his coup d’etat.

US President Millard Fillmore fetes Lajos Kossuth at the White House.

**6 December 1851** The trial of Hélène Jégado begins in Rennes. She is charged with three murders, three attempted murders, and theft, but is suspected in the poisoning deaths of 23 people over 18 years.

**9 December 1851** Inspired by the success of Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte in France, Prime Minister Juan Bravo Murillo of Spain dissolves the Cortes, arrests his political opponents, and closes their newspapers.

Hector Berlioz (47) writes of President Bonaparte, “this coup d’etat is the work of a master; indeed, it is a veritable masterpiece.” (Bloom 1998, 123)

**11 December 1851** Spain informs the American minister in Madrid that it will pardon all Americans held in Spain and Cuba.

**13 December 1851** Louis Moreau Gottschalk (22) gives his first public concert in Madrid, at the Coliseo del Circo. His concerts are very successful with the public and become a symbol of Spain-United States reconciliation.

**19 December 1851** Joseph Mallord William Turner dies in London at the age of 76.

**20 December 1851** The published results of a plebiscite in France authorize a ten-year term for Louis Napoleon by 92% in favor.

The *Illustrated London News* reports that sometime in late November or early December two waterspouts came on land to become tornadoes on Sicily near Marsala. They returned to the sea at Castellamare but not before destroying half the town. In all, about 500 people were killed.

**21 December 1851** Lowell Mason (59) and his wife sail for Liverpool and their second European trip.

**24 December 1851** Fire destroys 35,000 books in the Library of Congress in Washington.

**31 December 1851** The Austrian constitution is abolished by order of the Emperor. All political reforms, except the end of serfdom, are rescinded. A patent is issued declaring Emperor Franz Joseph II an absolute monarch.

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