Suite from "The Social Orchestra"

The well-known American songwriter, Stephen Collins Foster, was born July 4, 1826, in Lawrenceville, Pennsylvania, and died in New York City on January 13, 1864. The facts about Foster's youth are vague, but we know that he began writing songs at an early age despite little formal musical training. By his early twenties, he had tried his hand at other professions, but the success of his early songs like "Oh Susanna!" led him to pursue a career solely as a songwriter by 1850. The next ten years, mostly spent in New York, proved to be his most successful, and the majority of his 201 songs were composed during this time.

Capitalizing on Foster's success, Firth, Pond & Co., his publisher, commissioned Foster to compile an instrumental volume entitled *The Social Orchestra*, published in 1853. This collection of eighty-five little pieces included popular melodies of the day arranged as solos, trios, and quartets. They were designed to be played by

flute, violin, and any other instruments and are easily adapted for performance by brass quintet.

This suite is recorded by the American Brass Quintet on period instruments for Titanic Records (Ti81).

Notes by Raymond Mase.

Raymond Mase, a graduate of the New England Conservatory of Music, has been a member of the American Brass Quintet since 1973. He is also a member of the American Symphony Orchestra and principal trumpet of the American Composers Orchestra, Jupiter Symphony and Bethlehem Bach Festival Orchestra. He has appeared as soloist with the Boston Pops, the Naumburg Orchestra, the Aspen Chamber Symphony, the American Chamber Orchestra. Mr. Mase has also performed with the New York Philharmonic, the Boston Symphony Orchestra and was principal trumpet of the 1980 Casals Festival Orchestra. He is a founding member of the New York Cornet and Sacbut Ensemble and performs and records with the contemporary music group Parnassus and the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra. During the 1983-84 season he was heard in over 35 solo recitals nationwide with the popular Columbia Artist attraction "Toccatas and Flourishes" with organist Richard Morris. Mr. Mase serves on the faculties of the Manhattan School of Music, North Carolina School of the Arts, Hartt College, the Brooklyn College Conservatory of Music, and at the Aspen Music Festival.

SELECTIONS from THE SOCIAL ORCHESTRA











