

REMINISCENCES OF A
VOCAL TEACHER

by

EMI de BIDOLI

CLEVELAND, OHIO

1946

PRICE \$1.50

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Lithoprinted in U.S.A.
EDWARDS BROTHERS, INC.
ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN
1946

Dedicated to the memory of my great teachers

Mme. Aglaja Orgeni

and

Mme. Pauline Garcia-Viardot

agljaja orgeni (1844-1926)
brake name "Gorge Saint Jorges"

PREFACE

This inspired volume of reminiscences is aflame with the torch of musical enthusiasm which Mme. Emi de Bidoli has carried with her from the beginning of an artistic career to the completion of this delightful biography.

Her parentage was Austrian, and the earliest years were spent in the beautiful surroundings of Graz, Austria. The love of music was innate, and she also excelled in academic branches. After deciding upon a vocal profession, she and her mother crossed the border to take advantage of study with a great master in Dresden. Here the exciting part of her experiences begins and is most entertainingly told, so that any singer who takes up this book can place herself in the same position and live it as though it were happening today.

Mme. de Bidoli passed through the usual distress of private instruction from two of the great masters. All talented students are victims of the inflammable artistic temperaments until their crudities have been eliminated and the finished product is revealed. As the impassioned sculptor hacks away with rough abandon the protruding corners of his block of marble, impatient to reach the divine image within, so does the music master, when teaching talent worthy of his powers, being conscious only of the ultimate results which he has repeatedly attained. He is busy every hour and cannot waste time with polite discussion. Parnassus is high and it must be reached in a few years. Time and means are always limited. The rough speeches are simply the chips of marble flying with cutting speed. A seer would understand, but the young student under the whip hand, after the long fatigue of preparation, is deeply wounded, having taken the remarks personally. Often he is physically unfitted to complete his training.

Youth suffers purgatory through years of intensive

preparation for concert or opera. When half-mastery has been reached, their masters have always feared that self-satisfaction would slow down their efforts to become stars of first magnitude. There is no commendation oftentimes till the end is in sight.

However intense the heat required to form and crystallize a human diamond, there is no stronger bond than between a great master and a great protegee after the student years with their stormy lessons are in the background. The two minds are fused in transcendent glory. These friendships are indissoluble, and never vanish through revolutions or international wars.

Mme. de Bidoli, after her struggles, was the recipient of special honors in the music centres of Europe, as oratorio and concert singer, and, as a member of nobility, met, on her wide travels, the elite in the literary and musical world.

Cleveland is indeed to be congratulated on having had the invaluable teaching skill of this highly gifted woman for the past twenty-four years. She has developed many fine voices, lectured before audiences on music history, French, German, Italian grand operas, and abstruse cultural subjects. Her English is remarkable and no barrier in the expression of all the lights and shades of meaning. Her unusual appreciation of the gifts of life permeate each listener with a glow of warmth and sympathy. She comes to fill the heart with a hymn of praise to an exalted being, and radiates only the highest consciousness.

This, then, the fountain spring of life, she has in abundance, and, therefore, the best products must result. Her students are poised and successful in concert. They go with her as fellow travellers, not in fear, but in love, all trying to reach higher accomplishment, regarding her as a great mother at first, then an authority, and later an example.

Mme. de Bidoli's book will thrill her American colleagues, add a beautiful chapter to the annals of her

artist students, and be a genuine memorial to her two great masters of singing, Mme. Aglaja Orgeni and Mme. Pauline Garcia-Viardot.

With sincere fellowship and devotion,

Alice Crane Williams

National President,
Composers and Authors Association of America

FOREWORD

This little book was written in response to many requests by students and friends for a record of some of my experiences and for an explanation of some of the principles and rules used by me in the art of singing.

Although a personal account, I have endeavored, first of all, to focus the attention of my readers on the work of my two great teachers: Mme. Aglaja Orgeni of The Royal Conservatory of Dresden, Germany, and Mme. Pauline Viardot-Garcia of Paris, France. Their memory is so dear to me that I desire, in the form of this book, to pay a tribute of love and admiration, and to show the attitude and achievements of a student who was privileged to study under them.

My second endeavor was to set forth my own viewpoints derived from experiences as a voice teacher in different countries under varied and often trying conditions. Not attempting to add to the numberless treatises on scientific voice production and rules for singing, I have only tried to set forth a truthful and vivid account of my adventures and experiences through many years devoted to both study and teaching. If, by so doing, I succeed in strengthening the enthusiasm, courage and perseverance of any applicant to the entrance of the "temple of art," a sincere desire of mine will have been satisfied and a worthy purpose accomplished.

All duties and endeavors in our life should end in setting an example, or being helpful to those whom we contact and to those who come under our care or who will follow us. Therefore, this little unassuming work of mine was written in the spirit of service, with a great desire to contribute, in a humble way, to the most divine of arts which comes from the emanation of the human voice.

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Emi De Bidoli as a student of voice

Part I. THE STUDENT

CHAPTER I

The first requirements of a voice student are: a great love for singing; the possession of at least a pleasant voice, even if not of special volume or unusual compass; some foundation of musicianship; a pleasing appearance - though not essential; a real desire for self-expression, and a true interpretation of the inner meaning of the text set to music.

The "divine spark" which makes the real artist is not a common gift, alas! but much can be done in the artistic realm if, along with the mechanical study of voice training, the pupil or teacher, or both, if possible, will care and strive for an all-round education and soul growth. The greatest school for higher education and the most eminent soul grower is, of course, Life itself, and its numerous and varied experiences which leave their imprint on the soul, lifting it gradually to the height of artistic expression and rendition.

Of these experiences I have had aplenty! Some of them fostered my ambition and ideals, while others were crushing, but even the hardships and disappointments which Life has brought me have turned out to be blessings. If I did not succeed in becoming a singer of great repute my path - as an earnest student and teacher, strewn with roses and thorns - has brought me to a deep understanding of Life and of music, both vocal and instrumental. Being sympathetic to many phases of love, joy and suffering gives the student the key to the hidden depths of music, revealing to him all its inner beauty. With this key in his possession, he can unlock the mysteries of any great musical conception of our tonal masters.

If the student or teacher has set his foot on this path, he will be able to reach a certain degree of art in vocal expression and rendition which may be comparable with, or even far surpass, the mere technical skill of virtuosity, for singing without soul vibration is like a harp without strings, like a flower without fragrance, like a bell without a ring!

CHAPTER II

Although born in Vienna, formerly Austria, my childhood and girlhood were spent in Graz, one of the most picturesque and romantic spots on earth, situated on the banks of the Mur river, in a lovely valley surrounded by a chain of beautiful Alpine mountains.

The intellectual life of this little town was first rate; its schools were known for their excellent pedagogical value and its great university was world famous, especially for its zoological department. People of ability and renown lived there, such as the great Austrian poet, Peter Rosegger, and writers such as Emil Ertl, Hans R. Bartsch, Wilhelm Fischer and many others. In the fine arts, Brandstätter, the sculptor, was the outstanding figure. But all of these were overshadowed by Dr. Wilhelm Kienzl, famous opera composer. All his works were given a hearing in Graz - "The Evangeliman," which had seventy-eight world performances, "Urvasi," "Heilmars der Narr," and the charming opera "Kuhreigen," one of his latest works.

Dr. Kienzl, whose close friendship I have maintained through the years up to his death a few years ago, was such an ardent admirer of Richard Wagner's music that his own compositions were greatly influenced by Wagnerian harmonization and orchestration, yet neither imitating nor equalling them. The greatest attraction in Kienzl's music is its folksonglike simplicity and charming sentiment, deeply moving the listener. No one could be untouched by listening to the simple yet sublime melody of his "Evangeliman" set to those beautiful words: "Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven!"

Kienzl was responsible for Mme. Schumann-Heink's career. This was caused by the following episode, told to me by the composer himself. When at the age of 19, he already conducted a mixed chorus in his parents' home, he was short of good contralto voices. Complaining about it to

a friend, the latter suggested the 17-year-old daughter of Captain Roesler. The next evening Ernestine Roesler appeared and joined the alto section of the chorus. She started in, but all of a sudden the other voices stopped, as they wanted to listen to her glorious, golden voice. Dr. Kienzl himself was startled and he told her right away that her voice was too good for chorus singing and her only aim should be Grand Opera. Through his father's connection, young Ernestine was given fine recommendations to the Dresden Royal Opera House. She was immediately engaged even without previous training.

The incomparable Schumann-Heink, the great favorite of the American public, maintained a hearty friendship with Kienzl for many years. The first world war interfered with their correspondence. When I visited the composer at the foot of the Dachstein glacier in the Austrian Alps in 1936, he had lost track of his old friend. I am happy to say that I became instrumental for a renewal of friendship between these two great people. I approached Mme. Schumann-Heink here in America, first through correspondence and also by meeting her personally when she appeared in concerts in Cleveland under the management of Adella Prentiss Hughes, the well-known mother of our Cleveland Orchestra. Mme. Schumann-Heink was overwhelmed on hearing details about Kienzl's life and activities and also asked for his address.

There were other musicians in Graz, during my girlhood, most of them fervent Wagnerites or adherents to Gustav Mahler's music. There was also a very well-known architect by the name of Hoffmann who was a close friend of the Wagner family. So great was his admiration for the master, that he built, for his home in Graz, an exact reproduction of the famous Wahnfried Villa in Bayreuth. Some time later, when I had almost completed my studies with Mme. Viardot of Paris, I was invited to the home of Mr. Hoffmann. He wanted me to meet Siegfried Wagner who had come to Graz to conduct his opera "Der Baerenhauer," to sing for him, as he needed an "Erda" for Bayreuth, and my coach, Dr. Julius Schuch, a very fine accompanist and aesthetist, thought my voice would do.

The moment of my meeting Siegfried, the son of the

great genius, Richard Wagner, was a very thrilling one to me. Siegfried was gracious and encouraging. (A number of years later I met him in Cleveland, Ohio.) However, my engagement with him was not consummated as Mme. Viardot called me back to Paris for further study. In a letter from my beloved teacher, she mentions this episode of my chance to sing the role of Erda.

All this has been related just to give a glimpse of the background afforded me by the city of Graz. Great enthusiasm for the fine arts seemed to prevail among the young people that grew up in that lovely place. When I first heard an opera I was only five years old, and how many more I have heard since then! The Nibelungen Ring dramas were an annual event in Graz and we were thrilled to have our city chosen for the premieres of the Richard Strauss operas, such as "Salome" and "Electra." These opportunities furnished a good foundation for me as a voice student - opportunities that I wish all my earnest American pupils could have had.

After becoming of age, my desire to be an actress or opera singer grew more and more intense. But, alas! my papa (pronounced pa-pá), a high officer in the Austrian army, and of old aristocratic stock, was absolutely opposed to a stage career for his daughter. Neither would he consent to my being a school teacher, although I had passed all my examinations for that purpose. However, so eager was I to pursue an artistic career that, when he became stricken and was compelled to lie in bed for two years previous to his death, despite my great love and respect for him, I took advantage of this opportunity to take lessons in dramatic art from a famous actor of the old classic style, also singing lessons from a well-known Wagnerian singer - Mme. K. - without his knowledge.

My first vocal teacher was quite a character! She weighed about three hundred pounds and I still vividly remember her moonlike face, her shrill voice and abrupt manner. She had many pupils and they were all treated alike; that is she did not adapt her teaching to their individual needs or voices. Whether a high soprano or a low contralto, each pupil was started with trilling on high F. After this exercise came "scooped-up" octaves,

followed by the descending scale and the whole vocalization was to be covered and throaty. Fortunately I soon realized that her instruction was developing a kind of shouting rather than singing and I quit studying with her in time to save my voice from being ruined.

The death of my dear pa-pá, when just out of my teens, changed my whole life. Although now free, in a way, to prepare myself for the stage, new difficulties arose owing to the great financial losses connected with my father's departure. But, "where there is a will there is a way" and certain opportunities always come along to give the pendulum of Life, when seemingly at a standstill, a little swing one way or the other.

It was a great occasion for me when the coming of Edith Walker, famous American contralto, was announced in Graz. She was to sing the part of "Brunhilde" in "The Twilight of the Gods." I felt I could not afford to miss hearing her, although in European countries a daughter should not be seen at the theatre or any other public place, for a whole year after the death of a parent. However, it seemed so important to me to avail myself of this opportunity to hear Miss Walker, that I waived all conventionality and tradition and attended the opera. From the moment of her first appearance, to the unforgettable end of the third act when she held a high B flat and made it ring triumphantly above the entire orchestra, I was awe-stricken and spell-bound! I did not know which thrilled me more - her full velvety chest tones or her pure high tones which she seemed to spin out with such finesse and vigor. Edith Walker was to me that night, THE singer! Never before in all my life had I heard such glorious singing!

Returning to my home fairly intoxicated with her singing, overwhelmed and lifted out of myself, I immediately decided to attempt to meet Miss Walker and ascertain the name of the teacher to whom she owed such superb mastery of her voice. After finding out at which hotel she was staying, I sought her out the next morning.

I was just going to send my card up to her room, when to my surprise, she appeared, coming down the wide stairway, accompanied by a handsome young officer wearing pink

"aufschlaege" (insignia) on his collar. Though my heart was beating fast, I summoned the courage to address her as she reached the foot of the stairs, telling her what had brought me there. She seemed to be in a great hurry and so wrapped up in the society of her companion, that she scarcely heeded my request. However, she told me, she would leave a letter for me at the hotel the next day.

That letter was a turning point in my life. It was written in large bold script, half in English and half in German. Precise and terse, the letter said substantially: "If you want to study seriously, there is only one teacher in Germany - Mme. Orgeni. Go to her and tell her I recommended her to you." Mme. Orgeni! I gasped! Her very name acted as magic and held me spellbound.

Immediately I responded to Miss Walker's suggestion. Within three days, with my dear mother's assistance, preparations were completed for my trip to Dresden where Mme. Orgeni was "Professor of Singing" at the Royal Conservatory. This was my first trip alone, so far away from home, as my dear ma-má, as I called her, had always accompanied me wherever I went. Soon I was traveling northbound, eagerly anticipating the meeting of this well-known teacher, who would give me her judgment as to whether or not my desire for training my voice was justifiable.

Not having announced myself by letter beforehand, I went directly to the Royal Conservatory and boldly asked for an interview with the Director. When I told him I wished to study under Mme. Orgeni, he smiled significantly, telling me it was very difficult to be accepted as one of her private pupils or even as a pupil at the Conservatory. He stated that all the classes were filled up and many names on the waiting list, giving me the impression that it might be months, or even years, before I could have the opportunity of studying with her. My high hopes tottered, yet I had enough courage left to ask him for a letter of introduction to Mme. Orgeni to enable me at least have my voice tested by her.

The determination evinced by this request gained for me an entrée to Mme. Orgeni's luxurious studio-apartment on the "Buergerwiese" (boulevard). Her niece, who acted as her secretary, received me, then her sister Cloe came

in to critically look me over. For hours I waited in one of the several small parlors, each being designated according to the color of its particular furniture and hangings. At last I was told to proceed to another parlor where Mme. Orgeni would test my voice! There she stood - a distinguished matronly figure, richly clad in a purple velvet gown with a long train. She fairly took my breath away! The direct searching look I encountered, from her deeply shadowed eyes that shone like black diamonds, seemed to penetrate my whole being and for a moment I was speechless. But, when she spoke, her melodious mellow voice and gracious manner reassured me so that I was able to quite readily answer her various questions.

She seemed to be pleased that, like herself, I was the daughter of a high Austrian officer. Being Austrian, she inquired much about her native country and finding I had this interest in common with her, made me feel more at ease, so that when she sat down to her piano and struck a chord, I was better able to sing the exercises she directed, although I was not able to do myself justice. My tone production seemed so abominable that I anticipated her judgment would be annihilating. But, much to my surprise and relief, she seemed interested in my voice and - miracle of miracles - stated that in spite of being overcrowded with pupils, she would make room for me and take me on in the fall. She instructed me to go back to the Director of the Conservatory and enroll as a member of her "Alto" class which, again to my surprise, the Director consented to do. Paying my enrollment fee and, filled with much joy and almost walking on air, I hastened to catch the next train home.

The facial expression of my dear ma-má, as I excitedly broke the good news to her and related my experiences, I still vividly recall. She seemed to want to say to me: "But child, how will it be possible to get all the money required for such costly study?" However, she said not a word to discourage me. Private lessons at twenty-eight marks (then about \$7) per half hour were out of the question and even the monthly Conservatory fee of 150 marks (or about \$37) seemed an unthinkable sum, besides the expense of living abroad and all sorts of extras! Nevertheless, within a few months every detail was arranged.

Our beautiful home in Graz was rented and, before the first of September approached, the time when German schools start all over the country found ma-má and myself crossing the old borderline between Austria and Germany. My mother was just as inexperienced in traveling as I was. She had never before gone so far away from her little "kingdom of home" where she had reigned as queen, so there were many trying experiences ahead of us. However, only those bearing on my study will be related here.

When I again sought out the Director of the Royal Conservatory, he told me I was to join a class taught by a certain Mrs. Braunroth - a preparatory teacher for Mme. Orgeni's pupils. I protested stating that Mme. Orgeni herself had promised to take me in her "Alto" class. "Well," said the Director, "I know nothing about it and, furthermore, Mme. Orgeni will not be back until October." So it was with much disappointment and dissatisfaction that I started working under the preparatory teacher. My dear mother had made such terrific sacrifices to get me there that it was a blow to both of us to find that I could not have the privilege of being directly under Mme. Orgeni. A whole month of waiting seemed almost interminable to us.

Finally Mme. Orgeni returned. Mother talked to her, but either she did not remember her promise to me or, if she did, assumed that she didn't. The Director's opposition was so strong that we feared he would win out, although ma-má kept insisting that Mme. Orgeni's promise be kept. She finally yielded; I was accepted and my first lesson scheduled.

Arriving promptly at 9:00 on a Wednesday morning, I found about five other pupils already there - all contraltos. The sopranos came later, just to listen. There was humming and vocalizing going on, uninterrupted, and I soon discovered they were testing each others breathing and tone production. Yet, withal, a real professional air pervaded. Quietly sitting in one corner awaiting Mme. Orgeni's appearance, I did not seem to be noticed by anyone. After nearly two hours elapsed, the great lady arrived seemingly quite exhausted, her stern face covered

with white face powder which gave her a ghostly appearance. She observed me at once and introduced me to the other girls as a Viennese whose father was a high officer in the Austrian army, like her own.

She summoned me to the piano, requesting me to sing an exercise of the chromatic tones in my lowest register. Suddenly she thrust out her arm, quickly turned me around, poked her long bony fingers into the middle of my back and screamed: "Stützen Sie doch!" that is, "Support!" This greatly surprised me and I did not have the slightest idea what she meant! In a very nervous manner she showed me how to breathe in order that my breath would support my tone; but I still did not understand what she meant by "stützen." I was doing the best I could, yet I felt she was utterly disgusted with my efforts. When I again opened my mouth to sing, she yelled: "Show me your tongue" which I was holding curled up in my mouth. She then told me to bring a tongue holder to my next lesson, and with this admonition I was abruptly dismissed.

Now I was supposed to remain in the studio until all the other girls were finished. There were only rich voices in the group, some of them far advanced in development. One, a young Jewess, was almost ready for an opera engagement, to sing the famous "Fides" aria from "Le Prophète." To my surprise she easily reached high B, her low notes reminding me of Edith Walker's velvety tones, and I was enthused! It seemed to me that to be able to produce such beautiful tones would be well worth all the chicaneries and excitements I might have to endure.

As the days and weeks followed there was not a lesson period without one of us shedding tears, or having to leave the studio abruptly, in despair. I recall one instance, particularly, that was very pathetic. One of my classmates was a Swedish girl from Stockholm. Her low notes had such a beautiful timbre that they brought tears to my eyes, but there was something decidedly wrong with her middle and high range. Once, when she was singing a Grieg number and she came to the words: "I wished that somebody would close my eyes and my mouth,"

her voice cracked on the high note which seemed to grate on Mme. Orgeni so much that she shouted at the girl: "I wish somebody would close your eyes and your mouth forever!" Immediately this harsh sentence was uttered, the terrorstricken girl fled from the studio out on the street.

Mme. Orgeni commanded us to run quickly and bring her back, she herself following. We finally caught the girl and dragged her upstairs back into the studio. Between sobs she told us her story. Her scholarship from the City of Stockholm had expired a year before and she had been compelled to hire out to do housework to pay for her room and board. Besides not having enough nourishing food, her working hours were long, she was not getting enough sleep, and it took all her wages to pay for her vocal lessons. Not having the proper rest or diet, of course, her voice had deteriorated with her strength. And now, Mme. Orgeni was very contrite and just as kind as she had been "wild" before. She begged the girl's forgiveness, kissed her all over the face, and told her not to worry anymore, that she would not accept another penny from her and would try to procure a better position for her.

This was just one of many similar incidents that were continually happening at the studio. I have related it not in any way to belittle my teacher, but to show her temperamental methods in dealing with her pupils and what studying under her meant. We all feared her but we also loved her, for in her breast there seemed to dwell closely together both a devil and an angel!

Mme. Orgeni was already past middle age when I started with her, much overstrained, and almost a nervous wreck from being compelled to take sleeping powders in order to get rest at night. During my study with her, she had about sixty pupils, some of them well-known opera singers who would come to her to "brush up" for a season or two. Among these I recall a dramatic soprano by the name of Schubert who was sent to Mme. Orgeni by Gustav Mahler, the famous composer and conductor of the Imperial Royal Viennese Opera House, with whom she had a contract to sing because of her superb quality of voice. However, Gustav Mahler wanted her to learn Mme. Orgeni's famous breathing method for which Vienna Opera would pay the fee.

This young woman usually had the last lesson on Mme. Orgeni's schedule, around 10:00 p.m. Mme. Orgeni would sometimes work with her for two hours, night after night, even coaching her in many dramatic acts such as how to faint, how to drop dead on the stage, et cetera, so that by the time this lesson was finished, it was usually past midnight. Both teacher and pupil were exhausted. Being difficult then, for Madame to relax and get drowsy, she would take refuge in a sleeping powder or two in order to obtain her required rest. As a result her nerves were always on edge and our class never started on time!

Living near her apartment, I was often dismissed when reporting promptly at 9:00 a.m. for my lesson and told to return at 4:00 p.m. Upon reporting at that time, I was offered a cup of tea and asked to wait a while. Often I would wait until supper time and would then be told to go home and return again about 9:00 p.m., at which time I would finally get my lesson - a private strenuous one that usually left me shaky in the knees. The class lesson was different for there I felt I had the sympathy and support of my classmates.

My second lesson and the new tongue holder which I had dutifully purchased, have never been forgotten! I opened my mouth wide and Madame thrust the tongue holder so far back on my tongue that it almost gagged me, causing two big tears to roll down my cheeks. At the sight of these she cried: "Oh, you are one of those delicate spoiled children who are always under the tutelage of their ma-más! You had better go back home to your ma-má." In a way she was right, because I had been brought up in a very strict and protected manner, I was taught to be very modest and retiring, the old standard of European education for girls and women particularly; and to fear those in authority over me. However, this outburst of sarcasm by my teacher so wounded my feelings that, had it not been for the influence of my classmates, I would have fled from the studio and never returned. Instead, I exerted my willpower and resumed my practice with the dreadful tongue holder until I could keep my tongue down flat in my mouth and even make a furrow in it. This was my first triumph and I was duly rewarded by feeling that

the pressure on my throat had been removed, giving my voice more freedom.

Had it not been for my classmates, more advanced in singing than I was, I might never have fully understood Mme. Orgeni's method, for she simply did not have the patience to initiate a beginner into the marvelous mysteries of her great art! Little groups of advanced pupils were requested to meet two or three afternoons a week to practice and criticize each other, and they were kind enough to invite me to join them. In these groups I procured a foundation which enabled me, later, to better comprehend what Mme. Orgeni would request me to do, thereby deriving much more benefit from her instructions.

After a year of hard work, I was allowed to sing my first "aria" which was supposed to be my only food for another year. I thought my progress extremely slow but was consoled when I saw that other pupils were handled just as strictly as myself.

As the second winter approached, a great event was announced. Edith Walker from the Imperial Royal Opera House of Vienna was to come to Mme. Orgeni's studio to have her voice, which had suffered through a very tragic event, restored. For months Mme. Orgeni kept her on "humming" exercises only. The rest of the great Orgeni method did the trick and after a year the golden voice of Edith Walker made its reappearance in full glory. While we were both under Mme. Orgeni's direction, I talked to Miss Walker a number of times complaining about our teacher's severity. Miss Walker always had the same reply: "Go on, go on, endure, endure! I often wanted to throw her into the Elbe River but I pulled through and now I am so grateful to her. I love her and she is the only teacher."

More years passed by and I was already well established as a voice teacher in Cleveland, Ohio, U.S.A., when, on one of my European trips in 1936, I met Miss Walker in the French Metropole, Paris, the great city of light. Friends had told me that she had become deeply interested in Christian Science and given up her art. When visiting her at the Hotel Belmont, 30 rue Bassano, I was so happy to see her after a lapse of 30 years. Her

dark hair had turned to silver, giving her luminous eyes enhanced expression. The same artistic temperament came forth when we exchanged memories of Mme. Orgeni and other great personalities. She told me of her great love for Christian Science to which religion she clung with all her heart and soul. However, the world of music claimed her too. The Paris Grand Opera Company persuaded her to coach Wagnerian roles to some of their members, among them the now famous Marjorie Lawrence.

When bidding each other goodbye, we agreed to meet again in the near future, this time in Bayreuth even before the Festival time. Miss Walker suggested that she might try to get me an invitation to some of the rehearsals, though permission to attend these was very hard to obtain.

On July 12th, 1936 I was privileged to witness the final rehearsal of "Lohengrin." This was one of the most thrilling experiences of my life. The decorations with the new sunken stage were magnificent. The chorus was made up of solo singers from different opera houses in the country, and never did I hear the Wedding Song in the bridal scene done with such spirituality. The costumes of the court ladies were designed by the famous Professor of History, Dr. Pretorius, and were made of the most precious material. All in all - action, singing, orchestra - neared perfection. Between acts we went to the canteen outdoors to supper. Miss Walker introduced me to Mme. Winifried Wagner, to her sons, to the great conductor, Furtwängler, to the famous painter, Franz Strassen, as well as many other artists.

The next day my friend suggested a visit to Richard Wagner's grave, to the villa Wahnfried and to the Museum. Just as I was throwing a bunch of dark red roses over the railing which enframed the master's last repose, we were approached by a sweet old lady in black attire. She was none other than Mme. Cosima's daughter, the countess Blandine Gravina. After the customary introduction, the countess invited us to see the Wagner family at their home. As we approached the villa, two charming young ladies welcomed us. They were Wagner's granddaughters, Friedelind and Verena. I dared asking one of them whether there was

any truth in the rumor that the "Fuehrer" (at his height that year) was really planning to marry her mother. Her answer was word for word: "Oh yes, mother would like to marry him, but he does not." How viewpoints have changed in the meantime!

CHAPTER III

Turning my thoughts back to Dresden and to my studies, I remember that with the approach of summer, I became more and more nervous. I had found out, that in order to make headway under Mme. Orgeni, it was absolutely necessary to remain with her for seven or eight years. Of course, by that time the student was a finished artist. The booking agents came to her studio to engage her accomplished students for important roles in the leading concert halls and opera houses of Germany. Erica Wedekind, whom I heard and met several times, Margaret Siems and many others, were living examples of Mme. Orgeni's unsurpassed method. But only a few were able to continue with her for years on account of the great expense.

Her pupils were strictly forbidden to earn money by strenuous labor of any kind, not even being allowed to practise on the piano longer than two hours each day. But, if a young lady had a wealthy gentleman "friend" available, to pay for lessons or other expenses, she was not questioned as to the way she earned the money and it was quite permissible! This fact was so well known in Dresden, that it was often difficult for an Orgeni pupil to rent a room in a conservative Christian boarding home. Although having my mother with me, after announcing quite proudly that I was a pupil of Mme. Orgeni, when I requested the privilege of practising certain hours per day, I was refused many times, and similar difficulties continued to arise until we found a little apartment of our own.

Before the Conservatory closed its season and gave its final big recitals in which the Orgeni pupils were almost unrivaled features, I had a very interesting experience which I will relate.

One Sunday afternoon I accompanied my dear ma-má to the Zoo. Watching the animals was quite a pastime with her, and she was very anxious for me to see a week-old baby tiger she had told me about. While we were standing before the cage, admiring the cute little beast,

conversing together in French, a very refined, intelligent looking gentleman approached us, saying: "Est-ce que ces dames sont Françaises?" - inquiring if we were French ladies. Mother told him we were from Vienna, Austria, after which he introduced himself as a "Professor C..." of Montreal, Quebec. He promenaded with us through the beautiful pathways of the Zoo park, inquiring of my mother what the young lady, referring to me, was doing in Dresden. Upon being informed he asked me: "But how can you get along with that crazy woman?" meaning Mme. Orgeni. He then told us that he was the Impresario of the great Adelina Patti, that he had traveled with her around the world twice. I was spellbound listening to his stories of the famous diva. He seemed to know so much about the singing profession that an acquaintance with him seemed very desirable to me. He also showed great interest in me, personally, expressing a desire to hear my voice. So, at parting, it was arranged that he would come to our apartment the next day.

His arrival excited me quite a bit. He sat at the piano and ably accompanied me to the charming "Mignon" aria. "Connais-tu le pays?" Complimenting me on my voice, he stated that he thought I should not continue studying with Mme. Orgeni, that there was not enough freedom in my singing, even a decided suppression. Furthermore, that the environment of the heavy German atmosphere was not at all the right kind for me. Paris, with its gaiety and charm, would wake me up and I should go there without my mother to gain self-confidence and a feeling of independence and liberty to broaden my experience, and to advance quicker under some famous French teacher. These suggestions strengthened my half-desire to leave Mme. Orgeni because, even as much as I valued her methods, I felt I could never completely overcome the fear with which her personality filled me. But Mother explained to him that she would not be able to finance me for a sojourn in Paris.

However, after answering our many inquiries pertaining to his suggestion and saying he hoped something might turn up to make my study in Paris possible, he offered to procure teachers' rates for us. He then dictated letters, in beautiful French, for my mother to sign, to four great

singing teachers in Paris: Mme. Mathilde Marchese, Mme. Francillon Kaufmann, Mme. Artôt de Padilla and Mme. Laborde, inquiring about their rates, et cetera. In response to these letters the first one informed us that she charged three years' tuition in advance, which amounted to six thousand francs - out of the question for my mother. Mme. Kaufmann stated she would accept no more pupils, probably having retired from teaching. Mme. Artôt de Padilla stated her fee would depend upon whether she, herself, would accept a pupil after hearing her voice or turn her over to her niece, Mme. Charpentier, the famous composer's wife, for a preparatory course. Mme. Laborde quoted a medium rate for those days, but it was still too high for our means.

Professor C...continued to urge us in the matter until one day, while sitting at our piano playing, I espied on the floor under the piano some pieces of paper that looked like money. Hastily stooping to pick them up, much to my surprise, I recognized them to be Swiss francs amounting to several hundred dollars. Upon handing them to him he started to deny that he had dropped them, yet I felt sure he had, since the money was not there previous to his entering our apartment. He then looked at me and said, smoothly, "Don't you understand? Don't you want to accept?" Mystified, I stared at him! What could he mean? In my inexperienced innocence, I did not grasp the significance of his words, yet I felt, instinctively, that something was wrong and that it would not be right for me to accept that money. At this moment my mother who had overheard our conversation from the adjoining room, entered and very courteously told the Professor that we were not the kind of women to accept any money from any man. Much to my surprise and disappointment he abruptly left our apartment, never to return again and we saw him no more!

However, he had inoculated my mind with the Paris "germ," as it were. What could be more alluring to a young girl, full of dreams, than the idea of going to Paris, the famous "City of Light"? The French language was no hindrance to me as I spoke it as well as I did German, yet many "buts" and "ifs" were left for our consideration! The money question, first of all; would my

mother permit me to live in Paris alone, and last, but not least, could I find another teacher there under whom I could continue to follow Mme. Orgeni's method? I valued her system of teaching so highly that I felt I could not afford to make a complete change.

As it is usual in making important decisions, this matter had to be talked over between mother and me, pro and con, the advantages and disadvantages carefully weighed, and finally the scales dropped toward the other side of the Rhine! But, only conditionally was I supposed to pursue my study in Paris. As it was nearing summertime, I was to enroll in the so-called "vacation" classes at "La Sorbonne," the famous Parisian University. Passing the "foreigner's" examination there, and procuring a diploma would authorize me to teach French in every country in the world. This would furnish me a splendid substitute vocation should my anticipated singing career meet with too many hindrances.

Furthermore, I was not to let anyone know about my intentions to study in Paris lest my connection with the Royal Conservatory be severed before finding the right teacher in Paris. It would be better to continue in Dresden under Mme. Orgeni, much as I disliked the atmosphere of fear and nervousness she seemed to create around her, then to tie up with a new teacher, however famous, whose viewpoints and method would not coincide with Mme. Orgeni's teaching. In this conviction, from which I never deviated, I think I was right.

Later in life I observed that not one of Mme. Orgeni's pupils failed to make good. Everyone I knew proved to be a success either on the stage, the concert platform, or as a teacher. And, now desiring to pay Mme. Orgeni a special tribute of my admiration and respect for her as a teacher of singing, I am adding to this little narrative a short sketch of her life.

However much I disliked and resented this teacher's temperamental eccentricities and severity, yet I am really grateful to her for every scolding and severe criticism. From a teaching standpoint she was always right and, after all, her drastic methods compelled us

to take our work seriously and professionally. There was no "joking" or halfway about learning to sing with her; it just meant hard work every minute during a lesson period, exerting our energy and willpower to the utmost, and intensive earnest practice between lessons.

In later years, when I was established in Brno, Czecho-Slovakia, as a teacher of singing at the Conservatory in that city, I frequently visited Mme. Orgeni. This was during and immediately after the First World War. She had left Dresden as her Austrian heart was drawn strongly to Vienna where her brother, General Von G... lived and she wanted to be united with him during that period of such sad events. Her sister, Cloe, had passed on, which was another reason for her going to Vienna. She was granted permission to teach her Dresden Conservatory pupils in Vienna provided they would, at the end of the school year, go back to the Conservatory for final recitals. By this time she had aged considerably; she was paler and frailer looking, but "on the job," still an indefatigable worker.

I spent many weekends with her, since the trip from Brno to Vienna could be made in less than two hours on a rapid train. I wanted to hear her pupils, to get suggestions and new inspiration for my own teaching, besides the great joy of being able to attend Viennese opera at least every fortnight, if not every week. After coming to the United States in 1921, I never heard from Mme. Orgeni any more until I read an account of her death in the newspaper. However, she is still alive in my heart! I sincerely wish there were more teachers today like her, who take the Art of Singing more seriously, and the teaching of it as a sacred service to humanity, as she did.

(Biographical sketch of Mme. A. Orgeni follows.)

ANNA MARIA AGALJA ORGENI

Anna Maria Aglaja Orgeni, (real name Gorger St. Jorgen) born in Rima Szombet, Hungary, December 17, 1841, was a pupil of Mme. Viardot-Garcia. She made her first appearance on the stage September 28, 1865 as "Amina" at the Royal Opera House in Berlin. Mme. Orgeni was highly successful both on account of her excellent singing and acting, as well as the natural charm of her person and manner. She first appeared in England April 7, 1866, at the Royal Italian Opera, Convent Garden, as "Violetta," and was very well received, subsequently playing "Lucia" and "Marta."

Mme. Orgeni also sang in concerts, and gained great praise for her singing of Agatha's scene from "Der Freischutz" (of which a contemporary remarked "We have not heard anything better than the opening of the great scene - her measure and expression in delivery of the delivery of the Largo bespoke a real artist"). And also of Bach's "Mein Glaubiges Herze" to the violincello obbligato of Piatti, of which the same writer remarks that "elegance and distinction of her manner and her real musical acquirements have secured her a public."

In spite of the large measure of favour given her, she never played on the stage again in England, but in 1870 sang in concerts for a short period, being well received at the Philharmonic in the above scene of Weber and that from Lucia. After her first season in London she went to Vienna in September of that year and played there with success. Afterwards she was heard in opera, festivals and concerts at Leipzig, Hannover and Dresden. She also sang for a few nights at the Lyrique in Paris as "Violetta" in 1869.

In 1881 she reappeared in England, and sang with success at the Crystal Palace, Philharmonic and other concerts. Mme. Orgeni subsequently became a teacher of singing at the Dresden Conservatorium, and was the first woman to receive there in 1908 the title of Professor. In the beginning of 1914 she went to Vienna, where she had a large number of singing pupils. She died in Vienna some time in March 1926.



Mme. Aglaja Orgeni,
Professor of Singing at the
Royal Conservatory of Dresden

CHAPTER IV

It was a sunny day in June, when I parted from my beloved mother in Dresden. The train took me via Stuttgart-Köln to the borderline of France. I stopped in Nancy, one of the most charming of provincial French towns where my mother had spent eighteen years of her youth. I was anxious to see the people and places she had so often told me about when, as a little girl, I sat on her lap. Her old friend, the Countess de Landrian, the "La Place Stanislas," the beautiful French accent of the Lorraine people - all seemed so familiar and dear to me as if I, too, had lived there!

My arrival in Paris, the largest city I had ever seen, was a memorable event. A little cab took me to my destination - a very simple boarding home on the Rue de la Seine, near the Luxembourg Gardens, which was destined to be my "second" home for a number of years. The owner, a dear old Parisian lady, took care of me like a mother. I always enjoyed the meals she provided, and her husband, who had formerly been a cook in the Navy, was responsible for some very fine menus.

This particular "pension de famille" was a rendezvous for many interesting people - some professors, but mostly students of art, music and the French language. They represented many nationalities, all gathered under one roof, with the pursuance of some art in common. Once, at dinner, our landlady "called the roll" of our native countries, and found we represented fifteen different countries and religions. She then suggested that each one tell a story about his country and religion. As far as I can recall, her pensioners at that time consisted of French, Italian, Spanish, German, American, one Parsi, two Japanese, one Russian girl and one Finnish girl. All of these young people evinced a real taste for and a keen interest in study and a great deal of enthusiasm, that often amounted to quite a commotion at dinnertime when we

related our individual experiences of the day. We became like one big family.

Soon after my arrival I discovered that some other young ladies and gentlemen were going to take the same course of study at "La Sorbonne," that I intended to pursue, so we enrolled together and a very strenuous schedule was laid down for us. The first lecture of the day started at 7:00 in the morning, followed by one subject after the other in quick succession, until the early afternoon when we were personally conducted, in excursions, to the different museums in various parts of the great metropolis. We returned at 5:00 p.m. for our literature instruction under two famous "literateurs," Lanson and Doumic. After dinner, from 7:00 to 8:00, was seminary work, and only after 9:00 o'clock were we at leisure to stroll around on the beautiful boulevards. Often on these saunters we would stop to rest at one of those inviting little cafés, out of doors on the sidewalk, where we would partake of one of those fine "coupes St. Jackes" or a glass of beer, according to our taste or thirst.

This intensive school schedule continued until the end of August, climaxed by an examination which lasted several days, including oral and written tests. I obtained my diploma with "mention très honorable."

In the meantime the great singing teachers I had anticipated interviewing, had returned to Paris from their summer resorts. Mme. Artot de Padilla, the famous Spanish "prima donna," did not appeal to me, nor did I to her. She wanted me to study with her niece, Mme. Charpentier, promising to supervise my studies, but this was not satisfactory to me. I wanted the best and greatest I could afford.

After this disappointment I went to see Mme. Laborde, a most charming old lady, having been told that Mme. Calvé was one of her prodigies. She tested my voice and even allowed me to listen to her pupils' lessons. They all sang very beautifully, but I immediately noticed that her whole method of vocalizing was very different from Mme. Or-geni's. So I told Mme. Laborde that since my means were limited, I could not afford her price, thinking this would

be a legitimate and sufficient reason for my decision not to study with her, but the dear old lady made all sorts of suggestions and provisos in an effort to make it possible for me to study with her. She wanted to make arrangements for me to live with one of her friends, where my expenses would be very small, and she assured me that I could earn a little money by practicing with and accompanying some of her wealthy pupils. All this thoughtfulness on her part touched me to tears, but my decision to return to Dresden was definitely made.

However, just a few days before I had planned to leave Paris, I recalled that Mme. Orgeni's own teacher - the great Mme. Viardot - was still alive and residing somewhere in that very city. Upon inquiry I learned that her home was located on the Boulevard St. Germain, near the Chambre des Députés, in front of the beautiful "Place de la Concorde." Soon after, on a rainy afternoon, I set out for her home with the idea of ascertaining when I could have an interview. Mme. Viardot was 83 years old at that time, and I did not think she would do any more teaching.

Arriving at her home, I was received by a butler to whom the proverb: "Tel maître tel valet" could be justly applied, for he was just as courteous and friendly as I later found his mistress to be. He inquired by whom I had been sent. This unexpected question rather startled me, but I quickly gave Mme. Orgeni's name. Hardly had her name slipped over my lips, when there appeared at the door an elderly lady who bade me enter the big "salon de réception." My first thought was that she was Mme. Viardot, herself, although she looked much younger than 83 years. Later, I learned she was Mme. Viardot's companion, Mme. A... Relating my story to her, I told her how anxious I was to meet Mme. Viardot to ascertain if she would recommend one of her pupils as a teacher for me. Then Mme. A...arose and graciously said: "Wait a moment, my dear, I am going to call Mme. Viardot herself."

My heart beat fast! Was it true that I was so soon to see this great teacher, face to face, without further recommendation or "red tape," or being compelled to wait for hours? Then I heard the rustling of stiff silk; I

became conscious of the sweet fragrance of lavender, and the gracious woman, whom I later learned to love, stood before me - upright, dignified, beautifully poised like a queen! That was my first impression and, proverbially, a lasting one. She motioned for me to be seated in a golden "Empire" chair, in a corner of the octagonal hall, and rather abruptly said: "Vous venez de la part de Mme. Orgeni? O, la petite est-elle toujours un peu toquéé - meaning - "You are coming from Mme. Orgeni? O, the dear one, is she still a little crazy?"

Her question acted as a strong "upbeat" for me to begin my story. I poured out my heart to the sympathetic woman whose kindness warmed me as a summer breeze would affect a north-pole explorer upon his return to the temperate zone! She listened attentively and quietly, and then, after a short silence, she asked me to sing for her. Having a slight cold I did not care to introduce my voice to her under unfavorable conditions, so an appointment for the coming Saturday was granted me.

The anxiously awaited day finally arrived, bringing great happiness into my life. For a moment or two after my audition, Mme. Viardot sat thinking. Then she asked: "How much did you have to pay at the Dresden Conservatory?" I indicated the monthly sum after which she replied: "If you can keep up with that amount, I will accept you as my pupil for three lessons a week." Her offer was so unexpectedly generous, that I could scarcely believe my ears! I soared to the "seventh heaven"! To be accepted by this great teacher, just like that, out of a clear sky! Vibrating with joy and gratitude, I fervently kissed her hands, and she then told me when to return for my first lesson.

To that event I looked forward with the keenest anticipation, and I was well rewarded. Mme. Viardot used the same type of exercises with which I was already familiar, the same system of breathing - vocalizations by Mme. Marchese as well as from her own book. An hour of intensive work quickly passed and how different it seemed compared with my previous lessons. Mme. Viardot taught with so much poise and kindness that I was immediately inspired and determined to give of my very best to satisfy my new teacher.

It did not take me long to become accustomed to Mme. Viardot's ways and her studio routine. My lesson was set for 10:00 a.m., but I usually arrived ten or fifteen minutes earlier. As a sort of prelude to my lesson, I would watch with interest the precise and methodical services of her maid - the opening of the Playel grand piano, the placing of a little standing clock on the left side, together with Madame's characteristic red leather notebook for her appointments, and on the right-hand side the lovely oriental lacquer bowl. Into this bowl each pupil dropped his tuition fee, thirty francs in gold, for a half-hour lesson. At the end of a day's teaching there was quite a heap of gold in the bowl. My payments, however, were made monthly as arranged.

In winter time the thoughtful little maid threw a beautifully embroidered shawl over the back of the piano chair and placed a so-called "chaufferette" (a basin of glowing charcoals) on the floor near the piano pedals to keep the feet of her beloved mistress warm. Not many of the Parisian homes at that time were favored with a central heating system. Although a big crackling fire was always burning in the fireplace, yet, unless one was very near it and became fairly "roasted," one felt quite chilly in other parts of the room. A "chaufferette" underneath the piano, the sewing or dining table, was very comforting and quite the vogue. However, the appearance of this chaufferette struck me as very funny since in Austria and Germany we used the huge fayence stoves, one in each room which kept our homes evenly warm and cozy.

At the stroke of 10:00, Madame appeared. She always had a sweet smile and some lovely words of greeting on her lips, but immediately after she became grave and very strict, although she almost never lost her patience. It was very hard to satisfy her ears which were very keen for her advanced age. She interrupted many times even her great opera-star pupils who would come to her from all parts of the world. Though the pupil were standing far away from the piano, she could detect the slightest mistake. If my breathing became incorrect or "sloppy" once in a while, she always caught me "en flagrant délit." She never used an accompanist and, although her eyes were

failing, she played the hardest and most difficult accompaniments herself.

In her youth Mme. Viardot had been Franz Liszt's favorite pupil. Her musicianship, as well as her experience, was so great that she was able to play all the operas by memory. She even mastered the great Wagnerian scores and remembered the texts. Mme. Viardot studied Wagnerian roles under Wagner's personal direction and was an expert in Wagnerian style. She often told us just how Wagner preferred certain parts rendered and that he favored the old Italian method of "bel canto" to be used by the singers of his works, though certain modifications and changes in tone production became necessary here and there. For instance, sometimes in order to enhance a dramatic expression and to obtain a certain effect, certain words and notes had to be scooped up which, in Italian opera would be shunned as a veritable "crime."

Mme. Viardot had mastered so many languages that it was almost impossible to detect which was her "mother tongue." Of Spanish parentage, though away from her home country for several years, she still spoke Spanish fluently and beautifully. Having lived in Baden-Baden, Germany, and studied with Richard Wagner, her German accent was pure and well-nigh perfect. She was strict with her pupils regarding German pronunciation. After all the elocution training I had received in Dresden, I thought my German almost perfect, but many a time Mme. Viardot would suddenly ask me, ironically, from which part of Germany I came. I knew what she meant - that I should have known better - and sometimes this made me feel very bad.

Correction after correction was the experience of all her pupils. Sometimes I would apologize after the lesson for my mistakes. Though during a lesson Mme. Viardot might call me a few names, such as "bécasse" (equivalent to the German "dumme Gans" or "dumbbell" in English), she was always very sweet when she noticed my despairing attitude. Then she would say: "Well, well, my dear child, if you did not make any mistakes you would not have to take lessons." One time I was not at peace, in spite of her kindness, and added: "You see, Madame, I do not want to cause you illness or to weaken your

health!" To this she replied: "No, no, my dear! Such things do not hurt me and I will never be sick, for Viardot will work to the very last day of her life!" And she kept her word.

In her presence one felt the "divine spark" and every lesson was an event! Like the majority of truly great personalities, she had a keen sense of humor and a magnetic life energy. During my study with her she had a pupil whom she especially loved - an Armenian with an alluring tenor voice who could sing the folk songs of his country with exquisite artistry. Knowing her fondness for him, whenever during my lesson Mme. Viardot began to be a little nervous or moody, I would ask her a question about him which immediately caused her to relax.

This young man became engaged to a young lady of Paris - the daughter of a great musician by the name of Jossset. Mr. Jossset had invented an instrument to facilitate the art of transposing music, not only from notes but by ear. It was very remarkable and all of musical Paris was interested in Mr. Jossset's astounding performances. Mme. Viardot wanted me to take lessons from him, and she herself went to his studio in order to learn this new method, although she was about 86 years old at the time.

At the wedding of Miss Jossset and the Armenian tenor, a big concert was given at father Jossset's home. Two of Mme. Viardot's pupils - a young Neapolitan girl and myself - were invited to attend and sing a few of Mme. Viardot's compositions. The beautiful soirée at Jossset's to which the greatest artists of Paris were invited, continued until 4:00 a.m., and Mme Viardot stayed through to the end. When the arrival of her equipage was announced, she offered to take me home. It was a one-horse affair with two seats in the back - for herself and lady companion. I was supposed to be seated on the little back bench called "strampontin." The two ladies were already seated when I attempted to sit down on the bench, but it was impossible to lift it up if anyone were seated on the back seat. So, with the swiftness of a young girl, Mme. Viardot lightly stepped out of the rig and getting

back into it again she clapped her hands, saying: "Da capo, da capo, la Viardot!" (Encore, Encore)

Sometimes she would invite me to accompany her to the opera. We would sit in her own box, or, when she was invited to be the guest of Baron Rothchild in his box, I had the honor of going, too, which gave me quite a thrill! Upon entering the opera house, we were ushered in by the "ouvreuses" as if we belonged to the Royalty. Between acts hundreds of opera glasses were directed to the Rothchild box and - no wonder - as it contained the magnate of financiers and one of the greatest woman artists the world has ever known!

Other delightful experiences came to me through Mme. Viardot when she invited me to accompany her to social functions for the ambassadors of the different countries where I would come in contact with great composers such as Massenet and Saint-Saens. The latter was very fond of Mme. Viardot and it was to her he dedicated his world-famous score of "Samson and Delila" which I studied under Mme. Viardot. She also gave me a wonderful conception of Gluck's "Orpheus" and she, being the first woman to sing the role of Orpheus, wrote into my score the annotations given to her when she herself was coached in this part by the famous French composer, Berlioz.

Mme. Viardot knew all these operas from cover to cover, and she was very anxious for her pupils to learn their roles perfectly. When studying Mozart's famous aria of "Sextus," "Parto ben mio" from "La Clemenzia di Tito," and also the Rose aria from his "Figaro," I had to work from three to four months on each aria. As a final test, I was given the task of writing the music by memory, without overlooking any little rest or sixteenth note. It took me a long time to get ready for this herculean work.

After studying with Mme. Viardot for some time, my mother wrote me to return home to Graz for a vacation during which Mme. Viardot sent me the loveliest letters, even including valuable information for voice instruction. At the end of this chapter I give translations of some of these precious letters.

Although during this first year in Paris, I made ends meet financially by giving German lessons, yet there was still a shortage of money for my return. However, upon receiving a scholarship from the City of Graz through the generosity of some friends, I was enabled to resume my study in Paris with my beloved teacher.

In the following chapter is a brief sketch of Mme. Viardot's life and career which will give my readers an idea of how great she was. Sovereigns bowed before her and the Russian poet, Turgeneff, left his family and his fatherland to follow her wherever she went for about thirty years! When I attended lectures at "La Sorbonne" on Turgeneff's life and works, his friendship with a great artist living in our midst, whose name was not given, was explained and discussed in detail. They carried on a voluminous correspondence for 40 years, some of which was published in 1907.

Mme. Viardot was a super-woman, not only a musical genius, but also a great philosopher who was able to combine love and wisdom at the height of her life. Her musical gifts were inherited from her great father, Manuel Garcia I. Mme. Viardot told me some stories about him which makes them authentic.

When she was only about four years old - the youngest of her family - her father, who lived in Spain, organized an opera company with the members of his own family. They were all gifted singers - wife, brother, Manuel Garcia, Jr., and the famous daughter, Maria Felicia Garcia, later known as the great "Malibran." He conceived the idea of introducing grand opera to America. Little Pauline (Mme. Viardot) was also taken along. The company met with great success in New York, but father Garcia did not confine himself to this experience only. He determined to take his family troupe to Mexico. On their way back, traveling in covered wagons, his pockets well filled with dollars, they were spied and held up by a band of robbers. Mr. Garcia was seized and tied to a tree to be shot by the desperados, but at the most critical moment, Mr. Garcia, who had a fine melodious tenor voice, began singing one of his best opera arias. The

robbers were so amazed and awed, that they quickly dropped their arms and let the travelers pass on.

Once in a while Mme. Viardot showed me some of her keepsakes. She owned one thing of great price - the original manuscript of Mozart's "Don Giovanni" which was presented to her as a tribute of admiration by Napoleon III. After her death many organizations coveted the possession of this priceless manuscript. Mme. Viardot's son, Paul Viardot, a very fine violinist, whom I have heard in recitals several times, did not intend to part with it, but he finally yielded and sold it to the Louvre Museum for three million francs.

Another treasure Mme. Viardot was very fond of, was the portrait of her beloved sister, Malibran - the only one in existence. Malibran's reputation was unequalled. Her voice and art were unrivaled and she was her father's pupil. The salaries she received in European metropolises, as well as in American cities, amounted to unbelievable sums. But alas! when she was only twenty-five years old she fell from a horse and her precious life came to a sudden end! Her father became almost insane. His younger daughter, Pauline, was then about fifteen or sixteen years old. Having so many singers in his family her father had not been even interested in Pauline's voice, but had dedicated her to become a great pianist under Liszt's direction.

However, after this terrible shock and although grief-stricken over his daughter's untimely death, the thought came to him that Pauline might have a voice like her sister, and he was not mistaken. He took her in hand and after three years' training, he arranged a debut for her at the famous Odeon Theatre in Paris. All Paris was present and among the listeners were two great poets, Theophile Gautier and Jules Musset. After the first curtain dropped the audience became wild, not only because Pauline bore a great likeness to her departed sister (though not as pretty), but because her voice was so exactly the same! It was like hearing Malibran's "ghost"! The two poets wrote the most impressive sonnets to her and the public wanted to hear her again and again.

But father Garcia, the voice teacher par excellence, told his daughter Pauline that from then on she would have to STUDY, for at least six more years and study she did! Mme. Viardot told me that those lessons with her father became "nightmares" and that many times he used the whip and frightened her. After this period of preparation, she made another debut and her reputation grew from year to year until she reached the pinnacle of fame.

She told me that once, in the beginning of her career, she was booked to sing "Desdemona" in Othello with her own father as her partner. He had warned her that in the killing scene, if she did not sing a certain high note dramatically enough, he would actually stab her. So when the dramatic crisis arrived, Pauline was so scared of her father, that she gave a sincere scream that was most impressive! The audience was fairly carried away with emotion, and there was not a listener that night who did not "shiver" through and through!

When Manuel Garcia I died, his son, Manuel II, became his successor. He was one of the greatest singers of all time, being the first one to give the art of singing a scientific background. He invented the laryngoscope which was epoch-making for medical science. While appearing in concerts and private musicals in Vienna, I happened to meet several very renowned throat specialists and university professors who were leaving for London to attend Manuel's one-hundredth birthday celebration. Learning that I was a pupil of his sister, Mme. Viardot, they were keenly interested in me and inquired much about her. At the same time I also received a letter from Mme. Viardot telling me she was crossing the Channel to congratulate her brother and attend his birthday celebration. This was in 1906 and the last direct word I received from her.

Mme. Viardot was the greatest woman I have ever known, and my gratitude for this and to her will last as long as I live. Of course, we all know that a genius is not born every day, therefore, I consider it a great privilege to have known her, to have been associated so closely with her for some time. Her memory is still alive in my heart, and it is my desire to humbly follow her

example in serving my fellowmen through teaching the art of singing to the best of my ability.

Mme. Viardot's method was very similar to Mme. Orgeni's, which is natural as the latter had been Mme. Viardot's pupil in former years. Of course two teachers cannot be alike. There must be a leeway for individual expression. Furthermore, each has to deal with different personalities and talents, applying and adapting methods to each student's individual needs. It would mean stagnation and automatic imitation if it were otherwise. In all fundamentals these two great teachers agreed. Mme. Viardot was more encouraging and progressive, and yet, on the other hand, giving less detail work. She laid special stress on volubility and velocity and often declared that the more flexible a voice becomes, the more it gains in fullness of sustained tones. Her exercise book, "An Hour of Study," was her best representative, and she really wanted us to practice a whole hour every day on these exercises. Frequently she invented new exercises and wrote them into my "scribble" book. All her work had the stamp of "grand style."

First letter of Mme. Viardot to her pupil, Emi de Bidoli translated from French into English.

My dear child:-

Thank you for having sent me such a nice letter. But you only tell me about your poor mother and don't mention yourself. How do you like the change of climate and life, habits, food, direction of thoughts and so many other things? Did you take up your daily practice? Has your mother heard you? What did she say? Is she satisfied with your improvements?

When you take up your studies, start with breathing exercises, first of all. Then some sustaining notes in chest until Mi, not any higher. The high notes very softly and without effort. Then take some little exercises to the 4th, 8th and 10th. Use as much as

possible my little book, "An Hour of Study," which is my best representative. I will not leave Paris before the middle of August.

Give my best regards to your dear mother.

I embrace you very affectionately,

Pauline Viardot

Second letter -

My dear Emi:-

Come back to me as soon as you can. I'll make you work very hard. You have to prepare a nice repertoire. It would be too bad to drop your work just now when you are at two steps from "trés bien." (Very good!) Take care of your voice, because such pure and clear qualities are becoming more and more rare. In singing so much modern music, people think it not necessary anymore to make the voice supple and light - and how wrong they are. They don't realize that the more the voice is agile, the more it gains in volume and the better a person can sing expressively and sustained - and the less the voice becomes tired. This is true even in singing modern music, which is often very beautiful, but almost always fatal to the voice.

Write to me as soon as possible, my dear Emi, and receive my best wishes for yourself and your dear ones.

Pauline Viardot

Third letter -

My dear little Bidoli:-

Thank you for your charming letter and for your picture. I find it resembles you very much, but it is not at all flattering. I am suffering and very despondent about the death of my dear companion, Miss Arnholt. May God take care of her soul. She was such a good creature.

Very affectionately yours,

Pauline Viardot

Fourth letter-

My dear child:-

What you ask is difficult to answer. Ah, if I could hear these voices for 5 minutes only, I could easily tell you what should be done. Anyhow, I shall try.

Begin by making them hold sustained notes after having taken a good, deep breath; work up to the highest possible notes produced without any effort and without tightening the throat.

That is about all I can say for the time being; let them cover when they arrive at Mi BE moll (E Flat) and do not go higher than FA natural.

Concerning a tenor - is it a tenor? Begin with DO; make him cover after MI, everything relaxed and natural - always a few minutes of deep respiration. To this you may add some exercises of the first volume of my "Hour of Study."

Thousand affectionate greetings,

From your,

Pauline Viardot

Though Mme. Viardot did not have much voice left at her advanced age, when I started studying with her, she was still able even by soft humming to make one understand how a certain phrase should be sung. When she sang some of the arias to me in mezza voce, there was still a certain beauty and a touching expression in her tones.

Her great experience in operatic roles was invaluable. She knew every style whether French, German or Italian. She was even familiar with modern composers as Hugo Wolf, Richard Strauss and others. She thought, however, that their music was injurious and never to be undertaken by an untrained voice.

A few weeks before Mme. Viardot's 90th birthday, I

happened to be in Berlin, where I contacted Mme. Schoen-René, who later became a very famous teacher of voice at the Juilliard Foundation in New York City. At that time she maintained two great vocal schools for opera candidates, one in Minneapolis, Minn., and one in Charlottenburg-Berlin (Germany). She too had been a pupil of Mme. Viardot and one of her most enthusiastic admirers.

Here I want to refer my readers to Mme. Schoen-René's excellent book which appeared in the fall of 1941, shortly before her passing. I say that every American music student or music lover should know this book. The title of it is "America's Musical Inheritance - Memoirs and Reminiscences" by Anna Eugenie Schoen-René, published by G.P. Putnam's Son, New York.

Mme Schoen-René kindly suggested that I take over one of her schools while she was attending the other, which offer I unfortunately could not accept. We had much in common and our mutual desire was to attend the Viardot 90th birthday anniversary to be celebrated in Paris under the auspices of the greatest musical authorities. To our great regret, news came from Paris about her passing in June 1911, three weeks before her 90th birthday.

I received notice from the family that three days before her death occurred, Mme. Viardot told her dear ones that she would be leaving them within three days. On the third day, after having given her lessons as usual, she retired for her afternoon nap. When she did not come forth at the regular time, they entered the room to find her reclining in her armchair apparently asleep--her great soul had taken its flight into the eternal beyond!



Mme. Pauline Viardot Garcia
at the age of 83

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF MME. VIARDOT

Pauline Garcia-Viardot, the second daughter of Manuel Garcia, was born in Paris, July 18, 1821. The genius of the Garcia family flowered in her no less than in her older sister, the great Mme. Malibran. The hereditary gift of music came to the foreground in her at the age of three. When she was six Pauline Garcia could speak four languages - French, Spanish, Italian and English - with facility; to these, she later added the knowledge of German. At the age of twenty-eight she also learned to read Latin and Greek and made herself acquainted with the various arts and sciences.

The talent of Pauline Garcia for the piano was so remarkable that her father placed her under the tutelage of Franz Liszt. Later she became one of his most distinguished pupils. It is altogether probable that Pauline Garcia, as a singer, owed an inestimable debt to Pauline Garcia the pianist. Her accuracy and brilliancy of musical methods were, in a large measure, the outcome of her training under the king of pianists.

Though not destined by her famous father to become a singer, she aimed at this goal. She was just sixteen, when panting with an irrepressible sense of her own powers, she exclaimed: "Ed Io Anche Son Cantatrice." ("I too am a singer.") After the death of her sister, Mme. Malibran, she stepped into the musical world of Europe, as her successor. Very soon the greatest of distinctions and many splendid gifts were showered upon her. The Queen of Prussia sent her a superb necklace of emeralds. Mme. Sontag, with whom she sang in Frankfurt, gave the young singer valuable testimony. The Parisian critics recognized the precision, boldness and brilliancy of her musical style, in the most unstinted expressions of praise.

Her voice combined the two registers of contralto and soprano from low F to high C. Like her sister, Mme. Malibran, she too had in her voice the soul-stirring tone, the sympathetic and touching character by which the heart is thrilled.

A well-known French "Literateur" and director of the Italian Opera in Paris won the heart of the youthful singer. In consequence of Pauline's marriage to Mr. Viardot, she retired from the stage for a year. After that time she returned to London for a short season only, when the young couple proceeded to Spain, the native land of Pauline's parents. She was induced to sing in Madrid, where she was welcomed with all the warmth of Spanish enthusiasm.

In October 1842, Mme Viardot made her appearance on the French stage at the "Theatre Italien." At the close of the Paris season she went to Vienna where her artistic gifts were highly appreciated, thence on to Berlin.

In 1849 Mme. Viardot's engagement at the Royal Italian Opera in London began with the performance of "Amina" in *Somnambula*. She was generally admitted to be a woman of rare genius. The most memorable event of this distinguished artist's life was her performance of the character Fides in "Le Prophète." No operatic singer ever made a greater sensation in Paris.

The last season of Mme. Viardot in England was in 1858 during which she sang to enthusiastic audiences many of her principal roles. The tour in Poland, Germany and Russia which followed was marked by a series of splendid ovations. She was eagerly sought after by the most patriotic circles in Europe.

Her last public appearance was in Paris in 1862. Then she went to live in Baden-Baden in order to take up teaching and devote some time to composition. When the Franco-Prussian War broke out in 1871, she moved to Paris where she taught at the Paris Conservatory, and privately, until her death in June 1911, just three weeks before her ninetieth birthday.

In private life, this great artist has always been loved and admired for her brilliant mental accomplishments, her amiability, the suavity of her manners and her high principles. No less has she been idolized by the public for the splendor of her powers as a musician and tragedienne.

Madame Viardot transcribed some of Chopin's Mazurkas into songs, appearing with the composer in joint recital. Charles Gounod was her discovery and protégé. Robert Schumann dedicated his first volume of songs, the Liederkreis opus 24, to her. She sang the alto solo of Brahms Rhapsody opus 53 at Jens in 1870. Among her possessions were found valuable manuscripts such as the score of Mozart's "Don Giovanni," Bach's Cantatas "Schmuecke Dich" and "Vom Grossen Alten," Mendelssohn's 42nd Psalm, and her own lovely compositions, mostly songs and operettas.



Emi De Bidoli as a teacher

CHAPTER V

A voice teacher never becomes a good teacher unless he or she continues as a voice student too. There is endless knowledge to be gained through teaching.

The requirements of a vocal teacher are as follows: a good musical foundation - some experience in singing and public appearances - great love for and interest in the profession of teaching - good hearing - a developed sense of appreciation for good music - patience - natural friendliness - poise - and enough understanding of psychoanalysis to detect the weak and strong points of the students, as well as the ability to impart general culture. A good teacher should know something about the laws of pedagogy, the lack of which has often resulted in the inability of even famous opera singers to teach voice. Being naturally gifted, they often do not know how to train the voices of others, while there are many cases on record where the teacher who had to strive for his or her own voice development puts much stress and effort on the problem of training a voice.

The greatest teacher is one who is able to develop a small and often unpromising voice into a surprising success. There are such cases in the history of teaching, but they are rare.

The most futile teacher, in my opinion, is the one who works hastily and without genuine interest in his work or his pupil, one who works for the sole purpose of making a definite amount of money each day. He or she might be able to produce a fairly good voice, but if the enthusiasm in the loftiness of Art is lacking, if there is no soul quality in such a teacher, there can be no beneficial or lasting reaction on the pupil.

Every new voice should be taken into the teacher's heart, just as a mother takes to her breast the newborn baby, to feed it with her own life stream, to care for and nurture her precious charge as the dearest and

nearest she has. It is indeed a perplexing problem in our trying times of depression and commercialism to keep the standard of such idealism. It is also difficult to find people who will understand and respond to such soulful guidance, but regardless of all handicaps, no matter how complicated the circumstances, it is the teacher's work to remain steadfast to his or her ideals and give the best to those who come for learning.

Though I had the ambition of the stage in my heart and my musical education was planned accordingly, fate - or to use an occult expression, "karmie" conditions - did not permit.

I had some very splendid recommendations for Viennese engagements and started out with a "bang." The name of my former teacher, Mme. Viardot, opened all doors for me. Many of my appearances were in the homes of the most cultured and aristocratic people of the city, and I was received in the most exclusive musical circles. I sang in hospitals and churches and appeared as soloist with famous male choruses. As soloist in Händel's and Beethoven's Oratorios (Missa Solemnis, etc.), I had concert engagements in different cities of the Austrian-Hungarian monarchy, even as far as the city of Sarajevo, capital of Bosnia. I was received there by Governor Field Marshall Baron A.... I was enraptured by the Turkish atmosphere and visited mosques, harems, bazaars and other exotic places.

While back in Vienna, I continued enjoying a round of very successful activities with excellent prospects for the remainder of the season until Christmas of 1907. It was then that my high aspirations received a severe blow. News came that my poor mother, then living in Graz, was in a critical condition. This frightful shock jolted me completely out of the dream world in which I had been living. I hurried to her bedside and prepared to take charge of her. Her illness, which was a pathetic one, kept her helpless for ten years before her passing, and I settled in Graz.

Here I sang occasionally at recitals and oratorios, but made my living as a teacher of voice. It did not take

long to establish good classes - some of my students having reached the operatic stage.

Because of her mental condition, it was necessary to place my beloved mother in a well-known hospital for nervous afflictions, to remain there indefinitely. After that my desire for further study returned, and I proceeded to Milan where I had the great privilege of coaching with Professor Vanzo, former teacher of Joseph Schwarz, Baklanoff and other great artists. It was strange that this Italian Maestro had me studying much of Bach's arias, as well as a fine repertoire of the old Italian masters. He was a highly learned man and his teaching was inspiring.

Milan, with its beautiful dome and fine paintings, was a delight to my artistic tendencies. As added attraction which I shall always remember was the celebration of the 100th Anniversary of Verdi's birthday, when every work Maestro ever wrote was given at la Scala. I heard them all, including the last which was Verdi's Requiem. The next day following the celebration, there was the unveiling of a huge monument on a large piazza. The crowds were so enormous that I was in danger of being crushed.

The month of Christmas came, and I was anxious to reach Spain where I was expected by some good friends, and where I would be received at the Spanish Court. I made my first bow to Infanta Isabella of Bourbon, King Alfonse XII's sister. She was a great lover of music and interested in all musical affairs. I gave a recital in her palace and was rewarded with diamonds and a valuable antique fan. Through her gracious influence, I was received at the Royal Palace by the Mother Queen - Maria Christina. This was one of the greatest thrills in my life.

Her Majesty, having been born in my home city of Vienna, seemed to take a personal interest in me as well as in my singing. I had to give her a selection of twelve songs - mostly Schubert, but also Schumann, Kienzl and Richard Strauss. She spoke to me in the genuine "was-echte" dialect of Vienna. In dismissing me she presented me with a charming diamond brooch and told me to feel free to ask her, should I find that her influence would at any time be of advantage in getting me favors.

It would surpass the frame and purpose of this booklet were I to enumerate all the delightful experiences and impressions Spain gave me. I stayed here a little more than seven months. During that time I was introduced into some of the finest families of Madrid, such as the Duchess of Bolanos and the Princess of Radzivil (wife of the Ambassador of Germany) and others. As public solo recitals were not usual in Madrid, the musical attention was focussed on a splendid three months' opera season and a few symphony concerts. I was asked to sing in private concerts, which proved to be brilliant social functions as well.

News from my poor mother was not encouraging and I hurried home, via Paris and Germany. It was at the end of July 1914. I hardly set foot on native soil when the Archduke Ferdinand d'Este was murdered in Sarajevo, Bosnia and the terrible First World War was on. Again my ambition to go on with my own career was crushed. Every woman's foremost interest turned to help and serve the wounded as they came back from the battlefields.

Some wealthy friends whose residence was in Czechoslovakia - near the city of Brno - opened a beautiful hospital accommodating about two hundred soldiers, in the village of Zidlochovice. Because of my great desire to serve my countrymen, I was asked to manage this hospital, which I did willingly. Troops were mobilized, more and more day after day, and my journey to the hospital took me many nights and days. Ordinarily it would have taken less than a day.

A new chapter of my life started with this hospital work. Music and all other artistic aspirations were completely pushed into the background. To take care of our dear unfortunate soldiers and prisoners was my sole occupation for about two and a half years. During this time I found my only medium for expression was administering to the needs of the sufferers, and in a sense this gave me some happiness, at least an inner contentment that kept me working through all the greatest horror and tragedy that the world had known. Needless to say, those of us who devoted ourselves to this side of the war, did so without remuneration.

In the midst of this turmoil, further sad news called me to the deathbed of my mother, who was finally relieved of ten years of pathetic martyrdom. I was called upon to make new decisions and prepare myself for the future. It looked as if the war would never end, and it seemed as though the Austrian youth was bleeding to death. I returned to Czechoslovakia to be near my friends, but I would not bring myself to resume the hospital work.

A fine opportunity was presented to me in an offer to assume the post of Professor of Singing at the Conservatory of Brno. I shall always recall the director of this institution, Mr. Frotzler, as a highly capable person, a great interpreter of Richard Strauss' music. Among the otherwise congenial faculty, there was one woman, however, who worked decidedly against me, since her influence as wife of the President of the Conservatory was strong. The conditions under which I worked became more and more discordant and, after two and a half years of serving the Conservatory, I took leave and established myself as a private teacher in Brno.

Things went well with me here. My conservatory pupils followed me, and enrolled in my private classes. I was fortunate in obtaining two very talented assistant teachers for my pupils. One was the opera conductor of Brno, who coached the pupils in their operatic repertoires, and the other was a baritone of our opera cast, who held classes in dramatics. The results were wonderful, and we gave beautiful student performances. Even the use of the opera house and costumes were granted us.

The revolution in 1918 brought mighty financial upsets, and the loss to me was very great. The Austrian State as well as the newly formed Czechoslovakian Republic refused to refund the many thousands of Liberty Bonds which I had purchased at a sacrifice in the interest of my country. In spite of the good attendance at my school, the struggle for a meagre existence was hard; the political situation got worse and worse to the point of making it dangerous for a German Austrian to live in Czechoslovakia.

Eventually, after a series of events too numerous and complicated to explain, I decided to leave for America in

the spring of 1921. My experiences in the new continent would fill a special volume, were I to go into detail. There were trying times at first. I settled in Cleveland, Ohio, finally and made some fine friends. For over twenty-three years I have found deep satisfaction in working here as a teacher, vocalist and lecturer - doing what I could to prove myself a useful resident in the community.

Having arrived at this point in my narration, I want to cease all personal mention and throw some light on my teaching experiences.

In Graz my pupils were more or less similar - all of the same stock - and easily handled. Most of them had a tendency to throatiness and had bad speaking habits, due to the Styrian dialect. The material in Brno was more interesting. My classes were composed of quite a few Jewesses with gorgeous voices, mostly of an oily, sensuous quality. These voices are naturally flowing and easy to begin with, but owing to the fact that many of their possessors were lax in disposition, relying too much on the beauty of their voices, it was a task to train them.

The Czech pupils of whom I had very few, were all well-built girls. Their Slavic formation of cheek bones and beautiful teeth gave them a fine disposition for resonance. Among the German element (these were of Moravian stock) I had some cultured pupils who followed up the work with utmost zeal and interest. Some of them were later engaged in Grand Opera - and light opera - on the German and Austrian stage.

So strong has been the bond of genuine friendship and understanding between my pupils and myself that throughout these many years the link of mutual love and interest was kept alive, until the breaking out of World War II interrupted all communications.

My American students have offered the greatest variety to me. Through the years I have had representatives of all nationalities under my care, making my classes very cosmopolitan and giving a good background for colorful programs. It has helped me to study and appreciate the different folk music of the world more than ever before.

As long as prosperity reigned in this country, I was able to choose my students and use them in some very interesting recital work. The so-called depression has made it more difficult, but with the help of God, the work has gone on and is still going on. It has been my earnest desire in my entire teaching career, to give these youngsters the best I could in the Art of Singing, to awaken their minds and souls, to key their interest in the best kind of music, and to lead them gradually into the higher, loftier realms of appreciation and Life.

My ambition for this goal was prompted, first of all, by a love for my work, love for my students and an honest desire to impart to them all I had absorbed from my great teachers - plus the wish to influence and help them from a spiritual angle. There is peace and harmony in my studios. My boys and girls are trained to take interest in their work - and the work of one another - creating a feeling of good fellowship.

The dreams which I cherished as a child - to have a large family - I believe have come true. I consider my students to be my children. The knowledge which I possess, my heart and my soul, are open to them and not a day passes but that I do not ask God's blessings on them.

I also want to extend to every voice student and teacher who may have read these pages - my heartiest wishes for success, happiness and prosperity. There is a great beauty and satisfaction in studying and teaching the voice. It is creative work, and we see many reasons for being grateful for it, even though the thorns may be close to the roses.

During many years the city of Cleveland afforded me fine opportunities for musical stimulation. One of my greatest joys was to watch the growth of the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra which, at the present time, ranks with the foremost orchestras in the country. Our great conductors, such as Nikolai Sokoloff, Dr. Arthur Rodzinski, Dr. Rudolph Ringwall and Erich Leinsdorf, the latest and youngest of them, successfully worked for a greater understanding by the general public for the finest and noblest type of music.

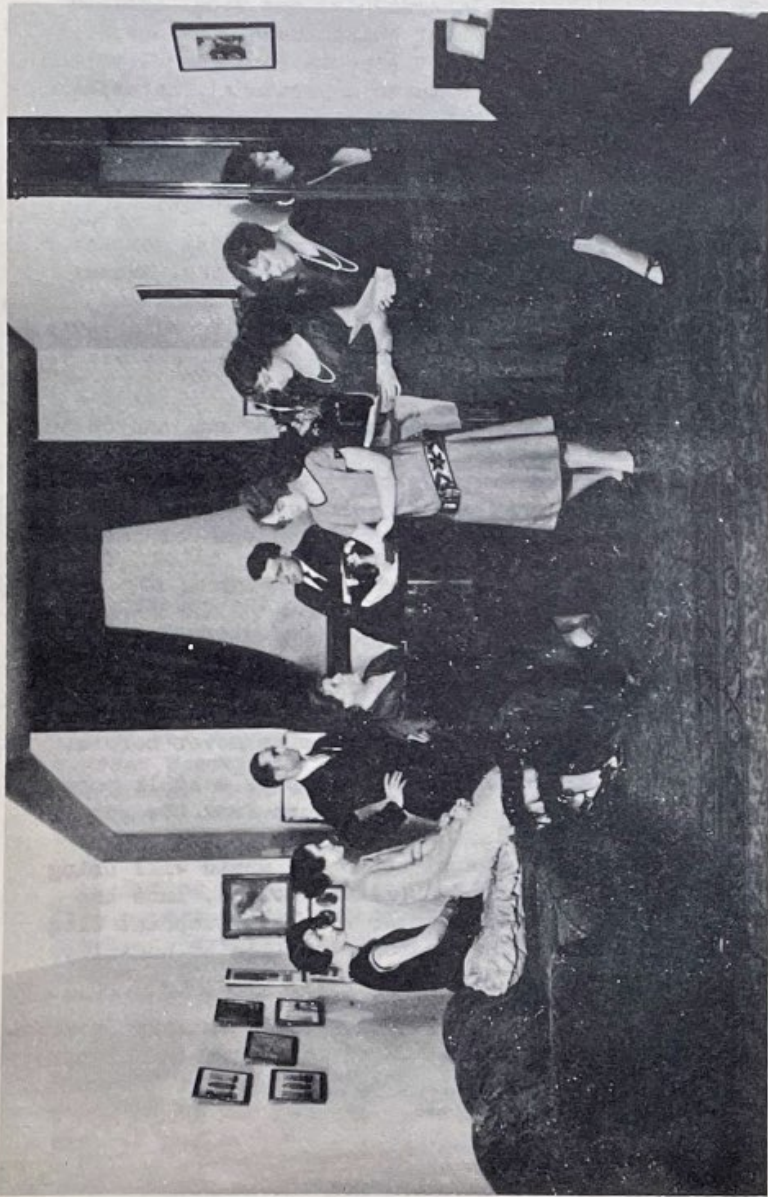
The most celebrated instrumental and vocal artists can be heard during the winter season under the auspices of the Cleveland Civic Concert Association; the Cleveland Art Museum maintains a fine music department, fostering preferably Bach's organ music. Numerous clubs such as the Fortnightly, the Singers Club, the Orpheus male chorus, the Composers and Authors Association of America and many others, are fostering lofty aims in musical production.

However, I am missing a steady civic Opera Company to which I was accustomed in European countries. Annual visits of the New York Metropolitan Opera Company and others of secondary repute are not an adequate substitute for the artistic atmosphere created by a local opera company.

I also take great interest in the National and State Music Teachers Associations, Academies of Teachers of Singing, Musicians and Music Teachers Clubs, et cetera. To belong to some of them and to serve them in different functions has been my great joy and privilege for several years.

The musical life in our city, or in the country at large, has not suffered at all since the outbreak of World War II. The peaceful battlecry "Keep Up Music for the Sake of Morale" rang as a clarion throughout the country. It was echoed by greater and greater efforts to let music live and grow into the hearts of people as never before.

This most sacred of all arts will play a still more beneficial role when our boys will return from the war theatres, weary, wounded and many of them mentally ill. A new therapy through the application of music will bring healing to many physical and spiritual wounds. Into the expected New Age, music will enter with a triumphant flag of peace and brotherhood to restore the ills of humanity.



Mme. Emi De Bidoli's Studio, 708 Carnegie Hall, Cleveland, Ohio

PART III - TECHNIQUE

CHAPTER VI

A. POSTURE AND BREATH.

The 10 commandments for beginner students are as follows:

- I. Stand erect.
- II. Keep perfect body balance (one foot in advance).
- III. Chest high, shoulders in natural position.
- IV. Head free and straight (feel your head like a flower and the neck as its stem).
- V. Breathe deeply, without moving chest nor shoulders in the least.
- VI. Tongue flat and grooved, tip of tongue leaning on the roots of the lower teeth.
- VII. Mouth open moderately and with friendly expression.
- VIII. Upper lip never to be drawn over teeth.
- IX. Soft palate in high position.
- X. Chin never protruding - lower teeth behind the upper teeth.

REMARKS:

It must be impressed on the beginning student never to practice any longer than 15 minutes at a time - 15 minutes rest, to which another period of 15 minutes may be added. The ideal condition would be to have the student practice with the teacher every day at least for the first 3 months, in order to prevent wrong muscle contractions or any other bad habits. As the pupil is advancing, the time for practice should be extended to one or one and a half hours.

The pupil who is approaching artistry should of course devote more time to his work, not only to prepare a certain material from lesson to lesson, but also to memorize songs and arias, to study foreign languages - so important for a professional career - to take dramatic lessons and even fencing lessons in certain cases.

There are three kinds of breathing: (1) the diaphragmatic or low breath, (2) the intercostal or middle breath, (3) the clavicular or high breath. All three together mean full contraction of all the inspirational muscles, necessary for the singer's health. However, for the purpose of singing, the combined diaphragmatic and intercostal breath is to be used.

It is advisable to have the pupil practice this kind of breathing on a divan with the following scheme: 12 waves inhaling and exhaling (diaphragmatic breath exclusively), 6 waves (diaphragmatic and intercostal breath combined), 2 waves full respiration (for health's sake, 7 counts in, 7 counts out).

The first attempt to apply the correct procedure of breathing is 4 counts in - 4 counts hold (hands on lower ribs) and then from 4 to 24 counts exhale on ZZZZZZZZZZZZ like a humming bee. After this exercise, the pupil may learn to sing sustained single tones in the middle or lower range (according to the quality of the voice) on "OH" or "OOH" or just humming.

A word may be said here on the debatable practice of the "HUM." Mme. Orgeni, as well as Mme. Viardot-Garcia, believed in humming exercises, of course not to be carried up too much into the high range of the voice where the labial and nasal resonance looses out for the "M" sound. Otherwise humming could be detrimental, as there is a danger of pressure on the throat. To avoid this, by touching lips and nostrils occasionally, one can control the looseness of the "hum." It is also helpful to start the humming exercises with a quick "H" before grasping the "M". This should be done with absolute relaxation (nonchalant as Mme. Viardot would say).

I have talked to several colleagues who absolutely denied the value of the "hum." It is a known fact that in no other profession than in voice teaching (the medical one perhaps excepted) can one find so many different opinions and practices.

Some teachers, for instance, lay no stress on breathing exercises, claiming that breath control naturally develops by itself, as soon as the pupil is given the first

exercises. Some others advocate a flat tongue, while others again say that no attention should be given to this point. However, there is an uprising of the tongue when singing the sounds "EE" or a long "A". This can only be counteracted by making the tip of the tongue lean against the roots of the lower teeth. The best way is never to go to extremes. There are exceptions to every rule and all roads lead to "Rome."

If breathing exercises of a gymnastic nature are given for correcting a sunken-in chest, round shoulders, a sloppy posture, and so on, we must admit that such exercises are quite necessary. They mean "corriger la nature," to use a French term, and they should go hand in hand with the building up of the voice.

For poorly constituted individuals, breath culture is a savior. We all agree that breath is life; we cannot live 5 minutes without breathing, else suffocation would set in; however we can abstain from eating for days and weeks without endangering our lives, as many saints and sages have already given proof. Correct breathing should be taught to children, as well as to those adults who are forced to live in crowded cities, thereby exposed to much polluted air, to over-heated office rooms, to smoky restaurants and many other dangerous places.

We cannot do enough to keep our lungs clean, free from poisons of all kinds. Correct breathing should play an important role in our lives, a real science such as it was and still is among Oriental peoples. Singing contributes a great deal to reviving the art of breathing in a scientific way.

In the latter part of the last century, a commission was elected in Paris to find out the cause of the predominant decline of the art of singing. Great scientists such as the doctors Segon, Poisonelle, Marshal de Calvicruvulhler wrote interesting treatises and France gave the signal for a revival of a greatly neglected science. After this happy turn, great German scientists took the subject in their hands. The doctors Weil, Neumann, Niemeier launched a campaign to convince the medical world of the great importance of the breath function concerning the well-being of the human body. A very well-known vocal

teacher from Holland, Mme. Jeanne Van Oldenbarnvelt, has rendered a great service to humanity, by lecturing extensively over Europe on the value of breath in connection with Art and Science. Her viewpoints were even printed in the famous French magazine "La Revue Internationale de la Tuberculose."

Unity between tone and breath is and should always be the supreme goal, such as was so superbly demonstrated by the late world-famous Enrico Caruso. Tones sung on the breath always vibrate pure. It is the most natural procedure, and only through wrong habits did we go astray. This includes wrong living, wrong eating, lack of sleep, lack of exercise and first of all wrong thinking.

I have proved from my experience as a teacher, how helpful it is to have pupils recite beautiful texts from world literature, from different holy scriptures and so on. First let them pronounce the whole text, word for word, with the greatest possible resonance, which we may call the dramatic voice, or "fortissimo," then single sentences in the conversational voice or "mezza voce," and finally in a sort of whisper voice or "pianissimo," the whole stanza or paragraph with greatest volubility in one single breath.

After this technical work is mastered, the inner meaning of the poem, or whatever quotation it may be, should be dwelled upon and rendered with deep feeling and adequate expression. In concentrating on such noble thoughts, the soul of the young student can be raised to great heights of inner beauty.

EXAMPLES: INFINITE ONENESS

Thee I see revealed in song of bird,
 The flower growing at my door,
 The happy laughter of the little child,
 The star of night, the pebble of the shore,
 Each to each allied and all to thee,
 O thou great reality so tender,
 Thou art so near, so near!

CLOUDS

Clouds adrift in the summer sky
 Resemble life as they wander by
 Whence they come and whither they go,
 We often wonder, but never know.
 One little hour we know their grace,
 They pass like shadows
 Nor hold their place.
 Ever recurring, like the dawn,
 Never enduring, but always gone,
 Part of the Infinite, shall we say,
 Part of the moment we call today,
 Clouds adrift in the summer sky,
 Resemble life as they wander by.

From E. Charles song "Clouds"

Hear the mellow wedding bells,
 What a gush of euphony voluminously wells,
 How it swells.
 How it tells of the future that impels
 To the singing and the ringing,
 To the rhyming and the chiming of the bells.

From "The Bells" by E. Poe

Every word should be distinctly and sonorously spoken, deliberately with constant tone and with free natural inflection. The decisive and, at the same time, flexible activity of jaw, tongue and lips must be observed in forming the different words.

B. VOICE PLACEMENT

Voice placement is a method by which correct sounds are produced. It depends on many factors. It is the result of many causes and preparatory works which lead to the high goal, called "A well-placed voice." Many teachers consider the term "voice placement" as a misnomer. They claim one should call it "breath or voice direction."

It is true that every tone chromatically going upward has to be directed by the ascending breath, respectively the voice, into the different resonance chambers, such as the mouth cavity, predominantly for low tones; into "The Mask" (nostrils and adjoining cavities),

predominantly for middle tones; and finally into the cavities of the forehead and skull, predominantly for high tones. I emphasized the word "predominantly" which means that other vibrations should not be excluded. For instance, even the lowest tones must receive co-vibrations from the head cavities and likewise the middle and top notes have to include some of the lower vibrations. This will produce and is the best means for producing an all-around resonance.

In the old Italian "Bel Canto" school the phrase "con la fronte" means that all tones must be directed toward the forehead, at the juncture of the nose. However little can be derived in this matter from written rules and explanations. Only a capable teacher can make the pupil understand what the requirements of correct voice placement are. An ounce of practice and example is worth more than a ton of theory. It is almost impossible to lay down any absolute rules on this subject. A great help can be offered the pupil by showing him or her the chart from Mme. Lilly Lehman's book "Meine Gesangskunst," which gives a fine visualization of where the different tones from the lowest to the highest range are to be felt.

Right attacking has also much to do with correct placement. In order to avoid the horrible mistakes of sharp or glottis attack, or scooped-up attacks, it is advisable to have the pupil attack single tones on syllables or on words beginning with "H", such as "HOOH," "HOH," "HAH." These attacks cause a gentle opening of the vocal chords and therefore the emission of floating tones.

The Latin and the Italian language furnish the purest vowels for attacking. These vowels are absolutely free from diphthong sounds or covered qualities. They are straight and pure and should be practised in their purity

"A" like in "father"
 "E" like in "able"
 "I" like in "bee"
 "O" like in "on"
 "U" like in "moon".

The perfect attacking of consonants is also instrumental toward correct voice placement, but only considering a certain group which I like to call the "sounding" or "floating" consonants. They are 7 in number: "M", "N",

"L", "Z", "R", "V".and "NG", a combination of two. The most efficient of all is the "M" (labial and nasal). Consequently syllables and words, beginning with or containing "M"'s are to be highly recommended for practice.

The next consonant for attacking with resonant value is the "N" (dental and nasal) therefore syllables and words beginning or containing "N"'s are helpful. Following in value are "L", "Z", the rolled "R", "V" and "NG". These seven consonants are great helpers on account of their resonance value, also for their value of linking syllables (especially for German texts).

No two voice teachers would agree upon any method being the right one. This results in the fact that there are as many methods as there are voice teachers. It may be that every one teaches with a preponderance of certain standardized rules, received from books or from teachers. There are not even two pupils who can be treated alike, which also proves that no rigid method can ever be followed. It is up to the intuition of a good, devoted teacher as to which way such a problem can be met. Innovations and inventions are quite permissible in such unusual cases.

A teacher must be born for his job, plus years of preparation and studies. He must be able to demonstrate voice production himself. This requirement is rarely the case with so-called self-styled teachers, who never had a lesson in their life.

This is the reason why the founders of the American Academy of Teachers of Singing came into the field as a redeeming factor. They are safeguarding the public against such unprofessional teachers. They have established strict laws and by-laws in their constitution. The members of this great organization have to agree to the fundamental ideas set forth by the Academy, and those abiding by them surely deserve to be chosen by the young aspirant of the art of singing

C. DICTION.

I. For songs and arias in the Italian language:

(a) Preparatory Exercises.

Practice on the 5 Italian vowels "A", "E", "I"

"O", "U". First to be attacked each separately 3 times on one breath with the dramatic voice (corresponding to fortissimo).

Second to be attacked 5 times on one breath with the conversational voice corresponding to mezza voce).

Third to be attacked 5 times on one breath with the whisper voice (corresponding to pianoissimo). After mastery of these vowels with the speaking voice, take these vowels up in singing them on single tones in the middle range of the voice, also on 3 and 5 tones up and down (the latter was Caruso's daily exercise).

Also use vowel combinations, such as, "IEA", "AEI", "UOA", "AOU" on single tones.

- (b) Practice single words like baccio, gente, notte, bello, fiamma, donna, cento, caro, ferro, etc. (more examples can be taken from Buzzzi-Peccia's excellent book "Italian Diction").
- (c) Alternate the words "fuggi" and "giura" on little runs of 5 notes up and down.
- (d) Practice of Italian syllables: DO, RE, MI, FA, SOL, LA, SI, DO.
1st on single tones.
2nd on 5 tones up and down.
3rd on scales up and down (twice on one breath).
4th on 9 tones up and down (on one breath).
- (e) The following Italian texts could be applied to ascending and descending scales:
 1. Ma dolce fille chi lo sà - se tu avrai di me pietà.
 2. So che ben spesso alla beltà - s'accompagna crudeltà.
 3. Ma te lo dico tanto fà - godi di tua fresca età.
 4. Presto qual fiore appassirà - ne piu alcun ti guarderà.

REMARK:

For Italian pronunciation rules, see Vaccai's book "Metodo Italiano."

II. For songs and arias in the French language:

The most important instruction should be directed toward the perfect pronunciation of the 4 nasal sounds which are the outstanding characteristics of the French language.

The 4 nasal sounds are:

1. AN, AM, EN, EM, (same pronunciation, though different spelling).
2. IN, IM, AIN, AIM, IEN.
3. ON, OM.
4. UN, UM.

These sounds must all find their resonance in the nose, though without any pinch. Exercise on different words (see pronunciation rules in Vaccai's book). Examples: fin, main, enfant, rampant, sans, dans, gentil, lentement, ganti, manteau, rien, bien, indien, mon, ton, son, ondulation, bonbon, dompter, songer, un, brun, parfum, important, dindon, rataplan, grand, instant, etc.

Some of the easier words may be picked out and given as exercises on single tones, perhaps: dans, mon, ton, son, fin, lin, brun, etc.

Another very important study must be dedicated to the pronunciation of French vowels. A, E, I, O, U, to be pronounced like "AH", "OE", "EE", "OH", and "UE." After having shaped them real well, combine them with the different consonants of the alphabet.

EXAMPLE: ba, be, bi, bo, bu,
ca, ce, ci, co, cu, (pronounce a hard c like "k").
da, de, di, do, du,
fa, fe, fi, fo, fu,
ga, ge, gi, go, gu, (pronounce a hard g like in "good")
ja, je, ji, jo, ju,
la, le, li, lo, lu,
ma, me, mi, mo, mu,
na, ne, ni, no, nu,
pa, pe, pi, po, pu,

ra, re, ri, ro, ru,
 sa, se, si, so, su,
 ta, te, ti, to, tu,
 va, ve, vi, vo, vu,
 xa, xe, xi, xo, xu,
 za, ze, zi, zo, zu,

Rules:

First each line on one breath (dramatic voice).
 Second 8 lines on one breath (conversational voice).
 Third the whole group on one breath (whisper).

Attack each consonant very strongly and execute the whole exercise with regularity and rhythm of a metronome.

The same exercise with the 4 nasal sounds in combination:

ban, ben, bin, bon, bun,
 can, cen, cin, con, cun,
 dan, den, din, don, dun,
 fan, fen, fin, fon, fun,
 jan, jen, jin, jon, jun,
 lan, len, lin, lon, lun,
 man, men, min, mon, mun,
 nan, nen, nin, non, nun,
 pan, pen, pin, pon, pun,
 ran, ren, rin, ron, run,
 san, sen, sin, son, sun,
 tan, ten, tin, ton, tun,
 van, ven, vin, von, vun,
 xan, xen, xin, xon, xun,
 zan, zen, zin, zon, zun,

Above exercises and some more are used by the actors of the famous Playhouse in Paris. They never appeared in print, but were handed over from generation to generation. I was privileged to receive them from a very famous actor, professor Edouard Céalís, with whom I studied French Diction, Dramatics and Stage Department for two years. He demanded these exercises to be done with utmost accuracy and considered them as the very foundation for reciting high class poetry and French drama.

Another great difficulty in singing French texts is

presented by the different "E"'s. There are 3 types of "E"'s.

1. E without any accent to be pronounced like the German "Umlaut" oe. (very round).

EXERCISE: je, me, te, le, ne, petit, regard, renom, melon, menace, geler, peler, semer, selon, refaire, breton.

2. E with an accent from right to left, called acute accent produced as a long a, very closed, like in the indefinite article "a", though without any vanishing into e (only one finger's width between the teeth).

EXERCISE: été, féliciter, dé, blé, thé, élève, élégant, étude, bonté, vérité, vénérable, séparation, céder, angélique, éperdu, etc.

3. E with a grave or circumflex accent is to be pronounced very openly like the a in "black."

EXERCISE: père, frère, tête, fenêtre, rêve, bête, fête, mère, grêle, etc.

After this preparation the book "French Diction for Singers" by William Harkins Arnold should be thoroughly studied.

III. For songs and arias in the German language.

The most important factor in singing German texts is the utilizing of the sounding consonants, especially the "M"'s and the "N"'s which so frequently appear in the ending of German verbs. The Italian words usually end with a vowel and meet with another vowel at the beginning of the next word. This produces a continuous linking, blending and melting together of vowel sounds. Not so in German. This language contains more covered and dark vowels; however the advantage of "Bel Canto" singing is afforded through the linking of the forementioned consonants with other consonants or vowels.

Richard Wagner, as a universal genius, was led to transform the German language into a perfect vehicle for tonal effects. By using the alliteration rhyme, he produced a great beauty and singability of language. In his "Nibelungen Dramas" we find many of those alliterations, mostly coming from an accumulation of "M"'s, "L"'s, "W"'s, and so on.

The Goethe-Schubert songs, the Heine-Schumann songs,

and the Moericke-Wolf songs would furnish excellent practice. If executed in rhythmical manner, the singing of the songs will appear much easier; for those singers who are not otherwise familiar with the German language will be able to transmute this idiom into a beautifully rhythmical and musical instrument. The German rolled "R", to be especially used in German operas, is even more prominently pronounced than the Italian "R". It can be attained from the two consonants "TD", to be struck quite hardly with the tongue toward the upper teeth, several times in succession, followed by sample words such as: Krieg, Prinz, Fritz, Trieb, Krabbe, Trost, Trug, trage, Rost, Ring, rot, Rasen, Rose, Treue, drohen, etc.

For obtaining a good rolling "R", I also recommend the following exercise:

TA DA LA DLA DLA DLA DRA
 TOE DOE LOE DLOE DLOE DLOE DROE
 TI DI LI DLI DLI DLI DRI
 TODO LO DLO DLO DLO DRO
 TUE TUE LJE DLJE DLJE DLJE DRUE
 DRA DROE DRI DRO DRUE.

EXAMPLES:

"Wagala Waja: Woge du Welle, Walle zur Wiege"
 "Was Sinnt nun Wotan so Wild" "Wie liebliche Luft
 uns unweht, wonnig Gefühl die Sinne erfüllt" "Wie
 taumeln die Tölpel dahin, durch has Tal talpen sie
 schon." "Ihr Reisen nehmt Euren Ring"

It is advisable to have the student practise simple sentences which contain many such sounding consonants,
 EXAMPLES:

For "M" "Mein arme lahme Muhme."
 For "N" Nun neun Nonnen nahn"
 For "L" Lieblich Loblied Lalit sie leise"
 For "R" Wiehernder Rosse Getrabe"
 For "Z" and "NG" "Saenger singen leisen Singsang."
 Another excellent example for the utilization of
 "M"'s and "N"'s is the text to Richard Strauss' song
 "Morgen": "Und morgen wird die Sonne wider scheinen
 und auf dem Wege, den ich gehen werde, wird uns die
 Glücklichen sie wieder einen inmitten dieser sonn-
 enatmenden Erde, etc.

It is of great help to explain to the student that the German language is made up of certain rhythms, there is a permanent change between accented and unaccented syllables (called hebungen and senkungen). There are 4 such rhythms, designated by Greek names:

1. Jambus: Gedicht, Verliebt, Bedeckt, Genug, etc.
2. Trochaeus: Wonne, Maiensonne, Leben, Weben, etc.
3. Anapaest: Meine Laute hab'ich gehängt an die Wand Hab sie umschlungen mit einem gruenen Band.
4. Dactylus: Mitten im Schimmer der spiegelnden Wellen gleitet wie Schuwäne der schwankende Kahn, etc.

Sometimes two kinds of rhythms are intermingled.

All the texts of German songs should first be practiced speakingly in order to get familiar with their specific rhythms. Let the pupil get started on simple folksongs.

EXAMPLES: "Sah ein Knab' ein Röslein stehn, war so jung und morgenschön.

IV. For songs and arias in the English language:

There are many excellent books on the market to help the improvement and refinement of English diction. There are teachers and singers who are denying any value of singing advantages in using the English language. I consider this a great injustice. Though the predominance of the "A" sound is producing a slight lowering of voice placement - though many words are fostering covered and backward tones, there is still wonderful material available.

Any language of any cultural race has its beauty. Let us go to the great poets, such as Milton, Shakespeare, Tennyson, Byron, Longfellow, Browning and others, and one can see how the English idiom is elevated to an instrument of beautiful poetic expression. Songs are usually based on great poems, and mastering them from their highly phonetic value, will have a great influence on the song itself as to beauty and perfect resonance. Vocal students whose native language is English will have no difficulty with the peculiarities of this language, except that most of the young people of nowadays have adopted many bad habits,

swallowing syllables, using slang, and so on. Therefore, corrections from a good elocution teacher can be of great advantage. F.W. Root, one of Chicago's outstanding vocal teachers, has issued several books for the purpose of correct pronunciation. One of them to be specially recommended is his collective work "Technique and the Art of Singing."

D. REPERTIORE STUDY

When the time has come to initiate the pupil into the study of songs and arias, great care must be taken in the procedure of advancing from the simplest material to the more and more complicated.

In the beginning the choice should fall on those songs which afford the best chances for good tone production. I guess it is agreed by the majority of teachers that the old Italian masters are furnishing the best opportunities toward this aim. This has not only to do with the purity of the Italian language but more so with the simplicity and singability of the melodic line of these classical compositions.

There are wonderful Anthologies available to present a good choice for different voices and grades. There are some of the easier opera arias by Mozart, Bellini, Donizetti, and even Verdi, which can be given in the beginning of repertoire study by letting the pupil work perhaps on certain phrases only, when they are especially helpful to good portamentis or to flexibility. At the same time easy and melodic songs can be given to the student in his or her native language and much later should the attempt be made to explore the song and opera literature written in foreign languages, such as the German, French, Czech, Norwegian, Spanish, and so on.

For each of those groups preparation ought to precede as to how a certain language must be handled. At the same time the bringing forth of soul qualities of nationalistic music must not be neglected. Very special attention should be directed to sacred music from the singing of simple hymns to the rendition of the most complicated Recitatives and Arias from world-famous Oratorios by Bach, Beethoven, Handel, and others. May we call it style or specialty, it always culminates in fascinating work.

The crown of Repertoire study is attained by the mastery of great opera arias or entire roles in their immensity of characteristics, to be understood with all their details and according to their psychological background.

Those of the young singers who are more inclined for concert work should appropriate the shades between the finest lyrical to even the highest dramatic expression of the huge literature of art songs.

Finally semi-popular songs and ballads also become a rich source for pleasurable singing, for creating happiness and joy in the heart of the listeners. Special tributes of praise must go to the alluring waltz songs and other dance rhythms, to the tender lullabies of all peoples and races, boat songs, nature songs, all based on universal feelings and emotions.

The distribution of Repertoire study can be classified by the following groups:

1. Old classical masters.
2. Sacred songs.
3. Opera arias with subdivisions for the different kinds of voices.
Female voices: Contralto, mezzo contralto, mezzo soprano, dramatic soprano, lyric soprano, light or coloratura soprano.
Male voices: Basso profundo, bass baritone, high baritone, robust tenor, lyric tenor.
4. American and English songs.
5. German and Scandinavian songs.
6. Slavic songs.
7. French songs and other songs of Latin origin.
8. Folksongs and Ballads from all over the world.
9. Light Opera songs.
10. Ensemble songs; duets, trios, quartets, sextets, etc.

All these forementioned groups are under the subdivision as to which grade they are fitted: beginner, intermediate, advanced, or artist student.

Group 1: Old Classical Masters

a) For beginners

"Tre Giorni son che Nina"	Pergolese
"Non e ver"	M. Speaker
Ave Maria	Marchese
La Folletta	Marchese
"Se ben crudele"	Caidara
"Caro mio ben"	Gordigliano
"Per la gloria"	Buononcini
"Star vicino"	S. Rosa

b) For intermediate and advanced grades

Amarillis	Caccini
Conzonetta	Haydn-Viardot
Alleluja	Mozart
Jubal's Harp	Händel
Largo from "Xerxes"	Händel
"Where e'er you walk	Händel
"Angels ever bright and fair"	Händel
"Ocessate di piagarmi"	Scarlatti
"Se tu m'ami"	Pergolese
Piacer d'amor	Martini
"Un Certo Non So Che"	Vivaldi
"O del mio dolce ardor"	Gluck

Group 2: Sacred Songs

Ave Maria	Cherubini
Ave Maria	Mercadente
Ave Maria	Marchese
Ave Maria	Kahn
Ave Maria	Tosti
The Lord's Prayer	Malotte
The Lord's Prayer	Forsythe
The Lord's Prayer	Mascagni
(adapted from "Cavalleria Rusticana")	
Agnus Dei	Bizet
Agnus Dei	Mozart
Cantatas	Bach
Arias from Oratorios	Handel
Arias from Oratorios	Bach
Arias from Oratorios	Beethoven
Arias from Oratorios	Mendelssohn

The Redeemer, "Be still and adore"	Gounod
"Consider the Lilies"	Prindel Scott
Gloria	Buzzi-Peccia etc.

Group 3: Opera Arias and Roles

Contralto or mezzo contralto

"Orpheus"	Gluck
"Ulrica" from the Masked Ball"	Verdi
"Carmen"	Bizet
"Mignon"	Thomas
"Oh mio bel Fernando" from "La Favorita"	Donizetti
Nancy from "Martha"	Flotow
Fides from "le Prophete"	Meyerbeer
Delila from "Samson and Delila"	Saint-Saens
Magdalena from "Der Evangelimann"	Kienzl
Lucia from "Cavalleria Rusticana"	Mascagni
Emilia from "Otello"	Verdi
Magdalena from "Rigoletto"	Verdi
Azucena from "Il Trovatore"	Verdi
Amneris from "Aida"	Verdi
Adriano from "Rienzi"	Wagner
Mary from the "Flying Dutchman"	Wagner
Brangaene from "Tristan and Isolde"	Wagner
Magdalena from "Die Meistersaenger"	Wagner
Erda from "Rheingold"	Wagner
Flosshilde and Fricka from Die "Walküre"	Wagner
Erda from "Siegfried"	Wagner
Ortrud from "Lohengrin"	Wagner
The third Norn and the third Rheindaughter	Wagner
Suzuki from "Madama Butterfly"	Puccini

Dramatic Soprano

"Iphigenia"	Gluck
Leonore from "Fidelio"	Beethoven
Dona Anna from "Don Juan"	Mozart
The countess from "The Marriage of Figaro"	Mozart
Valentine from "Les Huguenots"	Meyerbeer

Leonora from "Il Trovatore"	Verdi
"La Juive"	Halevy
Selika from "L'Africaine"	Meyerbeer
Amelia from "The Masked Ball"	Verdi
"The Queen of Sheba"	Goldmark-Gounod
Seïta from the "Flying Dutchman"	Wagner
Elisabeth from "Tannhauser"	Wagner
Kundry from "Parsifal"	Wagner
Isolde from "Tristan and Isolde"	Wagner
Tosca	Puccini
Agathe from "Der Freischuetz"	Weber
"La Gioconda"	Ponchielli

Lyric of Light Soprano:

Manon	Massenet
Nedda from "Pagliacci"	Leoncavallo
Mimi from "La Boheme"	Puccini
"Madame Butterfly"	Puccini
Lola from "Cavalleria Rusticana"	Mascagni
Inez from "L'Africaine"	Meyerbeer
From "The Merry Wives of Windsor"	Nicolai
Rosina from "Il Barbiere"	Rossini
Elsa from "Lohengrin"	Wagner
Waldvogel from "Siegfried"	Wagner
Sieglinde from "Die Walküre"	Wagner
Marie from "The Bartered Bride"	Smetana
Gilda from "Rigoletto"	Verdi
Aennchen from "Freischuetz"	Weber
"Louise"	Charpentier
Cherubino and Suzanna from "The Marriage of Figaro"	Mozart
Zerlina from "Don Juan"	Mozart
The Queen of Night from "The Magic Flute"	Mozart
Constanze from "Die Entfuehrung"	Mozart
Juliette from "Romeo and Juliette"	Gounod
Marguerite from "Faust"	Gounod
"Martha"	Flotow
Urbano from "Les Huguenots"	Meyerbeer
Violetta from "La Traviata"	Verdi
Frasquita from "Carmen"	Bizet
Sonnambula	Bellini
Lucia Di Lammermore	Donizetti

La Fille du Regiment	Donizetti
Lakme	Delibes

Special Coloratura Arias and Songs

Voices of spring	Strauss-Liebling
The Laughing Song from "The Bat"	Strauss
The Nightingale	Alabieff
The Shadow Song from "Dinorah"	Arditti
L'ètè	Chaminade
Swiss Echo Song	
Norwegian Echo Song	
Vienna Woods Waltz Song	Strauss- La Forge
Vilanelle	Dell'Acqua
"Lo Gentle Lark"	Bishop

Bass Voices

Sarastro from "The Magic Flute"	Mozart
The Cardinal from "La Juive:	Halevy
The Sorcerer from "Bastien and Bastieene"	Mozart
Mephistopheles from "Faust"	Gounod
Leporello from "Don Juan"	Mozart
Boris Godounow	Moussorgsky
Hagen from "Die Walküre"	Wagner

Baritone

Rigoletto	Verdi
Escamillo from "Carmen"	Bizet
Valentine from "Faust"	Gounod
Tonio from "Pagliacci"	Leoncavallo
Lescaut from "Manon"	Messenet
Figaro from "The Marriage of Figaro"	Mozart
Wolfgram from "Tannhauser"	Wagner
Hans Sachs from "Die Meistersaenger"	Wagner
Telramund from "Lohengrin"	Wagner
Amfortas from "Parsifal"	Wagner
The Flying Dutchman	Wagner
Figaro from "Il Barbiere"	Rossini
Rafaele from "The Jewels of the Madonna"	Wolf-Ferrari

Tenor

Nemorino from "L'Elesir D'Amore"	Donizetti
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Enzo from "La Gioconda"	Ponchiello
Il Duce from "Rigoletto"	Verdi
Canio from "Pagliacci"	Leoncavallo
Rhadames from "Aida"	Verdi
José from "Carmen"	Bizet
Lohengrin	Wagner
Tannhauser	Wagner
Parsifal	Wagner
Walter Stolzing from "Die "Die Meistersaenger"	Wagner
Siegmond and Siegfried from "Der Ring"	Wagner

Group 4: American and English songs

a) For beginners:

To You	O. Speaks
Her Rose	W. Combs
Birth of Morn	Leone
Sylvia	O. Speaks
All Through the Night	Old Welsh
The Lassie With the Delicate Air	A. Arne
Passing By	E. Purcell
Sing On	Denza
Carissima	A. A. Penn
At Dawning	Chas. W. Cadman
Long Ago	Old English
Beaming Eyes	McDowell
A Dream	Bartlett
At Parting	J. Rogers

b) For advanced grades:

At the Well	Hageman
Clouds	E. Charles
Bird of the Wilderness	Horsman
A Birthday	Woodman
Rain	Curran
Spirit Flower	Campell-Tipton
"When I Bring You Cloured Toys"	Carpenter
"Do Not Go My Love"	Hageman
The Blackbird	C. Scott

Group 5: German and Scandinavian songs

a) For beginners:

Auf Fluegeln des Gesanges	Mendelssohn
"Aus meinen grossen Schmerzen"	R. Franz
"Es hat die Rose sich beklagt"	R. Franz
Volksliedchen	R. Schumann
An den Sonnenschein	R. Schumann
Die Lotosblume	R. Schumann
Wiegenlied	Schubert
Heideroeslein	Schubert
Das Veilchen	Mozart
Kindergebet	M. Reger
Maria Wiegenlied	M. Reger
"Ich Liebe Dich"	Beethoven
Im Volkston	Hildach
Der Lenz	Hildach
"Still Wie Die Nacht"	Bohm
"Es Blinkt Der Thau" and Asra	Rubinstein
Wiegenlied and Sandmaennchen	Brahms
Primula Vera, "I Love Thee," Solveigs song	Grieg

b) For advanced grades:

Draw from the rich treasure of songs by Schumann, Schubert, Brahms, Hugo and Erich Wolf, Richard Strauss, Grieg, Sinding, Sibelius, et cetera.

Group 6: Slavic Songs

Draw from the rich treasure of songs by Dvorak, Tschaikofsky, Rachmaninoff, Gretchaninoff, Rimsky-Korsakoff, et cetera.

Group 7: French songs

a) For beginners:

Chanson de Florian	Godard
"Bonjour Suzon"	Delibes
Bergerettes of the 18th century	
L'Heure Exquise	Hahn
"Si Mes Vers Avaient Des Ailes"	Hahn
Obstination	Fontenailles
La Charmante Marguerite	Old French

b) For advanced grades:

Èlègie	Massenet
"Ouvre Tes Yeux Bleus"	Massenet
Après Un Reve	Faure
Anneau D'Argent	Chaminade
Bois Epais	Lully
Procession	Cesar Frank
Le Marriage Des Roses	Cesar Frank
Les Filles De Cadix	Delibes
Nuit D'Etoiles	Debussy
Romance	Debussy
Les Cigales	Chabrier

PART IV. MISCELLANY

CHAPTER VII

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A LESSON WITH MADAME VIARDOT

(This article was written during the winter of 1904 and published in a Viennese paper. It is here translated into English.)

The aged artist with the silvery hair and the deep eyes of the Spanish race, Pauline Viardot, is the idol of many. Since she has been the object of romantic poems by Alfred de Musset, the great poet of Love and Youth, as well as by Theophile Gautier - her fame is spread to all the corners of the earth, and her name glorified in newspapers of all tongues.

Even now, as she is over eighty, reporters and journalists are anxious to interview her, just perhaps to receive a little word from her lips. She never fails to tell some interesting anecdotes, for dear Madame Viardot still has a marvelous sense of humor in spite of her eighty-five years. There is a little sarcasm mixed up with it sometimes, but who could mind this? For this dear woman is always most gracious in her manners.

How charming she is in meeting her pupils whom she receives in her home in great numbers. Even on the coldest winter days she is on her job at ten in the morning sharp. Her home and environment emanate harmony, amiability, order and calm. Even the old servant who opens the door to usher pupils in, shows an air of kindness and poise when giving his greeting, thus proving the French proverb: "Tel maitre, tel valet."

Entering the parlor, which is filled with the most precious objects of art and most of the time adorned with a profusion of flowers, one is overcome with a feeling of awe and grandeur. All these memories produce an atmosphere which can only foster the effectiveness of the lessons.

The one who opens the teaching period may have a little conversation with Madame's maid who bustles around before her mistress appears. Whatever she says, shows her love and reverence for the great artist. She arranges the cushions on her chair, places a "chaufferette" under her feet in such a way that it will not interfere with playing the pedals, a warm shawl on the back of the chair, and on the right-hand side of the piano a standing clock and a little oriental bowl to receive the tuition fees which were acceptable only in gold coins. On the left-hand side lay the schedule book in red leather. From the chimney you hear the crackling fire and as you look out through the big glass door on the famous Place de la Concorde (for Madame's palace is located near the Chambre des Deputes) you may be startled by the "frou-frou" of a taffeta dress and the pleasant odour of lavender perfume.

One turns around and perceives the great teacher ready to open the series of her morning lessons. She certainly looks like a picture, usually clad in purple velvet or black silk with trimmings of Venetian lace, with antique jewelry, which enhances the beauty of her interesting face. "Bonjour ma petite, comment allez vous?" is her greeting to every one of her students, young and old.

Not only young novices of the Art of Singing consider Madame Viardot as an aim of pilgrimage from near and far, but she also takes under her wing finished and renowned opera and concert singers who desire to drink from the fountain of high art. They all become like little children in her presence.

As charming and humble as Madame Viardot can be in personal conversation, so strict and businesslike is she in her teaching. As soon as she plays the first chord on the piano, one is stricken with a feeling of excitement,

for it is very hard to satisfy her claims. Not only with myself, but even with my most advanced fellow students, I could experience how she interrupted us over and over again, when starting our songs and arias. One is forced to repeat certain passages many times until the redeeming word comes from her lips: "Enfin, ca va, allez."

There are critical days which come along from time to time when the darling old lady loses her temper, hitting the piano with her little fist and saying, half in earnest and half jokingly: "Sapristi, vous êtes une bé-casse" (you are a dumbbell). The very next moment she regrets she has been sharp and immediately, with mellow and loving voice, she tells you: "Never mind, my dear child. If you did not make mistakes, you would not be here."

It is most incredible how her ears have continued keen and observing. If by chance a pupil takes a breath too early or at the wrong place, she knows it immediately. Madame Viardot instructs her pupils in many languages, as the cosmopolitan city of Paris furnishes her disciples from all over the world. Whoever hears her speak French, Spanish, German or Italian, would wonder which one of all those idioms is her native tongue, as she masters them all to perfection.

Every lesson is an event and one returns home uplifted and enriched. If one dares to ask about her health and activity, adding to this that she should not overdo, a little frown appears on her forehead. Like all greatly celebrated artists, she does not want to be reminded of the great enemy "old age." Once when I asked her whether so much work would not harm her health, she replied: "No, my child, let me tell you that when Mme. Viardot will not work, she will be no more." May this word be true for a long time.

THE HUMAN VOICE

The human voice is the most marvelous attribute of man. It is his glory and most Godlike expression. It distinguishes him from the animal kingdom, as it is the very echo of his thoughts and emotions.

All treasures are, as a rule, well taken care of; people usually are very careful about their valuable possessions. But, are they equally attentive and appreciative in regard to their voices? Do they realize what a precious thing has been given them to carry throughout life as an indication of their cultural attainments? Do they know that a good and harmonious voice - speaking or singing - is the most potent means of reaching the souls of our fellow beings? Of transmitting to another love and wisdom and joy?

Even those who do not use their voices in a professional way, as orators, preachers, singers, need to pay attention to this wonderful instrument of mental and spiritual communication.

Like the eye, the voice also is the mirror of the soul. Harshness and coarseness indicate similar traits in the character of the owner. On the other hand, you may be sure that a certain sweetness, a melodic ring, reveals a loving and artistic disposition. As a rule, it is claimed that a beautiful voice is a gift from heaven, bestowed upon the chosen few and denied to others. I am, to a certain extent, inclined to object to this theory.

My long experience in studying and teaching the training of voices, in observing the different qualifications that may make or break a voice, has given me the conviction that a tremendous amount of work may be done toward developing and beautifying any kind of voice.

The much-quoted slogan "it must come from within," so often used in metaphysical treatises can easily be applied to this theory. The "within" must be inculcated in the child at the very beginning of its thinking career. You must never allow your children to scream, to misuse their voices in any manner. Help them to overcome outbursts of anger or of any other emotional urge. Influence

their thoughts, uplift their souls, so that from "within" will come the beauty of their characters and their voices. Thus only will they grow to bloom and bear the fruits of love and beauty, to be filled with melodic vibrations.

Hand in hand with this, go all the hygienic rules, pertaining to the prevention of colds, voice strains and other dangers, which must be observed. These must not only be considered in the life of the child, but must carefully be observed also in the life of the adult.

It would surpass the frame of this little sketch if I would mention all the things which are harmful or helpful to the voice. There is, however, one thing generally neglected, which should not be forgotten here; I cannot lay enough stress upon the importance of breathing, of filling our lungs with oxygen, of training the capacity of breath control and breath support which is solely to give the voice power, endurance and beauty.

When it comes to professional training, there are, of course, many more means to build up a voice of immaculate beauty. Sometimes years and years of training have to make up for certain shortcomings of nature. Demosthenes, one of the greatest orators of ancient Greece, was deprived of a good voice, but his will-power conquered all his failures. He practiced on the shore of the blue-waved Greek ocean; he tried to overpower the water's music and he succeeded so well that he developed into one of the most imposing orators of all ages.

A strong and ringing voice means health and happiness. It is the result of a well-trained body, of careful study, and leads to the highest manifestation of intellectual and musical talents. It becomes the very expression of all the wonderful dreams and occult powers of our souls.

HOW TO BUILD A PROGRAM

What is a program? Webster says: "A program is a statement of the order of proceedings or subjects embraced in any entertainment or public ceremony." Therefore it is something which is subordinated to the thought of order, to the logical arrangement of individual things or pieces so as to make a whole, and to lead from the simple to the more complicated. There must be a system in any program, whether it is consecrated to music, to politics, school-work or any other purpose.

Any other than a musical program has more chance of keeping within the frame of its own purpose, being more self-centered and intended to reach the public after being entirely worked out, regardless of the effect it will have on the outside world. It is not so with music.

Musicians are dependent to a great extent upon the taste and musical standard of their audiences and various other circumstances, which means that they have to use a great deal of psychology in order to make a success through the arrangement of their programs. It is not only necessary to unite the different musical numbers in a skillful way, so that no one number will eclipse the other, but there must be a decided effort to build up, to lead the whole program to a tremendous climax. In this is shown the meaning of building up a program.

Building is a creative power. Consider our great American buildings. The Master Builder inspires the mind of an artist or an architect who visualizes the completed creation through one glimpse of his indwelling creative forces. In the execution of the plans that are to realize his ideal, the height of the edifice to be must determine the depth and strength of the foundation. He builds upward from below according to whatever peak he plans to achieve.

The beautiful tower of our new Terminal Station for instance, would not give its lofty impression if the two wings of the whole building in their massiveness would not give it a wonderful support, an effect of restfulness and natural development.

This is comparable to the structure of a musical program. A program which claims to be classical and in the very best sense of the word should present fundamental music first, if possible, according to the chronological order of our musical literature. The old masters: Astorga, Pergolese, Gluck, Händel, Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, offer the very best introductions. They were dominated by periods when people lived a more sedate and quiet life. The music of these masters and of Bach exhale a peculiarly perfect poise and inalterable faith. The structure of their music is clear, positive and transparent. They will hold the highest standard of thematic perfection, and in spite of their relatively simple harmonization, they lead to the heights of human emotions. Consequently it is only natural to advocate the presentation of their works at the beginning of a worth-while musical program.

After listening to the uplifting harmonies of the old classical master which lead us to the realms of religious concentration and purity of mind, we are prepared to listen to something more romantic or descriptive, something which feeds our hunger for imaginative things, for soulful sensations and deeper vibrations.

This is the part where Schumann, Schubert, Weber, Berlioz and others find their places. But the romanticism in music soon palls; we have grown away from it in our strivings and we cannot easily attune our minds to their interpretations of life. We are enchanted by their tender ways, we feel transported to the shores of fairyland, but the modern soul craves for music of its own kind; and here we are at the climax of our own life history. The rapid tempo of modern music, her overwhelming richness and tunefulness in orchestration, her descriptive power, her thrilling capacities, make it the very thing to stir up our whole being - we vibrate and we respond to the vibrations of our own time. This may explain why, at the end of a program when we are given an opportunity to admire masters of our time, such as, R. Strauss, Respighi, Ravel, Duparc, Bartok, Mousgorsky and many others of great renown, we feel fascinated because their expression of life corresponds with our own understanding of life.

It is of great importance for a conductor, singers and instrumentalists, to attain a perfect knowledge of how to build up their program. From my standpoint, as a vocalist, and in case of an entirely vocal program, I am very much in favor of following the example of the so-called German "Liederabende," presenting entire groups of a certain composer or of a certain period which enables the audience to get in closer touch with the characteristics of this composer or period.

Hugo Wolf's songs for instance, so little known in our country, cannot be enjoyed if they are not presented in a group of at least four or five songs. A listener who never had the opportunity to become familiar with the unknown works of lyrical composers must train his ear to accept that composer's particular message through hearing not one but several of his compositions, before he can say to himself whether or not the music pleases him.

I regret that American audiences generally lay too much stress upon hearing their old favorites over and over again, thus preventing even the greatest stars from introducing new material of good value to the concert stage. Good things cannot be heard too often, but, unfortunately, there is so much cheap material among the so-called favorites that it is deplorable to see a great many outstanding singers yielding to the public's taste for fear of losing their popularity.

As far as this point is concerned, I feel that an artist should always uphold the highest standards. It is his or her mission to promote the very best, to be an educator, a pioneer, and a shining light in the darkness of ignorance and poor taste, a real star on the firmament of Art.

WHAT DOES OPERA MEAN TO THE MUSIC STUDENT?

To answer this question, I wish to say that the study of opera and the attending of operatic performances is a potent factor for widening a student's horizon in the worlds of mentality, emotionalism and musical knowledge, plus many items to foster an all-around cultural education.

Why is it that we can find all these advantages in Grand Opera, which to this day has not even received full recognition by the general public of the United States? I decidedly feel that our youth should be trained and prepared for a greater understanding of this most perfect form of art. Though great progress has been made during the last decade in awakening more interest in operatic performances, there is still much to be done in order to foster the founding of Opera Companies throughout the whole country, and in educating the public to appreciate and support them.

In what factors lie, then, the magic and the spell of Grand Opera? We might say that all the arts are usually combined in one single opera performance. The Art of Music in the first place, represented by a powerful orchestra under the all-embracing eye and ear of a competent conductor. Secondly, the Vocal Art, represented by a huge cast of singers for major and minor roles assisted by a most important chorus body. Thirdly, the Dramatic of Histrionic Art - for all of these singers with their glorious operatic voices have to be consummate actors and actresses. Without dramatic effects, the finest and noblest singing would not enhance the deeper meaning of an opera's plot.

We must not forget that opera is nothing less than a drama, set to music. It might be a tragedy or a comedy; the music might be continuous from beginning to end; it might be interrupted by dialogues, by ballet or interpretive dancing. However, in certain types of operas, music becomes the predominant partner. In others the composer sacrifices musical effects to the truth of the drama.

Beside the Art of Dancing we must also take into consideration the Decorative Art, which plays a very important role in the presentation of operas. This art

is usually connected with some historical background. The stage details in "Aida" for instance almost need an expert in Egyptology. In the "Magic Flute" some understanding of Free Masonic rituals would be desirable. So many epochs in history should be studied and depicted for the operatic stage.

Most of the Wagnerian operas are exponents of Teutonic mythology which requires a thorough study of ancient and medieval legendary literature. The opera "Faust" lends to a study of Middle-Age German architecture and costuming. Gluck's operas "Orpheus," "Alceste," "Iphigenia" must be staged according to a fine knowledge of Grecian art. As a striking contrast "Carmen" needs a sparkling and most colorful "Mise en Scène" - altogether the most interesting research work in the field of history and fine arts.

Many more crafts are necessary to produce the complexity of only one single opera performance. It is like a big machine with hundreds of smaller and bigger wheels in rotation. Through the action and accessories of the operatic stage, the force of feeling can be conveyed with overwhelming power. The whole gamut of emotions from the subtlest hint to the fury of inevitable passions must be at the command of those who wish to touch the hearts and souls of onlookers and listeners

May the writer of this narration give just one personal experience on behalf of this subject? When a child of about six years old, my parents were boxholders in the opera house of a middle-sized town near Vienna. I wanted to know why they left me at home for so many evenings and I begged to be taken along. Finally, I was to hear my first opera "La Traviata" by Verdi. When, in the first act, fair Violetta appeared in her gorgeous evening gown, adorned with pink camellias, a glittering diadem in her dark hair, displaying a marvelous voice in excellent artistry, I was spellbound and a sense of beauty was aroused in a child's heart. When later on, at the close of the third act, the same beautiful creature was lying on her death bed, coughing, sobbing, moaning and calling for her sweetheart with outstretched arms - something welled up in my soul which might be termed as compassion.

Modern educators say that children should not be given any sad impressions. However, I venture to say, that one experience laid a foundation in me for dramatic expression and for sympathy for those who suffer. Deep soul lessons can be conveyed by certain operatic works, such as in Beethoven's "Fidelio" where conjugal love is portrayed in its highest degree of sacrificing fidelity. Gounod's "Romeo and Juliet," based on Shakespeare's immortal love tragedy is an example of purest ecstasy between lovers, only equaled if not surpassed by Wagner's "Tristan and Isolde."

The entire "Nibelungen Ring" is a striking symbol of the curse cast upon those who are greedy for gold and money. Throughout the four dramas of this huge Tetralogy, the one who covets the "Ring" is doomed to perish. In the drama "Parcifal," Wagner recognizes in Christ the fulfillment of redemption. The composer himself had gone through many sad experiences, through deep soul suffering, and so for him "Parcifal" became the symbol of Christ. Many of Wagner's admirers call it the most marvelous and impressive achievement in the history of music.

Should not such a tremendous work be a source of great inspiration for young people? If our music students would be given more of the inner meaning of some of these gigantic works, the interest for the correlating music could be greatly awakened.

Also light operas and operettas which found their birth in old Vienna, especially through the delightful creations of the waltz king Strauss, as well as through Gilbert and Sullivan's numerous works, can be of great value to the music student. Italian operas, though very attractive from the standpoint of melody and vocal beauty, are unfortunately too much intermingled with murder and suicide subjects.

It is expected that the coming "New Age" will also create a new type of opera with deeper interpretations of human life and characters. In his marvelous book (which every musician should read) "Music - Its Hidden Influence Throughout The Ages," its author, the well-known English composer, Cyril Scott, tells us that the musical geniuses of the future will set themselves the task of writing new

types of music, which will be able to meet the most complex modern psychology. This will also include operatic works.

The music of the future will become more and more potent to bring humanity in touch with the higher planes of being, thus enabling humanity to experience a greater spiritual joy and exaltation than we are able to visualize in our present life condition.

In the future all types of music will act as a cement, more than ever before, to unite individuals, peoples, races, religions into one great whole, based on music's unsurpassed power as the "Language of the Universe."

HOW TO PREVENT COLDS AN INFORMAL "CAUSERIE"

In my vocation as a teacher of voice, I am often asked, "What shall I do for my cold?"

My answer usually is the following - "As your cold has come to the surface, let it have its course - only little things can be done for relief. However, my advice is that in the future you should work for the prevention of a cold."

Of course, the preventive work is not easy and requires effort physically and mentally. But you will profit through the systematic regularity of your actions - the perseverance - brought about by clearer insight of everyday living.

I feel qualified to speak with authority on this subject, as for years and years I have not had a cold, in spite of severe weather conditions and often being in constant contact with people afflicted with bad colds. First, I made myself independent to climatic conditions. Snow, blizzards, rain storms, sombre clouds or any unpleasant weather which tends to obscure the brightness of the day, have no effect upon me either mentally or

emotionally. By ignoring the atmospheric conditions I deny their power over my physical body and can find love for these days of seeming adversity. The lack of sunshine makes me realize that a far higher degree of warmth - and only the real sunshine - can be found in my heart. Snowflakes and icicles bring delight to my soul by their glittering beauty. Fogs and mists enhance my mystical faculties, etc.

Of course, I remember to put on my overshoes when the temperature is low and the streets are covered with snow or rain. The young ladies who invite trouble by wearing thin-soled, high-heeled slippers and spiderweb hose cannot expect an extra guardian angel to keep them from the outbreak of a cold. There are certain physical laws which must be obeyed - and one is that you keep your feet warm and dry or the reaction of a cold is inevitable.

Now, what are the main preventives to avoid nasty unnecessary colds? And by the way, some people excel in having more than one a year - they often get one after the other during the winter months, and then in the warmer weather they manage to get a so-called "summer cold," which is even more difficult to get rid of than the ordinary run-of-mine cold. These people must avoid certain things, whether they like it or not, if they wish to overcome this unpleasant affliction.

I shall enumerate a group of requirements, more or less important. These belong to the physical plane and deal with our bodily frame:

1. Breathing
2. Diet
3. Bathing and other water applications
4. Physical exercises

Everyone knows that breath means life. Hence, it is the most precious thing we have. We can exist without food over a short length of time but only five minutes without breathing would result in a horrible way of expiration.

The creator, in His unspeakable wisdom, has given us His Holy Breath to accompany us from our first to our last

sigh - or breath. How many people are really conscious of this most precious gift? How many know how to cultivate it? How to strengthen and use it for their general benefit? People who live in the country have the advantage of being surrounded by an ocean of oxygen which comes to them through companionship with their younger brothers of the vegetable kingdom. The trees and plants and flowers, all dear creations of God, absorb the poisonous carbon acid which our lungs expel. Consequently, these people of the country have an advantage over the city folks, although they are not always conscious of it. Those who live in cities are subject to danger - since there is no stimulus in the air for them to absorb what we may term "the elixir of life." On the contrary, the various and often unpleasant odors which are encountered in the street, such as automobile exhalations of gasoline, smoky particles and dust from factory chimneys and other fumes like those which come from radiators and fireplaces, the contaminated air of restaurants, club rooms and even homes - caused by insufficient ventilation where people smoke, etc. This adulterated air contaminates pure breathing and means - poison! poison! poison!

Well, this poison must be counteracted. Try to live in well-aired rooms. Keep the windows open during sleep, by all means. If your occupation is of a sedentary nature, make every effort to sit straight. Take an extra deep breath every once in a while. If time permits, open the window every half hour and stand before it, taking a good breath, dilating your nostrils. Count to seven or until you feel that you have inhaled a good noseful of fresh air into your lungs. Then go back to your work and rejoice in the satisfaction of a moment's regeneration.

Avoid contrasts in temperature. Turn the heat off when the radiator makes the air in the room too hot. This item is very important, as overheated rooms make our bodies unresistant. Last but not least, be sure to purify your breathing by regular morning and evening breathing exercises.

Singers, actors and public speakers whose foundation work is the art of correct breathing, usually have great resistance against colds, especially when they have

entered a professional career. It takes time for the amateur and student on the road to artistic achievement to overcome susceptibility to colds. Regular breathing exercises should be taken besides those required for the development of singing or speaking.

All the ancient religions and philosophies have given mention to the subject of breath. The Religion of Zarathustra, The Sufi Mystics, The Buddhists and Brahmins - all follow a special system of breathing. However, their methods are not needed for the average western people, but it is interesting to note that the subject of breathing has always been recognized as a vital one. A set of wonderful breathing exercises are available and highly recommended for the use of people in every walk of life: office worker - house wife - musician. This short sketch does not permit adequate explanation of these exercises but I assure you that daily exercising on my part gives me this immunity against colds.

It is my conviction that proper diet is also important in the matter of preventing colds. As a rule diets are advised in cases of overweight and high blood pressure, etc. But I also believe that our nourishment has much to do with colds. It stands to reason that anemic people are easily subjected to colds and that those whose diet consists mostly of rich proteins, etc., are likewise prey to colds.

To prevent colds, it is well to remember that we should never overheat our blood. Therefore, the less meat the better - and very little of spices, alcohol, nicotine, caffeine. It is better to eat your fill of good ripe fruits, fresh, and when possible, raw vegetables; in fact, those foods which make the blood richer and lighter and at the same time produce normal circulation.

Another means of helping our blood circulation and avoiding colds is to do daily physical exercises. Not the tiresome jerky routines of the gymnasium but those which will loosen our joints in a rhythmical and natural way. Care should be given to our skin. Two weekly hot baths should be followed by a shower of cold water - to close the pores. Rub the skin each morning after a

shower of lukewarm and then cold water. A good sniff of cold water up the nose and a thorough gargling of the throat with lukewarm salt water should complete the morning preventative measure.

This is about all we can do in a material way to combat a cold but there are many mental and emotional factors to be observed too.

All of you who know anything about the power of thought will agree with me that the fear of anything causing the cold is always pernicious. What we hold in our consciousness is apt to outwardly manifest itself. Why not then hold the greatest thoughts of assurance that nothing can really harm us; that a draft is a non-entity and that contagion from our neighbors can be checked by our denying the danger. We can gain mental power and fearlessness by a glorious consciousness of HEALTH.

A firm inward statement of Health should become our second nature. To be healthy means to be harmonious and happy, to be in accordance with God's Will that we become more and more perfect children of Nature, masters of the elements, Creators of all good things through the creative power of our God-given Minds.

The foregoing statements perhaps would produce a smile on a doctor's face. I have the greatest respect for the medical profession and do not claim to know anything about its practice. This little article is expressed empirically - with only one motive in mind - and that is to help some of my fellow human beings who might profit by my experience. I know there is no higher ideal than to reach Harmony and perfection in the manifold realms of our human lives. Our bodies, being the temples of the Spirit, need to be kept clean and perfect. Colds and their accompanying conditions are like spiderwebs on the walls and ceilings of our homes. We must sweep them away with the good strong broomstick of right thinking and living.

I have actually said nothing new in the above. What I mean to convey concisely is the strict observance each day of the little right actions which we can do easily

neglect. For only through the power of a pure and true Will can we reach higher conditions of life. A person who is under the spell of a cold has a more or less dimmed consciousness. The faculty of thinking is certainly benumbed. In the French language a cold is called, "Rhume de cerveau" - something which has to do with the brain.

Liberation from cold conditions is only possible through preventive means. If we are negligent we have to suffer the consequences. Why not start at once, set our feet on the path of right thinking, right feeling and right living? You can do it. Harmony of body, soul and spirit must be the result!

God has given us the right to become masters of our destiny. His laws aim for the good and beautiful - and true. To enter these realms of happiness we must not even overlook a little cold.

Let us become perfect, warm through the fire from within - good and true!

RICHARD WAGNER'S PARSIFAL IN THE LIGHT OF SYMBOLISM

The legend of the Holy Grail is incorporated in two of Wagner's music dramas, in Lohengrin and in Parsifal. The latter is Wagner's swan song. After many experiences and much suffering, the master recognized in Christ the fulfillment of the redemption, and the character of Parsifal became the symbol of Christ. Wagner's bosom friend Friedrich Nietzsche, the great German philosopher who created the idea of the superman, could not follow Wagner into the sanctuary of his heart where the Christ vision had finally appeared in all the glory of its light. A friendship of long standing came to its end. However, Wagner went on unwaveringly creating his masterpiece in which the mystery of Golgotha found a glorious counterpart in the renunciation of Parsifal.

This work was the result of thirty-five years of reflection and is to be considered as the embodiment of his mellow and deliberately developed philosophy. Many of Wagner's admirers called it the most marvelous and impressive achievement in the history of music. It is undeniable indeed that in joining the story to the transcendent power of his music, Wagner produced a work of such greatness that even a so-called unawakened soul could not remain untouched after hearing it.

The music and characters are bound together as in no other musical production. From the host of medieval legends surrounding the story of the holy Grail, Richard Wagner selected the epic poem of the old German Minnesinger Wolfram Von Eschenbach. The origin of this version is enshrouded in the mystery which overshadowed the infancy of the human race.

It is an erroneous idea, when we think that a myth is nothing but a human fancy, having no foundation on facts. On the contrary a myth is a casket containing sometimes the most precious jewels of spiritual Truths, pearls of beauty so rare and ethereal, that they cannot stand exposure to the material intellect. These spiritual Truths appeared in the form of symbolism in religions, philosophies and peoples. They were given to humanity for the purpose of spiritual development.

To suit his dramatic impulse, Wagner modified many of the details given in Eschenbach's poem, and he also enriched its meaning according to his initiate consciousness which gave him a much deeper understanding of the whole subject. The idea of the Grail dates from the earliest times and during the middle ages became a most poetic conception representing the ideal of the pious devotions of chivalry.

It was the sacred chalice of wonderful spiritual power from which Christ drank at the Last Supper, in which were caught the last drops of his blood as He hung on the cross. According to Wagner, both the Grail and the sacred spear with which Longinus pierced the side of Christ, were brought down from heaven and given into the keeping of Titurel, who built for them a temple in the mountains of northern Spain (Monsalvat). He founded an

order of knighthood to watch and protect the sacred relics. None but the pure in heart would find the magic temple; none but the noblest could remain in its service.

Titurel was succeeded by Amfortas who fell victim to the allurements of Kundry, a witch woman, a female prototype of the erring Jew. Her master, the magician Klingsor, had wrested from Amfortas the sacred spear, and in the conflict, Amfortas was gravely wounded. The wound of Amfortas would not heal though the Knight remained in life through the sustaining power of the Holy Grail. However it was prophesied that a youth would come to Monsalvat, pure and unsophisticated, who would become wise through compassion. This youth is Parsifal, the hero in Wagner's drama. The prophesy also foretold that Parsifal would have to withstand temptation and evil, that he would regain the spear and finally by its aid, heal Amfortas' wound.

Wagner was great in making his characters symbolic for certain principles or laws of an inner nature.

In explaining the Esoteric meanings of the characters and objects, appearing in the Parsifal drama, we are led to begin with the only female character, the witch woman, Kundry. She is a creature of two existences. In one existence she is willing to serve the Grail and to further the interests of the Grail Knights. In her other existence she is the slave of the magician Klingsor, forced by him to tempt the Grail Knights whom she longs to serve. In the first act Kundry is clothed in a robe of snake skin which symbolizes the doctrine of rebirth or reincarnation, for as the snake sheds its skin, coat after coat, which it exudes from itself, so in its evolutionary pilgrimage the human ego emanates from itself one body after another. This idea is also coupled with the teachings of the law of consequence, which brings to us the effects of causes we have laid in former lives and expressed in Gurnemanz's answer to the young squire's avowal of distrust in Kundry. "Under a curse she well may be from some past life we do not see, seeking from sin to lose the fetter by deeds for which we fare the better. Surely it's good she follows thee helping herself while helping us."

Klingsor is symbolizing the dark forces in life; he is a real black magician, always opposing and fighting goodness and purity.

Parsifal is his very opposite, the embodiment of love and chastity. He is the pure fool or the soul who has forgotten the wisdom of the world and is seeking for the higher life. In the Arabian language the name means Parsee, the pure one and Fal means foolish. As long as a man is seeking earthly goods or just to have a good time, he is called wise according to the world, but when he turns his face towards the things of the spirit, he becomes a fool in the eyes of the world. Parsifal overcomes all temptations through his firmness and virtue. The wild Kundry is changed into a saint desiring nothing more but to serve and to be at the feet of her master, such as Maria Magdalene was conquered by the purity of the Christ.

When Parsifal attained the supreme goal, he had reached the stage of freedom spoken of in Revelation: "Him that overcometh, will I make a pillar in the house of God; he shall go out thence no more."

Amfortas symbolizes the cross of suffering.

Gurnemanz, who is a guide and mentor to Parsifal, represents the initiator who comes into the life of everyone who has set his feet on the path to liberation. The flowermaiden are symbolizing earthly pleasures, amusements and temptations. The cup or chalice represents the Higher Understanding, the attainment of transcendent knowledge. It is also analogous to the cup of Hermes of the ancient Egyptians, the basket of the Greeks, the vase or basin of the Druids, and similar European or Oriental mystical vessels.

It is very important to know that the spear which plays such an important role in many of the Wagnarian dramas is representative for the Divine Will or Spiritual Power which comes to the pure of heart, when it is only used for unselfish purposes. Impurity and passion cause its loss, as was the case with Amfortas.

The swan which in the first act is shown swimming on the lake and is unintentionally killed by Parsifal, stands

for Ecstasy. Parsifal has brought him to earth, but through the right use and might of love, he was able later on to perform the miracle of redemption. The quickening of the spirit has been represented in all religions as a bird. In the Christian religion, the Holy Spirit descended as a dove during the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan river.

In northern mythology, a swan moves upon the lake beneath the World Ash, called Yggdrasii and likewise a swan is brooding upon the waters of the lake near the precinct of the castle Monsalvat.

The legend of Parsifal as dramatized by Wagner and transcended by his initiated philosophy symbolizes the doctrine of renunciation, for the young hero, after many privations and considerable self-sacrifice, becomes the head of the mystic body of knights who perpetuate the observance of the last Supper and of the Mass of the Apostolic church.

In Wagner's time many people objected to the employment of religious themes for dramatic purposes, considering them as a sacrilege. But it was the essence in Wagner's teachings that the stage should be restored to its place beside the church in the exposition of religion and ethics.

The most thrilling parts in the Parsifal score are the music played during the march of Gurnemanz and Parsifal to the temple and of course the "Good Friday Spell" which is of highest spiritual power. The keynote of Parsifal is ecstasy symbolized by the swan as mentioned before. The lake, over which the swan is brooding calm and unruffled, is the human mind tamed by the proper methods of Right Contemplation. For only when the mind is still may the Light of the true Self be reflected in its depth. From there it is only one step to the attainment of right ecstasy. When the sun plunges in the depth of the mind, the whole being is aflame with the sacred fire of the Holy Spirit. This is one of the most important keys to the interpretation of the drama Parsifal and also an indication of the result which Richard Wagner desired to produce upon the minds of his audience.

Wagner made arrangements that this work should only be given in a proper setting and under right conditions, for it represents the summit of his magical mountain of which the base was the Ring. He called it a stage-consecrated festival, and its effects were intended to exert their influence upon the Drama of Life itself.

Emi de Bidoli

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RICHARD WAGNER'S MYSTICAL INFLUENCE TO THE WORLD

Richard Wagner was not only a great reformer of music throughout the whole world; he was also a great poet, a dramatist of first rank, a deep thinker, a philosopher, a splendid prose writer and an artist in every sense of the word.

Supreme to this great versatility we find deeply embedded in his flaming soul the mystical impulse which made him an outstanding figure on the firmament of all the world geniuses.

The secret of why his immortal works won recognition throughout the whole world, why they aroused enthusiasm, attracting so many followers even among the so-called enemy nations, lies not only in the overwhelming impression of his rich and colorful music, but mainly in the subjects which he preferred to choose.

He was thoroughly acquainted with the legends and romances of the middle ages. Most of all his operas and music dramas with only a few exceptions introduce their listeners into the realms of old myths and symbolical characters.

Myths are vehicles of spiritual truths veiled under allegory, symbols and pictures. As fairy tales are an enlightenment to children, so the great myths were used to convey spiritual truths to infant humanity. Richard

Wagner was a master builder in setting such kind of old myths to music.

As it is usually the case with great geniuses, they do not always win recognition during their lifetime. The dark forces which always work against spiritual evolution were using all the means at their disposal to thwart Wagner and his message. The forces of Light however which used and inspired Wagner in his creative work urged him on ahead, in spite of the continuous struggle of his existence.

The keynote of Wagner's drama is Unity and Diversity. His music is the prototype of the Principle of cooperation. Spiritually speaking it symbolizes the mystic truth that each individual soul is unified with the all-soul, the all-pervading consciousness.

In order to attain Unity, Richard Wagner had to break down all the barriers and he set music free. Although he introduced unknown structural innovations in operatic form, the far-reaching effects he was destined to produce are to be found in other causes.

Among all the preceding geniuses Richard Wagner was the first to portray that Love which is God, the Divine, or what in certain schools of occultism is termed "the Buddic." Wagner's inspiration reached its most sublime altitude in the "Prize Song" from the "Meistersinger," in Isolde's "Liebestod" and in Parsifals "Good Friday Spell."

All the characters which Richard Wagner created are bearers of certain symbols, most of them heroic beings, gods, goddesses, half gods and half goddesses.

The effect of Wagner's music is so great that in spite of its nationalistic attitude and being so teutonic in every aspect, his work was accepted by all civilized nations and is coming more and more to the front.

What is the secret of this effect? The music, the Romanticism and the spiritual expressed in his work, can not help but attract the attention and devotion of responsive minds and souls. Those who are able clairaudiently to hear the music of the spheres, will recognize

that Wagner's music is very close to the higher planes, as it possesses a great spiritual value. This spiritual contingent in his music is the secret of its overwhelming effect on certain souls whether they are consciously touched by it or not.

Richard Wagner was possessed by one exalted idea - the formation of one Great Brotherhood of Art. His whole life was singleheartedly devoted to the regeneration of the human race and in Art he saw the means of its accomplishment. He loved not only the human race but also its younger brothers of the animal kingdom. In many of his letters one can find charming references to domestic animals and one of his most trenchant essays is directed against vivisection. His character was by no means flawless, but owing to the fact that his genius was the finest musical medium for divine expression, the message which he brought to the world was of the highest quality. He enriched humanity with a glorious philosophy of life, with the beauty of his melodies and harmonies, and also with his curious power to move the human heart. The happy ones who are at the level of comprehending his music, of penetrating the mystical content of his work will find therein a treasure house of eternal beauty.

Dedicated To Richard Wagner's 125th Birth Anniversary

From heights unknown hast thou come to us, the human race, to endow us with the glory of music unsurpassed.
 For what the string of thy golden lyre has produced stirs our souls, moves our hidden tears, deepens our whole being.
 With thousand ears hast thou received Devic melodies, the strangest harmonies given to thee from above.
 The earthly clay, surrounding thy radiant soul, has not barred the rich flow from divine sources at thy disposal.
 Thy life was not without thorns but something higher and stronger within thy frame has conquered them all and every thorn, every sting became a wondrous tune, a glorious unit of harmony, poetry and mystic truth.

None other on the starry firmament of music has combined like thou all the means of expression to fulfill thy gigantic work.

We stand in awe before the slightest strain born of thy Genius, we bow our heads in devotion, when listening to the holy chords of thy music.

Whence was their magic spell conceived?

Let us never forget that thy great mystery came from love supreme, from the universal mind who found in thee the willing instrument to yield to celestial spheres and to become a link between heaven and earth.

We greet thee great Richard on this day of thy earthly birth as our elder brother, as a bringer of Light and Truth; for what thou hast given us, what thou hast concealed within thy work sublime, bears the stamp of eternity.

Glory to the Maker of thy Genius, to the Devic Angels who overshadowed thy art.

We know thou goest on in yonder realms from heights to heights, from beauty to beauty, and we rejoice in thy greatness.

In thee we glorify the Creator of harmonies divine.

Emi de Bidoli

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