MUSIC

EDITED BY JOSEPH MACQUEEN.

Dr. Emil Enna

William Mansell Wilder.

PORTLAND'S brief season of grand opera will open tomorrow night at the public auditorium, when the San Carlo Grand Opera company will present Donizetti's tuneful opera, "Lucia di Lammermoor," with Queena Mario, coloratura soprano, for the past two seasons a favorite with Portland music lovers, cast as Lucia and Pilade Sinagra as Sir Edgar.

The company comes this year, it is promised, with more elaborate scenery, finer costumes, larger and better orchestra and chorus. Besides the regular stars, two guest artists of international fame—Anna Fitziu and Alice Gentle, both of the Metropolitan forces—have been secured to take leading roles in four of the operas. Miss Fitziu will be heard in the role of Cho Cho San in "Madame Butterfly" and as Thais in Massenet's opera by that name. Miss Gentle will be heard in the leading soprano roles in "Carmen" and "Tosca."

Tuesday night "Madame Butterfly" will be given; Wednesday matinee, "Martha," with Queena Mario in the title role; Wednesday night, "Carmen," with Miss Gentle; Thursday night, "Thais"; Friday night, "Faust," with Miss Mario; Saturday matinee, "Tosca," and closing night in "Il Trovatore."

AUDITORIUM CONCERT, 3 P. M.

An unusually interesting programme will be presented at 3 P. M. today at the public auditorium, when John Claire Montieth, baritone, and Mrs. Blanche Williams Sargersten, soprano, will be feature soloists. Lucien E. Becker will be organist. Mr. Montieth will sing five numbers, two with piano accompaniment and three with pipe organ accompaniment. His special number will be the "Toreador Song." Mrs. Sergersten will sing four numbers with piano and organ accompaniment, her feature song being Aria "I Will Extol Thee."

The programme:

Organ: "Chorale" and "Gothic Toccata" (Boellman); "Berceuse" from "Jocelyn" (Godard); variations on the tune "America" (Tesse), Mr. Becker; "The Lost Chord" (Sullivan); Aria, "It Is Enough" (Elijah)" Mendelssohn Mr. Monteith; "The Robin Woman's Song" from "Shanewis" (Cadman); "Fairy Tales" (Wolff); "A Birthday" (Corwen); Mrs. Sergersten; Gavotte Sergeant "Ye Olden Tyme" (Martin); "The Fountain" (Matthews); aria, "I will extol thee!" Costa; Mrs. Sergersten; "Duna" (McGill); "The Barefoot Trail" (Wiggers); "The Toreador Song" (Bizet); Mr. Monteith, with Miss Ida May Cook, accompanist; "Marche Funebre" (Chopin); "Scherzo-Fanfare" (Loret). "Star Spangled Banner."

ORPHEUS CONCERT TUESDAY.

The Orpheus Male Chorus, Inc., William Mansell Wilder director, will give the first concert of the 11th season at Pythian hall, West Park and Yamhill streets, 8:15 P. M. Tuesday, February 15, with Vivian Strong Hart, colorature soprano, of Seattle, and will present the following programme:

"Trust Her Not" (Parks), "Honey Town" (Parks), "The Warning" (Mozart), aria, "Shadow Song" from "Dinorah" (Meyerbeer), Vivian Strong Hart; "O, Warrior Bold" (West), "Carry Me Back to Old Virginia" (James Bland), "The Spirit Flower" (Campbell-Tipton), "One Summer Night" (Grieg), by Vivian Strong Hart; "Brave Heart, Sleep On" (Parks), in memory of the boys who sleep under the poppies in no man's land; "Old Farmer Slow" (Adam Geibel); "The Rose Enslaves the Nightingale" (Rimsky-Korsakoff), "Amy's Song," "Shanewis" (Cadman), by Vivian Strong Hart; "Water Lilies Gavotte" (Carl Linders), "Good-bye, Sweet Day, Good-bye" (Kate Vannah).

HOFMANN PLAYS WEDNESDAY.

Josef Hofmann, piano star, who plays in recital at the Heilig theater, Wednesday night, direction of Steers & Coman, can well boast that Anton Rubinstein, that giant among the world's pianists, was his (Josef Hofmann's) only other teacher, besides his father. With Rubinstein he studied two years, shortly before Rubinstein's death, and he has the noble distinction of being the only private student ever accepted by the great master. The tender affection existing between the two was nearly that of father and son, and the deep impression and strong influence of close association with Rubinstein have often been remarked in Mr. Hofmann's character and playing.

"Such piano playing as was heard yesterday afternoon in Carnegie Hall is something which might occur once in a half dozen seasons, and when it does occur it leaves a remembrance never to be forgotten." Such was the verdict of H. E. Krehbiel music critic of the New York Tribune, given to Mr. Hofmann. Mr. Hofmann excels in the extraordinary possession and command of each and every musical and artistic virtue; his piano technique is colossal, and his interpretations ring with eloquence and poetry.

MISS WOLFE'S RECITAL FEB. 15.

The MacDowell club will meet at 3 P. M. Tuesday at the Multnomah hotel auditorium, and Miss Phyllis Wolfe, lyric soprano, and Mrs. Eulah Mitchell Carroll, pianist and accompanist, will present the programme.

Miss Wolfe has had unusual training in voice culture, having studied in Boston with William L. Whitney at the New England conservatory, and later in Italy with Vannuccini in Florence, and Teresa Ankel and Guarino, famous coaches in Milan. Miss Wolfe has had the advantage of study with Leon Renay, the prominent French coach of New York City, and possesses an enviable repertoire of early and modern French songs. Miss Wolfe gave freely of her talent to war work, singing for soldiers and sailors in and around New York, and she toured with the Foch-Lyons naval band in the interest of liberty loan drives.

Mrs. Eulah Mitchell Carroll, pianist and accompanist, who made her initial concert appearance in Portland last December and was cordially received, will be at the piano for Miss Wolfe's accompaniments.

TWO PORTLAND MUSICAL PEOPLE ACTIVE IN CURRENT AFFAIRS.

Dr. Emil Enna announces a series of concerts featuring music by American composers, to take place in the near future in various towns in Oregon.

William Mansell Wilder, director of the Orpheus Male Chorus, Inc., will present that chorus in concert, Pythian hall, West Park and Yamhill streets, 8:15 P. M. Tuesday.

COMPOSERS' DINNER FEB. 24.

The Society of Oregon Composers has issued invitations to a musical dinner to take place at the Benson hotel February 24. A programme of compositions by Oregon composers for orchestra, quartet, strings, piano and vocal solos has been arranged, and it is expected that composers from the various portions of the state will be present. Reservations must be made in advance with Dr. Emil Enna, at 510 Bush and Lane building.

The committee in charge: Mrs. Katherine Glenn Kerry, Mrs. Ralph C. Walker, Miss Annabelle Wagstaff, Mrs. Amelie Amacher, Mrs. Sarah A. Blackman, Mrs. Lena W. Chambers, Miss Evelyn Calbraith, Mrs. Eva Hammer Hull, Mrs. Norine W. Harris, Mrs. Katherine L. Johnson, Miss Jessie L. Lewis, Miss Constance Mattingly, Miss Jean McKercher, Mrs. Adel Anderson Wood, Daniel H. Wilson, E. O. Spitzner, Christian Pool, Lucien E. Becker, Charles Swenson, Alexander Hull, George D. Ingram and Dr. Z. M. Parvin.

SYMPHONY POP FEBRUARY 29.

The third popular concert of the Portland symphony orchestra will take place at the public auditorium, 3 P. M., Sunday, February 27. The programme will include a "fantasie" in themes from the "Hansel and Gretel" never before played in programme in Portland. The special request numbers, Delibes' "Pizzacato" from "Sylvia" and Strauss' "Blue Danube Waltz" also will be played. The remainder of the programme will include well-established favorites. Tickets for this concert now are on sale at Sherman, Clay & Co.'s.

ASTORIA DAY CONCERT MARCH 6.

The names of the Larkin Singing society of Astoria, Or., that will sing in concert Sunday afternoon, March 6, in the public auditorium, Astoria day, of music are: A. B. Thorsnes, president; Adolf Hauke, secretary; T. P. Haller, director; M. J. Berg, A. Rasmussen, H. B. Rasmussen, Herman Pedersen, Gust Peterson, T. P. Neste, Robert Rasmussen, Ellif Forness, Ole Berg, Magnus Pedersen, Emil Anderson, Emil Knutsen, J. O. Sandven, Paul Hauke, R. Johnson, Roy Ness, Axel Bernhoff, Alfred Hauke, A. G. Backlund, E. B. Hauke, Emil Indergard, J. N. Jorgenson, Arne Olson, Anton Kvistad, Carl Kvistad and E. B. Roth. The concert is under the direction of Mrs. Rose Coursen Reed, who will present the Astoria Treble Clef club, and Mrs. Myrtle Olsen-Embich and Mrs. Maude Ross-Sardam, on this occasion.

PARLOW CONCERT MARCH 9.

Miss Kathleen Parlow, violinist, appears in concert, Heilig theater, March 9, and the event will be the third concert of the Elwyn artist series for 1920-21.

Five years have passed since America has had the pleasure of hearing Kathleen Parlow, and when she made her Aeolian hall debut last January, New York music lovers crowded the hall for the event. She was greeted with enthusiastic applause when she appeared upon the concert platform, violin in hand, but the applause became an ovation lasting several minutes when she finished her final programme number. Miss Parlow has returned a more finished violin artist than ever. The New York critics were unanimous in their praise the following morning.

"She has returned with the same vigor and energy that animated her thin, spare frame, and that signified a nervous strength and a fire that were not suspected; with the same big and broad tone, the same excellent technique in bowing and fingering and a ripe musical feeling," wrote the critic of the New York Times.

The New York Sun critic termed Miss Parlow "a mistress of the violin."

Miss Parlow comes to America for a limited trans-continental concert tour under the direction of the Elwyn concert bureau after several years of European triumphs. In Europe she has been termed "the greatest living woman violinist," and America will undoubtedly confirm the decision of European critics. The violinist has started on her trans-continental tour and is scheduled to appear in concert in Salt Lake City Friday night.

SEATTLE ORCHESTRA'S STATUS.

SEATTLE, Wash., Feb. 12.—(Special.)—Rumors that the Seattle Symphony orchestra is on the verge of collapse due to financial difficulties is denied by officials of the organization. John Spargur, one of the prime factors in starting the orchestra and keeping it alive after it started, said that the plans outlined at the beginning of the season will be carried through to a successful end. The plans referred to are those of raising $40,000 by subscription and $40,000 from concerts, a total of $80,000. Mr. Spragur said that the $40,000 has been pledged though not all collected, but that there was no doubt at all as to the intentions of the persons pledging the money to advance it when needed.

The orchestra is made up of approximately 72 pieces, 15 of which were brought to Seattle from eastern cities at the beginning of the present season.

AMERICAN MUSIC FEATURED.

A splendidly rendered all-American programme of music was given at Oregon City under the auspices of the P. E. O. at the Congregational church by Dr. Emil Enna, pianist; Otto Wedemeyer, baritone, and Richard G. Montgomery, 'cellist. These numbers were presented:

Piano, "Prelude, Chanzonetta and Dance" (Arthur Whiting); "Masurka" (Lucien E. Becker); "Tocatta" (Arthur Foote); "Menuet" (Seabock); "Valse Brillante" (Huerta); "Indian Dances, Morning, Noon and Night," and "Etude de Concert" (Emil Enna); vocal, "I'm Wearing Awa'" (Arthur Foote); "Let Miss Lindy Pass" (Frank L. Stanton), and "Invictus" (Bruno Huhn). Cello, "Hymnus" (Ivar Holter); "Venetian Love Song" (Nevin); "A Rose in Bud" (Dorothy Foster), and "The Sky Blue Water" (Cadman).

At the programme at Newberg, Or., February 17, Mrs. Mabel Ryder Williams, pianist; Miss Clare Coakley, soprano, and Alexander Hull, baritone, will assist on the programme.

MUSIC TOOLS VISIONED

In China the most celebrated stringed instrument is certainly the classical Ch'in, said to be the invention of Fu-Hsi (B. C. 2852). Its dimensions, form and materials are supposed to have their origin in nature, while even the number of threads to each string are prescribed, says the Christian Science Monitor. The seven strings pass over a bridge and through the sound board, being tightened by nuts below. The 13 studs are of metal, the body of tungwood, the nuts of marble or jade.

It is extremely difficult to play and is the instrument of elegance in China. Six of them are used at the Confucian ceremonies.

A similarly shaped instrument is the Se, but it has 25 strings; originally it had as many as 50. Each string has a movable bridge, the whole being distinctively colored (blue, red or yellow, white and black), in fives. A similar variant, with 14 strings only, is known as the Taong.

Guitars are of several kinds. The P'i-p'a balloon guitar, with four strings representing the four seasons, is used on joyful occasions with the flute and by troubadours to accompany their songs. It is never used at religious ceremonies. It is mostly played tremolo, like our mandolin. The San-hsien (three-stringed) is also a favorite with street singers, while the Yueh-ch'in (moon guitar), perhaps the most pleasing in tone, is often used with the P'i-p'a to accompany ballads.

Chinese violins are quite primitive. The Hu-ch-'in has a hollow cylindrical body of bamboo, wood or copper, covered with snakeskin. Through this the long neck passes. It has either two or four silk strings and, like the Ehr-hsien (two-stringed violin), the bow passes between the strings so that bowing is somewhat difficult. The latter instrument varies in shape, the body being either of bamboo, cocoanut or shell. Both are popular with the Chinese poorer classes.

Wind instruments are not of great variety. A long horn with sliding tube is used for military purposes. A trumpet like a Roman tuba, though military, is also used by itinerant knife grinders, while a curved variety is played at weddings.

Flutes were formerly of copper, jade or marble. The commonest now used is the ti-tzu, a bamboo tube bound with silk. It is found in every orchestra. The only difference between ordinary flutes and those used in the rituals is that the latter are ornamented with dragons' heads.

The "so-na" (clarinet) is also immensely popular in spite of its shrill, unmusical tones. It is a wooden pipe with copper bell and mouthpiece like the English oboe.

Of all Chinese instruments none is more charming that the sheng. Directly descended from the panpipes, it is traditionally associated with the Phoenix and supposed to reproduce its voice. An organ in miniature, it has a soundbox of lacquered wood the size and shape of a cup. The reeds are grouped in fancied resemblance to a bird's tail. It is never used in popular orchestras and, although it is generally carried at weddings, it is only for show. It is used at the Confucian ceremonies to support the flutes.

—Bushnell.

Little Louisa Amelia Rice, 7 years old, appeared recently in piano recital.

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MUSIC BRIEFS.

Louis Graverne, the Belgian-English baritone, sails in June for a concert tour in Europe.

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The Pittsburg, Pa., male chorus and the Apollo club recently combined in a concert in that city, with John Hand, tenor, as soloist.

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Mischa Elman, the star violinist, recently sailed for the far east. He has been engaged to play for five consecutive recitals in one week in the Imperial theater, Tokio, Japan.

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Emmy Destinn, New York Metropolitan opera soprano, has canceled her concert engagements to sing in California, and plans to sail soon for Europe.

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Erno Dohnanyi, the eminent European composer-pianist, who plans to arrive in this country Tuesday, has been booked for many important concerts, among them appearances with the Boston, National and Cincinnati symphony orchestras.

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A delightful programme was presented last Wednesday at the regular assembly at Hill Military academy. The vocal numbers were sung by Otto Wedemeyer and included "I'm Wearing Awa'" ((Foote); "Let Miss Lindy Pass' (Rogers); "Invictus" (Huhn); "Oregon, My Oregon" (Murtagh). Miss Gertrude Lakefish played a group of piano solos and both soloists were enthusiastically applauded by the cadets. Dr. Emil Enna arranged the programme and was accompanist for Mr. Wedemeyer.

Little Miss Geraldine Peterson, reader and violinist, will take part in musicale, Portland Woman's club building fund benefit, Tuesday afternoon.

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Madame Alda, the New York Metropolitan opera prima donna soprano, has decided that she will not visit Australia, her native land, at present.

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At a recent meeting of Lavender club No. 2 Mary Stevens Mastin, to the enjoyment of all present, played several piano solos. She is studying piano with Roy Marion Wheeler.

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Fritz Kreisler, the violin star, played lately in concert in Columbus, O., to an audience of 4000 people, and many were turned away for lack of seating capacity. The concert is described as being a big success.

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It is again stated that unless financial support is received to offset the deficits in this season's concerts, that the St. Louis Symphony orchestra may be forced to disband before the close of the season.

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Mrs. N. J. Campbell, who is Portland correspondent for Musical America, New York, has been ill at the Portland surgical hospital for the past two weeks but is improving. During the illness of her mother Miss Irene Campbell has been handling the work.

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Webber's string orchestra will give the concert at the Men's Resort, 8 P. M. Saturday, and will be directed by H. C. Webber. Owing to the success of Mr. Webber's juvenile concert last month, Mr. Webber decided to give another concert with his string orchestra at the resort.

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Mrs. Clifford Moore, specialist in harmony fundamental work for children and even older musicians, announces a class recital of her fundamental music training school 8 P. M. February 21. Mrs. Moore was the first instructor to do music class work in Portland. Starting ten years ago with ten students, Mrs. Moore's school now has 150 students.

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Miss Nina Dressel, contralto of the First Congregational church choir, is one of the advance students to be presented by Mrs. Rose Coursen-Reed at her complimentary students' concert, to take place March 29 at the public auditorium. One of Miss Dressel's numbers will be "Oh Don Fatale," aria from "Don Carlos." Miss Dressel has a full mellow contralto of extensive range, which the rendition of this aria will show to good advantage.

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Little Miss Anita Kempe is a piano student with Mrs. J. Harvey Johnson, and shows marked talent and ability in piano work. She was presented in piano recital by Mrs. Johnson February 5, and soon showed creditable progress in piano performance after 13 months' instruction. Miss Kempe played solos—from memory—from the works of Kragmann, Makiejs, Grant-Schaefer, Schytte, Reinhold and one special solo, "For Elsie" (Beethoven). Miss Kempe was assisted by Master Allan Balda, boy soprano, who charmed the audience by his singing of about half a dozen solos.

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"The organ will now play," announced the lord mayor of Liverpool, England, at a big function many years ago in the Liverpool city hall, of which the late W. T. Best was organist. The latter, who was present, remained seated, and the lord mayor again made the announcement, with the same result. An official was sent to where Mr. Best was sitting and informed him of the lord mayor's announcement. "Let it play," was Mr. Best's terse reply. On being informed of this, the lord mayor took the hint and, on rising for the third time, said: "Our distinguished fellow citizen, Mr. W. T. Best, will now give us a selection on the organ." Needless to say the selection was ably given.

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An American conductor, Weston Gales of New York, gave Paris her first solid Wagnerian programme of overtures recently when he was accorded the honor of directing the Lamoureux orchestra, says a dispatch from that city. Paris now seems to accept German music without protest, although within a month squads of police guarded the government-supported opera, when "Die Walkure," the first Wagnerian production sung there since the war, was rendered. Mr. Gales founded and conducted for four years the Detroit, Mich., symphony orchestra. His Paris programme comprised the "Rienzi," "Flying Dutchman" and "Tannhauser" overtures and the preludes from "Lochengrin," "Parsifal," "Tristan and Isolde" and "The Meistersinger."

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It is evident that Marguerite D'Alvarez is gaining a popularity in New York equal to that which the famous Peruvian contralto has in England. There she has a record of 12 capacity audiences in Queen's hall, which seats 2800, in a single season, and that during the period of war depression. She has already given two recitals in New York this season and will sing a third soon. In March she will be soloist with the Schola Cantorum, Kurt Schindler, conductor, in a programme of Spanish music. Later in the same month she will appear twice in the spring festival of the Oratorio society of New York, Walter Damrosch, conductor, in performances of Bach's "St. Matthew Passion" and the Verdi "Requiem," supported by a chorus of 800 and the New York Symphony orchestra augmented to 120.

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Fred L. Boynton, tenor, a student with Miss Minnetta Magers, sang at the luncheon given by the Business Women's Advertsing club, Tyrolean room, Benson hotel, last Friday noon, and his solos were "To a Hilltop Fair" (Cox) and "A Little Bit o' Honey" (Carrie Jacobs Bond). Mr. Boynton has a lovely, powerful, robust tenor voice which he uses with much skill. He recently gave a programme at the Girls' Polytechnic school, which was so much enjoyed that he was requested to give a second programme. Mr. Boynton studied a year with Miss Magers, Salem, and then he was transferred in work to San Francisco, where he studied singing for two years. Then he entered army service, and sang first tenor in a male quartet at Camp Grant, and when the music revue presented the comic opera, "Chimes of Normandy," Mr. Boynton was chosen to sing the leading tenor part.

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The musical and literary activities of the following students of the Valair Conservatoire de Musique et Art Dramatique recently were as follows: Martha Batterson, dramatic reader, was presented at the conservatory February 5. Miss Batterson gave a fine rendition of "The Spanish Gypsy" (Eliot) portraying the various moods and feelings with intensity and depth. Itryes Gardner, an advanced piano student, assisted Miss Batterson by playing "To a Wild Rose" (MacDowell) and "Scarf Dance" (Chaminade) with ease and beauty of tone. A large audience was present and received these two students cordially. Fay Buchanan was the soprano soloist February 4 at the Church of Latter Day Saints, Montavilla, where the general yearly conference was being held. Her songs were "The Jewel Song" from "Faust," "When Spring Comes Laughing" (Scott), "Where My Caravan Has Rested" (Lohr) and "Love Planted a Rose" (Cox). Margaret Louise Jones appeared in a short programme of songs for the Woodstock school benefit to raise funds for the gymnasium class. Carolyn Hutchins and Bessie Atkinson were the dramatic readers for the organ benefit of the Divine Science church, East Twenty-fifth and Clay. Miss Hutchins read "The Heart of Old Hickory" (Drumgool) and Bessie Atkinson gave a clever interpretation of "The Party" (Dunbar). Both girls were cordially received and recalled for encores.

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The Monday Musical club gave an elaborate tea and musical at the home of Mrs. Herman A. Heppner, honorary president of the club, last Monday. Mrs. J. L. Stafford was in charge of the social arrangements for the affair. Assisting Mrs. Heppner in receiving were Mrs. J. Thomas Leonard and Mrs. A. R. Mattingly; Mrs. F. W. Vouney and Mrs. Fred A. Kribs poured, assisted by Mrs. J. E. Bonbright, Mrs. A. B. Holderman, Mrs. Hughson, Mrs. R. W. Jameson, Mrs. W. R. Robinson and Mrs. B. B. Banning. Mrs. Wm. H. Brauger arranged an enjoyable programme, featuring three young soloists: Piano solo, "Spring" (Cranston Hoag); vocal, "Melisande in the Woods" (Goetz), "Love Is a Rose" (Santa Sonci), "On the Shore" (Neidlinger) Cranston Hoag; violin, "Meditation" (Thais); "Serenade" (Gabriel Pierne), Miss Willetha Ritter; vocal, "Pale Yellow Rose" (Montague F. Phillips) "Rachem" (Mana'zucca), "I Dreamt" (F. Schira), "Love Like a Dawn Came Stealing" (Cadman), Miss Henrietta

(Concluded on Page 7.)

RIGHT BREATHING DECLARED MOST IMPORTANT TO SINGER

Beautiful Voice Said in Danger of Being Marred by Faulty Breath Control—Hard Work Essential to Success—17 Proper Age to Begin.

Mme. Nellie Melba, Who Tells of Her Own Success And How Others May Achieve.

MADAME NELLIE MELBA, K. B. E.

I HAVE received as many as a hundred and twenty-five letters in a single day from students of singing who sought my help. In one day also, 30 or 40 more have begged for a hearing; and I found that some of these could not even tell one note from another. Now, in my view, mediocrity is best discouraged. It can only hamper or obscure real talent, overcrowding the singing profession and disappointing, or even irritating, the musical public upon whose patronage the highest art must ultimately depend.

Therefore, I shall speak quite plainly, confident that the student with a fine voice, as well as the true temperament and determination will profit by my none too rosy words. There is no royal road to success in singing. I rate correct breathing before even a beautiful voice, for this can be marred by faulty breath control. Phrasing, true resonance and expression—all these depend upon respiration. Here we have one of the old Italian secrets, which so many singers of our day have never found.

Louis Pasteur's motto "Il faut travailler"—we must work—should be that of every ambitious artiste. "Hasten slowly" applies supremely in the delicate and complex art of dramatic singing. And when all the obstacles I name have been vanquished and the stage is reached, it is then that the most important study may be said to begin. For life and art are the greatest of teachers.

Fight Declared Necessary.

One of the luckiest and most talented women who ever lived—Madame la Pompadour—could review her career and declare that, "ma vie est up combat"—"it has been one long fight." Perhaps it is better so. "One must travail and turmoil," as Byron remarked, "otherwise there is no existence." So if I seem to strew the climber's path with thorns I am quite sure she will surmount them, glorying in the struggle as she goes.

Consider my own case. I quote it with no vanity at all, but only to illustrate my meaning. The gift of song was certainly mine. I was born with a natural and absolute breath control. Consequently as a child of seven I was as far advanced as more mature students are after years of study and practice.

At my school in East Melbourne the girls would gather round me and say, "Nellie, do make that funny noise in your throat!" My trill amused them. Yet for all that, I had everything to learn. Even after my public debut in Brussels, as Gilda in "Rigoletto" my French was very bad—though I studied the part of Lakme under the composer himself.

The opera directors came one day to that famous master and expressed grave doubts about me. Ought I to sing in Lakme at all? The answer of Delibes was very decided. "Qu'elle chante en chinois," he cried, pounding the table with his fist—"mais qu'elle chante mon opera!" ("Let her sing in Chinese if she likes, as long as she sings my work.")

Hard Study Recounted.

The moral of this is that a voice alone is not enough. I had forthwith to begin French seriously, and in Brussels I put in six hours a day at it under Mlle. Tordeus. I hope vocal aspirants may be cheered by the tale of my own early struggles. Remember, I lived at the other end of the globe, as far as possible from the best musical traditions and atmosphere. At the age of 20 I was a wife and mother; and my first concert appearance was calculated to damp all ardour and ambition.

Alone I hired a small hall, and then went about selling tickets to my friends—people who had heard me sing in the choir, either at the Presbyterian church or that of St. Francis in Melbourne. But my parents were distressed at the whole affair. My father went round to all the ticket holders and asked them as a family favor to stay away. And this they did.

On the great night I faced an audience of just two persons, yet I sang my whole programme through precisely as though the place were packed with enthusiasts. In the same spirit I met and overcame every subsequent damper. Indeed, obstacles had a peculiar whet and spur for my nature—a fortunate trait for any artist, especially one who adopts a musical career.

Now let me begin with the girl who has an exceptional voice as well as a capacity for hard and careful work, together with the strength of character that will not take "no" from an unkind fate on the upward road. Nothing should be done by the student until she is past 17. Even a limited study before that age may hinder development, or do injury.

Competent Teachers Few.

Among my daily letters are requests for a hearing from girls of 15 or 16. But, however promising, I always tell these they are too young. Others, again, have had their voices marred or even ruined by ignorant methods or improper tuition. Competent teachers are extraordinarily few, and I fancy this accounts for the dearth of competent singers.

Apparently any quack can set up as a "professor" and trick a public which is all too easily deceived. I feel strongly on this subject, having seen the havoc wrought in this way in many nations. It is well for the student to begin early on physiology and languages, as well as on a general knowledge of music, including the piano, counterpoint and harmony. Supremely necessary is an accurate knowledge of the marvelous neuro-mechanical apparatus which produces the singing voice. I would even advise the student to get some throat specialist to show the vocal cords; the sight would be very impressive and interesting.

It was on these true physiological lines that the old masters taught, showing the pupil clearly how to filar il tunor, or spin the voice as subtly and finely as the spider does the silky web it draws from its own body. A painter may know little of optics, but the voice-producer should be as intimately acquainted with the anatomy of the larynx as the engineer is with his engine or the architect with the nature and values of his working material.

Voice Declared Basis.

Unless the structure of the larynx be understood, the "attack" or application of the air blast to the vocal strands will not be as perfect as it might otherwise be. Let me insist again that a lovely voice is no more than the basic accessory of a great career. Nature may be prodigal in the elementary gift, but no student can expect to become a singer of renown by mere inspiration. Il faut travailler! (We must work!)

Right methods of breathing, the "attack" and the use of the registers must all be carefully mastered. The successful singer should also be acquainted with the structure of those parts above the voice box, as well as with the need for a well-controlled chest-expansion in the production of tone.

It is in these and kindred matters that students too young to be allowed free use of the voice should be assiduously instructed. On all grounds good breathing should be taught to the young and adolescent when the body is most capable of development. Exercises that strengthen the diaphragm have a special value, since this is the main factor of inspiration.

Expiration is less easily controlled and calls for more careful practice, since faulty or hurried breathing mars the accurate vibration of the vocal strands. I advise nervous singers to take a few deep breaths before going on the stage or concert platform. Moreover, the novice would do well to avoid numbers which have rather exacting opening bars.

Here let me tell the public how telepathically sensitive even singers of great fame are to indifference and apathy, when these are manifest in an audience. Heedlessness, or a slighting lack of appreciation can sap all the color from the loveliest voice, and all the necessary elan from a passionate interpretation. I have known the foremost singers—myself included—to fall immeasurably below their best before an unresponsive audience.

(This is the first of three articles by Madam Melba. The second, to be printed next Sunday, will deal with "The Need for Study Abroad.")

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