

HARD TEST FOR SINGERS.

Making Talking Machine Records is a Difficult Task.

It is well known that the grand opera stars make a great deal of money singing into the talking machines of various concerns, in order that these companies may manufacture the records for sale, but the fact that almost without exception a grand opera star would much rather sing before the most critical audience than before a talking machine is by no means generally known.

In the first place it is rather unbecomingly standing in a big empty room before a mammoth horn protruding from between curtains, with the conductor away up high where he will not interrupt the sound waves, and the "orchestra" composed of weird looking instruments made especially for this work.

The singer stands on a little wooden platform at the mouth of the receiving trumpet.

A red light is flashed, and the queer little orchestra gets to work. Then at the crucial moment the artist has to sing to this strange little assembly with the same zest he would under the inspiration of brilliant lights, beautiful clothes, splendid settings and an applauding audience. It is an ordeal, because he has to sing with far greater care in front of the talking machine than is required when an audience is pleased. The slightest variation means a start over, a slight clearing of the throat, a deep breath or slight shuffle of the feet—and the revolving disks record every one of those faults—and the record is spoiled. But these faults are all criticised by an experienced record-director, and it is his business to see that nothing short of the perfect records are produced—because from these first molds are made all of the thousands of records that go into so many homes.

When the artist has finished the record is played over and the imperfections criticised. The weak spots are rehearsed and the whole trying business commenced over again. And so it is acknowledged by many of the theatrical and musical hall stars that to produce a record of pure and distinct tone is far harder than to make their way successfully through a whole operatic score. It is a tremendous task to get a set of the perfect records from the opera favorites. It has been said that Caruso has been forced to spend more than four hours of untiring work before he was able to perfect his "Ridi Pagliacci" in the opera "I Pagliacci," and in that time was forced to make more than thirty fresh starts before a disk of pure and distinct tone was obtained. — Washington Post.

Ended the Agony.

The late Count de Lesseps never seemed to lose sight of the education of his children, even in the smallest detail. One morning at breakfast a beautiful Dresden tea-cup was broken. "Ah!" cried the countess, "a disaster! Two more of that set will now be broken. It always happens so." "Are you so superstitious," asked the count, "as really to believe that two more will be broken?" "I know it." "Then let us get it off our minds." And, taking two of the cups by the handles, he dashed them together. The anger and dismay of the countess proved conclusively that she had not seriously held to her superstition. It also loosed any hold the absurd idea may have had on the minds of the children.

Insidious Humor.

A budding author who was making excursions into humor sent a paragraph to the editor of a daily paper. Not finding it printed within a reasonable time or hearing from the editorial department, he wrote about its welfare: "I sent you a joke about ten days ago. I have heard nothing respecting its safe receipt and should be glad to hear whether you have seen it." The editor's reply was as follows: "Your joke arrived safely, but up to the present we have not seen it." — Boston Herald.

Condensed Tragedy.

Condensed tragedies form a tempting theme for the "funny man," this from London Pick Me Up is not without merit: First, Jones poisons his wife's cat; second, he professes a deep sorrow for its disappearance; third, he offers \$10 reward for its recovery; fourth, numerous animals are brought for inspection; fifth, Mrs. Jones identifies one.

Just to Remind Him.

She—I heard about the elopement. Has her mother forgiven them?

He—I think not. I understand she has gone to live with them.—Puck.

RULING A WARD IN CHINA.

It's a Perilous Job the Head of the Community Holds.

After you have lived in China for some time and studied its institutions, the one thought that strikes you is the feeling of responsibility that pervades every phase of Chinese life. Mr. John Macgowan, a missionary in China for fifty years, tells in "Men and Manners in Modern China" how this sense of personal responsibility makes useless the ordinary excuses that weigh with European or American.

Two men were gambling in an obscure part of the town, in a room hidden away from observation. A dispute arose over the game. It ended in a fight, and one of them got a fatal stab. It was 2 o'clock in the morning when the incident took place. The whole city was asleep, and the tipao, the head man of the ward, and his family were in bed, so that he was entirely unaware of what was going on. His protestations that he knew nothing of the matter were received with a sneer and with the remark, "Well, then, you ought to have known."

"But how could I?" he modestly replied.

"Never mind how," was the official answer; "that is your business. The ward is in your charge, and you are the responsible person to look after it."

With that he was thrown upon his face, and a couple of sturdy li-tors who had been looking at him with hungry and expectant eyes proceeded to administer with their bamboo a lesson in the art of ruling a ward that would keep him in a recumbent posture for at least a week to come.

This doctrine of responsibility is a very comfortable one to a foreigner when he is traveling through the country. The innkeepers where he lodges take the greatest care of him while he is under their roof lest they be called to account for any injury done to him or his property.

On one occasion a certain Boniface pursued a guest, who left early in the morning, for miles along the road, with some article that he had left behind him. The innkeeper was panting and perspiring when he got up with the traveler, and the latter was greatly amused when the innkeeper, with a pleased and virtuous look, handed him an empty matchbox.

Plane Sailing.

All plain sailing. This term is so spelled even in nautical works of some age, but plane sailing is the correct form. Before Mercator invented the sea chart which goes by his name all charts were on a plane projection. In using these the ship's course was treated as an angle and the distance, difference of latitude and departure as the sides of a right angled triangle. There were very large errors in plane charts, yet all the world was chartered on them and all the great voyages of discovery made before Mercator's projection came into use. Plane sailing was the simplest of all sailings, and thus came the present meaning of the term.

Interested.

"I had a narrow escape from being run over this morning," remarked Johnson. "Hughes, who was with me, only saved me by showering blows on the horse's head with an umbrella. Just as the umbrella broke the animal stopped, and I was pulled out from beneath the wheels of the wagon."

"Had the umbrella a silver handle shaped like a shepherd's crook?" asked his friend Blinks anxiously.

"I didn't notice particularly, and, besides, he broke it to pieces stopping the horse. Why?"

"Nothing; only he borrowed mine yesterday." — Pearson's.

Our Spirits Make Prisons.

There are prisons with iron bars behind which men are thrust, but they are not farther from real life than is the man who has put up the bars over his own mind and heart and soul by his own selfishness and indolence and sin. Many a man who is complaining at the outlook life has to him has but to release himself from the self made prison in which he has incarcerated himself, to step forth into the free sunlight to know life as it is, for he is his own cruel jailor.—Universalist Leader.

Lending a Hand.

Little Ella heard the cook say she was going to have green peas for dinner, so she went to the kitchen to offer her services in preparing them. While deeply engaged in this fascinating occupation, her brother came and wanted her to go and play with him.

"I can't go now," said Ella, "cause I'm helping cook unbutton the peas." — Woman's Home Companion.

"FINDINGS ARE KEEPINGS."

They Are, Provided You Can't Locate the Rightful Owner.

There are a good many popular sayings on matters legal which if followed literally may lead to trouble. The old saying that "findings are keepings" is one of them.

It is true that under the law the finder of lost property is entitled to keep it against all the world except the rightful owner, but he may get himself into serious trouble unless he makes a reasonable effort to locate the real owner.

At least that is so in New York, and probably in some of the other states where New York's penal code is more or less closely followed. There is a section of that code which provides that unless he makes a reasonable effort to restore it to its owner the finder of lost property is guilty of larceny.

Just what amounts to "a reasonable effort," must depend upon the circumstances of each particular case. One would not be expected to go to any considerable expense to locate the owner of an article of little value, but on the other hand if the property found were worth several thousand dollars, the finder might reasonably be expected to expend his own money, if necessary, to locate the loser. If he didn't, he would be guilty of larceny under the statute.

There is no duty upon the part of the finder to advertise for the owner unless that method seems to be the most likely one to locate him.

If you find a gold watch on a street car it is your duty to turn it over to the conductor or to the lost property department of the railway company, not because the company has a better title to it than you, but because that is the most likely method of locating the owner. If the property is not reclaimed within a reasonable time you may insist upon having it returned to you. For this reason, when you turn over lost property in this way either obtain a receipt for it admitting your claim to it as a finder, or, if you cannot obtain such a receipt, deliver with the article a letter asserting your claim, keeping a copy of the letter.

Again, if you find a pocketbook in a store and there is no clew to its owner it is your duty to inform the shopkeeper of your find, but there is no reason why you should turn it over to him unless by so doing the owner may be more easily found.

Articles found in the public highway may be turned over to the nearest police station, but in most cases it would suffice simply to notify the police authorities of your find.—New York American.

A Trying Job.

"The doctor has ordered my wife to go to a rest cure."

"Why should she need rest? You have no children; you have servants to do all the work around the house; your wife has an electric, so that it never is necessary for her to walk anywhere. I suppose she never finds it necessary to do any sewing or darning or anything like that, and I have no doubt that she even hires other people to polish her nails and arrange her hair. How can a lady so fortunately situated possibly be in need of rest?"

"She's got all tired out trying to think of new ways in which to make me more worthy of her." — Chicago Record-Herald.

Record Hailstones.

It would be difficult to determine what the hailstone record is. There are numerous pretty well authenticated cases of hailstones weighing half a pound and more, but claims far beyond that are made. Stones of six or eight pounds were said to have fallen at Namur in 1719. The missionary Father Hue records the fall in Tartary in 1843 of a block of ice as big as a milestone which took three days to melt. In May, 1802, a Hungarian village reported a 1,100 pound block, requiring eight men to move it. And in Tippoo's time one as big as an elephant was said to have fallen near Seringapatam.

Calling a Skeptic.

Wayback Senior — The time I went to see Barnum's world famous white elephant—

Wayback Junior (interrupting)—He never had a white elephant, dad. It was a fake.

Wayback Senior (bristling up)—A fake wuz it? Gol darn ye! I s'pose arter ye go to college fer another year or two ye'll be tellin' me I never seen a real live mermaid in a tank uv water! — Brooklyn Life.

Undecided.

Mr. Peewee—Your wife is a sufferer, isn't she?

Mr. Homebody—I can't just exactly say. She'd rather like to vote herself, but she doesn't want other women to vote.—New York Globe.

CURIOUS HERM ISLAND.

A Romantic Feudal Spot Close to the English Coast.

A real feudal island, where the inhabitants are ruled by rigid regulations reminiscent of the middle ages and where even visitors have to conform to Spartan laws—such is the island of Herm, about four miles from Guernsey.

Herm is only about eight miles in circumference, but kangaroos run wild within its confines, and the inhabitants are not allowed to have either guns or dogs.

It is difficult to believe that Herm is a real island only a few miles from the English coast and not a dream island in the south seas invented by some fanciful novelist.

It is leased from the British government by Prince Blucher, a descendant of the famous Waterloo Blucher. His residence stands on the summit of the island and can be seen from the sea for miles around.

There is only one landing place, and then one can only get ashore under certain tides. No one is permitted to land without paying a fee, and people have to give a reason for their visit.

Visitors are only permitted at Herm during the summer season from June to September.

The law in this romantic feudal island is enforced by the chief boatman, who holds the office of constable. As an emblem of office he carries a miniature ebony silver mounted baton. People arrested are taken to a curious little stone prison near the landing place, shaped like a beehive. Herm has forty inhabitants, all dependents of the prince.

The most fascinating feature of the island is the herd of kangaroos, with a few rock wallabies, which leap about the place as if in the heart of Australia.

A former inhabitant of Herm put two kangaroos on the island. The present herd, several hundred in all, are their descendants.—London Cor. New York Sun.

Pitcher's Tragedy.

Connie Mack, who takes great pride in developing young pitchers and then prophesying how they will show up in action, sent in one of his finds in an exhibition game not long ago. The slaughter of the young slab artist was pitiful to behold. At the end of the second inning Connie was somewhat peeved.

"What's the matter with you, son?" he asked the youngster as kindly as he could, which was not remarkably kindly.

"I—I don't seem to be able to get the ball over the plate," said the pitcher sadly.

"You're mighty right you can't get it over the plate," observed Mack, his peeved condition much aggravated. "And I'll tell you why. Every time you start it over they knock it back at you." — Popular Magazine.

Vegetarians.

In his book, "The Natural Food of Man," Hereward Carrington says that the natural food of man is neither meat nor vegetables, but fruit and nuts, and remarks: "One of the chief causes of failure on the part of those who leave off meat and attempt to take up vegetarianism is that they do not rightly balance their diet and do not supply to the system the proper amount of proteid food to take the place of that which the meat supplied. Vegetarians, as a rule, eat far too much food. Under the impression that they must eat more in order to offset the supposed greater nutritive value of meat, they eat far more than they should."

Word Derivations.

"Disaster" is an astrological term meaning "unfavorable star," one of the many words that astrology has bequeathed to the English language. "Predominant," "ill starred," "in the ascendant," are other instances, not to speak of the expression "My stars!" Even "influence" is really astrological, signifying the flowing in upon human affairs of the power of some heavenly body. "Petrel" and "petrol" both descend from "petra," a rock. "Petrol" comes directly enough through "petroleum," rock oil, but "petrel" through St. Peter, after whom the bird was named because it appeared to walk upon the waves.

With Thanks.

John Budd was a most sedate, precise and altogether exemplary young man. When he wooed and won Susan Smiley, the belle of the village, everybody rejoiced at John's good fortune. However, he bore his triumph with modesty and decorum until the day of the wedding. Then for one awful moment his air of aplomb failed him. When the officiating clergyman asked, "Will you, John, take this woman to be thy wedded wife?" John responded blushing, "Yes, please."

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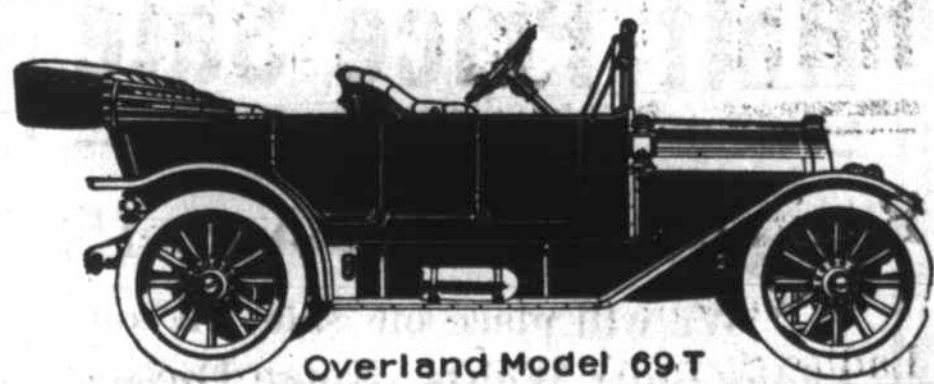
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