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Notions Concerning the Voice.

"It is a well-known fact that the imagination holds a great power over the mind: and when this can be turned to account, I see no reason why it should not be encouraged. All know what diverse fancies singers have regarding food or drink taken just before or while singing. Albani said apologetically to a friend one evening during her first season at Covent Garden: "I suppose you think it a silly fancy," but I could not finish 'Seanambula' without a bowl of weak tea and toasted bread soaked in it." Salvi used to fall so that his head would be behind the wings and say, "Per amor di Dio, give me a mug of beer," and while the scene went on he slyly regaled himself.

Some very comical scenes are the outgrowth of the search by singers for the drink or dainty bit that will quiet their nerves by imagining they have taken something that will put them in good voice. In one theatre I remember the general cry, "Punch, without fire and without sugar," the exceptions being the buffo and contralto, who contented themselves with a pinch of snuff from the silver snuff-box of the director passed over the prompter's head before the house filled.

Another voice-softener in demand, was that of a raw egg beaten in a pint of milk, and is one of the few things that does no harm, like wines, dry the throat; and while the egg gives sustenance, the throat is not impeded by an unpleasant feeling of fullness in the stomach.

One evening, Lombardi, our tenor, and a great favorite with the public, took it into his head to try something stronger—he had been taking part in a very long church service during the afternoon and felt very much fatigued.

The opera was "Linda." Upon his entrance I joyously ran to him with "Carlo, Carlo," when to my horror, as I met him in the middle of the stage, not even the mock expression of delight met my gaze, but only a mechanical stare.

I gave his hand a savage clutch, as I demanded sternly, "Potete cantare?" and was somewhat reassured by his mechanical reply that he could.

As usual, we moved to the footlights, the public unconscious of the by-play, and I proceeded with my part.

He began bravely, but like some dilapidated circus organs we have heard start "The Battle Cry of Freedom," with all the vim of patriotism, and then suddenly collapse, going slower and slower, so did he begin to wander.

The leader looked at me, and I shrugged my shoulders as indicative that I could not explain it, and the public looked aghast, but respected my appeal for patience, with the exception of one indiscreet person who did not see, or did not understand, and gave vent to a decisive hiss. The sound reached the comprehension of Lombardi, in spite of the stupid haziness of his condition, whereupon he left the stage as if scorched.

I lingered a moment, sure of the sympathy of the public toward the tenor, and that they comprehended

the situation; then entered my dressing-room next his own. The stupid mood had suddenly passed, for that one sign of disapproval had brought him to his senses, and he was like a madman in his wrath that any one had dared to hiss him. Nor could he be persuaded to sing again till a coxibatory note regarding the accident had been put in one of the papers by subscribers of the theatre. It was his first and last attempt to gain borrowed strength from wine.

This imagination, which seems inseparable from the artistic character, must be conceded by the teacher through the course of study intended to fit the singer for the utmost control of his powers.—Miss F. Rowena Miller, in *Musical Critic*.

Unprecedented Success.

In the history of American music publishing, there exists no parallel for the extraordinary popularity achieved by "National School for the Piano-Forte," by W. F. Sudds. Prior to its publication, although there were several respectable instructors in the market, considerable dissatisfaction was expressed, principally by teachers, at the incompleteness of the books they were compelled to use in their profession. This universal complaint on the part of the teachers was not without just grounds, for while each work contained some essential feature, yet it lacked others, the want of which rendered it of little practical value, and served only to perplex both tutor and pupil. Thus it was that a vast amount of labor devolved upon the music teacher and notwithstanding the ability, and earnest desire of the individual to do justice to his scholars, the work was tedious, for he had nothing to leave with the latter as a guide in his absence; in short, it was like trying to teach navigation without a compass or quadrant. Mr. Sudds, being a teacher, and feeling the necessity for a book that would include all the information and instruction requisite to a knowledge of music and piano playing, conceived the idea of writing such a work, and in this undertaking he brought into play a thorough musical education, backed by long, practical experience. The result was the production of a piano-instructor that outvalued anything of the kind ever known in America, and the secret of its worth lies in the fact that it was honestly created for use, and not alone for sale. In its compilation, Mr. Sudds had in constant view the requirements of the teacher as well as the wants of the scholar. It is no wonder, then, that in the sixth month of its existence we find "National School for the Piano-Forte" enjoying a reputation and sale that by the trade is considered marvelous. It is no wonder, we repeat, because it is a legitimate sequence of a master's effort. The first copies of "National School" were sent out the beginning of April, and almost simultaneously with its reception came pouring forth from trade, profession and press, words of praise and admiration, till every section of the land, Canada included, had paid tribute to the brilliant volume.

Already thousands of copies have been sold, editions have been printed and exhausted, and still the demand is steadily increasing. Even those who were prejudiced against American works have recognized its excellence, and, to make the book available for them we have issued an edition in foreign language, thus making the book a general favorite with both schools.

Encouraged by his grand success, Mr. Sudds has gone farther in his good work, and to the delight of his fellow-teachers and all well-wishers of the music interest, he has just completed a volume for the organ, which contains a wealth of knowledge and embraces all the points of merit included in his piano book.

"National Guide to Reed Organ Playing" is the appropriate title of his latest work, and its future is destined to outstrip in popularity books that have been in the field for years. An examination of either or both of these works cannot but result to the advantage of those who are seeking for the best instructors.

—On the 7th of October the French Opera Company engaged to appear at New Orleans this season, will sail from Havre, France. M. Kreitz, who sang at Nice last year, will be second basso. Of the chorus singers, thirty-five will come from Paris, and twenty have been engaged in New York. Some of the scenery to be used in the representations is being painted in Genoa.

—HAD HIM THERE. A young Wall Street broker annoyed everybody within hearing by constantly singing, "I wish I were a daisy," until an old fellow shouted in a steatorian tone, "I wish I were a cow." Whereupon the young man asked, "What would you do then?" "Oh," growled he, "I would chew you up and put a stop to your infernal singing!"—A. I. *Commercial Advertiser*.

An Imperial Band.

According to a correspondent of the *Schlesische Zeitung* the Emperor of Russia, who is extremely fond of music, has given orders for the formation of a regular Court Band. Hitherto, the best bands of the Guard Regiments have officiated at the Imperial Court, but this arrangement was attended by all kinds of inconvenience for the military service of the bands and by other drawbacks. In order, however, not to incur too heavy an expenditure, the band of the Chevalier (Garde-du-Corps) Regiment will be done away with, and most of its members drafted into the new band. Strict orders have been issued that none but Russians shall be members. In all the bands of the Guard Regiments there are many German and Austrian subjects, the bandmasters being almost exclusively Germans. In contradiction to the orders above mentioned is the fact that a former Austrian bandmaster, who now holds a similar position in a Guard Regiment here, has been appointed conductor of the Court Bands. As the members will not be allowed to give private concerts, and will thus have to sacrifice a lucrative source of income, the pay will, measured by a Russian standard, be exceptionally high. The conductor, it is said, will receive 5000 rubles a year. A post of Chief Director of the Imperial Court Band will also be created, and Herr von Beer, till now captain in a Guard Regiment, appointed to it.

Increasing Business.

The increase in the sale of sheet-music and music-books which began in the Spring, has shown no abatement, and, judging from the present volume of business, the Fall trade promises to exceed in prosperity that of any previous season in the history of the trade. That the American people have thoroughly awakened to the importance of cultivating and protecting the musical interests of the country there can be no doubt. In almost every quarter of the land, organized efforts are being made to establish Academies, Conservatories and other musical educational institutions, while in many localities there already exist prosperous schools of recent growth. Besides the foregoing evidence, it is only necessary to note the numerous festivals and musicales that are occurring to convince the most casual observer that the appreciation and love of music is a strong trait of our countrymen, which, though heretofore comparatively dormant, is rapidly approaching full and healthy development.

This is followed by a corresponding boom in the piano and the organ trades, which, as a legitimate sequence, are in close sympathy with the fluctuations of the music trade. The purchase of music at once suggests and necessitates the purchase of an instrument, and hence the publication and distribution of cheap music has done more to advance the cause of music than the combined efforts of all her previous champions. Of course the quality and quantity of the "cheap music" is necessarily primitive and sparse, nevertheless, it arouses the love and causes its purchasers to seek productions better and more varied than it itself affords. Fully alive to the importance of meeting this growing demand, we have within the past few months added to our catalogue the works—vocal, instrumental and instructive—of the best known authors, and to-day it stands unrivaled for its intrinsically valuable contents.

A Wonderful Man.

Among all the American composers there is not one who enjoys a more general popularity than Adam Geibel. And this fact becomes remarkable when it is considered that he is not confined to any particular line of composition, but with the same ease and certainty of success composes music the very extremes in style. Two things, however, are noticeable in all his works, the sweetness and the originality of his melodies, whether vocal or instrumental. Although totally blind, Mr. Geibel composes with great rapidity, and in most cases arranges the entire accompaniment without the aid of a piano. Seated in his studio, he simply dictates to his assistant, and after the piece is written down the latter tries it on the piano, when, if it meets with the composer's approval, the manuscript is ready for the publisher. With vocal pieces, Mr. Geibel first learns the words of the poem, which, to commit to his memory, seldom requires more than one or two readings. In the same manner (through his assistant) Mr. Geibel reads "proof" with surprising correctness. Altogether he is a most wonderful man, and so well informed on general subjects, and withal so agreeable in manners that one forgets the composer's misfortune while in his jovial company.

—M. DE LAZARÉ is the composer of a new comic opera, which will be produced in New York during the season. It is styled "The Two Mandarins," and the scene is China.