

"MY INTERVIEW WITH MY HUSBAND"

By FRANCES ALDA

Gatti Says Temperamental Prima Donnas Do Not Exist; They Must Be Hard Workers To Achieve Their Success

Director-General of the Metropolitan Opera Company Disillusions the Public of a Cherished Theory.

FOREWORD.

Madame Frances Alda's green-and-gold boudoir, in a corner of her New York home, a beautiful, spacious apartment in magnificent Alwyn Court, is the "scene set" for this "interview."

The bright little room has green, trellised glass doors, and the wall panelling and furniture, including a baby grand piano, carry out the delicate color scheme, which is further accentuated by many potted palms, making a suitable setting for the Titian-haired Australian prima donna, who is also Madame Gatti-Casazzi in "private life," as the saying goes.

A cosy fire burns in the grate, for it is one of those snowy, sleepy days the winter of 1922-23 has so plentifully supplied us with. Madame Alda, vivacious and alert, somehow reminding one of a bird poised on a

limb (as perhaps all prima donnas should, but many don't), is wearing a becoming house gown of pale green silk and chiffon, a lovely string of pearls around her white throat (she really has the creamy skin and dark red-brown eyes that should go with her tawny hair).

Madame has practically been cradled in opera. She was the niece and protégée of Madame Frances Saville, who created the role of "Manon," in which Madame Alda herself later made her debut at the Opera Comique in Paris, after studying for two years with Madame Marchesi, the famous teacher of Melba. Then she sang, not only in Paris, but in Brussels, in Parma, Italy, and in Milan, where she portrayed Louise in Charpentier's opera of that name, under the management of Signor Gatti-Casazzi, before coming to the Metropolitan.

At home on this wintry day she is sitting by the blaze and watching with motherly solicitude an active, black-eyed baby boy, the small son of her accompanist, who is playing about the room with childish disregard for the lace cushions on the big davenport and the delicate bits of glass and silver on a taboret nearby. "Isn't he lovely?" she asks proudly. "I wish he were mine."

"Interview Mr. Gatti? Good gracious, what about?" exclaims Madame Alda, surprised and hesitant. The idea is explained to her and Lady Luck is along, for "Mr. Gatti," as the famous director-general of the Metropolitan Opera Company is called, drops in at home for luncheon.

This dignified, astute gentleman has guided the artistic destiny of the great American home of opera for fifteen years. He is courteous, but unusually reticent, a studious man who loves his books, a walking encyclopedia if he chooses to talk, but



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this is almost never. However, he finally permitted his wife to put a few questions to him, which he answered with a tolerant air, as if amusing the children.

By FRANCES ALDA.

"Mr. Gatti, will you give me an interview?" I asked, trying not to look foolish.

"An interview? Why, what is it you wish?" replied my husband, looking somewhat bewildered at my formal tone.

"I want you to answer some questions, just as you would someone else, someone from the papers."

"But you know, my dear, I seldom give interviews," frowning slightly. "Is this for some friend of yours?"

"It is I, myself, who wish to interview you, so you must make an exception in this instance, and please be serious!"

"I am told," I went on hurriedly, "that you are considered to be a very diplomatic person, that you must know just how to manage all the so-called 'temperamental song-birds' that have a home in the Metropolitan or who have come and gone there during your regime, that whether they are blonde or brunette, great stars or beginners, French, Spanish, Swedish, Hungarian, American, Italian or—Australian, you know just how to keep everyone—happy, and I wish to know the secrets of your method!"

Doesn't Like To Talk.

I stopped, out of breath and almost aghast at my own temerity, for I know Mr. Gatti doesn't like to talk, unless it is about something that interests him very much—Napoleon, for instance, which is a very far cry from my present subject. Often, when we go out to dine at the house of some friend, he will say: "I will go with you, but I won't talk," and he doesn't, except to say "Yes" and "No."—It is dreadful, sometimes. But to get back to my "interview."

"Of course, if you are determined to be serious about this—my husband begins slowly, for he doesn't speak fluently in English.

"I am. I want you to tell the truth about the prima donna—the 'temperamental prima donna'—as you know her."

"But then, you know as well as I, that this talk, these popular fancies, are all nonsense!" replied Mr. Gatti, still apparently wondering whether he was to be annoyed or amused. "The 'temperamental prima donna'! There is no such one! Or, if there is, the Metropolitan is not her habitat!"

"Then how would you classify this lady—the leading singer in opera?"

Singer Is Human.

"We are all hard working people. The singer, the prima donna, like all the rest of the world, is human! She makes her living singing. We all give our best toward a single cause—a good performance of a certain musical work. What chance is there for 'temperament' to be displayed? How long would anyone, the greatest singer, be permitted to stop a rehearsal, or throw a performance off schedule?"

The prima donna is but a cog in the wheel, and all the cogs, the other singers, the conductor, the musicians, the chorus, the scene-shifters, the electricians, everyone, must do his or her part, whether it is a big or little part, it is just the same! All must give to the making of the whole. 'Temperament'! Ridiculous! You, yourself, have been in the Metropolitan for fifteen years. Do you see it?"

"No, indeed I do not!" I quickly and truthfully reply.

"Then, all this talk is foolish, is it not? For instance, we have had five Mimis this season. You are one of them. Luciezia Bort, one of your dearest friends, is another. Are you jealous of her?"

"Absurd! No doubt there are many people who prefer Bort's Mimì."

others may like mine, and again, others may prefer another singer's rendition of the part."

A Friend of Jeritza.

"Exactly and naturally. What difference does it make? Each one in an audience has a right to his or her preference. Then there is Madame Jeritza, who has made a great success. Are not you and she great friends?"

"Of course, you know that I like and admire her immensely."

"Very well; and how could one prima donna show jealousy, even if it is felt, or interfere with another, when no one is permitted on the stage, except those who are singing or others who have to go on immediately. And when no one is permitted to come to rehearsal except those directly concerned, and, therefore, they scarcely ever meet, unless socially, by mutual desire, is it not so?"

"This is very true. At the Metropolitan we do our work and go at once to our dressing-rooms afterward. There is probably no stage where the rules are so strict, or so rigidly enforced. And, of course, Mr. Gatti is right."

Take, for instance, the prima donna on a concert tour. Picture her traveling for weeks, often for long hours, at a time without proper rest, in drafts, or the stuffy atmosphere of a train. I speak from experience. She gets into a town where she is to sing that night. Naturally, the first thing she wants to do is to get to her hotel, to bath, to sleep and rest, in order to get herself into a fit condition to give her best, not to disappoint those who are coming to hear her."

But someone wants her to come to a tea; someone else wants to take her for a drive, perhaps merely to show her off in some way. It is not that she does not appreciate these attentions, if well meant, but that it is impossible for her to shine as a social lioness and give her best, professionally."

But, if she refuses, she is "temperamental!" No other reason is so good, for the prima donna has no right to be human, to need rest, to get a sore throat, to feel hungry, sleepy, or out of sorts. She really should be superhuman, for any of the ailments in which ordinary mortals may indulge is, in the prima donna, plainly "temperament!"

"No," Mr. Gatti says finally, "there is really little diplomacy needed on my part, for the successful singer must have, and has, much of what you call 'common sense'! The prima donna who imagines that she can give way to 'temperament' doesn't last, and there are few who are so foolish as to try it. So, although the contrary idea seems to be popular with the public, I believe I should know something about it, and I say again, there are no 'temperamental prima donnas'!"

And there you are! (Copyright, 1923, U. S. and Canada, Great Britain and South America, by Women's News Service, Inc. Released exclusively through North American Newspaper Alliance. All rights reserved.)

Agnes MacPhail Champions Her Sisters In Public Life

"When a Man Serves in Public, His Home Life Suffers."

By AGNES MACPHAIL.

Some women think that because I am the only woman in the Canadian House of Commons I should be especially concerned with things for women and children. That is furthest from my thoughts. I am here to work for everyone. I believe conditions will be better for women and children only when general economic conditions are better.

I hope to play a small part in making them better. I'm just here to learn the ropes. My idea is to learn everything I can.

I am looking forward to the time when more women will be in the Dominion Parliament. I believe that offices in public life will be well filled by them, not because we as women have better qualifications than men, but because we form a large percentage of the population with views and methods peculiarly our own, and it is but right that we should express them in the laws of the land.

It is said that public life interferes with women keeping up their homes. When a man serves in public life his home life suffers. Of every ten women, eight can be away from their homes for a few months each year without seriously disarranging their homes.

In social legislation I think women excel, partly because they are more intimately acquainted with the need

of reform, and partly because the feminine ear is more tender than the masculine. Women are direct in



AGNES MACPHAIL.

their methods, and directness is certainly needed in parliament. (Copyright, 1923, Women's News Service. Released exclusively through the North American Newspaper Alliance.)

Hardy Scottish Settlers Founded Mosa Church, 1838

Rev. W. R. Sutherland, Ordained As First Minister in 1848, by His Strenuous Efforts Contributed To Early Success.

Burns Church, Mosa, has a history reaching down from about 1838. A few years earlier a number of settlers from Argyleshire, Scotland, began to hew out homes for themselves in the almost unbroken forest of Mosa and adjoining townships. They were men who cared for fellowship with God, and they ceased not to pray for someone to be sent to minister to them in holy things. "Ask and it shall be given you." In 1838 New Glasgow, gave them occasional supply. Rev. Donald McKenzie of Zorra, and Rev. Dunlop McMillan, also at that time held services among them.

Known as Mosa Church. In 1844 a congregation was organized by the presbytery of Hamilton in connection with the Church of Scotland, (London Presbytery, Church of Scotland, was not yet organized.) The new congregation was soon organized in Knox Church, Elfrick, and was known as the North or Mosa Church. Rev. L. McPherson supplied for two summers (1844 and 1846) as a missionary catechist. In 1848 Rev. W. R. Sutherland, a Free Church minister, was ordained and inducted as minister of "The Elfrick and Mosa congregation."

At this time he had only six members from the Mosa section on his communion roll; the others, though attending services, continued for a time to hold their connection with the Church of Scotland. But the fruits of his faithful and earnest ministry

soon began to appear; the distinctions gradually vanished, and the congregation rapidly increased in strength. His field was large—20 miles long by 12 to 15 miles wide—entailing very heavy labor. But he never complained, and he never missed an appointment. In all weathers, he over all roads or over all roads, he was on hand at the appointed time to minister to the needs of his people.

He began services in 1857 in a new log schoolhouse in Glenora, where a congregation was soon organized. The people in and around this center urged for a weekly service. And Mr. Sutherland complied. But after a time, fearing the other parts of his wide charge might suffer, a proposal was made to engage an assistant, especially during the summer months. Nothing came of this, however, and in 1861 Mr. Sutherland resigned the Mosa part of his charge. By this time his membership of six had increased to one hundred and six, and he had a good staff of elders and deacons attending to the duties of their respective departments.

Mosa now became a separate pastoral charge. And they chose as their first minister Rev. Archibald Stewart, who was ordained and inducted in November, 1862. It was a happy settlement, followed by 14 years of successful pastorate. Mr. Stewart gave himself to the work with all the energy of youth, made the circuit of his congregation every three months, held prayer meetings and Bible classes and catechizing meetings in addition to his pulpit services, and labored in every way he could to win the people to Christ. At his first communion 42 names were added to the roll of membership.

About the time of his settlement a few acres of land were obtained for a manse site and a glebe, and in 1864 the manse was built. Services had at first been held in a log shanty where the cemetery lay now. This gave place to a square log church. This church soon became too small, and in 1867 the first brick church was built, and it was opened free of debt. The opening services were conducted by Rev. Dr. Burns of Toronto in English, and Rev. Mr. McTavish of Woodstock in Gaelic. Since opening it has been known as Burns Church, Mosa.

Work continued to prosper under Mr. Stewart's care, but in 1871 he accepted a call to North Easthope, and when he left there were 130 families reported in connection with the congregation.

He was succeeded by Rev. Neil McKinnon, inducted May 28, 1877. Mr. Stewart's pastorate was described as largely that of a gatherer-in of the people, and Mr. McKinnon's as more distinctively that of a builder-up. He was spoken of as an able minister, a devoted student and accomplished scholar, an earnest and faithful pastor. Under his guidance the congregation increased in numbers. After a pastorate of nearly eleven years he died suddenly on February 7, 1888, leaving behind him a deeply sorrowing people.

Building Weakened. The next minister was Rev. A. S. Stewart, from Prince Edward Island, inducted November 8, 1888. But after a short pastorate of four years he returned to Prince Edward Island. During his term building operations again demanded attention. In 1885 the church had been roofed with slate. In a little while the walls showed signs of weakness, and despite efforts to strengthen them the building was considered unsafe. Leave was granted by presbytery to use a part of the glebe land as a new church site, and in 1891 the present brick church was erected, with a seating capacity of about five hundred.

From this date onward scarcely any details are available. Mr. Stewart was succeeded by Rev. Alexander Miller, recently received from Scotland, inducted October 11, 1892. His ability and force of character and obliging disposition soon won for him a warm place in the esteem of the presbytery, but to the great regret of both congregation and presbytery, after a brief term of four years he accepted a call to Ashfield.

Mr. Alexander Fraser was the next minister, ordained and inducted July, 1897. In less than a year he asked for three months' leave of absence, outstayed his three months' term without arranging for further substitute supply, and when written to by presbytery sent in reply, resigning his charge. The pulpit was declared vacant in November, 1898. His successor was Rev. J. H. McDonald, inducted October 3, 1899. Work prospered under his care for the next 13 years. In September, 1912, he accepted a call to Kintore. Rev. J. Fraser Smith, M.D., followed, being pastor from May, 1913, to September, 1917, when he accepted a call to Blenheim. Rev. D. Robertson, the present pastor, was inducted December, 1917.

Flush Your Kidneys Occasionally By Drinking Quarts of Good Water.

No man or woman can make a mistake by flushing the kidneys occasionally. Too much rich food, creates poisons which clog the kidney pores so that they sluggishly filter or strain only part of the waste and poisons from the blood. Then you get sick. Rheumatism, headaches, liver trouble, nervousness, constipation, dizziness, sleeplessness, bladder disorders often come from sluggish kidneys.

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—Adv.

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