

DIVERSIONS of FAVORITE OPERA SINGERS



Mrs. Jeanne Gerville Reche with her husband and their son Paul.



ALICE ZEPILLI STUDYING A NEW ROLE



CHARLES DALMONES EXERCISING IN A ROWING MACHINE



ROSINA GALLI, THE PREMIERE DANSEUSE AND HER MOTHER MAKING NEW COSTUMES



HECTOR DURFANNE AND HIS DAUGHTER



MARIO SAMMARCO



A GENUINE GERMAN DINNER AT MRS. SCHUMANN-HEINKE'S



CAROLINA WHITE, THE AMERICAN SOPRANO, AND HER ITALIAN HUSBAND PAUL LONGONE

Friendship persons have been heard to say that Mary Garden would be less grieved about opera in this city were she singing here and not in Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul, St. Louis and all points West. If she were once again the great star of West Thirty-fourth street the American prima donna might not have so many hard things to say about New York as she has at present. It is not to be denied that singing outside the Metropolitan Opera House is for this country something akin to artistic limbo.

But the artists in Chicago have continued to get through two seasons there without devised various ways of passing the time. It was never difficult for

Charles Dalmones to pass his time anywhere so long as he was able to get to a gymnasium. He is an excellent boxer and put on the gloves once with Anthony Padilla of Philadelphia, the gentleman pugilist of the Quarter City. Then he is devoted to walking, running and other violent physical exercise, which is usually to be enjoyed anywhere.

So he has only the rigors of the Chicago climate to struggle against. That has been overcome by supplying himself with a rowing machine, and with the front on the window he is able to have as healthful an hour as though he were on Lake Geneva, where he is accustomed to work in the summer time.

Mario Sammarco, the Sicilian bary-

tone choir of the Chicago Opera Company, and after one of them she invited Mr. and Mrs. Dippel, her impresario, and his wife, and the conductor of the German operas, Alfred Cziedroi, and his wife to come to supper and have a real German meal cooked by herself and Mrs. Schumann-Heink, Jr. It was their way of taking the edge off life in Chicago, and they seem to have succeeded. Mrs. Dippel spends only a little while there.

Rosina Galli is the new premiere danseuse at the Chicago Opera House and as she is the youngest dancer ever to hold such a position she is very carefully guarded by her mother. The latter is not only her daughter's guardian, but she is not averse to doing plain sewing for her when it comes to freshening up the ballet dresses of Signorina Galli. It is by this means that the Galli family or as much of it as is represented in Chicago is able to get along with the differences

"Parsifal" Hardest to Produce

Difficulties of Managing the Scenery — Other Operas That Bother Stage Hands

The most difficult opera in the Metropolitan repertoire from the point of view of the technical director and his assistants is "Parsifal." Yet it probably would be the last one thought of by the average opera-goer if he were asked what production is the hardest to mount.

His idea of a difficult operatic production would be "Aida" with its tour-de-force and seven elaborate scenes. He always gets very much excited, for instance, by the third act, with its blaring trumpets, its processions, its horses and chariots, its dancers, its crowd so dense that it almost edges over the footlights and falls into the orchestra.

But "Parsifal"? No crowd, no tumult, no lofty deliberation, slow movement? What is there difficult about that? The answer is right in that phrase "slow movement."

The opera does move and before the eyes of the audience too. In other productions changes of scenes are made by the raising and lowering of the curtain and the stage setting is changed by the raising and lowering of the curtain. Two of these changes are the most difficult in the Metropolitan mechanical staff.

The opening scene is a forest near the castle of Monsivart. This changes to the interior of the Castle of the Grail. To make the substitution of these immense panoramas, a technical feat, a continuous piece of scenery is rolled from one side of the stage to the other, the ends reaching from the floor to the top of the stage. The back drop and the other side of the stage must be changed, and the raised

scenery nearest the footlights. There are still several other side scenes, the back drop and the "practicals" to be taken care of.

This is the way it is done: As the panoramas move slowly across the stage there comes along a single section of opaque canvas. It approaches at the spectators' feet, gradually shuts off more and more of the stage, finally hides the whole extent then passes off at the right. There must not be a delay of a single second in this progress, for the change is made while the music goes uninterrupted on with the movement of the act.

As the opaque section of canvas begins to cross, stage hands advance with it, some clearing away the setting as they go, others bringing on and placing the new practicals. The length of time that the stage is hidden from the audience is just fifty seconds. During that time the back drop, side scenes and flies are changed and the whole thing made complete. As the opaque section of canvas moves off at the right the stage hands go with it, and the thing is done. It sounds comparatively simple, but a single hitch would necessitate stopping the progress of the opera.

The curtain falls at the end of the act and the scene is then set for the exterior of Kinglor's castle. Before the curtain rises again Kundry has gone from her dressing room down into the cellar and has been harnessed into a set of steel braces which hold her on a pedestal. At the proper time this pedestal is raised so that Kundry makes a partial ascent through a trap in the floor of the stage. There is nothing hard about this, but the time comes for another change of scene without dropping the curtain.

This time the change is made during a moment's darkness. Down goes Kundry, some one lets her out of her steel cage and she walks around to the other side of the cellar and reclines upon the bed of roses upon which she is next to appear. The canvas walls of the castle sink through the floor, drops descend and lo! a beautiful garden where a moment before was a rugged castle. Kundry on her flowery bed of ease comes through

another trap and again the audience has no idea how much care and work has gone into the transformation.

At the end of the same act comes what is known as the demolition scene, when the garden gives place to a barren heap of ruins and the air is full of dead leaves falling from blasted trees. Suppose just one of the devices that produce these effects should fail to work and a single bed of smiling flowers should persist in the midst of the heap of ruins. In such a multitude of chances for trouble it is a wonder so few things do go wrong.

Last year when "Parsifal" was given on Thanksgiving Day the audience was suddenly startled by the descent into plain view of one of the bridges on which, in positively piteous embarrassment, crouched a workman madly clutching in his grimy hand a bag of dead leaves which he was to throw down during the impending demolition scene. Something had gone wrong with the counterweights governing the raising and lowering of the bridge and the stage hand had made his involuntary debut when it dropped.

The opening of the last act of "Parsifal" shows the exterior of Gurnemanz's hut, and again the scene changes to the interior of the Castle of the Grail. This time the proceeding of the first act is reversed. The four panoramas unroll from the barrels at the right of the stage and cross over to the left, the stage hands following the single patch of opaque canvas as before.

When that final piece of work is successfully accomplished there is a unanimous sigh of relief behind the scenes, and the technical director and the 100 assistants who have made the progress of the opera possible consider themselves open to congratulations.

Next to "Parsifal" probably "Die Götterdämmerung" is the most difficult production, although "Rheingold" has a first scene and a change which give the technical director almost as much trouble. To the mechanical difficulties of "Rheingold" is added responsibility for the safety of the singers, who as the lovely Rhine maidens must do their swimming suspended in midair. The stage

Roosevelt's Game Recorded

Other Facts in the Report of the British African Authorities.

Perhaps Col. Roosevelt does not know that accurate tally of some, at least, of the game he shot during his African junket of a year or more ago has gone into the archives of the British Colonial Office in the report of the superintendent of the game preservation department of the Government of the Sudan. They have a scrupulous way of looking after little things, these English colonial administrators, and A. L. Butler, the particular official whose business it is to take care of the game preserves of the upper Nile, has not let even one of Col. Roosevelt's *Balcaniceps rex* or snobills escape tabulation.

In his report for the year which saw the American ex-President ranging from Uganda to the Nile sources Mr. Butler counts of the fact that seven snobills were killed within the reservation that year "for scientific purposes." Four of these unusual birds fell under the guns of the Roosevelt party. Then, again, this excerpt from the superintendent's report shows that tabs were kept upon the bags of Col. Roosevelt.

Hand-locally distributed and apparently not very numerous, as none were seen by the commission. Apparently *Taurotaurus oryxias*, the form which occurs in the Bah-el-Ghazal. Col. Roosevelt's party obtained specimens.

The report shows the curious care taken of the wild beasts and their census in the territories under control of the Sudanese Government. Mr. Butler seems to know, for instance, that permission to shoot the white rhinoceros in the Lado Enclave ought to be refused for several years to come. Says he:

As regards the white rhinoceros, the Sudan Government is now responsible for

that existence there presents from what they are accustomed in "bella Napoli," where the climate is undeniably less rigorous and the cost of living not yet so high.

Although Dr. Rambaud, husband of Mrs. Gerville Reche, the French contractor of the Chicago Opera Company, is the head of the Pasteur Institute in this city, he is able to go occasionally to visit his wife and child in the West and tell them what is going on in this city. It was while he was on a visit to the West that the photographer took the picture of the contralto.

Not all the domestic honors in the barytone choir of the Chicago Opera Company go to Mario Sammarco since Hector Durfanne is also devoted to his family and has even brought his daughter with him to Chicago. He was trying to instruct her in the mysteries of an automatic telegraph when the photographer who was bent on finding out how the singers passed their time in Chicago happened into his hotel.

Alice Zepilli spends the first hour after breakfast at the piano every morning. She is trying her voice. Nobody to gaze at her smiling exterior would fail to appreciate from her expression that she was in excellent voice. The day this picture was made, Else how could a soprano be so smiling when she heard the tones of her voice?