

## LESCHETIZKY PASSES THE EIGHTY-THIRD MILESTONE

**Famous Piano Pedagogue Observes Occasion in Vienna with Supper to His Intimate Friends—His Energy Unimpaired by Age—Modernity of His Teachings—Some of His Illustrious Pupils—Debt America Owes Him**

By EDWIN HUGHES

ON June 22, Leschetizky, the "grand old man" of the piano, passed the eighty-third milestone of his long and active life. According to his custom of recent years, he withdrew himself into seclusion on the anniversary of his natal day in order to escape the army of congratulators, but on the evening following an informal supper was given at his villa in Karl Ludvigstrasse in Vienna, at which a few of his most intimate friends were present. Those whose good luck it was to be invited rejoiced to find the master of the house still in full possession of his ruddy good health, his sparkling wit, inimitable humor and the many other qualities which have endeared him to all who have come to know him well. His constitution, according to his physician, is one of those very rare examples of physical and mental energy of extraordinary potency; in fact, one has quite come to look upon Leschetizky as a permanent institution for the dissemination of the secrets of modern piano-playing.

It is quite characteristic of the master that in spite of the fact that his life-span reaches back to the days of Beethoven, to the very antiquities of piano-playing, and that he has seen the innovations of Schumann, Chopin and Liszt bud, flower and become pianistic classics, Leschetizky remains withal the most modern of all piano masters in his treatment of the instrument, the one whose glance perhaps penetrates furthest of all into the future position and import of piano playing in the art of music.

The youth of his spirit is probably due in a large measure to the fact that he is always in contact with young people. The pupils of three or four years go on their way to be replaced by a constantly young stream of aspirants from all the four corners of the globe, so that while the subject matter remains the same, as all must strive towards an understanding of the same Bach, Beethoven, Schumann, Chopin, the student material is always changing. This is the salvation from monotony in all teaching, the new faces, the different characters and the multitude of variety which they present.

At times there comes from among the green-eyed ones the question, "Why has Leschetizky not produced a second Paderewski?" There never will be a second Paderewski produced by Leschetizky or by anyone else anymore than there will ever be a second Leschetizky, or a second anyone else with such a remarkable combination of genius and personality. Since Paderewski's time, however, there have come from Leschetizky an Ossip Gabril-



Theodore Leschetizky and Mme. Leschetizky

owitsch, whose performance of nineteen concertos in six evenings during the past season, from a musical standpoint, not to mention the matters of memory and endurance, has never been equalled in the annals of piano playing; an Arthur Schnabel, a Mark Hambourg, to mention a few of the Titans.

Non-believers are invited to compare these names with the pupils of other contemporary piano masters. It would be a simple matter to mention a score of others who are artists of established reputation in Europe and America. Anyone who is familiar with the Leschetizky class of the past five years has only to glance through the season's list of concerts in any of the European capitals to see in what numbers these more recent pupils of Leschetizky are winning laurels before the public. They are not all of them Paderewskis, Gabrilowitsches or Essipoffs, but there are individuals among them, and they are many of them young enough to give hope for their development into pianistic personalities equally interesting as some of their predecessors.

The debt which the progress of piano playing in America owes to Leschetizky is

incalculable. Not only has the playing of the many Leschetizky pupils who have toured America from end to end been an enormous influence in developing the taste of a vast body of concert goers toward modern ideals in piano playing, but the presence in nearly every American hamlet of piano teachers of more or less close artistic relationship to Leschetizky ideals has meant an influence in American musical life.

At the lessons Leschetizky's vitality, his keenness of musical perception and his untiring energy are as marked as when the writer first worked with him, and those who have known him for an even longer period of time marvel that he still retains his unequalled pedagogical ability unimpaired as of yore. At a period in which men in most of the walks of life, those of them who have been spared eighty odd years, are content to enjoy the quiet contemplation of past achievements, Leschetizky is a living, moving factor in the world of art, a personality of such amazing strength and such a broad vision of life and art that the musical world may well wish him many more years of his present power and activity.

ing countries are extremely productive of sopranos, contraltos, baritones and basses, they bring forth few operatic tenors.

Mr. Dippel replied by suggesting that Mr. Aborn look up Kingston while in London. As a consequence of that hearing, Mr. Kingston went to the "boat train" this morning and contracts between him and the Century company were signed just before the train pulled out. The Welsh tenor has been loaned by Mr. Dippel to the Century, where he will make his debut in September. Kingston has been appearing with much success in London concerts.

Another of Mr. Aborn's annexations is a tenor named John Bardsley, with whom he signed a contract some two days before his departure from Europe.

### Varied Soloists in Volpe Park Concerts

A conspicuous feature of New York's Central Park concerts during the present week, in addition to Arnold Volpe's eclectic choice of programs, is the variety of soloists appearing with the Volpe Orchestra. On Wednesday evening Mme. Eva Rombro-Kranz won a storm of applause with the "Jewel Song," from "Faust," while artistic violin solos were afforded by Jacques Greenberger, on Thursday and Saturday evenings, his offerings being the first movement of Lalo's "Symphonie Espagnole" and Wieniawski's Polonaise in A Major. Another pleasing violinist was Mischel Gusikoff, whose Saint-Saëns Rondo Capriccioso and the Sarasate "Zigeunerweisen" were features of the Tuesday and Friday

concerts, respectively. Mr. Volpe's skilled oboist, C. Addimando, offers a Donizetti Fantasia, "Linda," at the Saturday matinee, and the favorite "My Heart at Thy Sweet Voice," from "Samson et Dalila," was heard on July 13 as a trumpet solo by B. Klatzkin.

### Frohman to Produce Latest Oscar Straus Operetta

Charles Frohman, the theatrical manager, arrived in New York from Europe last week with the news that among other dramatic and musical productions he had obtained the American rights of the latest operetta by Oscar Straus, author of "The Chocolate Soldier." This operetta has just been finished and will be produced on September 1 at the Lyric Theater, London, and immediately afterward in New York.

### Supper for Covent Garden Débutante

LONDON, July 12.—Colonel George Harvey, of New York, gave a supper to-night at Claridge's Hotel for Edith Miller, who had just made her Covent Garden début as Maddalena in "Rigoletto." There were several representatives of the nobility present, including the Duchess of Marlborough, and musicians attending included Mme. Melba, Gustav Huberdeau and Lawrence Gilman, the critic.

Ruggiero Leoncavallo is to conduct five concerts at the Municipal Casino at Montreux, Switzerland, in September.

## METROPOLITAN AIMS LEGAL FUSILLADE AT THE HAMMERSTEINS

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returned to New York and made known to the Metropolitan directors his intention of producing grand opera in English in this country. It understood from him that his plan would be furthered if he could have an opera house in New York City as his center. In a letter of November 29, 1912, it is said, he requested a partial release from his agreement with the Metropolitan Opera Company, which was refused in a letter from the Metropolitan Opera Company of December 18, 1912.

Immediately following its letter of refusal the Metropolitan Opera Company says that Hammerstein, in published interviews, stated his intention of producing grand opera in English at popular prices, notwithstanding his agreement with the Metropolitan Opera Company. At that time, it is maintained, he gave certain "alleged reasons, causes, or subterfuges why the obligations not to give grand opera assumed by him and by his son, Arthur Hammerstein, were not binding upon them, all showing his bad faith and intent in the premises."

Of the charge of Oscar Hammerstein that the season of opera at the Century Theater was undertaken with the support of the Metropolitan Opera Company to make it more difficult for him to conduct his new opera house the complaint says that the City Club's plan was announced long before Hammerstein made public his project.

"Great and irreparable damage will ensue to plaintiff," states the complaint, "if defendants, or either of them, are permitted to proceed in violation of their agreement as above specified, and are permitted to give grand opera in the city of New York." The Metropolitan then asks that the defendants be enjoined until April 26, 1920, "either alone or as a member of any firm or partnership or in conjunction with others, or as an officer, employee or in any other capacity from engaging in the business of producing in New York, in any language, grand opera, or any opera, operetta or comic opera that has ever been produced at the Metropolitan Opera House or at the Manhattan Opera House."

### Light on Singers' Salaries

An interesting exhibit in the case was the list of singers at the time of the transfer from the Manhattan to Metropolitan and the prices paid for them. Mme. Tetravini was to receive \$1,500 an appearance and to be engaged for forty appearances. Mary Garden got \$1,400 and was engaged for twenty appearances. Maurice Renaud, who had been engaged by Oscar Hammerstein for forty appearances at \$1,000, was engaged by the Metropolitan and the Chicago-Philadelphia companies for twenty-four appearances.

Varied were the royalties asked for the use of the operas. For "Salomé," for instance, \$500 for each performance was asked on condition that at least six be given each year. It cost \$800 every time "Elektra" was sung, and it had to be given six times a year. The operas of the Massenet repertoire cost \$100 for every representation and a retainer of \$600 paid for each opera in advance. For "Pelléas et Mélisande" a fee of \$400 was paid in advance and \$100 extra for every representation. "Samson et Dalilah" cost \$100 every time it was performed.

Oscar Hammerstein declared that despite the suit, which is to be brought in the Supreme Court, the successor to his Manhattan Opera House, which is to be known as the American Opera House and is now building at Fifty-first street and Lexington avenue, will open its doors to the public on the evening of November 10 at eight o'clock.

"And that will be the beginning of a season of grand opera at the American Opera House that will last at least twenty weeks," he added.

Counsel for the Metropolitan said that if any such thing were attempted, pending the present litigation, a temporary injunction would be asked for restraining the Hammersteins from opening.

"I am glad they brought the suit," was Oscar's comment. "It is the only decent thing the Metropolitan has done to me since I retired. Action has now been brought in the nature of a regular lawsuit and the case is to be considered on its merits. This action, however, can in no way interfere with my continuance of preparations for the season. All my signed contracts have a clause empowering me to

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## RUSSIAN COMPANY FOR CENTURY OPERA

**Negotiating for Spring Season—Aborn Signs Kingston, the Welsh Miner-Tenor**

LONDON, July 12.—That New York is to add another national flavor to its operatic fare of the coming year is indicated by Milton Aborn's announcement, just before he sailed for America on the *Mauritania*, that he had practically arranged with Sir Thomas Beecham for the presentation at the Century Opera House, New York, of the Russian Opera Company, now at Covent Garden, which is headed by Chaliapine. It is Mr. Aborn's plan to have this Russian season follow the regular English season at the Century, beginning somewhere near the first of May.

Perhaps the most interesting of Mr. Aborn's captures is the former Welsh miner, Morgan Kingston, who will make his operatic début at the Century. The release of this much-talked-of singer was obtained by Mr. Aborn from Andreas Dippel. It was in Berlin that the Century impresario met Mr. Dippel, to whom he complained that, while the English-speak-