

Musical New York at the Time of Sarasate's Début

Famous Violinist Nearly Wrecks His "Strad" in Mounting Stage—Carlotta Patti Makes Her First and Only Appearance in Opera in "Magic Flute" — Christine Nilsson Pays Her First Visit—Annie Louise Cary, Vieuxtemps, Brignoli Among Other Visiting Stars—Parepa Rosa and Clara Louise Kellogg in English Opera

By EDUARDO MARZO

ONE of the most impressive experiences of my early career was in the summer of 1869 when I had gone on a visit to Italy. While in Rome I had occasion to appear before the royal family of Naples and was presented with the picture of the brother of the former king of Naples, that is, the Count of Caserta, and his wife, who was the daughter of Queen Isabella of Spain.

On my return I met on the French steamer on which I was making the voyage, Carlotta Patti, who was on her way for a tour in South America. Theodore Ritter, the pianist, was with her and also on the same steamer were M. Dachauer and his wife. It was just that fall that M. Dachauer opened a music store in partnership with the Spanish pianist, Ranieri Vilanova.

Their store was then on the first floor in a building on Fourteenth Street, near University Place. I went to board with Mr. Dachauer, who lived with his family on the upper floors of the same building, but moved soon afterward to Sixteenth Street, near Third Avenue. It was this house that became afterward the rendezvous for many noted musicians and we all led there a real Bohemian life. Among the boarders were Randolph, who was a very popular bass at that time; Marie Krebs, the pianist, with her mother, Mme. Krebs-Michalesi, a noted German contralto; Kowalski, the Polish pianist, and later on Pablo de Sarasate, the violinist, who had just returned from a tour in South America with Carlotta Patti. Mr. Petri of Steinway's, of whom I have spoken in my previous article, was a table boarder. He was a good musician, but not very successful as a composer.

During that winter and the following my musical activities were principally as a private teacher and teacher at the New York Conservatory, accompanist and coach and organist at the new Roman Catholic Church of St. Bernard's, which was just being started in a basement on Thirteenth Street, near Tenth Avenue. It was for this church that I made my first attempt at composing a mass. There was considerable playing and singing at Mr. Dachauer's house by the artists living there; still, as a rule, I kept in the background and seldom played or accompanied anyone, with the exception of Randolph, with whom I was on the most friendly terms. This reticence was due not so much to timidity as to the attitude of the older musicians, who, because of my youth, were inclined to treat me condescendingly.

It so happened that one day some friends of Sarasate who called on him asked him to play for them. Willing as he was to oblige them, however, he said that he could not very well do it, as there was nobody to accompany him. Just then I came in, and Sarasate called me into the parlor and asked me to play for him. I willingly consented, with the result that Sarasate actually jumped up in glee as he was wont to do when he was pleased and remarked: "What can that man (referring to Dachauer) mean by speaking so slightly about you. Why, I very rarely have been accompanied as you have accompanied me."

Marie Krebs was a very fine pianist and made quite a success. She played for the Steinways and her mother sang several times in concerts and in opera at the old Thalia Theater on the Bowery. She was the first one, to my knowledge,



No. 1—Carlotta Patti (1870); No. 2—Marie Krebs (1871); No. 3—R. Randolph (1871); No. 4—Pablo de Sarasate (1871); No. 5—Clara Louise Kellogg (1873)

to wear a moustache in the part of *Orsini* in "Lucrezia Borgia," which was sung in German.

With Randolph, whose real name, by the way, was Randolph, I spent a great deal of time and often went with him to the Lotus Club, which was being organized at No. 2 Irving Place.

Numerous Concerts

During that winter and the following I accompanied at many concerts, both private and public, and was fortunate enough to make quite a reputation as one of the best accompanists in New York. Some of the concerts in which I took part were: One given on Oct. 30, 1869, by Henrietta Beebe (just making her first appearance after returning from Europe, where she had gone to study), in conjunction with Mr. Hill, tenor; Mr. Beckett, baritone, both members of the Mendelssohn Glee Club, at that time under the direction of Joseph Mosenthal, its founder; Mrs. Jennie Kempton, contralto; Master Willie Hess, violinist; William Popper, violoncellist, and George W. Morgan, organist. The concluding number at this concert was, as usual, a trio, this time, however, an "Ave Maria" by Owen.

Another concert at which I presided was given on Jan. 22, 1870, by J. A. Dawson, a young American pianist from New Orleans, pupil of the Conservatoire of Brussels, who was a protégé of Mrs. John Jacob Astor.

A concert given for the benefit of St. John's Guild in February of the same year has left quite an impression upon me, for the reason that one of the singers for whom I played was Mrs. Chester A. Arthur, the wife of the future President of the United States, at that time the Collector of the Port of New York.

But certainly the most interesting memory of that season, for me, is of a private musicale given in Twenty-second Street, at which I met Samuel Morse, the inventor of the telegraph. With his long, flowing beard and commanding appearance, he certainly was a man to be remembered aside from his wonderful personality.

The musical soirées at the New York Conservatory were continued that winter and the following one under the direction of Mr. Gerlach, Mr. Carmienke and myself. The music performed both by pupils and teachers was of the same high standard as that of the former season. As the hall at the new quarters of the Conservatory, 82 Fifth Avenue, was not large enough to accommodate

the audiences, some of the soirées were given at Steinway Hall.

Notwithstanding my work, I found time to attend almost all the musical events of those two seasons, which were quite numerous and extremely interesting.

Sarasate Saves His "Strad"

Carlotta Patti, just back from South America, gave in the spring of 1870 two farewell concerts (why "farewell" I am unable to tell), under the management of Max Strakosch, at which Sarasate made his first appearance in New York. A humorous incident which occurred at that concert might be related here. The concert was at Steinway Hall and Sarasate in going up to the stage, which was considerably above the level of the dressing rooms, stumbled on the stairs and, instead of him, the audience saw only his Stradivarius, which he held over his head in his desperate attempt to save it from harm. Marie Krebs played at this concert in place of Theodore Ritter, who had gone to Europe, I believe.

The Italian opera at the Academy of Music had come to an abrupt ending, and Max Maretzek, the manager who was called "the hero of a thousand fiascos," went to Europe to engage another company. This gave the opportunity to Max Strakosch to present at that opera house Carlotta Patti for the first and only time in opera. She sang the rôle of *Astrafiamente* in the "Magic Flute," which did not require her doing any walking on the stage, as unfortunately she was quite lame.

The other artists at that performance were Mme. Canissa, a German contralto; Habelmann, tenor; Hermans and Carl Formes, basses.

Nilsson Comes to Town

It was that fall that Christine Nilsson came to New York for the first time and was heralded by Max Strakosch as the new Jenny Lind. With her were Annie Louise Cary just returned from her studies abroad; Brignoli, Verger, Vieuxtemps, the great violinist, and Marie Krebs, pianist.

During that winter we had in New York also for the first time a company of Italian Opera Bouffe at the French Theater in Twenty-third Street near Eighth Avenue, with Carlo Patti, a brother of Carlotta Patti, as director. The first opera given was "Le Petit Faust," by Offenbach. Parepa Rosa and Clara Louise Kellogg sang in English opera at the Academy of Music, and the

Hess English Opera, with Rosa Hersee and Zeldia Seguin, were at Niblo's Garden, a theater which was then on Broadway on the corner of Prince Street.

With the Hess English Opera were also Castle, the tenor; Drayton and Albert Lawrence, who settled afterward in New York and became a noted singing teacher.

Artists of the Time

Other singers in vogue at that time were Mme. de Lussan, the soprano of St. Stephen's Roman Catholic Church; Nettie Sterling, contralto (with a most beautiful voice); Clara Perl, Anna Bishop, already somewhat passé since she had commenced to teach. Besides the usual concerts of the Philharmonic Society, under Carl Bergman, there were concerts galore at which appeared these singers and Candidus, tenor; Remmert, the bass; Giorgio Ronconi, Richard Arnold, violinist, and Charles Werner, violoncellist. We had at that time also a fine array of pianists, namely, Anna Mehlig, Marie Krebs, Richard Hoffman, S. B. Mills, Harry Sanderson, J. Patterson, J. A. Dawson, Vilanova and Homer Bartlett, the last of whom was just blossoming out.

As accompanist I was in close association with all these artists and made many warm friends among them.

Another prominent musician of that time, who certainly deserves mention, was Signor Paolo Giorza, who taught singing, played the organ in a Catholic church and composed any number of masses in the style of his ballet music, for which he was celebrated in Italy.

Huntington Has First Community Christmas Sing

HUNTINGTON, W. VA., Dec. 28.—The first Community Christmas Song Service was held at the City Auditorium on the afternoon of Dec. 23, under the conductorship of George L. Bagby. Saint-Saëns's "Christmas Oratorio" was sung and the "Hallelujah Chorus" from the "Messiah." Solos were also offered by Mrs. H. K. Eutsler, Mrs. John Culton, Mrs. Austin Sooy, Emily Schoew, Reba Griffith, Janet Parsons, Mont Davidson and Owen Burton. The Song Service was due to the efforts of the Woman's Club and was arranged by the Christmas Committee of that organization, Mrs. L. H. Cammack, Mrs. F. J. Waddell and Mrs. D. W. Brown.