

The Beloved Tenor: A Budget of Anecdotes

AMONG the mourners who watched in silent grief the passing of Naples' greatest son, attended with observances rare even when the potentate has lain upon the catafalque, have been those who, not always with dry eyes, recalled



some incident, some scene, in Caruso's life. There are brief tales which have their movement in colorful environment; short stories, consisting of a quip, a flash, an evidence of the naive wis-

dom which illumines the way of the great. There are accounts of these personal idiosyncrasies which added piquancy to the character of Caruso. There are, too, those recent statements of the wounded hero, returned Ulysses-like to the shores of his youth, which breathe a touching faith in the certainty of future voyages. All these—the matter of a literature yet unpenned—summon back momentarily from the untraveled country the sunny, simple and great figure of a beloved artist.

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CARUSO WAS MANNA to the newspaper man. He was always good for a story, and every reporter relished the assignment to meet the vessel on which the tenor would arrive in this country after his periodic absences. Caruso would be found amid his valets and trunks, bright and smiling at the sight of his interviewers. He would invariably bring out a fund of new stories to regale the reporters, and there was always something in his remarks that would make good copy.

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APROPOS OF THE "favorite rôle," which usually resolves itself into the question of the most successful rôle, Caruso declared that he had no such predilection. Unlike Dalmores (who declared that he liked them all), the Italian tenor once wrote dryly to Maurice Halpern, the New York critic, that he was "fond of none of them"—least of all, of that he was just about to sing!

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THE SINGER WAS rather proud of his magnificent jewelry. Indeed it was an essential detail in the picture of the great Caruso of a few years ago, as he sauntered on Fifth Avenue or Broadway, carefully tailored and, at one period, wearing an inseparable green Fedora hat. One night when he was wearing his emeralds at the opera, Edward L. Bernays remarked that the stones were as fine as those of the once-famous "Diamond" Jim Brady. "They are better," replied Caruso earnestly, "much better!"

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A LITTLE MORE than a year ago, burglars entered the Caruso mansion at East Hampton, L. I., and escaped



Photo by Keystone View Co.

The Church of San Francisco di Paolo, Where, in the Royal Basilica Erected by Ferdinand I, the Obsequies of Caruso Were Conducted While Naples and the World Mourned



Nothing Expressed Caruso's Genial Laughing Nature Better Than His Cartoons. He Delighted to Employ His Skillful Pencil in Caricatures of His Friends. He Had a Quick and Humorous Eye and the Drawings Here Reproduced by Courtesy of Marziale Sisca, President of "La Follia di New York," from a Book Devoted to This Phase of Caruso's Activities, Show What a Fantastic Line He Sometimes Described. In No. 1 He Gives an Odd Impression of the Faithful William J. Guard, Press Representative of the Metropolitan. Nos. 2 and 3 Are Snapshots at Royalty with Astigmatic Lens; Alfonso of Spain and the Late Czar Nicholas II. No. 4 Is Mascagni; No. 5, a Self-Portrait; No. 6, Toscanini; No. 7, Richard Strauss; No. 8, Gatti-Casazza Addressing His "Children"; No. 9, Alessandro Bonci; No. 10, Charpentier; No. 11, Caruso and Farrar at Rehearsal, and No. 12, Giorgio Polacco

with jewels valued at close to half a million dollars. Mrs. Caruso in great trepidation cabled to her husband, who was then singing in Havana. By return cable came the tenor's response: "Never mind; we'll get some new ones."

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DR. WILLIAM LLOYD, a London throat specialist, who treated Caruso, said that, while he demanded huge fees for his concerts, he cared very little for money. "I have known him refuse \$10,000 to sing at a Sunday afternoon concert in Albert Hall with the remark, 'I am too tired.' Again I made him an offer of \$20,000 on behalf of Sir Oswald Stoll to sing in London, but he refused. 'Too much money,' he said, and waved the offer aside."

CARUSO TOOK PLEASURE in his rôle of *Nemorino* in "L'Elisir d'Amore," revived at the Metropolitan in January, 1917. It provided opportunity for his engaging mischief. His singing of the well-known aria, "Una Furtiva Lagrima," always brought ecstatic applause. To cries for repetition he would be impervious. He remained sitting motionless on the curb of the village "well" whither the "business" of the opera called him. On one occasion he explained in English that Gatti did not permit encores to be given! After this interpolation the piece proceeded.

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ALBERT REISS, the tenor, used to tell about an occasion when Caruso jokingly consented to sing for him the Serenade offstage of *Peppe* in "Pagliacci." Reiss said that there was always a notable lack of applause when he himself gave it, and he wished to see whether it was because he was singing it badly. The superb presentation Caruso gave it aroused not a bit more enthusiasm—an illustration of what lurks in a name. At another time, when de Segurrola was having some difficulty with his part in "Bohème" because of an indisposition, Caruso stood near him in the wings and sang the "Coat Song," while the basso contributed the action of the part.

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WHEN HE WAS TWELVE years old, because of a difference with his schoolmistress, Caruso was removed from school and apprenticed to an engineer. The drudgery of bending over a draughtsman's board, he confessed in later life, was very distasteful to him. He wanted to go to sea, and passed his happiest time in moments on the wharves of Naples, looking out over the blue water that was to bear him to future conquests! But it was from the draughts-

man's board that he acquired the technique that afterwards served him in producing those clever caricatures with which he amused himself and his friends.

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CONFIDENT he was on the road to recovery, he spoke gaily to newspapermen at Sorrento only a week before his death. He was questioned regarding an Egyptian cigarette that he was smoking, and responded: "Of course I smoke. What! Do you think I am sick? Every morning I have my sun

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No Pope or King Ever Mourned More, Says Scotti of Friend

ONLY with the announcement that Cifariello, the Italian sculptor, was to make the death mask of Caruso did Antonio Scotti realize, as he said, that his friend was really gone.

"It did not seem real," said Scotti. "There were moments when I could not believe he was gone. Wait until next season at the opera. It is then that the people there will realize that they have not their father; they have not their brother; nobody will smile there next season."

"He was only forty-nine, and a man is young at that age. Why should he have died with all that life in him and with his great heart?"

"I dined with him before he left for Italy, and when I said 'You will be back next season to sing better than ever,' he answered, 'it will take a long time for me to get well.'"

"The whole world mourns for him. No man was ever mourned so in all countries. If a king had died, if a pope had died, it could be no more."