

HISTORIC VOCAL RECORDINGS

STARS OF THE VIENNA OPERA (1946-1953): MOZART: Die Entführung aus dem Serail--Wer ein Liebchen hat gefunden. Ludwig Weber, basso (Felix Prohaska, conductor). ...Konstanze... O wie ängstlich; Wenn der Freude. Walther Ludwig, tenor (Wilhelm Loibner). ...O, wie will ich triumphieren. Weber (Prohaska). Nozze di Figaro--Non più andrai. Erich Kunz, baritone (Herbert von Karajan). ...Voi che sapete. Irmgard Seefried, soprano (Karajan). ...Dove sono. Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, soprano (Karajan). ...Sull'aria. Schwarzkopf, Seefried (Karajan). ...Deh vieni, non tardar. Seefried (Karajan). Don Giovanni--Madamina, il catalogo è questo. Kunz (Otto Ackermann). ...Là ci darem la mano. Seefried, Kunz (Karajan). ...Dalla sua pace. Richard Tauber, tenor (Walter Goehr). ...Batti, batti, o bel Masetto. Seefried (Karajan). ...Il mio tesoro. Tauber (Goehr). ...Non mi dir. Maria Cebotari, soprano (Karajan). Zauberflöte--Der Vogelfänger bin ich ja. Kunz (Karajan). ...Dies Bildnis ist bezaubernd schön. Anton Dermota, tenor (Karajan). ...O zittre nicht; Der Holle Rache. Wilma Lipp, soprano (Wilhelm Furtwängler). Ein Mädchen oder Weibchen. Kunz (Rudolf Moralt). BEETHOVEN: Fidelio--Ach wär' ich schon. Sena Jurinac, soprano (Furtwängler). ...Mir ist so wunderbar. Martha Mödl, soprano; Jurinac; Rudolf Schock, tenor; Gottlob Frick, basso (Furtwängler). ...Hat man nicht. Weber (Prohaska). WEBER: Freischütz--Hier im ird'schen Jammertal; Schweig! Schweig! Weber (Prohaska). NICOLAI: Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor--Nun eilt herbei. Cebotari (Prohaska). WAGNER: Meistersinger--Und doch, 's will halt nicht gehn; Doch eines Abends spät. Hans Hotter, baritone (Meinhard von Zallinger). Die Walküre--Leb' wohl. Hotter (Zallinger). Götterdämmerung--Hier sitz' ich. Weber (Moralt). SMETANA: Die verkaufte Braut--Wie fremd und tot. Hilde Konetzni, soprano (Karajan). J. STRAUSS: Zigeunerbaron--O habet acht. Cebotari (Karajan). SCHUMANN: Der Nussbaum; Mondnacht. Julius Patzak, tenor (Hermann von Nordberg, piano). R. STRAUSS: Adiädne auf Naxos--Es gibt ein Reich. Cebotari (Karajan). Rosenkavalier--Da lieg ich. Dagmar Hermann, contralto; Weber (Ackerman). Salome--Ach, du wolltest mich nicht deinen Mund. Ljuba Welitsch, soprano (Lovro von Matacic). EMI RLS 764, 3 discs.

A generation has passed since 1953, and it is time to look back around the corner to another "golden age," more specifically a golden age of Vienna. The names of the singers listed here are now legendary, some thrice familiar, some more dimly remembered. It is sad to realize how many singers of the German school came into their prime during the war years, thus missing out on international careers. The most legendary of these, perhaps, was Maria Cebotari, who died in 1949 at age 39. Discovered by Fritz Busch, she was engaged for Dresden in 1930. Her brilliant career centered there until she joined the Vienna Staatsoper in 1946. She was admired in a number of contemporary operas, but most for her Mozart and Strauss. Anton Dermota was engaged for the Metropolitan in 1952, but cancelled, so that he is known in this country only by his numerous recordings. His big success came with his Don Ottavio sung

under Toscanini in Salzburg. Sena Jurinac is another artist whom the Metropolitan never lured to New York, though she has sung in other parts of the country. And Hilde Konetzni, a member of the Vienna company for almost 40 years, was unknown in the States, though her sister Anny sang one season at the Met (1934-35). Wilma Lipp, Walther Ludwig, Julius Patzak and Ludwig Weber remain European legends. Richard Tauber, known here as a recitalist, is included in this program despite the fact that his great days in the Vienna Opera were in the early twenties, before his meeting with Franz Lehar and his identification with that master's operettas. He sang a final Don Ottavio with the company in 1947, mortally ill, and he died the following January. His record, made in 1939, is the only one outside the years 1946-1953. Long a famous recording, it is surely one of the best ever made of the arias.

The list of conductors is no less distinguished than the singers, from the veteran Furtwängler to the young Karajan. The repertoire is well chosen and representative of Vienna.

Some of the performances are well known, some extracted from complete opera sets and some which appeared as single 78's. Pride of place goes to the veteran Ludwig Weber, who joined the company in 1945, for he is represented in no less than seven selections. He makes a smooth-voiced Osmin, not so unctuous and therefore more human than some. As Rocco he is genial and warm, but his Kaspar is properly villainous. His Hagen is presented in a previously unpublished recording of the watch scene, which makes an interesting contrast to the familiar live performance at Covent Garden under Beecham. And his Baron Ochs, with the insinuating Annina of Dagmar Hermann, is no novelty (EMI World SH 286, ARSC 10/2-3).

Erich Kunz was at the Metropolitan for two seasons (1952-54) after which he was sorely missed. Three of the Mozart arias here included are to be found in a retrospective reviewed in these pages, 12/41-2. A novelty is hearing him as Don Giovanni to Seefried's Zerlina, a previously unissued recording. Seefried's Mozart is justly admired, and the various arias here are up to standard. Her duet with Schwarzkopf suffers from an obtrusive orchestra. As for Schwarzkopf's Dove sono, I am not sure that I would recognize the singer, who is somewhere between the bright high soprano of her early days and the heavier voice we know so well. I am disappointed, too, in the various Gebotari records. The voice to me seems thick and a little hard, lacking in appeal. Nor is her intonation perfect.

It is hardly necessary to praise Hans Hotter, for four seasons one of the strengths of the Metropolitan. His was never a first-rate voice, but he was a great artist. Here we have three unpublished selections, or rather parts of scenes, for the two great monologues of Hans Sachs are missing their first halves, and Wotan's farewell stops after the first section. Hilde Konetzni gives a rather deliberate and expansive account of the Bartered Bride recitative and aria. Jurinac's familiar

song from Fidelio, along with the sublime canon quartet, is extracted from the Furtwängler set. Walther Ludwig's Entführung arias are well sung, and Patzak, brought in with two unpublished Schumann songs (there being no available arias) well deserves his place. But a highlight is provided by Wilma Lipp singing the two arias of the Queen of the Night under Furtwängler. This superb recording was never issued, we are told, because Lipp sang the arias shortly after in Karajan's complete Zauberflöte. The first aria is reminiscent of Ivogün's recording, while the second recalls Hempel. Finally, and crowning all, we have Ljuba Welitsch in the Salome finale. This performance under Matačić is considered the finest of the three recordings she made of it.

THE ART OF VICTORIA DE LOS ANGELES: Opera, Song & Zarzuela Recordings, 1949-1969. MOZART: Nozze di Figaro--Porgi amor; ROSSINI: Barbiere di Siviglia--Una voce poco fa; VERDI: Otello--Mia madre aveva una povera ancella; Ave Maria (with Gianella Borelli, mezzo-soprano); Traviata--Addio del passato; PUCCINI: Bohème--Si, mi chiamano Mimi (with Jussi Bjoerling, tenor); ...Donde lieta usci; Madama Butterfly--Entrance of Butterfly (with Mario Sereni, baritone); ...Un bel dì vedremo; WAGNER: Tannhäuser--Dich, teure Halle; Lohengrin--Einsam in trüben Tagen; GOUNOD: Faust--Roi de Thulé; Jewel song; MASSENET: Manon--Adieu, notre petite table; ...Obéïssons; Werther--Air des lettres; BIZET: Carmen--Habañera; ...Seguidilla (with Nicolai Gedda, tenor); GRANADOS: Goyescas--La maja y el ruiseñor; FALLA: La vida breve--Vivan los que ríen; ...Allí está! Ríyendo!; SCHUBERT An die Musik; BRAHMS: Dein blaues Auge; Vergebliches Standchen; FAURÉ: Clair de lune; HAHN: Le rossignol des lilas; DUPARC: L'invitation au voyage; CANTELOUBE: Bañero; CORNAGO: Que es mi vida, preguntais?; ANON: Ay, luna que reluces; GRANADOS: Callejeo; El tra la la y el punteado; La maja dolorosa, no. 3; TARRAGÓ (arr.): Dín, dan volerán; RODRIGO: De dónde venís amore?; De los alamos vengo, madre; CHAPI: La patria chica--Canción de pastora; La Chavala--Canción de la Gitana; Las hijas del Zebedeo--Carceleras; VALVERDE: Clavelitos; BARRERA & CALLEJA: Adios Granada. Victoria de los Angeles, soprano. EMI SLS 5233, 3 discs.

Victoria de los Angeles was 21 in 1944 when she made her debut as the Countess in Nozze di Figaro in her native Barcelona. In the next few seasons she sang a variety of roles there. So when her international career began she was a seasoned artist. In the two decades covered by this retrospective there was no crescendo from the promising beginning to the full mastery. Indeed there is little contrast between the earliest recordings included and the latest. Gifted with a voice of uncommon appeal, a gracious personality and the ability to communicate, she was charming in whatever she did. Thus she conquered New York with her first recital in 1950, and she held her public through her decade at the Metropolitan. There are few surprises in the arias and songs in this recital, but there is a freshness about the most familiar of them. The first four sides are devoted to opera, the fifth and about half of the sixth to song - German, French, Spanish - with three zarzuela airs and

two encores sung with guitar in her inimitable Spanish way. Some of the operatic numbers are extracted from complete sets; there is nothing on the program that has not been available before.

Porgi amor is one of the earliest recordings, and as an opener it shows her as a mistress of the Mozart style. Perhaps it is just a shade on the slow side, but the voice is at its loveliest, the phrasing is broad, and the way she arches the ascent and drop of the line O milascia almen morir, lightly touching the top, is delightful. Una voce poco fa is agile, neat and arch, the Otello scene meltingly beautiful. It was to be expected that she would be at home in Traviata and Bohème, and her Madama Butterfly has long been a favorite role. The two selections from Butterfly were made five years apart; both are convincing though the tessitura seems a little high for her. And she takes the lower ending of the entrance scene. The two Wagner perennials show another facet of her art. The Tannhäuser is full of spirit, the Lohengrin sung simply like the narrative it is. In contrast again, she plays the Faust scene for all the drama there is in it but treats the Jewel song like a dainty waltz. In the Manon as elsewhere there is a reminiscence of her compatriot Lucrezia Bori: the voices are not similar, but both have a special appeal. In Werther she strikes a deeper note.

Two selections from Carmen are extracted from the set she made with Sir Thomas Beecham. We remember the anticipation when the set was first released - what would this vocal aristocrat make of the French-Spanish Gypsy? Controversial she may have been, but she knew how to color her voice. Needless to say, there is nothing controversial about her authentic style in Granados and Falla.

As a lieder singer she did not work at "making something" of the songs, though in Vergebliches Ständchen she knew how to get a contrast between the voices of the characters. The Fauré Clair de lune moves inexorably as it must, but here perhaps she "sings" a little too much, injects a little too much personality. But the Hahn, Duparc and Canteloube are delightful. The Spanish group touches on the Renaissance and on folklore along with Granados and Rodrigo. The zarzuela selections are done with a real flair that only a native Spaniard can give them. The most famous of them, Carcelares is breathtaking. Finally, the two encores, announced by the singer: the inevitable Clavelitos and the favorite Adios Granada her customary last word sung to her own guitar accompaniment.

The accompanying leaflet includes a tribute by Frank Granville Barker as well as complete texts and translations. The documentation on the back of the box does not give catalogue and matrix numbers of the original releases, as has been standard practice, but does tell us the locations at which the recordings were made, the name of the producer and, where known, the engineer. There are a number of "assisting artists" in scenes extracted from complete opera sets. Amusingly, Jussi Bjoerling is credited in the first Bohème number: he sings a single syllable - Si.

Mario Sereni has a sentence in the scene of Butterfly's entrance, and in the Otello Gianella Borelli puts in E il vento. Nicolai Gedda has a more substantial part in the Carmen Séguidille.

The notation Mono/Stereo on the labels indicates that the earlier recordings have been reprocessed to match the later. Some unevenness in the reproduction would seem to be due to this.

THE VOICE OF META SEINEMEYER: VERDI: Ballo in maschera--Ma dall'arido stelo (German); Forza del destino--Madre pietosa vergine (German); ... La vergine degli angeli (German); Don Carlos--Tu che le vanita; PUCCINI: Manon Lescaut--In quelle trine morbide; Tosca--Vissi d'arte; ...Ah! franchigia a Floria Tosca; O dolci mani; Amaro sol per te (German, with Carl Martin Oehman, tenor); Madama Butterfly--Ancora un passo; ...Un bel di vedremo. Meta Seinemeyer, soprano; Berlin State Opera Orchestra and Chorus, Frieder Weissmann, conductor. Helios H 88002.

In the decade of the twenties Meta Seinemeyer was one of the glories of the opera stage in Germany. As a very young singer, in the early 20's, she visited this country with the Wagnerian Opera Company, singing Eva in Meistersinger and Elisabeth in Tannhäuser. She appeared in South America and enjoyed a fine success at Covent Garden, but her career centered mostly in Dresden. Her international reputation rests mostly on the long series of Parlophon-Odeon recordings she made in one decade; she died in 1929. The recordings transferred to this LP recall the excitement of hearing her voice back in the thirties at the Gramophone Shop in New York. John Steane, in his introductory appreciation, quotes Walter Legge as calling the voice "indescribable," and perhaps it is as well to leave it at that. But one may add that it was a spinto voice of rich quality and perfect evenness, a voice with a tragic tone especially suited to the heroines of Verdi and Puccini. Her singing is exciting but not flawless in intonation. We are told she took her recordings very seriously and over the years developed a technique that assured success with every number. In this she was surely aided by Frieder Weissmann, with whom she invariably worked, and whom she married on her deathbed. The recordings on this disc were made in 1925 and 1928.

The great aria from Ballo in maschera is complete with the long orchestral introduction. It was impressively realistic in 1928, and it still is impressive, though a certain tubbiness is characteristic of all these recordings. The conductor strove for a clean sound without studio reverberation. I find a curious fascination in the contrast of the singer's voice singing in Italian and in German. But if her dark vowels do not make for idiomatic Italian, the quality of the voice is no less appealing.

One could quibble over the brisk tempo in Madre pietosa, done with the introductory recitative but somewhat cut and lacking the chorus, but things were often done that way in 1928. Tu che le vanita was a classic performance in its time. The duet with Oehman, in German, recorded in

1925, comes off well, though reading Steane's account of her joint success with Tino Pattiera one wishes for a sample of that combination. Interestingly, she takes the lower option in the final phrase of Butterfly's entrance scene. On the whole the transfers are excellent.

CHOPIN: 17 Polish songs, Op. 72. Eugenia Zareska, soprano; Giorgio Favaretto, piano. Helios HB 88001.

Chopin's songs were not published during his lifetime, and though they were collected in one opus number, they range in date between 1829 and 1847. Sixteen of them were published in 1857, one added in 1872. Two more were discovered and brought out in 1910. Attractive as some of these songs are, no one would claim for them a place of great importance in Chopin's total output. Perhaps three of them are really well known - The maiden's wish (no. 1), Sembrich's invariable self-accompanied final encore; My joys (no. 12), best known in Liszt's transcription; and The ring (no. 14). Some of the songs are mazurkas, some dramatic - notably Hymn for the tomb (no. 17) - and some have striking touches, as the odd pattern of the introduction to no. 7, The messenger. Some really call for a man's voice - for example, Bachanal (no. 4). Perhaps seventeen of them in a row is too much for the casual listener, but they are varied in style, and they show a less familiar side of Chopin's genius.

The present recording, made in 1955, enjoyed some popularity in England. Zareska's voice is a very pleasing one - we remember her particularly in the Mahler Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen and as Marina in Boris Godounow - and her singing here has the authentic ring. There have been numerous recordings of various individual songs over the years, especially the three best known. And in 1952 Maria Kurenko gave us the seventeen with Robert Hufstader at the piano (Lyricord 23). By way of contrast, the burly voice of Doda Conrad was out of place in most of the songs (Vox PL 8310, 1954). More appropriately the soprano Stefania Woytowicz and the tenor Andrej Bachleda divided the songs on Musical Heritage (Orpheus OR C-161, 1969). I never heard the recording of Celine and Blumenthal (Everest 3370, 1975).

FLORENCE EASTON (Vol. 2): WAGNER: Tannhäuser--Allmächt'ge Jungfrau; Lohengrin--Einsam in trüben Tagen; VERDI: Forza del destino--Pace, pace, mio Dio; MASSENET: Hérodiade--Il est doux, il est bon; PUCCINI: Madama Butterfly--Un bel dì vedremo; Bohème--Si, mi chiamano Mimi; ...O soave fanciulla (with Giulio Crimi, tenor); WAGNER: Siegfried--Act III, scene 3, Heil dir, Sonne! (with Lauritz Melchior, tenor; Royal Opera Orchestra, Robert Heger, conductor). Florence Easton, soprano. Cantilena 6245.

Florence Easton came to the Met in 1917 with a rich and varied experience behind her. In the decade of the 20's - until her departure in 1929 - she sang a great assortment of roles, from the Santuzza of her debut, through Marguerite, Nedda and Madama Butterfly to Brünnhilde and Isolde. She had leading parts in such premieres as Liszt's Saint Elisabeth,

Gianni Schicchi (world premiere), Albert Wolff's The blue bird; Così fan tutte, Krenek's Johnny spielt auf, and Deems Taylor's The king's henchman. Her versatility was proverbial: she could sing practically any soprano role on a moment's notice, and she frequently did. Indeed, her versatility was to some extent responsible for her reputation as a "useful" singer. She did not have the personal glamor of a Jeritza, the lyrical charm of a Bori, or the tonal richness of a Ponselle or a Rethberg. Her voice was lighter in texture and brighter than we are accustomed to hear in the heavy Wagner roles, but she was able to sing them throughout her career without overtaxing, at the same time carrying the full load of the standard Italian and French repertoire. According to John Stratton's introductory notes - and he knew her well - she was fed up with stepping into new roles when she resigned from the company in 1929. She returned for a single Walkure Brunnhilde on 29 February 1936 to such public acclaim that one wonders why she did not remain. At that point surely she could have written her own ticket.

Easton's earliest recordings were made for the Vocalion Company shortly after her Met debut. Stratton explains that they were made by the hill-and-dale method, which the company soon abandoned. Through most of the twenties she was active in the Brunswick studios, and in 1928 she went over to Edison, which company, as it happened, was coming to its end. There were six sides made in the HMV studios in 1938, and of course the famous Siegfried duet recorded with Melchior in 1932. Thus the present program combines the earliest Easton recordings with the crown of her career.

The Vocalions are all but unknown. They represent the basics of the Easton repertoire in her first seasons at the Metropolitan. True, she did not sing Leonora in Forza del destino and Hérodiade has yet to be given at the Met, but the rest is standard fare. This is Volume 2 of Easton by Cantilena. Volume 1 is made up of mostly Brunswick material, with two of the HMV songs, a portion of the Siegfried duet, and some off-the-air takes from a performance of Tristan in her own English translation (CR 6234). There is also a Rococo LP (5219) which in a few numbers overlap with this. To round out the picture, in 1955 IRCC commemorated the 60th anniversary of her debut with some of her Brunswick numbers and some private "takes" (L-7022), and more recently, on UORC 372, she shares a disc with Dusolina Giannini, both recorded in recital.

The selections on the first side of this disc are a worthy memento of the artist as we remember her. Because of the condition of these rare recordings, to be sure, we have to accept some technical shortcomings. The voice was in its prime, her musicianship and intelligence everywhere in evidence. A distinctive quality of her singing in any language was a kind of "tang" in her diction, which would seem to betray her British background. Her singing in every language is always clear, but this "spice" is characteristic. I hardly need speak of the duet with Melchior, which has long been admired and sought after. It was issued as a kind of replacement for the abbreviated version in the early HMV-Victor Siegfried album, in which the great Frida Leider was paired with the wooden voice of Rudolf Laubenthal. Cantilena's transfer is very satisfactory.

THE GOLDEN AGE: Volume III, Eminent singers of the 1890's. MEYERBEER: L'Africaine--Sur mes genoux. Félia Litvinne, soprano. ...Holla! matelots; Adamastor. Giuseppe Campanari, baritone, ...O paradis. Francesco Vignas, tenor. BOITO: Mefistofele--L'Aktra notte. Gemma Bellincioni, soprano. GOUNOD: Roméo et Juliette--Ange adorable (Ital). Bice Mililotti, soprano; Francesco Marconi, tenor. VERDI: Aida--O patria mia, Ada Adini, soprano. LEONCAVALLO: Pagliacci--Si può? Mario Ancona, baritone. PUCCINI: Bohème--Addio dolce svegliare. Adelina Stehle, soprano; Maria Camporelli, soprano; Edoardo Garbin, tenor; Mario Sammarco, baritone. MAZART: Don Giovanni--Deh vieni alle finestra. Jean-François Delmas, basso. GOUNOD: Faust--Salut! demeure. Albert Alvarez, tenor. ...Je ris de me voir. Emma Eames, soprano. BERLIOZ: Damnation de Faust--Devant la maison. Pol Plançon, basso. MASSENET: Serenade de Zanetto. Emma Calvé, soprano. ERLANGER: Fédia. Victor Maurel, baritone. DUVERNOY: Hellé--Cantilene. Rose Caron, soprano. MASSENET: Hérodiade--Adieu donc. Francesco Tamagno, tenor. WAGNER: Lohengrin--Euch Lüften. Frances Saville, soprano. STRAUSS: Ständchen (Eng). Lilian Nordica, soprano. MEHRKENS: Wie ein Grüssen. Ernestine Schumann-Heink, contralto. Cantilena 6246.

This is the third volume of Cantilena's anthology, designed to give a cross-section of singing as practised around the turn of the century. Here are examples of the French, Italian and German schools. All the singers were famous in their own days, and some of them have passed into legend.

Félia Litvinne, sister-in-law of the de Reszke brothers, must have been a very great artist. I remember reading somewhere that her singing was so impressive one forgot her physical size. She sang the standard opera repertoire of the day, with particular distinction in Wagner. Her recordings are fascinating, though surely they give but a hint of her greatness. Her conception of the Africaine slumber song is more deliberate and outgoing than the approach of a Matzenauer or a Ponselle, perhaps a little rushed for recording. Giuseppe Campanari was very active in the early days of recording, both in the Victor and the Columbia studios. He was justly admired for the virility of his baritone voice, and for the musicality of his singing - he was a cellist in the Boston Symphony before he turned to singing. This recitative and ballad from Africaine (in Italian) is one of his best recordings. Francesco Vignas is less strong a memory, for his one season at the Met was 1893-94. His performance of the famous tenor aria displays a fine voice and a clean, vital style. His career in Europe extended from the early nineties until 1917.

Gemma Bellincioni, one of the leading lights of the verismo school, nevertheless is said to have pleased Verdi in Traviata. Mefistofele lies somewhere in between these styles; it must be said she manages the demented floridity of this aria with great assurance, and there is no lack of temperament. Francesco Marconi was one of the most admired tenors of his day, and some of his recordings have long held the affections of collectors. This one is unusual, an Italianate performance of Gounod, admirably reserved on the part of the tenor, paired with a less distin-



guished Italian soprano. Marconi made one visit to these shores, for the abortive American premiere of Verdi's Otello, an opera to which he was obviously not suited. Ada Adini was an American whose entire career was confined to Europe. Though trained in Paris by Viardot-Garcia and Sbriglia, her style is Italianate with hefty chest tones and a bright ringing top. Among her pupils was Maria Gay.

The ever dependable Mario Ancona is best known for the Pearl fishers duet with Caruso. His solo recordings are always smooth, perhaps a little bland. This 1904 Prologue is leisurely and truncated, not to be confused with the 1907 Victor version. Adelina Stehle and Edoardo Garbin were Nanetta and Fenton in the world premiere of Falstaff, and as husband and wife enjoyed a successful career together, mostly in Italy. Although he made a fair number of records, she seems to have left only two, this quartet and a duet from Adriana Lecouvreur with Garbin. The Boheme quartet is done with spirit, but the ladies' voices are on the shrill side.

Jean-François Delmas, singing the serenade from Don Giovanni in a voice rather heavier than usual, provides an example of a style no longer accepted. For once, though, a singer of his time resists the temptation to take the ending up an octave. The French words are delivered very distinctly, as is the way of the best French singers, but the tempo is distressingly slow. Slow, too, is Albert Alvarez's singing of the Faust recitative and abridged aria. This recording was done on a cylinder, and the accompanying noises are characteristic. But the voice was a fine one. Emma Eames, of course, studied Marguerite and Juliette with Gounod himself, and her recordings are authentic as well as beautiful. The Jewel song is long familiar to collectors in two versions - piano and orchestra - of which this is the earlier and finer. Pol Plançon was the Mephistopheles in his day, both according to Gounod and to Berlioz. This is his earlier recording of the Berlioz serenade, piano accompanied and delightfully clean. Emma Calvé is represented not by her Carmen, but in a charming performance of the Massenet serenade. And the great Victor Maurel, creator of Iago and Falstaff, gives us a real rarity recorded in 1903. Not a great song, perhaps, but superior singing.

Rose Caron, long a favorite at the Paris Opéra, made few records, and it is necessary to use some imagination in order to understand her reputation. This one, of a most unusual aria, is weak, but it gives at least a sketch of the voice and style. Needless to say, the recordings of the great Otello, Francesco Tamagno, still have the power to thrill though they were made in his own villa under rather primitive conditions. In the two selections he made from Hérodiade one is struck by his French, unusually good for an Italian. Frances Saville, American by birth, was an aunt of Frances Alda, whom she preceded in the studio of Mme. Marchesi and later at the Metropolitan Opera. Saville came in 1895, Alda in 1908. But unlike her niece she sang only two seasons in New York. The voice was obviously a lovely one, with a recognizable Marchesi tone. It is well known that Lilian Nordica, one of our great American sopranos, did not fare well in the recording studios. One has to take something on faith with most of her records. Here she sings the Strauss Ständchen in English, very deliberately and freely; but vocally this is one of her better records. And to round

it all up, we have a private recording made around the turn of the century by the great Schumann-Heink. She sings a modest little song with her characteristic warmth.

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