

Novelties in Operatic Productions Open Winter Season in the East

NEW YORK, Nov. 16.—The season of opera which will begin at the Metropolitan Opera house Monday—fourth in the dynasty of Operas—will differ in one particular from all that have gone before it. For the first time in the history of the theater there are to be regular performances on Thursday nights, for which the subscription is just the same as it is for the other subscription performances of the season.

So this year the weekly subscription performances will number five for the first time. They would be six were it not for the fact that opera must be given in Philadelphia on Tuesday nights. The demand for seats is already so large as to insure

there are some very fine conductors in Italy, and his wonderful achievements ended with the tradition that any old thing in the way of an Italian conductor would serve.

Mr. Ferrari came to this country from Buenos Ayres, where he has been at the head of a season of three months of opera in Italian. Twice before he has been in this country and both times at the commencement of his career.

He was engaged by Abbey & Grau for the season of concerts in which Stelka Gerster made her last lamented public appearance. She found that her voice was gone and returned to Europe, so the tour was cancelled. The next year Italo Campanini made a concert tour of the country



MARIA ZEFFLER-BURCKHARD



GEORGE LUCAS.



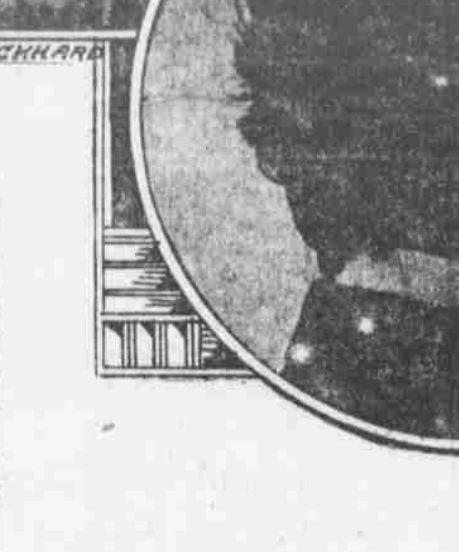
GUSTAV MAHLER.



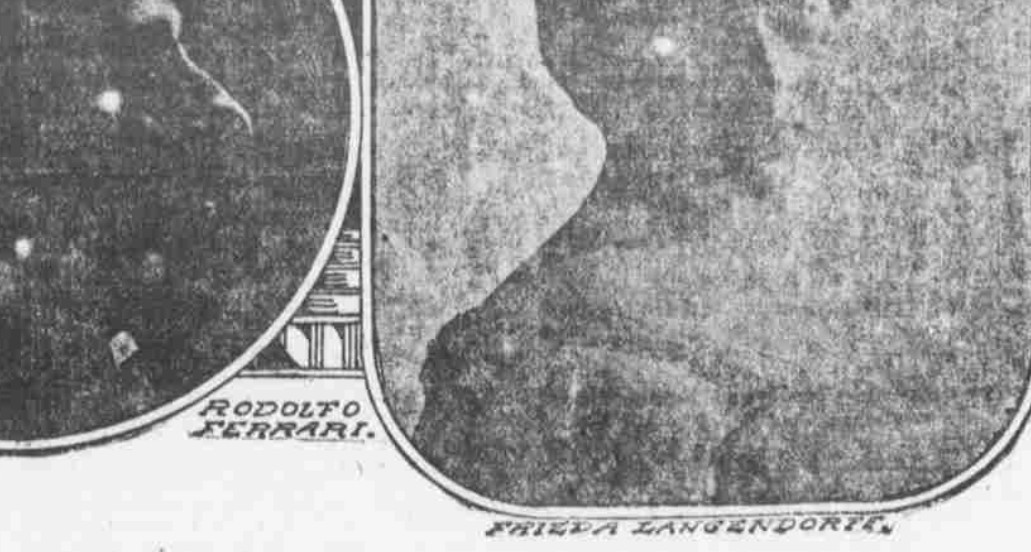
BERTA MORENA.



RICHARD MARTIN.



RODOLFO FERRARI.



FRIITZA LANGENDORF.



FEDOR SCHALIAPIN.



FELY DERYNA.

complete success for such a series. But it may come in the future.

The season this year is to continue for twenty weeks and the extra three weeks make the year the longest ever planned. The Saturday performances at popular prices will be continued, as will the Sunday concerts, at which Gustav Mahler is to attempt the production of some new music of a more serious character than the programs have hitherto contained. Felix Mottl, once undertook the same sort of reform without much success, but maybe times have changed.

Another difference between the present season and its predecessors lies in the expense involved this year. The contracts signed by Mr. Conried are not only for new singers, but for the costumes and scenery, involve so large an amount that any profit for the Conried Metropolitan Opera company is practically out of the question.

One more difference about this season must be noticed. It will begin with a novelty.

It used to be a tradition of Metropolitan seasons that new works should come very late in the year. The first night of the present season will be devoted to an opera never sung in New York before. This is Francesco Cilea's "Adriana Lecouvreur."

Other novelties and revivals that are to come at about the rate of one a week will be Mascagni's "Iris," Verdi's "Il Trovatore" and "Otello," Thomas's "Mignon," Boito's "Mefistofele," Giordano's "Andrea Chénier," Wagner's "Der Fliegende Holländer," Weber's "Der Freischütz" and Kreutzer's "Das Nachtlager von Granada."

Interesting in the season's plans is the production of the three most famous musical settings of Goethe's "Faust," that is to say Gounod's "Faust," Berlioz's "La Damnation de Faust" and Boito's "Mefistofele." There will be a complete cycle of the Nibelungen Ring and two productions of "Parsifal." Elaborate revivals of "Il Trovatore," "Otello" and "Die Walküre" are to be made for Mrs. Sembrich.

Perhaps after the works themselves there is nothing so important as the personalities of the conductors who are to produce them. The most noted newcomer among these prima donnas of the baton is Gustav Mahler.

He was for the last ten years director of the Imperial opera at Vienna, and under his administration the institution has attained an eminence which makes it today the foremost operatic theater of Europe.

The causes which led to his resignation last spring have never been wholly understood, but it has frequently been rumored that he had no idea that his resignation would be accepted when he offered it.

However that may be, it has been the good fortune of New York to secure him. Herr Mahler belongs to that young Bayreuth school which includes Matti Prutz in 1885. He was born at Kalescht in Bohemia on July 7, 1860. He studied first at the University of Iglau and later took a course of philosophy in Vienna.

Then abandoning law he went to the Vienna Conservatory to study piano with Epstein and composition with Bruckner. He has conducted at Cassel, Braue, Leipzig, Pesti and Hamburg, and is one of the most noted German composers of the day.

The Italian operas are to be entrusted to Rodolfo Ferrari, an Italian maestro, who comes here with a great reputation in his own country. The appearance of Cleonte Campanini here made it evident that

and Mr. Ferrari acted as his accompanist. He was born in 1863 in Mirandola and studied composition and piano with his father, who was a musician of note. He completed his studies at Madrid and was a conductor of the opera at Ravenna.

He was then called to the Teatro Comunale in Bologna and has since held the post of first conductor at Florence, Naples, Palermo and Trieste, and has conducted seasons in Vienna, Berlin and Frankfurt. He spent three seasons at Madrid and was for many years at the Teatro Lirico in Milan, where he conducted the first Italian performance of many works of Mascagni, Giordano, Saint-Saens, Leoncavallo, Massenet and Cilea.

His last engagement was at the Costanzi in Rome, where he was first conductor for six seasons.

Samuel and Alfred Heriza will assist in the German repertoire. Boy is again to have charge of the French repertoire.

The orchestra which is to be under the control of these conductors is but little changed in personnel since last year, as it was found wholly satisfactory there, but the chorus, which now numbers 100 voices, is made up largely of new material, only the best voices of last year having been retained.

New York with its overwhelming interest in the personality of the singers will find a number of new names on Mr. Conried's roster. Among the sopranos are Martha Leffler-Burckhard, Berta Morena, Fely Dereyna and Rita Le Fornia, while the successor to Mme. Schumann-Heink will be Frieda Langendorf. Newcomers among the tenors are Alessandro Bonci, already known here; George Lucas, Riccardo Martin and Fedor Chaliapin, and according to report the greatest of these is Chaliapin, the noted Russian bass, who has been the operatic sensation of Europe for the last two years.

Mme. Leffler-Burckhard is the latest German soprano to gain fame enough in her own country to have it spread beyond the frontiers. She has received the consecration of Bayreuth, and is the leading member of the opera company at Wiesbaden, reaping most of the honors in the special performances organized there by the Emperor of Germany.

Her career, like that of her noted predecessors, has been an advance from the lighter vocal roles to those requiring the heaviest vocal and mental equipment. She is a native of Berlin, and when her voice developed went to Dresden to study under the direction of Meisner, who had been a pupil of Vlodost-Garzia.

When she made her first stage appearance in Strauburg it was as a coloratura and lyric soprano. This was in 1900, and her next engagements were in Breslau and Cologne, where she still sang the roles she had dedicated herself to in the first instance.

In 1902 she came to this country, sang in operetta in the German theater in Milwaukee, and in 1904, returned to Bremen to take a place in the opera house which has sent to New York, Anton Reidl, Mikka Terzina and Andreas Dippel. It was while a member of this company that her voice developed to a degree which put the more dramatic roles within her power.

So when she became a member of the opera house at Welmer she was ready to appear as Lenora in "Fidelio," Donna Anna, Isolde and Brunhilde. In 1906 she went to Wiesbaden, which is under the same intendant as the Berlin Opera house, and there she has gradually risen to her post as the first of the German dramatic sopranos of the day.

Berta Morena, another German soprano, is a native of Mannheim and when she first went to Munich attracted attention immediately by her classic beauty. She was a frequent model for Lembeck, who painted

her in many poses and he introduced her to Ernst Posart.

The latter was the intendant of the Prinz Regent theater and she soon had an opportunity to make her operatic debut there. She sings Elsa, Sieglinde, Elizabeth and the role of Lenora in "Fidelio," in which she is to be heard here.

Twice has Mme. Morena been announced for the Metropolitan and each time has she been unable to come, owing to a long spell of nervousness, which finally sent her to a sanitarium. She made her reappearance on the stage last spring and was found to be restored to physical and vocal health. She will also sing here in the revival of "Der Freischütz."

The other two sopranos are Rita Le Fornia and Fely Dereyna. Mme. Dereyna is a Parisian who made her debut at the Nice opera house and has since sung in Marseilles and other French cities. Last year she was with the San Carlo opera company.

Her repertoire includes all the lyric roles, with such interesting exotics as Sanga in the opera of "De Lara" and Salome in "Herodiade" and Mimmi in the "La Bohème" of Leoncavallo. It is not necessary to observe that she will not be called upon to sing these roles in New York.

Miss Le Fornia is an American singer, who has been abroad preparing herself for the Metropolitan.

Frieda Langendorf, who is to succeed Mme. Schumann-Heink as the German contralto of the Metropolitan, is a pupil of Mme. Mallingner, the former Berlin prima donna and first of all Evas, and made her debut as a singer at the Stadt theater in Strauburg in "Ahnung" in 1901. She was engaged there for three seasons, appearing frequently in Wiesbaden and other German cities as a guest.

In 1904 she was called to Bayreuth, sang Fritza and one of the Walkures and studied the part of Venus under Julius Kneiss, although she was not called upon to sing the part. In 1906 she made her first appearance in Berlin, singing in the New Royal opera house.

Angelo Neumann engaged her for the Landes theater in Prague at the end of her contract with Strauburg and there she has remained until the present time. She sang all the contralto roles of the classic repertoire and also is enabled through the range of her voice to attempt with success such parts as Lenora in "Fidelio," Brunhilde, queen of Sheba and Selka. Mme. Langendorf has sung frequently in Vienna, and in Munich spent three months in place of Mrs. Fremstad, who was at that time singing in London.

George Lucas and Riccardo Martin are the two French tenors who will divide between them the roles of the unlamented Charles Rousselet, who has recently regretted that he found it impossible to accept Mr. Conried's kind invitation to come to this country for another season. If the directors of the Conried company had been able to get him over here audiences would have been compelled to listen to his painful efforts for another year.

George Lucas will make his first appearance here as the Abbe Cheneu in "Adriana Lecouvreur." He was born in Normandy and began life as a civil engineer. He was an actor for five years before he turned his attention to the operatic stage and studied singing in Paris under Marcal.

He made his first appearance in Geneva in 1888. Later he sang in Bordeaux and at the Grand Opera in Paris, where he appeared in the first revival of Berlioz' "La

prise de Troie." He has sung also in Lyons, Marseilles, Nice, Antwerp and New Orleans.

One important incident of his operatic career took place in Lyons, where he created the leading part in Saint-Saens' opera, "Les Barbares," and another was in New Orleans, where he sang the leading role in the first American production of Giordano's "Siberia."

His colleague in the French repertoire, Mr. Martin, is the first American ever to be engaged for leading roles at the Metropolitan Opera house. He was born in Kentucky of French parents, studied piano and harmony with Edward MacDowell and had composed a number of pieces for male chorus, orchestra and piano before he decided to go on the operatic stage.

He studied in Paris with Sbriglia and Escalati and three years ago and name. He was then engaged for the same role, his debut at Verona as Andrea Chénier in Giordano's opera of the same role at Milan and afterward came to this country to appear in the French opera house at New Orleans.

His repertoire includes Lohengrin, which he studied under Gounod-Marchand in Vienna, and Wagner's "Die Meistersinger." He has also appeared in "Iris," "Mme. Butterfly," "La Damnation de Faust," "La Gioconda," "Pagliacci," "Il Trovatore," "Aida" and "Cavalleria Rusticana."

Fedor Chaliapin, the young Russian bass who made his first appearance outside his native land six years ago, is the most interesting personality that has appeared on the operatic horizon for some years. He was born at the ancient city of Kasan in 1875 and his father, as if he suspected the existence of a future Hans Sachs in the family, apprenticed him to a shoemaker at the age of 7.

His health could not stand the strain and after a year he was sent to school, where he began to sing in the choir. He soon had to take up his old work as apprentice, and continued until his health again failed. Again he was sent home to school, where his father, to the great delight of the boy, allowed him to begin the study of music. This happiness continued for only a year, as there was no money to spare in the family, and the youthful Fedor was apprenticed to a wood carver.

Again he was physically unable to continue the work and he went to be a clerk in a pawnshop. Six months of that life was enough, and he emigrated to a far off provincial city, where he entered a professional school to study bookbinding. He remained in the school, and continued to sing soprano in a church choir in which the basses reach such depths of voice as nowhere else in the world.

When he returned to Kasan he was employed at the Mairie and for the first time had the opportunity to go to the theater. In order to be able to hear the performances of opera he found employment at night in a humble capacity in the theater. He was dismissed from his post in the Mairie for this and sought refuge in a monastery in Kasan as a novice.

His novitiate continued for a briefer time than most of his occupations, as he soon ran away and was next living on a vessel on the Volga, doing the most humble work to earn his bread. All these adventures befell the young man before he was 15.

When his voice began to change he tried in vain to be admitted to many of the choruses of opera houses, and only after repeated failures was he engaged for the chorus of an operetta troupe at a salary of 12 roubles, or \$6, a month. In the meantime he had been studying music on all possible occasions and educating himself in other ways.

In addition to singing in the chorus in

this theater he was machinist, prompter and stage manager. His work was very intermittent and he was often compelled to walk miles without a copeck in his pocket and no other food than what he might beg.

Finally, in 1892 in Tiflis, he met a singing teacher named Usankoff, who found that he had a beautiful voice and decided to give him free instruction. After one year he was able to appear at the Imperial theater in Tiflis to sing the leading bass roles at a salary of \$75 a month.

After one season he was called to Moscow and St. Petersburg and his success in the private opera houses of these cities was so great that he was engaged to sing in the Imperial opera houses of both cities. Impatient of discipline, however, Chaliapin went back to the impresarios of the private opera houses and was engaged at a salary of \$2,000 a year in St. Petersburg, which seemed a fortune to the young singer.

His success was so great that the Imperial opera house allowed him to return on his own terms. For six years Chaliapin continued to sing in his own country, appearing first in Italy in 1901 at La Scala in Milan as Mefistofele in Boito's opera of the same name, which is commonly regarded as his greatest role.

In that he appears almost nude, and as he is more than six feet tall and a giant in physique the effect is said to be wonderful. Other roles in a rather limited repertoire are Don Carlos, Basilio, The Demon, Ivan and Mephistopheles in Gounod's opera.

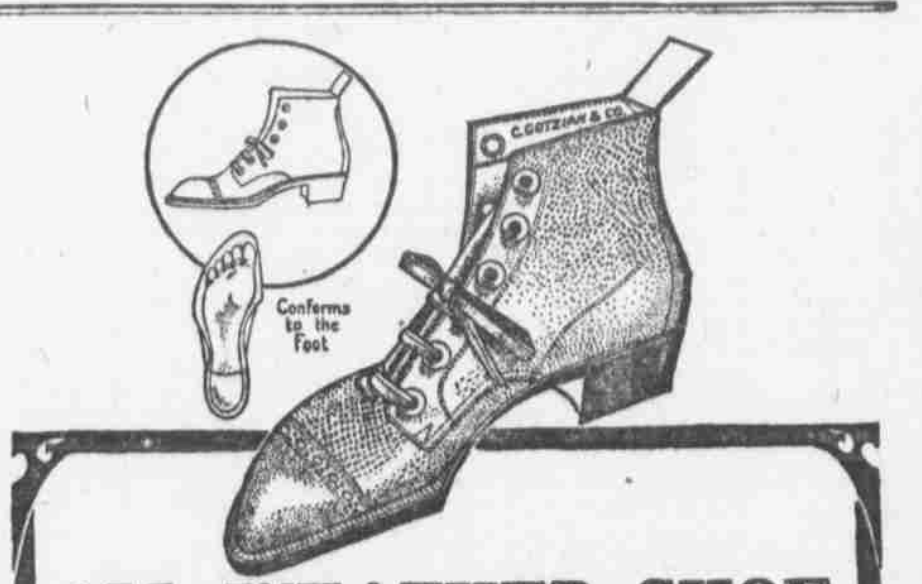
Among the artists of the company who will this season be heard in new roles or revivals are Mme. Sembrich, who will sing her usual repertoire and appear as Rosina and Susanna in the special Rossini and Mozart revivals; Mme. Eames, who will sing Donna Anna, Iris and Lenora in "Il Trovatore" for the first time; Mme. Fremstad, who is to sing Isolde and Lenora in "Fidelio"; Mme. Gadski, who will repeat her parts in a special revival of "Der Fliegende Holländer"; Miss Farrar, who is to sing Mignon, Cherubino and Zerlina in "Fra Diavolo"; Mme. Cavalleri, who will sing in addition to Adriana, Carmen and Gilda; and Maria Rappold, who is to appear as Micaela, Eva and Elena.

Enrico Caruso will have new roles in "Il Trovatore" and "Adriana," "Otello," "Iris" and "Andrea Chénier." Giuseppe Campanari will take part in "Il Trovatore" and the Rossini and Mozart operas, and Andreas Dippel, who is to sing in "Der Freischütz," has also added new roles in "Adriana" and "Iris" to his repertoire.

How Lawson Began

His school days were short; at the age of 12 he tried of study. He wanted to get out in the world and make money, relates Success Magazine. His father, a physical wreck from the wounds and sickness of warfare, had difficulty in providing for the family and Tom wanted to earn money to give his mother and sister more of the comforts of life. One day he ran away from school, crossed the Charles river into Boston and wandered into that marvelous thoroughfare, running from the old state house straight out to the wharves, where men planned great enterprises—railroads and mines and manufactures—and made fortunes over night in daring speculations in stocks and gold. Other poor boys, with nimble wits and lofty ambition, had gone into that golden way, and had won fortunes—why not he? Just below the old state house, at the corner of Congress street, a sign, "Boy Wanted," hung in a banking house window. The truant asked for the place and got it. That night, when he went home to his mother and told her he had gone to work for \$3 a week in State street she scolded him, and the next morning she sent him back to school. But

the boy skipped off to State street again and asked one of the men from the banking earn that \$3 a week. His mother, when house to plead for him. The mother was she found he was not in school, went over to Boston and brought him home. His sister begged and pleaded with her, and, falling since. His offers today are just across to win her consent to leave school, he Congress street on the neighboring corner.



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