

The Historic Cadenza in Rossini's "Barber of Seville" Which Romani Is the First Tenor to Execute in the Original Key Since the Great Rubini. Note the E Above High C to Which the Arrow Points.



Giuliano Romani, the "King's Tenor," as Arturo in "I Puritani."

"ECCO Romani e il suo mt-naturale in altissimo!" That's what the opera-mad Italians of New York are saying—in plain English: "Behold Romani, and his most high E-natural!" And that is not exaggerating, either, for Giuliano Romani can "hit high F," and probably is the only tenor in the world who can do it.

Who is this Romani with a "top note" which soars so far above Caruso's or of any other opera tenor of the present century? Well, in Italy he is known as the "King's Tenor." That is because the King of Italy—who is a first-class connoisseur—understands fully the rarity and the value of a voice that is equal to the great tenor roles of the classic Italian operas as originally written by their composers.

When the King heard Romani sing Rossini's "Barber of Seville," heard him execute smoothly and with ease the famous cadenza with its high C and its E-natural, two full tones higher—something which had not been accomplished in the last eighty years of the history of opera—His Majesty promptly and personally exempted the singer from military duty. What were one man's services in this war compared with the value to the whole world of such a voice?

So Romani received the popular Italian title of the "King's Tenor," and brought his precious top notes to this country for safe-keeping.

Where has Romani kept himself and that priceless top note, which only three or four opera prima donnas can reach? If he's got it, why doesn't he deliver the goods at the New York Metropolitan Opera House, where top notch tenors are worth their weight in gold? The answer is easy. The prodigy is a native-born Italian, barely twenty-five years old. Until a few months ago he had never been outside of his native country. Up to a year ago he didn't know that his larynx contained a "top note" more lofty than the conventional "high C" of all capable opera tenors. He had sung the principal tenor roles of Italian opera all over Italy, in the conventional modern way, and was forging ahead on the "high C" basis.

By accident, one day, the competent vocal instructor who happened to be singing the part of Valentine to his own Faust, in the opera of that name, became suspicious that a valuable C-sharp, an invaluable possible D, and an ultra-valuable "E in alt" were incubating in the voice-

box of that vital young tenor—and it was true.

Thereupon Romani and his discoverer secluded themselves and plunged into the exacting labor of developing those precious upper tones to the full extent of their possibilities. This meant a general going over of the tenor's whole vocal range, purifying it, smoothing out any defects, making it live up to those newly discovered upper tones, which would enable Romani, alone among living tenors, to sing the hero parts in the best works of Bellini, Donizetti, Rossini and Mozart as originally written for the great tenors of their own time.

When this task was well along it was not a difficult matter in opera-loving Italy, where "bel canto" is almost a religion, to bring Romani's rare gifts to the notice of the King—with the result just described.

The "King's Tenor" is now living quietly in New York City. Privately he has been heard by some of the most capable judges in America. The verdict is unanimous. Not only is that "E-natural in alt" pure, easy and to be relied on, but the whole range, down to lower C, demonstrates a lyric tenor of the finest quality, of admirable power, and—when the occasion warrants—with an irresistible "dramatic punch" in it.

The history of opera contains the name of but one tenor whose qualities could be described in the same terms. He was Rubini. And it was mainly because Rubini demonstrated these powers that Bellini composed the opera "I Puritani," with its brilliant cadenzas soaring into "altissimo." One reason that this opera, and others of about the same period—by Bellini, Rossini, Donizetti and Mozart—are not more frequently sung nowadays is because much of the quality of tone throughout their entire range are much greater than formerly. Then it was permissible to divide the vocal range into separate "registers," and even to produce the tones above "high C" with a sort of falsetto. To-day there must be no break in the quality of the tones nor in the method of their production from top to bottom.

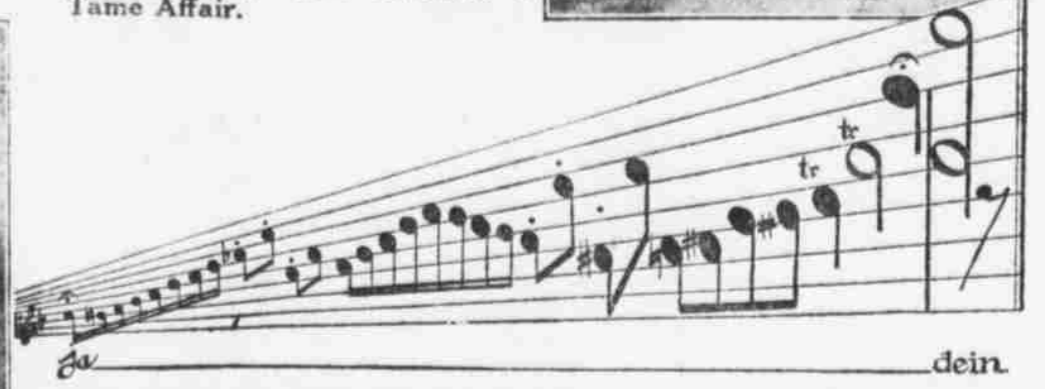
There is no doubt that Caruso and a very few other tenors of the last two decades were in this regard the superiors of their predecessors of two and three generations ago. But "high C" has been their really useful upper limit. Caruso, and one or two others, have upon occasion, when in exceptionally fine condition, ventured just one degree into "altissimo," dwelling briefly upon a C-sharp.

Thus it will be appreciated that for a Roman to produce an "E-natural in alt" having the same operative significance as the "high C" of his contemporaries, while applying all the other demands made upon a modern tenor, is not only to achieve a



The Only Man Who Can Hit "High F"

Signor Enrico Caruso, as the Clown in "I Pagliacci," Whose Difficult High C-Sharp Now Becomes a Tame Affair.



A "Barber of Seville" Soprano Cadenza, as Sung By Frieda Hempel, in Which Two Long Trills Are Followed by a Sustained F Above High C—a Remarkable Feat Even for a Soprano. Yet the King's Tenor is Able to "Hit" That Same "F in Alt."

The Extraordinary Vocal Machinery of Sig. Romani, the King of Italy's Favorite Tenor, Who Has Been Exempted from Military Duty by the King Himself to Save His Valuable High Notes

them. He sings the tenor roles of Fernando, in "La Favorita"; the Duke, in "Rigoletto"; Arturo, in "I Puritani"; Don Ottavio, in "Don Giovanni"; Nemorino, in "L'Elisir d'Amor"; Elvino, in "La Sonnambula"; Ernesto, in "Don Pasquale"; Alfredo, in "La Traviata," and so on. Of the modern operas his favorite role is Rodolfo, in "La Boheme," famous Caruso part. The tenor part of Rossini's "Stabat Mater" is one of his best achievements.

Probably you will wonder what is the secret of this young Italian's ability to do what no other tenor of these times or any other has been able to accomplish. The answer is simple: The perseverance of the fittest. A perfect vocal mechanism in a magnificently vital physique trained to its highest capacity characterizes all great singers. Romani adds the Nth degree, perhaps, by greater confidence and daring, united with sound methods.

The musical tone produced by vibrations of the vocal chords in the larynx as a thinner or thicker stream of air passes between them from the lungs, according to its higher or lower pitch, is also materially under the control of the diaphragm, that partition of muscle and cartilage which separates the abdominal cavity from that containing the lungs and heart, and which is largely responsible for the function of breathing. As the pitch of the tone rises, so does the center of the diaphragm, pressing against the lungs and increasing the force with which the

stream of air passes between the more and more contracted vocal cords.

"When I sing my highest tones," says Romani, "it seems to me that the center of the diaphragm rises like a cone, upward and forward, until it touches the inner wall of the upper chest. I seem to feel that this is the power which enables me to reach and sustain all my upper tones."

He added what is familiar to all singers—the part played by the upper throat and the cranial cavities back of the nose as resonance chambers; and these seemed to gain in importance the higher his tones soared.

There are several sopranos before the public whose specialty is the high-pitched roles of the old operas here mentioned. Tetravini made her great success in them. Marcella Sembrich—now retired from opera—probably was the greatest modern soprano in this class. Her former roles at the Metropolitan opera in New York are now in the hands of Frieda Hempel, a very beautiful young woman, who—curiously enough—recently justifies her coloratura specialty in the same way that Romani justifies his "altissimo" notes; by no other means can the charming old operas be restored to popularity and to general esteem among opera-goers.

As in the case of Romani, so does Frieda Hempel make her best impression with the soaring cadenzas of Rossini's "Barber of Seville"; she, too, with C-sharps, D's and E's "in altissimo." Perhaps they will be heard together this coming season—who can tell?



Diagram Illustrating Romani's Idea of How He Takes His "Top Notes." The Centre of the Diaphragm (A) Shown by the Dotted Curve (B) Rises Like a Cone Until its Apex Seems to Lie High Up Against the Chest. The Arrow Indicates How the Force Here Generated Carries the Vibrations to the Cranial Resonance Chambers, (C).

Frieda Hempel, the Beautiful German Coloratura Soprano Whose "Top Notes," Like Those of the "King's Tenor," Are Required in Restoring the "Lost Art" of the Classical Italian Opera.

triumph, but to do more than even Rubini could have attempted. Giuliano Romani sings "The Barber of Seville" with the Rubini cadenza at the end, which includes the "high E" above the "high C"—a performance which no other tenor since Rubini has achieved. He also vocalizes the fast movement, running chromatic scales which all tenors of the modern school have evaded. This means a revival of the "lost art" of the early part of the nineteenth century.

It also means new life for several of the most charming of the classic operas. Romani's practised repertory includes all of

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Why Men's Hats Are Tipped Back

An explanation has been suggested of the style now prevalent among men of wearing the hat on the back of the head.

The chief function for the hat except for the bald is to shade the eyes, but on a city street there is seldom any direct sunshine, and therefore small actual necessity for shading the eyes with the hat.

Now comes the discovery of an impelling motive to keep the hat on the back of the head. This motive exists in cities, even for the oldest resident.

Take New York, for instance. Inter-esting thing are always happening there above the level of the eyes, things that people like to look at, even while they pass along. If the hat were worn low on the face the head would have to be craned upward, and everyone would know that the person was looking at a particular thing.

Whereas when the hat is worn on the back of the head the eyes may roam where they will, and an air of indifference and sang froid be preserved.

Here is an instance of a style which seems an affectation having a real basis in utility.