

THE RADIO RECORD

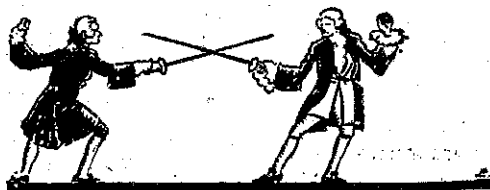
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Broadcast of "La Traviata"

Another Verdi Grand Opera from 1YA



EVERYONE who listened in to "Rigoletto" when presented some months ago will be pleased to note the opening date for the broadcasting at 1YA of another of Verdi's grand operas, "La Traviata." The first instalment will be given on Tuesday, August 27, with explanatory description by Mr. R. W. Strong, secretary of the Auckland Choral Society.



"LA TRAVIATA" means "The Frail One." The Opera was produced when Verdi was forty. He had already had great success with "Ernani," "Rigoletto," and "Il Trovatore." Yet, writing to a friend after the opening night of "La Traviata," he had to say: "It was a failure. Was the fault mine or the singers? Time will decide."

On the whole, time has been fairly kind to "La Traviata."

The Opera was familiar to a former generation of play-goers in its form as a spoken play, "Camille." It is based on Dumas' "La Dame aux Camellias."

ACT I.

THE chief characters in the order in which they sing are: Violetta Valery, the heroine (Soprano); Gaston, the hero's friend (Tenor); and Alfred Germont, the hero (Tenor). Other voices heard are those of Violetta's friends, to whom, at the opening of the Opera, she is giving a gay entertainment.

Alfred is introduced to her, and his friend, Gaston, tells her that Alfred is in love with her. She seems to think little of the news, but in reality she is touched by Alfred's sincerity.

He, himself, protests his love, and she sings the famous air, "Ah, fors' e lui" (translated as "Ah, was it him my heart foretold, when in the throng of pleasure, Oft have I joy'd to shadow forth, one whom alone I'd treasure").

But she decides that there is no hope of lasting love for her, and her mood changes to one of recklessness.

The Act ends with her brilliant second air, "I'll fulfil the round of pleasure, joying, toying from flower to flower."

ACT II.

IN the second Act, Violetta has made her home with Alfred. He, however, learns from her maid, Annina (Mezzo-Soprano), that in order to keep up the home, Violetta has sold her jewels. He goes to Paris to raise money to pay her back. In his absence, his father, old Germont (Baritone) comes to Violetta, to beg her to give up Alfred. Violetta sacrifices her new happiness. Ill though she is, she writes a note for Alfred to tell him she is returning to her old life.

Alfred comes in, and she conceals the letter, sending it to him, instead, later, by messenger.

He concludes that she is perfectly heartless, and pursues her to a banquet. At the banquet Alfred publicly insults Violetta. She is broken-hearted, but carries out her bargain with his father, and will not divulge her real motives.

The Act ends with Violetta's sad protestation to Alfred that time will show how he has wronged her.

ACT III.

IN this, the last Act, Violetta is dying.

Her doctor (Bass) cheers her, but knows she cannot live. Then Alfred comes in. His father has told of Violetta's sacrifice of her happiness. All is forgotten but their love. Old Germont comes to give his blessing, but it is too late. Violetta dies in her lover's arms.

A VERITABLE triumph has been attained in the recording of "Traviata" in complete form. The opera itself is one that has held the stage since its first production in 1853; and the singers of La Scala, Milan, both principals and chorus, together with the orchestra of that famous opera house, unite in the production of a record that is marvellous in its close approach to reality. Mercedes Capsir, a soprano with a voice of deep emotional significance, is cast for Violetta; Lionello Cecil, an excellent tenor, as Alfredo; and Carlo Galeffi, the famous baritone, as Alfredo's father.