

Practise Hard — But Don't Take Your Singing Too Seriously!

Interviews with Madame Goossens-Viceroy and Raymond Beatty—Famous Singers in N.Z.

“GOOD diction is one of the most important factors in singing,” says Madame Goossens-Viceroy, the famous Belgian dramatic soprano who is touring New Zealand at present, giving recitals from the national stations.

“If people can't understand what you are singing you may as well play a wind instrument. With many people it might be better,” smiled Madame, during an interview with a “Radio Record” representative the other morning in one of the 2YA studios, where she had just finished rehearsing. “As far as interpretation goes, I always advise my pupils to sing their songs as though they were reading them to the accompaniment of music. A singer can never go wrong, interpreting songs that way.”

Madame went on to say that she had come across many singers with bad control, which was a great pity because as long as that fault remained they would not be good singers.

“There is nothing more important than practise,” continued Madame. “Anyone who does not practise will degenerate very quickly. I would not recommend anyone to practise technical work more than a quarter of an hour at a time, but that could be repeated two or three times a day.

“Smoking? Personally I do not think that is good for singing.

“Yes, I have been to New Zealand before. After the war, when Mr. Tait brought me out from England to Australia for a concert tour Verbrughen engaged me on the staff of the Sydney Conservatorium, where I am still teaching. About 14 or 15 years ago Verbrughen brought me over to New Zealand on a concert tour. I think there are many good singers in this country, but of course there are not so many opportunities for them as there are in Sydney and farther afield.

“I like New Zealanders very much indeed, and the country is delightful, although I am uncomfortably hot at present. I hoped to escape the summer heat, which is so fatiguing in Sydney, but I find it just as hot over here!”

Madame Goossens-Viceroy has a daughter 18 years of age, who was born in Melbourne. She has a promising voice, which Dr. Bainton, the well-known Sydney musician, whose work is familiar to listeners-in, admired at a recent big recital in Sydney. There is every possibility that this young girl is destined to follow in the footsteps of her famous mother who, when about the



MADAME GOOSSENS-VICEROY

age of her daughter, won a prize given by the Queen of Belgium.

Mr. Raymond Beatty, the well-known Australian basso-cantante who is making a tour of the national stations with Madame Goossens-Viceroy, is a good-natured, all-round sport.

When asked over the phone, on a sweltering hot day, whether he felt in the mood to give a bright and sparkling message to “Radio Record” readers he said that he would do his best to oblige. This is what he says:—

“I have been asked for something bright and sparkling, but if you could see just how dull and uninteresting I look you would realise to the full what a hopeless chance you have for something really scintillating—and yet from another point of view I am fairly radiating to-day, having just come from a swim and sunbathe at Lyall Bay, and believe me, my nose is shining with a lustre which would shine to much better advantage on a door plate.

“Perhaps I should tell you a series of funny stories, but before I get carried away with the exuberance of my outstanding ability in this direction—ahem! let me tell you how I feel about my singing. I find it—the singing—very delightful at times; at other times rather boring; sometimes a task; at other times a pleasure. At times I don't feel like singing at all. At other times you just try and stop me, particularly when I'm getting a larger fee!

“I would suggest from the matter of the last sentence that should you at any time find me singing badly, you should immediately come to the conclusion that I am being underpaid. I am sure that if I had your undivided attention on the matter, backed by your most consistent efforts in the right direction, I would in no time become a very rich man.

“Christmas will be past ere you read this—but, no matter, a prosperous New Year is what I'd like most and so I also wish you great success. But, of course, I am forgetting my subject; viz., my attitude towards my singing, and I really think singing can be taken far too seriously, and so I always adhere to that most stable of maxims, to wit, if anything interferes with the singing, give up the singing. I find this most satisfactory in that it allows me to have

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