

Farm Boy Wins Battle for Fame and Success

By WILLIAM C. UTLEY

JOE BENTON made good. The roof of Chicago's palatial Civic Opera house raised a few inches and almost floated away on the crest of a wave of applause that would and did surprise even an opera house, on the night of Tuesday, November 13. The cheers were not for the glamorous and tempestuous Maria Jeritza, whose voice and beauty have made her an international darling of opera. Nor were they for Pasquale Amato, veteran baritone whose lusty notes have been sending chills or delight up and down operatic spines in these many years.



Giuseppe Bentonelli.

They were for Giuseppe Bentonelli, whom the boys back home in Sayre, Okla., and the brothers in the Pi Kappa Alpha house at the University of Oklahoma remember as Joe Benton. But Joe or Giuseppe, Benton or Bentonelli, it was all the same to the musical world and the press who lauded his American debut as Mario Cavardossi in "La Tosca."

Four times at the close of the first act he had to return to the footlights to take bows with Jeritza and Amato, and finally to appease the demands of the 3,000 out in front he had to take a call alone.

Toasted by Elites.

After he had left his dressing room and the army of waiting reporters, there was a lavish party in Bentonelli's honor. Toasting him were the musical world, the social world, the artistic world. One of the most enthusiastic celebrants was Prof. William G. Schmidt of the University of Oklahoma. He was the link that night between Giuseppe Bentonelli and Joe

"What I hated most was washing the cream separator," Joe says. "We had no hot water and many a time I had to break the ice in the barrel to get at the water. The lye was so strong that it has ruined my hands."

The hands were not ruined to the extent that he couldn't get plenty of music out of a piano, nevertheless. At three, Joe had already shown all the symptoms of becoming a musician. His mother, who was always giving up things for Joe, made some more sacrifices and bought a piano for \$25. It was a funny, square thing and it came

cause any other music was so hard to procure in the wilds of western Oklahoma just then, he won the contest, and with it a teachers' college scholarship which he never used. He was just past sixteen.

After that came dark days, but they were days which had more, perhaps, to do with shaping Joe's career than all of his study so far. He fell sick with typhoid fever. For forty-six days and nights he battled with the fever.

The fever left him weak and wasted. But it was in that sick-bed that Joe Benton, the farm boy, really became Giuseppe Bentonelli, the lyric tenor of American and Continental opera. When he had recovered he entered the University of Oklahoma, and tried out for the glee club. It was amazingly discovered that his baritone voice, which he had not tried since the typhoid got him, had become a fine, rich tenor.

The glamor of the war attracted Joe Benton while he was at the university and he tried to join the army, but was too young. He joined the ROTC, and was commissioned as a lieutenant in the infantry just after the war closed. He was graduated with a bachelor of arts degree and won a Phi Beta Kappa key.

Joe didn't need the army to get to Europe. On a shoestring he crossed the Atlantic to study with the masters. He didn't always eat, he said, but he studied night and day. At Nice, he studied under the distinguished Polish tenor, Jean de Reske. His lesson on March 31, 1925, was the last ever given by the role, who died seven days later. Still known as Joseph Benton, he went to Italy, where he studied for four years.

When his teachers pronounced him ready, young Benton made his debut as the first tenor in the title role of "Andrea Chenier" in the Teatro Reale del l'Opera at Rome. It was the beginning of a European career that was to take him through 411 performances in thirty-four different operas.

He Becomes "Bentonelli."

It was in his Rome debut that, upon the advice of his teacher in Milan, he assumed the name of Bentonelli. His reason was a good one.

"To the Italians my name sounds French," he explained. "They pronounce it 'Bon-Ton'. No matter if you are better than Caruso, if you make your debut in Italy bearing a French name, you are likely to get grape-fruit thrown at you. Martin became Martinelli, so I could see no reason why Benton should not be Bentonelli. In a Milan court it cost me three hundred dollars in law fees to have the new name legalized. I can now use it in perfect security; it is good even on passports."

When he returned home this year it was the first time in five years. But you will never find a more ardent patriot than Giuseppe Bentonelli.

Bentonelli is still a "regular guy"; success hasn't spoiled him. When a Chicago critic scored him for the lusty manner in which he sang to Scarpia, denouncing the chief of the Roman police as a hangman and an unscrupulous butcher, his enthusiasm was unruffled. The critic claimed he overplayed the role.

"What do they want me to do?" he asked. "Waltz up to the old villain, tinkle his chin and say, 'Oh, you nassy ol' hangman, you!'"

Bentonelli has been much interested in a career somewhat parallel to his own. It is that of a fellow tenor of the Chicago Grand Opera company, Myron Duncan. Duncan, a logger of



Myron Duncan, the Logger, Who Also Reached the Heights.

the north woods who was discovered singing to the trees up in northern Wisconsin, made his American debut a week later in the same role as did Bentonelli. Like the latter, Duncan "went Italian" over there. His name became Mario Duca, but he has not retained it in the land of his birth.

Bentonelli, dark, handsome and, in his own words "more than thirty and less than thirty-five," is a real American young man. He looks more like a well-dressed collegian than anything else.

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POULTRY

LIKE GRADING PLAN IN MARKETING EGGS

More Careful Practices Are Found Profitable.

By R. E. Cray, Poultry Extension Specialist, Ohio State University.—WNU Service.

Each year more eggs are marketed on a graded basis. Along with this trend it is noticeable that poultrymen are taking better care of their eggs. And we are finding that the farm practices leading to better quality are no more difficult to follow than many of the practices now in vogue that lead to poorer quality.

Eggs, like milk, deteriorate. Because the egg comes in a sealed package, and its appearance seems much the same whether kept under good conditions or poor conditions, farmers have come more slowly to those practices that make for quality.

Here are the four practices poultrymen say lead to good quality:

Remove all cockerels from the flock as soon as the breeding season is ended.

Use good laying ration. It happens that the best laying rations also are proving to be the rations that give quality and, when the eggs are fertile, hatchability.

Produce clean eggs, by using good litter in nests, on the floor, and covering dropping boards with wire netting.

Gather eggs frequently. One poultryman reports saving time by gathering four times a day. He had less washing to do, he explained.

Guinea Fowls Marketed Like Other Game Birds

The marketing season for guinea fowls is during the latter part of the summer and throughout the fall. At this time the demand in the city markets is for young birds weighing from one to two pounds each. As the season advances, the demand is for heavier birds.

Guineas are marketed as game birds and, like game birds, are usually sold on the market unplucked, although hotels and restaurants buy them plucked. There are three varieties of guineas, white, pearl, and lavender, and although they were probably one of the earliest domesticated fowls, they still retain many of their wild characteristics. They can be raised profitably on most farms where the young birds are allowed to range, picking up waste grain and insects.—Missouri Farmer.

Warns Poultrymen on Iodine

Because production of eggs with a high iodine content is quite easy, and lately has become somewhat of a fad, California poultrymen have been advised by Dr. H. J. Almqvist, research assistant in poultry husbandry, University of California, to proceed cautiously along this line. "The principle guiding much of this work," he said, "seems to be that, if a small amount of iodine in eggs is desirable, a large dose of it would be much better. This is following the same rule which caused the Indian buck to kill himself with cough medicine." Minimum and maximum iodine requirements of laying birds and growing chicks, according to Doctor Almqvist, are not known, and until they are, considerable caution in the use of iodine supplements is to be recommended, he said.

Watch the Water Supply

Water fountains for poultry are often counted expensive appliances. Those who keep only a small flock are apt to think ordinary open vessels which can be bought for a small fraction of their cost will do as well. The great advantage of the fountain is that it keeps the water much longer at the temperature it was when put in, and that in summer there is very little evaporation from it. On a hot, dry day water will evaporate from open drinking vessels so fast that they may be dry long before the time when they are usually refilled. Where the attendant is away from home all day, the consequence is that the birds are without water when they need it most.

Poultry Affairs

Poultry houses should be ventilated at the top.

Poultrymen have found it costs just as much to feed a nonlaying hen as it does a high producer.

The good layer has a long, slightly curved keel, a deep abdomen and body, a broad, straight, smooth back, good chest development, straight sides, with the width carried back from the hip bone to the stern.

TYPED MESSAGES BY RADIO

Glenn Watson of Detroit and Walter Lemmon of New York have perfected a machine, known as a Watsonograph, which will send typed messages by radio. As each key on the machine, which resembles an ordinary typewriter, is pressed it sends out a cryptic flash over a five-meter wave length, which operates a corresponding key on a similar machine equipped for receiving.

Automatic coding and decoding is also incorporated on the device, this equipment scrambling the message so that only the machine for which it is intended can unscramble the information. To prevent eavesdropping by a clever cryptographer, the code may be changed at will by simply throwing a switch.—Pathfinder Magazine.



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