

# MRS. HAMMERSTEIN'S OWN STORY TODAY: Untold Tales About Famous Figures



**PORTRAIT OF A LADY**  
A Photographic Study of Mrs. Oscar Hammerstein When, as the Wife of the Impresario, She Was One of the Most Famous Figures of New York's Aristocracy of the Opera.

**THIS** is the second of a series of articles by Mrs. Oscar Hammerstein, widow of the famous impresario. Hers is the amazing story of a woman who rose from a small-town choir girl to become the wife of Millionaire Julian Swift, of the famous Chicago packing firm, then enjoyed prestige and splendor as the mate of the greatest opera producer of his time, and finally was found drifting about New York, penniless and forgotten amidst the scenes of her former glories.

By Mrs. Oscar Hammerstein.  
**I** THINK my greatest thrill as the wife of Oscar Hammerstein was the realization that he called upon me for advice whenever he chose a singer. Even when he did not he would discuss the possibilities of such and such a singer long before he or she became famous.

How many times I heard him tell me how he combed Europe for sensations; how he had given New York Luisa Tetrazzini, Mary Garden and Maurice

## Caruso's Rebuff; the Capture of Tetrazzini and McCormack; and the \$3,000 Melba Defi



**JUST A MEMORY**  
Mrs. Hammerstein, at right, is shown gazing at a Broadway banner announcing the Famous Hammerstein Memorial Performance at the Metropolitan—Once Her Husband's Bitterest Rival. Note Oscar's Picture on Banner.

"THIS IS TO CERTIFY"—Photostatic Copy of Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Hammerstein's Certificate of Marriage. It Marked the Climax of a Romance That Attracted the Attention of Two Continents.

Renaud. And I know how he had brought back Melba and Calve after they had been given up foolishly by the Metropolitan. I knew only too well how he came to introduce to New York music lovers such famous operas as "Thais," "Electra," "Louise," and "Pelleas and Melisande."

I think one of his saddest defeats was his failure to lure over Caruso. He used to lunch often at the Hotel Knickerbocker. That was Enrico Caruso's home. They were not strangers by any means. Caruso often came to our box in the Manhattan Opera House, and Mr. Hammerstein often went to hear him at the "Met."

One day Oscar told me, in later years, he felt that the point had been reached where he might approach Caruso with an offer. Oscar went about it quite casually, but there was a great purpose in his attempt to bring about a coup. He wanted Caruso because he knew that a successful deal would make the walls of his rival, the Metropolitan Opera House, totter.

They finally met, and Oscar told Caruso, quite casually, that he "was thinking" of taking the singer over to his opera company. This seeming condescension far from flattered Caruso, who held the scepter at the "Met." In fact, Oscar's pronouncement congealed the tenor. Finally Oscar offered him \$5,000 a week. But Caruso's loyalty was not to be shaken. Oscar never tried to get him again after that.

Instead, he was continually announcing that he had found a tenor greater than Caruso. Unfortunately, neither I nor anyone else remembers such a tenor's name—unless it be that of the glorious Zenetello. But in contrast to that defeat was his sweet triumph in securing the operatic works of Richard Strauss, just when a battle was on to get a corner on that genius. At a time when Oscar was making his bitterest fight against the Metropolitan and his Manhattan Opera Company received a cable from Strauss to the effect that he was willing to sign up with my husband. Daniel Frohman was the first to congratulate my husband on his victory.

Oscar told me what nobody has known, besides myself, until this day, how he secured "Electra." He had worked in secret, the negotiations starting when he met Strauss at a dinner in Berlin. Naturally Oscar, by either direct or devious methods, made it a point to impound Strauss for his purposes and designs. Hammerstein regarded "Electra" as the great musical attraction of the century.

He said to me one day: "I was almost ashamed of having secured the opera, with the several managers of the Metropolitan striving like wild men to capture Strauss's work. If Andreas Dippel and Gatti-Casazza had been quick enough and clever enough to secure it, it would have set the Metropolitan up again in a formidable place."

Gloating over his victory, he went on to explain to me, as he paced my boudoir: "But these two gentlemen were so busy putting on that novelty, 'Aida,' that they let 'Electra' slide. What didn't the Vanderbilts say? I can imagine how J. Pierpont Morgan



**PRESENTED AT COURT**  
Two Courts of an Entirely Different Kind Are Shown in These Pictures Which Symbolize the Tragic Story of Mrs. Oscar Hammerstein. In the Drawing the Artist Pictures the Splendor of Her Presentation to King George and Queen Mary in Buckingham Palace. But What a Sad Contrast Is Presented in the Photograph, Which Shows Mrs. Hammerstein Recently Leaving a New York Magistrate's Court—After She Had Been Sentenced to a Day in Jail on a Disorderly Conduct Charge. Prominent Clubwomen Who Became Interested in Her Behalf Declared the Charge Unfounded.



**LEAVING COURT**  
Mrs. Oscar Hammerstein is shown in the photograph leaving a New York Magistrate's Court—After She Had Been Sentenced to a Day in Jail on a Disorderly Conduct Charge. Prominent Clubwomen Who Became Interested in Her Behalf Declared the Charge Unfounded.

xpressed himself, and Goelet and he rest of them."

At another time, when the American opera stage appeared desolate, so far as great talent was concerned, Oscar looked around for new faces. He found that Mme. Tetrazzini was the rage in Mexico City. He was intrigued, and set out to acquire her. She was a native of Florence, Italy, and at seventeen had made her debut in her home city as Inez in "L'Africaine." It was one of those strange accidents of fate which cast her into the role. The day before the opening her sister, who was to have appeared in the prima donna role, became ill.

Oscar told me how they couldn't even get a dress to fit Tetrazzini for that first performance. He was very much impressed by her voice. He told me later that she had earned during her career the incredible sum (even for one of the greatest of opera stars) of \$5,000,000.

Oscar concluded she belonged to New York City. His negotiations with her were sagacious. He never revealed himself to artists as being too anxious for their services. The diva made her New York bow in Oscar's Manhattan Opera House and her acclamation was tremendous.

knew of them. He went to Italy later, and I well suspect that he vowed never to return to the United States. He was turned down in Italy, too, and went to London in desperation. Circumstances were none too propitious for him there.

It was Campanini who tipped off my husband about McCormack. Oscar signed him up. For the first year he was to get \$700 a week; the second, \$800, and by the third year Oscar hoped to have him whipped into shape enough to be worth \$1,200 a week.

But it finally remained for Oscar to decide that John McCormack was not at home on the operatic stage. He told me so emphatically before he even told McCormack. He said "Mike" was not an actor, but a genuine singer. This decision, later imparted to McCormack, was destined to net the singer his great career, climaxed by con-



**OTHER DAYS**  
Life Was Serene and Gay When This Photograph Was Taken of Mrs. Hammerstein, Showing Her With Vera Brand, a Friend, at Palm Beach.

band so furious that he took a roll of notes from his pocketbook, stiffly counted out \$3,000, and flung them into her face. Before he parted he said: "There's your first week's salary. If you want to go with me in my opera house, otherwise return the money to me."

That fall Mme. Melba opened at Hammerstein's in New York.

Here's another example of his quick temper. He told me about it, though it happened far back in 1894, when Mlle. Di Dio, internationally famous songstress from Vienna, made her debut at Koster and Bial's music hall, New York. Her singing so irritated Oscar that, although he was her manager of the house, he hissed her from his box. It was a long, sibilant and vibrant hiss, heard all over the theatre. Mlle. Di Dio left the stage in confusion.

For that matter, everybody was confused at the spectacle of a house manager hissing one of his own attractions. As the manager he shouldn't have done it. But I suspect that somewhere in that house were discriminating people who admired Oscar's sincere appreciation of music, which, in later years, was to make a whole world of aspiring singers tremble.

His mannerisms, of course, were the talk of the town. His hat was without duplicate, except that worn by William M. Chase, the painter. Oscar's hat was a barometer of his temperament. If the glass had set fair, the placid angle of the hat was unmistakable. On the other hand, if a storm was brewing and things had not been fashioning themselves according to his wishes, the tilt of his hat registered the mood.

With his hat went his Prince Albert coat, touched off with his goatee. Everybody knew Oscar Hammerstein as he strolled the streets. In his habits he reflected the grandeur of the social world as well as the opera. His clothes fitted into the picture of this thorough aristocrat—a Roscavalier of the opera who never awakened from a fair and rosy dream that was too sweet to last.

(To Be Continued.)

**PEARLS OF NORMANDY.**  
Waltz.  
OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN

An Excerpt from One of Mr. Hammerstein's Most Famous Waltzes, "Pearls of Normandy." Do You Remember it?

I came to know Mme. Tetrazzini very intimately and I can say that she is one of the most charming women I have ever met. I cannot help, however, but ponder on her marital career. Her first husband was J. G. Bazelli, tenor. At the age of fifty-two she married a second time—Pietro Vernati, the son of a small haberdasher. He was a tenant in the same building she lived in in Rome.

She said to me one day: "I am sure that love is the inspiration of my new romance, and I rejoice in thinking that it was my voice that brought me into the life of the man who is now my mate forever."

Perhaps you may have read, however, that more than a year ago they reached a parting of the ways.

One of Oscar's boasts was that he had lured from Covent Garden, London, the late Cleofonte Campanini, whom I cannot help but regard as the greatest conductor of the present century. I am even thinking of Toscanini when I make such a sweeping statement. London was alarmed at Oscar's capture of Cleofonte.

But if the pillaging of Campanini was an "unforgettable crime," London was doomed to another marauding expedition on Oscar's part when he enticed John McCormack to New York. It is my intention to set forth here the real story of McCormack's conquest.

On November 10, 1909, McCormack, an unknown and almost obscure Irish tenor, made his bow at the Manhattan Opera House as Alfred in "La Traviata." With him were Mme. Tetrazzini and Mario Sammarco, with Anselmi conducting. The following morning Oscar telephoned John at his hotel: "You ought to have your voice at its best this morning, Mike. The press is for you." (He called all his non-Latin singers "Mike.")

It was only five years before that McCormack had left New York in dejection, humiliation and with memories which he no doubt wishes he had never known. I am one of the few who

## HUMAN MECHANICS

How We Distinguish One Taste from Another

By HERBERT L. HERSCHENSOHN, (Physician and Surgeon)

**T**HE sense of taste is appreciated by means of nerves, which are present in the mucous membrane lining the mouth and covering the tongue. On the surface of the tongue these nerves lie in innumerable small pimple-like projections, called papillae. In the back part of the tongue, near the root, are a group of large papillae, numbering from seven to fifteen, and arranged in an inverted V fashion (Fig. 1). A microscopic cross-section of one of these is shown in Fig. 2. In these larger papillae the ends of the nerves lie among groups of cells, called taste buds (Fig. X). The cells of these buds are arranged so that they taper, resembling the end of a watermelon. The ends of the cells do not meet at a point, but are separated just far enough to leave a little canal open, the same as would be present if a pencil were pushed into the melon at the end.

The cells of the buds are merely supporting beams for the nerves. From each nerve a small hair-like filament protrudes into the canal. These are extremely sensitive, and are specialized to transmit the impulse of taste to the brain, where the sensation is recorded. The base of each of the larger papillae is buried rather deeply in the substance of the tongue, and is

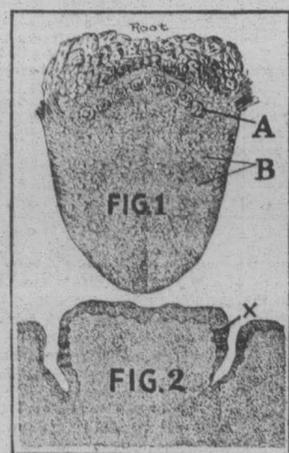


Fig. 1—The Roof of the Tongue Showing the Positions of (B) the Small and (A) Large Papillae.

Fig. 2—Cross Section of the Large Papilla Showing the Location of the Taste Buds at X.

surrounded on all sides by a trench-like groove. The taste buds are especially prominent in the side walls

of the papillae, and are occasionally found in the wall across the groove.

In order to be tasted a substance must be in solution. Solids which are not already dissolved or which cannot be dissolved in the saliva are tasteless.

Certain parts of the tongue are more sensitive to particular tastes than others. For instance, the tip of the tongue is most responsive to salt, the back part to bitter and the sides to sour and sweet. A difference may even be noted between the papillae themselves. A mixture of sugar and quinine, for example, when applied to one papilla, may excite a sweet taste, whereas, when applied to another papilla, possibly the next one to it, the taste may be one of extreme bitterness.

The different tastes are not affected to the same degree. This is proven by painting the tongue with a solution of cocaine. The first of the sensations to be deadened is that of bitter. This is followed by the sweet, then the sour, while the taste of salt is the last to be lost.

In considering the subject of taste one should not become confused with flavors. The flavor of a meal does not depend only upon our sense of taste but rather upon our sense of smell. If the nostrils are pinched while eating, the flavor of a meal will be almost entirely lost, but the sensations of sweet, bitter, sour, and salt will remain. Strange as it may seem, when the sense of smell is destroyed it is difficult for one to tell the difference between an apple and an onion.