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An OUTLINE of THEORY

Made and adopted by the American Academy of
Teachers of Singing for their individual guidance

BREATHING—(Adopted December 9, 1925) The American Academy of Teachers of Singing

- 1 Believes in teaching the pupil how to breathe.
- 2 Believes that the correct practice of singing in itself tends to develop and establish the mastery of the breath.
- 3 Believes that the singer should stand comfortably erect, with the chest medium high, and with a feeling of flexibility and well-being.
- 4 Favors that method of breathing which is known scientifically as "Diaphragmatic-Costal," colloquially as "deep breathing."
- 5 Believes that, in inhalation the upper abdomen expands, owing to the descent of the diaphragm, and the ribs expand; in exhalation the abdomen tenses and contracts, owing to the pressure of the abdominal muscles and to the gradual ascent of the diaphragm, and the ribs contract. Thus the greatest observable effect in both inhalation and exhalation is in front and at the sides in the region of the waist-line.
- 6 Believes that either the mouth or the nose may be used in inhalation.
- 7 Recommends the daily practice of calisthenics or setting-up exercises.

TONE—(Adopted Apr. 14, 1926)

Good vocal tone depends upon a concept of beautiful sound and upon a sensitive and educated ear.

It results from the consequent co-ordination of the following:

- 1 Controlled breath;
- 2 A larynx whose normal position, neither locally raised nor lowered, is insured by correct inhalation, and allows freedom of action of the tongue to which it is attached;
- 3 Vocal cords in unhindered vibration.
These three produce a fundamental tone, proportionately reinforced by
- 4 The resonance chambers of the chest and the head (mouth and nasal cavities), and issuing through
- 5 A free throat;
- 6 Tongue, palate, lips, and jaw, all freely active in pronouncing, without rigidity, and with no locally specialized effort for supposed aid to the tone.

This tone, easy flowing, smooth, permits and favors every variety of expression in singing.

Its inception, following inhalation, is the Attack; that is, the immediate application of breath to the vocal cords, after pitch and vowel adjustment of the whole vocal apparatus.

PRONUNCIATION —(Adopted November 10, 1926)

Pronunciation is the utterance of words with regard to sound and accent;

Enunciation is the manner of that utterance as regards fullness and clearness;

Articulation is the action of the speech organs in the formation of consonants, vowels, syllables and words;

Correct pronunciation, clear enunciation and distinct articulation in singing constitute Good Diction.

The invariable medium for forming and sustaining vocal tone is THE VOWEL. Therefore the vowel should first be established in pure form, and not changed until time for the next vowel or consonant.

The function of THE CONSONANT is to interrupt the vowel without doing violence to the tone.