B14

Saint-Saëns

CARNIVAL

OF THE

ANIMALS

A Grand Zoological Fantasp

Performed by Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra



Musical Masterpiece Series

ALBUM M-71

Charles Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)

HARLES CAMILLE SAINT-SAËNS was born at Paris, October 9, 1835. A month or two later his father died from consumption, and according to the medical opinion of the time, it was believed that the child had inherited the disease. Consequently the infant was confided to the care of a nurse in the country at Corbeil. Two years later he was brought back to his home in the Rue du Jardinet, Paris, robust in health. Even at this early age he began to show a great fondness for music and his musical education was begun by his mother and her great-aunt, both women of unusual culture. He had a remarkable talent for piano-playing, a sensitive ear, great musical memory, and boundless energy and capacity for work. His teachers wisely took care that the child's development was not forced so as to bring about, as is often the case with prodigies, injury to the man. Still his early attainments are astonishing. At the age of seven he became a pupil of Stamaty in piano and took up the study of harmony—he had already begun to compose; at eleven he gave his first piano recital; at twelve he entered the organ class at the Paris Conservatoire; and at sixteen the Société Sainte-Cécile performed his first Symphony. After having filled a position at the Church of Saint Mêry for several years, he became, in 1858, organist at the important Church of the Madeleine. In 1861 he also became professor of piano at the Ecole Neidermeyer, and although he held this latter position for only the short term of four years, he numbered among his pupils such famous musicians as Fauré, Gigout, and Messager.

His later career was one of incessant activity as a concert pianist, conductor, and composer. His compositions include a hundred and sixty-nine that were given opus numbers, many works of considerable extent, and several others to which no numbers were affixed. As a relaxation from his musical labors he had as hobbies literature and science. He wrote a book of poems, many essays on musical subjects, later collected and published in book form, several farces, and papers on scientific subjects. He visited the United States in 1906, and again in

1915 as French representative to the Panama-Pacific Exposition. On both occasions he was welcomed by enthusiastic audiences and acclaimed as a remarkable piano virtuoso and

as a composer.

Saint-Saëns may well be regarded as a link between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. He did his first work in the midst of the world of Liszt and Wagner; and he lived to witness the changes in musical style signalized in the work of Debussy, Ravel, and Strawinsky. He died, full of honors and rich in the products of his labors, December 4, 1921. The infant whose chances of survival were thought to be small, had lived for more than four score years!

One of Saint-Saëns' greatest services to Art was his espousal of the cause of French music at a time when his influence was much needed; thus, along with Berlioz and Gounod he played a leading part in the musical Renaissance of his country and paved the way for the later work of Franck, Fauré, and Debussy.

At the outset of his career he allied himself with the forces of musical progress, and thus by conservative elements was regarded as a radical. As time passed, however, and the liberal movement developed its later tendencies, he came to be considered a conservative. It was not Saint-Saëns who had changed, but the times; he remained true to his ideals.

His work as a composer is notable for its perfection of form, great technical skill, and mastery of orchestration. His music has an objective beauty, the beauty of careful workmanship, exquisite lines, élan and brilliance. His work is, in fact, often reproached for its surface brilliance and its lack of emotional depth; yet at times Saint-Saëns finds a genuinely expressive melodic loveliness, as in the famous Mon Coeur s'ouvre à ta voix from Samson et Dalila and Le Cygne from the present suite. And even though he may lack profundity, neither is he given to writing the turgid or obscure; his work is always clear, and as a recompense for any deficiency often sparkles with a captivating humor of which no better example can be found than "The Carnival of the Animals." Romain Rolland has well summed up Saint-Saëns' characteristics: "He is tormented by no passions, and nothing perturbs the lucidity of his mind. At times, his music seems to carry us back to Mendelssohn, to Spontini, to the school of Gluck. He brings into the midst of our present restlessness something of the sweetness and clarity of past periods, something that seems like fragments of a vanished world."

THE CARNIVAL OF THE ANIMALS

note in the published score says that Saint-Saëns composed "The Carnival of the Animals" in February 1886 intending to present it as a surprise at the annual Mardi-Gras concert of the violoncellist, Lebouc.* The note adds that the work was repeated shortly afterwards by the Society of La Trompette at Lemoine's in celebration of the festivities of mid-Lent (Mi-Carême). The composer permitted a few performances of the work under special conditions during these early years of its existence, but finally forbade any renditions whatsoever. Only one number of the suite escaped this ban: the violoncello solo, "The Swan" was published with accompaniment for one piano, and grew to world-wide popularity. An article in the composer's last will and testament revoked this edict and permitted the publication and performance of the entire Carnaval des Animaux. Saint-Saëns was given to humor and satire; perhaps he thought it a jest that this suite, which captivatingly blends exquisite music with delightful wit, should make its appearance in the world at large after the author had vanished from the scene.

Our enjoyment of the "Carnival of the Animals" will be greatly enhanced if while listening to it we bear in mind the original purpose of its composition, some cue of which is given by the sub-title, "Grand Zoological Fantasy." Written as a surprise number at a Mardi-Gras concert, it is filled with the carnival spirit, and itself abounds in delightful surprises. As the result of a happy inspiration the composer introduced parodies of melodies well known to his audience. To list these briefly: a theme from his own famous symphonic poem, Danse Macabre (played by Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra on Victor record 6505); two phrases from the popular comic opera of the day, Offenbach's "Orpheus in Hades" (Orphée aux enfers) (the first and more striking of these will be found in the Overture—Victor record 35881); a theme from the Ballet des Sylphes from Berlioz' La Damnation de Faust (Victor record 20563); a motive from the Scherzo of Mendelssohn's Midsummer Night's Dream music, (Victor record 7080, or 9283); the French folk songs, J'ai du bon tabac, Ah! vous dirai-je maman, Au clair de la lune and Partant pour la Syrie (the first three will be found, sung by Eva Gauthier,

^{*}Saint-Saëns' biographer gives 1887 as the year.

on Victor records 72165 and 72166); and a phrase from Rosina's air in "The Barber of Seville." Imagine the surprised delight that must have spread over the first audience as these well known tunes were heard in this zoological setting!

"The Carnival of the Animals" is scored for two pianos, first and second violins, violas, violoncellos, double-bass, flute, clarinet, Harmonica,* and xylophone. The work was reintroduced to the world at a Concert Colonne, Gabriel Pierne, conductor, February 25, 1922. The first performance in the United States was at Ravinia Park, Chicago, under Louis Hasselmans, August 28, 1922. It was first played by the Boston Symphony Orchestra, November 3, 1922, under Pierre Monteux, and by the Philadelphia Orchestra, April 9, 1923, under Dr. Stokowski.

(Record 1)

Introduction and Royal March of the Lion

Against a tremolo played by the pianos, there is heard an urgent, portentious, upward striving figure played by the strings. Next is heard a trumpet-like fanfare. This is followed by a pompous, oriental theme, played by the lower strings the King of Beasts approaches, and his roars are soon suggested by the chromatic rumblings in the bass. There is a moment's pause (about two-thirds through Record 1), and with a sudden change of mood, a change almost from the sublime to the ridiculous, we are ushered before the . . .

Hens and Cocks

The well-known barn-yard sounds are cleverly imitated by a cackling figure played canonically by the strings and later realistically heard in the clarinet; a motive in the treble of the pianos suggests the crowing of cocks. A crashing chord (one-half inch from the end of Record 1) introduces the . . .

Hémiones * *

The piece Hémiones bears in the original the sub-title Animaux Veloces (fleet-footed animals). This bit of musical irony consists entirely of rapid passages without pause,

^{*} The Harmonica for which Saint-Saëns wrote was a keyboard instrument in which a series of glass plates were sounded by hammers. The tone was similar to the celesta, which

has taken its place in the modern orchestra.

**Hémione is variously translated as Tartar horse, mule, and wild ass. The French word is from the Greek, Hmionos, which in Homer means a mule (II, 17, 742). The Syrian Hmionos is a sort of wild ass, intermediate between the horse and the ass, native to Central

change of rhythm, or variation from a constant forte, and is assigned only to the two pianos. This may be taken as a representation of the Hémiones galloping over the plains of Central Asia. Perhaps the composer also wished to intimate that those performers who strive only for dazzling speed, and who make a habit of playing thus without expression, are themselves wild asses and as such are fit to be locked up.

(Record 2)

Tortoises

The pianos supply a slow, pulsating background while all the strings in their lower register intone the well-known melody from Orpheus . . . a melody usually played at breakneck speed, it is now given an air of awe and dignity by being heard at a true tortoise tempo. Imagine the smile of amused astonishment of the first unsuspecting listeners as they recognized the popular tune in this strange parody. The contrast of rhythm in melody and accompaniment, and the piquant harmonies introduced by Saint-Saëns add musical interest to the solemn progress of the Tortoises.

The Elephant

The pianos set up a waltz rhythm (half way through Record 2); to it the double-basses and 'cellos add a melody that in itself is light and frivolous enough, but heard in this guise, amusingly awkward and cumbersome. A phrase quoted from the Valse of the Sylphes in Berlioz' Damnation of Faust is a bit of mischevious humor. Then, as another sly turn, this glides into a reminescence of the Scherzo from Mendelssohn's Midsummer Night's Dream music which leads into the reappearance of the opening phrase of this piece.

Kangaroos

A hopping little motive played alternately by each of the pianos quaintly suggests the hesitant movements of Kangaroos about their cage.

(Record 3)

Aquarium

The ripple of arpeggios played by the pianos against the flowingly sustained tones of the flute and violins in their most transparent register create a background suggestive of the limpid movement of water. Through this there are heard

the sounds of the celesta, bright flashes of tone like the crystaline gleam from the scales of the fish as they appear and disappear swimming through the aquarium.

Personages with Long Ears

The "Personages with Long Ears" need not be named to be recognized as soon as they are heard in the alternate braying of the first and second violins (nearly half way through Record 3).

Cuckoo in the Woods

Sonorous chords played by the two pianos suggest the cathedral-like calm of the depths of the forest while the call of the Cuckoo is sounded by the clarinet.

(Record 4)

Birds

There is heard a tremolo like the fluttering of the wings of countless birds; rapid scales and arpeggios played by the flute dart up and down in swift flight; the pianos imitate the chirping which is heard above the ceaseless commotion of the aviary as we pass by.

Fossils

Against the crashing of pizzicato chords, the xylophone hammers out the familiar melody from Saint-Saëns' Danse Macabre. Perhaps the composer felt that he had heard his composition too often and would relegate it to an exhibition of prehistoric remains. Deftly mingled with this osseous theme from his own composition are fragments from well-known—Saint-Saëns probably thought too well-known—French folk songs, J'ai du bon tabac, Ah! vous dirai-je maman, Au Clair de la lune, and later Partant pour la Syrie, this last closely joined in the burlesquing tones of the clarinet to a phrase from Rosina's air in "The Barber of Seville." A return of the motive from the Danse Macabre brings the number to a close, brilliant, hard, cracklingly dry.

The Swan

As a contrast from the biting, almost ribald irony of the "Fossils" we hear the graceful loveliness of "The Swan." The pianos create a background suggestive of the quiet waters of

a lake; above this is heard a violoncello solo, remarkable for the beauty and long sweep of its melodic line, its placid grace and expressiveness.

(Record 5) Pianists

Would the composer imply that pianists—at least those beginners who practice Czerny—should be confined behind bars, or placed with zoological specimens to be seen, not heard? Such we might infer from this amusing parody of a Czerny exercise in which the pianists repeat the same technical problem over and over. The orchestra discreetly limits itself to a few modulating chords and a sly bit of comment near the close of the number. Three fortissimo chords lead directly into the . . .

Finale

There is a reminiscence of the opening of the "Introduction and Royal March of the Lion," then brilliant scales played by the pianos, are followed by a new theme. This is a melody, frivolous, almost banal, but exactly in the carnival mood. The *Hémiones* are passed in review, then the first theme returns more brilliantly. In the growing crescendo of jollification the Hens and Cocks, and Kangaroos hurriedly appear and the "Carnival of the Animals" reaches its climax of revelry. Even amid the general merrymaking, characteristically enough, it is the "Personages with Long Ears" who manage to say the last word! Thus, with a final thrust of pungent wit, does the composer bring this "Grand Zoological Fantasy" to its scintillating close.

(Record 6)

SONG WITHOUT WORDS

bу

Tschaikowsky

(Opus 40, No. 6)

This charming number from one of the great Russian composer's sets of piano pieces, has been orchestrated by Dr. Stokowski. The melody is typical of Tschaikowsky in its elegy-like melancholy, and in Dr. Stokowski's version is given great intensity of expression.

THE ARTISTS

Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra have become so well known to music lovers throughout the world through their Victor records that comment concerning them would be well nigh superfluous. It is interesting to note, however, that on the occasion of his visit to the United States in 1915, Saint-Saëns appeared as soloist at one of the concerts of this organization, playing to its accompaniment his Concerto in G Minor. Thus there is a certain appropriateness in the fact that this recording of his "Carnival of the Animals" is of a performance by the Philadelphia Orchestra. members of the orchestra ought to be especially named because of their prominence in solo passages: Mr. W. M. Kincaid, solo flutist, and Mr. Willem van den Burg, solo violoncellist. Nor should one overlook the two pianists, who in performing the important and difficult piano parts, have contributed greatly to the success of the recording. They are: Miss Olga Barabini, a pupil of Joseph Hofmann, and Miss Mary Binney Montgomery, who studied with Moritz Rosenthal at the Curtis Institute of Music, and later with Mme. Adale Margulies and George Copeland.



OTHER IMPORTANT WORKS RECORDED IN THEIR ENTIRETY ON ORTHOPHONIC VICTOR RECORDS

Brandenburg Concerto No. 2, in F Major Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra Choralvorspiel-Wir Glauben All' An Einen Gott Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra Passacaglia, in C minor Harold Samuel *English Suite in A minor Piano Frederick Stock and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra *Suite No. 2 in B minor Balakirelo Eugene Goossens and Hollywood Bowl Orchestra †Islamey Beetholen Concerto in D major, for Violin and Orchestra Fritz Kreisler and the Berlin State Opera Orchestra Concerto No. 5, in E flat (Op. 73) Wilhelm Bachaus (Piano) and Royal Albert Hall Orchestra Catalonian Choir of Barcelona Missa Solemnis Symphony No. 3, in E flat major (Eroica) Symphony No. 5, in C minor Sir Land Albert Coates and Symphony Orchestra Sir Landon Ronald and the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra Symphony No. 6, in F major (Pastoral) (Op. 68)
Serge Koussevitzky-Boston Symphony Orchestra Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra Symphony No. 7, in A major
Symphony No. 9, in D minor (Choral)
Quartet No. 16 in F major (Op. 135)

Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelp
Albert Coates, Choir a
(With Menuetto from Quartet No. 4) Albert Coates, Choir and Orchestra Flonzaley Quartet Quartet No. 2, in G major (Op. 18, No. 2)

Sonata No. 9, in A major (Kreutzer) Violin, Piano Isolde Menges and Arthur De Greef

*Sonata in C minor ("Moonlight") (Op. 27, No. 2) Piano Harold Bauer

*Sonata in F minor ("Appassionata") (Op. 57) Piano Harold Bauer

*Sonata in C minor ("Pathétique") (Op. 13) Piano Wilhelm Bachaus

*Leonore Overture No. 3 Alfred Herzt and the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra Berlioz †March to the Scaffold (from "Symphonie Fantastique") Eugene Goossens and Hollywood Bowl Orchestra Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra L'Arlésienne—Excerpts Carmen—Opera in Four Acts Famous Artists and Orchestras of the Opéra-Comique, Paris *Carmen—Suite Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra *Patrie-Overture Malcolm Sargent-New Light Symphony Orchestra Block Fabien Sevitzky-Philadelphia Chamber String Simfonietta Concerto Grosso Brahms Fritz Kreisler and Berlin State Opera Orchestra gs Harold Bauer and Flonzaley Quartet Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra Concerto in D major (Op. 77) Quintette in F minor, for Piano and Strings Symphony No. 1, in C minor Symphony No. 2 (In Preparation) Symphony No. 3, in F major Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra Symphony No. 4, in E minor
*Variations on a Theme by Haydn Hermann Abendroth and London Symphony Orchestra Pablo Casals and London Symphony Orchestra Chopin The Twenty-Four Préludes (Op. 28) Piano The Twenty-Four Etudes (Op. 10 and 25) Piano Alfred Cortot Wilhelm Bachaus Debusse Members of the Opéra-Comique and l'Opera, Paris with Pelléas et Mélisande Symphony Orchestra conducted by Piero Coppola DE Falla Eugene Goossens and Hollywood Bowl Orchestra †Fire Dance (from La Amor Brujo) Eugene Goossens and Hollywood Bowl Orchestra *Three Cornered Hat—Suite New Light Symphony Orchestra conducted by Malcolm Sargent

^{*} These shorter works do not include explanatory folder or album.

Suite
Frederick Stock and Chicago Symphony Orchestra
*Ruralia Hungarica—Presto—Molto vivace—Gypsy Andante Violin Fritz Kreisler

*PGorák
†Carneval Overture (Op. 92)
Quartet in F major ("American")
Symphony No. 5, "From the New World" Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra

*Sonata in A major Violin and Piano

Quintet in F minor

Quintet in F minor

Quintet in F minor

Symphony in D minor

Alfred Cortot and the International String Quartet

Symphony in D minor

Quintet in F minor
Symphony in D minor
*Variations Symphoniques

Alfred Cortot and the International String Quartet
Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra
Alfred Cortot and the London Symphony Orchestra

Cregorian Cfant

Ordinary of the Mass

Pius X Choir, College of the Sacred Heart

Grieg

Concerto in A minor Arthur De Greef (Piano) and Royal Albert Hall Orchestra Sonata in C minor Piano and Violin Sergei Rachmaninoff and Fritz Kreisler

*Symphony No. 2, in D major (London) John Barbirolli's Chamber Orchestra Symphony No. 4, in D major ("The Clock")

Arturo Toscanini and Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York Symphony No. 6, in G Major ("Surprise")

Serge Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony Orchestra

*Fantasie Hongroise Arthur De Greef and the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra
*Les Préludes Alfred Hertz and the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra

Le Cid—Ballet Alfred Hertz and the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra

Concerto in E minor
Midsummer Night's Dream

Whendelssogn
Fritz Kreisler and the Berlin State Opera Orchestra
Alfred Hertz and the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra

Symphony in D major (K. No. 385)

Arturo Toscanini and Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York

*Quartet in B Flat major (Hunting Quartet)

Symphony in C major, No. 41 ("Jupiter") Albert Coates and London Symphony Orchestra

*Symphony in G minor

*Symphony No. 39 in E Flat

Malcom Sargent-Royal Opera Orchestra, Covent Garden

*Symphony No. 39 in E Flat

Erich Kleiber-Berlin State Opera Orchestra

*The Love for Three Oranges
The London Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Albert Coates

La Bohême—Opera in Four Acts

Famous Artists and Orchestra of La Scala, Milan

Rachmaninoff

Concerto No. 2, in C minor (Op. 18) Piano
Sergei Rachmaninoff with Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra

*Daphnis et Chloé—Suite No. 2

*The Waltz

*The Fountains of Rome The London Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Albert Coates

*These shorter works do not include explanatory folder or album. †Included in album entitled "A Hollywood Bowl Concert." Rimsky-Rorsakow

*La Grande Pâque Russe (Russian Easter) Overture Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra Scheherazade—Symphonic Suite Spanish Caprice (Op. 34) Alfred Hertz and the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra

Quartet No. 6, in D minor (Death and the Maiden) Symphony No. 7, in C major London Symphony Symphony No. 8, in B minor ("Unfinished") **Budapest String Quartet** London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Dr. Leo Blech ("Unfinished")

Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra Trio No. 1, in B flat Piano, Violin, 'Cello Alfred Cortot, Jacques Thibaud and Pablo Casals

Schumann Carnaval (Op. 9) Piano Sergei Rachmaninoff Concerto in A minor

Alfred Cortot-London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Landon Ronald Quartet in A minor (Op. 41, No. 1) Trio in D minor (Op. 63) Flonzaley Quartet Alfred Cortot, Jacques Thibaud and Pablo Casals Quintette in E flat major (Op. 44) Ossip Gabrilowitsch (Piano) and Flonzaley Quartet

Smetana

Quartet in E minor (From My Life)

Flonzaley Quartet

The Crucifixion (Sacred Cantata) Richard Crooks, Lawrence Tibbett, Mark Andrews and Trinity Choir

Strauss (A Hero's Life) Ein Heldenleben

Willem Mengelberg and Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York *Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche Albert Coates and London Symphony Orchestra *Der Rosenkavalier Augmented Tivoli Orchestra, conducted by Richard Strauss *Don Juan (Tone-Poem After Nicholas Lenau)
*Death and Transfiguration (Tod und Verklärung) Albert Coates-Symphony Orchestra Albert Coates-London Symphony Orchestra

The Fire Bird-Suite Petrouchka-Suite

Strawinsky
Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra Serge Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony Orchestra

Cschaikowsky

*Capriccio Italien Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra Casse-Noisette (Nutcracker) Suite Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra Concerto No. 1, in B flat minor Mark Hambourg (Piano) and Royal Albert Hall Orchestra Symphony No. 4, in F minor Symphony No. 5, in E minor Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra Symphony No. 5, in E minor
Symphony No. 6, in B minor
Symphony No. 6, in B minor
Symphony No. 6, in B minor
Symphony Orchestra
Conducted by Albert Coates
Romeo and Juliet—Overture
Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra †Sleeping Beauty Suite Eugene Goossens and Hollywood Bowl Orchestra

Aida—Opera in Four Acts Recorded by Members of La Scala, Milan, with Dusolina Giannini Rigoletto-Opera in Three Acts Recorded by Members of La Scala, Milan Wagner

Die Götterdämmerung (The Twilight of the Gods) (Opera in Three Acts)

Famous European Orchestras, Conductors and Wagnerian Operatic Stars Parsifal (Act 3) Berlin State Opera Chorus and Orchestra Three Great Scenes (from Meistersinger, Götterdämmerung and Parsifal)

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^{*} These shorter works do not include explanatory folder or album. † Included in album entitled "A Hollywood Bowl Concert."