OFFENBACH IN AMERICA. NOTES OF A TRAVELLING MUSICIAN

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Offenbach in America. Notes of a travelling musician by Jacques Offenbach

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JACQUES OFFENBACH

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Trieste

OFFENBACH IN AMERICA.

NOTES OF A TRAVELLING MUSICIAN.

By JACQUES OFFENBACH.

WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL PREFACE BY ALBERT WOLFF.

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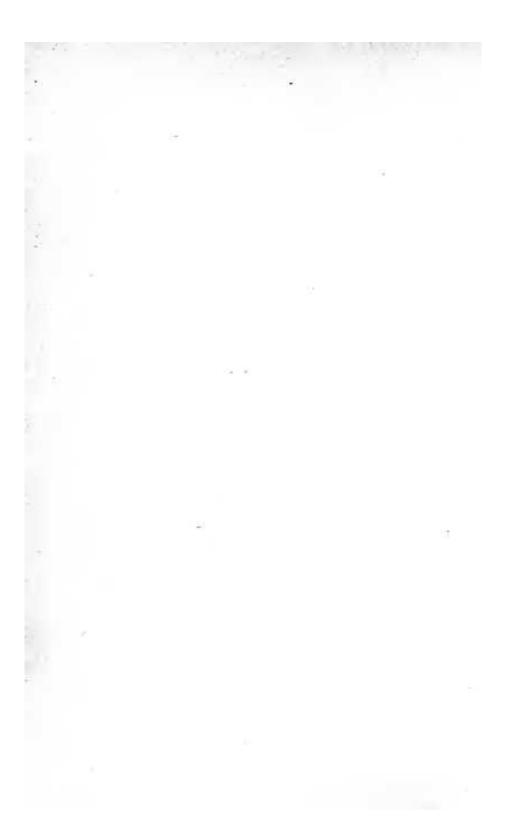
TO MY WIFE.

DEAR FRIEND,

It was you who wished me to make up a book from the scattered notes and random utterances of my heart. It is the first sorrow you have caused me. I bear you so little grudge, however, that I beg you will allow me to dedicate this volume to you, not for what it contains or for what it is worth, but because I love to manifest in every way my esteem and my affection for you.

JACQUES OFFENBACH.

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BIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION.

BY ALBERT WOLFF.

To Madame HERMINIE OFFENBACH :

MADAME—Your husband's publisher has requested me to write a preface to this book, which he has dedicated to you. It was not necessary that your name should appear on the first page, for us to be convinced that you were worthy of every proof of affection and gratitude. Whatever your husband writes, whether music or words, belongs to you by right. There is not a single one among your innumerable friends but is aware that you are not only the best of wives, and the most excellent of mothers, but that also, and to a certain extent, you have participated in the works signed by our illustrious composer.

The numerous productions of your husband

BIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION.

may be divided into two quite distinct parts: the one is like the echo of Parisian gossip, Boulevard bustle, and artistes' suppers, when French mirth and good humor have been stimulated by sparkling champagne; the other part has nothing in common with the first, and is your legitimate property, for it is you, Madame, who have blessed this thoroughly Parisian artiste with a happy and genial home, where his heart has expanded at ease in the midst of a charming, joyful, and spirited family, where he has most unquestionably found the pathetic and more delicate tones of his repertory, which, in my humble opinion, form the purest part of his talent. This is why I think of your husband when the blasts of frolicking mirth burst forth in his music, and I think of you, Madame, when suddenly, through the jingling bells of folly, plaintive melodies glide out harmoniously, and delight the ears both of connoisseur and crowd. Quite lately, Madame, I was staying a few hours in the aucient city of Cologne, and chanced to pass before the house where your husband was born. Jacques was already a well-grown youth, and something

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