

Library of Congress

## [Interview with Vito Cacciola #24]

ORIGINAL MSS. OR FIELD NOTES (Cheek one)

PUB. Living Lore in New England

TITLE Italian Cobbler - Beverly - #24 (M. R. Lovett)

DATE. 2/10/39 WDS. PP. 4

CHECKER

DATE

SOURCES GIVEN (?) Interview with Vito Cacciola

COMMENTS

2/10/39

Gardens & poetry

Paper No. 24

Interview with

Vito Cacciola

. . .

by

Merton R. Lovett

. . .

“As well an remembered.....”

INTERVIEW WITH VITO CACCIOLA

by

Merton R. Lovett

(from memory) . . .

“The Italian, he's smarta with de garden. He maka de tomato and brocali grow like everything. Most Italians hava fine gardens in de old country. That's a why.

“The Italians hava little land. De garden it is small. But de good Lord giva to them much sunshine. He maka de soil rebundant. He giva de people much skill. On piece of soil so big as this shop he will make grow enough tomatoes to feed big family for year.

“Yes he taka much care of de garden. He diga it every day. He picka off of de vines all branches that is no good. He raise a de vines high with sticks and twine. He adds to the ground richness, what do you call it? Yes manure. When the rains are not plentiful he makes the ground weta with wata.

“Sure de Italians here has nica gardens in de back yard. They is demarkable. They is better as American gardens. But you don'ta see nothing in this country. In Sicily de maise, he grows so high he hide a de house.

“Well perhaps not quite a so big. But, by jingo, de tall man if he walka in de corn, he's getta lost.

2

## Library of Congress

"Whata happen, if de Italians, hava greata farms like Americans? Perhaps there would be more corn whata they could eat. They must builda de barns [so?] big as churches. I guess they would filla big ships with wheat and senda it to all de world.

"And de grapes. You do not know nothing Mr. Lovett about de grapes. You seea grape tree in Italian's yard. Whata you think?

"You thinka de trees is load-ed with de gropes? You thinka they maka nice wine. Huh! De grapes here is grow in little bunches. In Sincily Sicily de bunches are biga as man's head. And de wine. De grapes in Beverly are no gooda for wine. The taste of this wine maka peoples disgust-ed.

"No I was never the farmer. For me the cabbages would not grow. I was de musician, de artist, also de shoemaker. You know, de cobbler must keepa to his last.

"My brother Peter, he's a different. He lova de flowers. He de besta gardener in Beverly. He worka for de millionaires on their estate. He taka care of gardens and de hothouse.

"Yes, believe you me, Peter grows the flowers so beautiful he geta prizes at de Flower Show in Manchester.

3

You would be surpris-ed did you see de roses. but de orchids! They is most rare. They is so lovely it maka de man of sentiment glad in his heart.

"Some of those orchids is worth mucha money. De rich mans paya for them fifty, hundred, a thousand dollars.

"No, I do not think they is worth so mucha money. [Me?], I would just so soon have carnation as de orchid. Its just as much pretty and it smella much more sweet.

## Library of Congress

“That's a pretty poem, what you say. I guess de poets write a much about flowers. When I see de rose, I thinka nice a thoughts. But I cannot make de poem. I fella de beauty in my heart. Sometimes I maka de beauty of de flowers into music. Music can give you every kind of feeling. Music is a sad. Music is a glad. It talka of de ocean, de flowers, de love, de country, de storm, of death, of a God.

“Yes, you are right. The Italians have many great poets. Me, however, I do not know about that [ante?]. More do I know abut de musicians in Italy.

“Perhaps you are right, Mr. Lovett. You say you do not hear mucha Italians sing in this America. Whats de matter? Perhaps in this country there is too little sunshine. Maybe he's too cold. Looka de dark cloud. See de peoples maka hurry to keepa warm. They go with hands in pockets. They maka steam from noses. If they open mouths to sing, de 4 music freeza. All de time they hava roughness of de skin. Yes, thats a it, gooseflesh, like you call it. Gooseflesh! Why you says gooseflesh?

“By Jingo, I guess you hits de head with de nail this time. Maybe its de American custom what spoils de mnsic. But its not de harda work. De Italians maka more labor in Sicily, but they does not hurry and worry so much. They worka in de sunshine with nature. They does not get so mucha greed and ambition. They has fewer tenements and mortgages.

“Hah! Hah! It is de truth. Nobody singa who must make de payment on automobile and washing machine. Peoples what paya all de time through de nose, maka disharmony when they opens de mouth.

“And, does you know Mr. Lovett, peoples does not sing who has a sin in [e?] heart. You must hava de good conscience. You must have faith in de Blessed Lord. You must believe you live when you die.