In April 1918, Heinrich Schlusnus made his debut on the concert stage in Berlin. The performance took place in the Blüthnersaal in Linksstrasse and was the first of over two thousand recitals given by Heinrich Schlusnus over the course of three decades.

When singing, he sang of himself: the landscape of his youth, nostalgia, enchanting reverie...of a longing that neither love nor life can quench.

In 1919, one year after his first concert in Berlin, an event of fundamental importance occurred. People who are not themselves singers, or who have not studied the theory of singing in depth, will find it hard to grasp its full significance. Schlusnus was already a successful singer at the Berliner Staatsoper, and yet he had the heart, nerve, and unfathomable energy to start again from scratch. Here's what happened:

Edmund von Strauss, a conductor at the Staatsoper and a sensitive musician, advised the thirty-year-old Schlusnus to entrust himself to the singing teacher Louis Bachner. For the conductor knew that the voice of a young singer – even a successful one – still requires supervision. Schlusnus knew this too. Since his studies in Frankfurt, no one had monitored his voice, and he sometimes felt that his vocal development was still incomplete. Despite already having achieved greatness as a singer, he sensed there could be more – if only he knew how. He found this path through Bachner.

For anyone who has acquired a skill, whether it be singing, speaking, sculpture or painting, it is nearly incomprehensible that one should find the courage to undergo retraining despite already having achieved success. The security of the tried-and-tested is missing, while the less familiar new techniques – one would presume – bring nothing but insecurity.

Schlusnus had to summon his entire inner conviction as a human being – not just as a singer – in order to undertake such a daring experiment. It required the complete trust of the student in his teacher, and the suggestive power of that teacher with the capacity to help his pupil negotiate the perilous transition from one method to the other; an awesome challenge, in which the two prevailed. Henceforth, Bachner attended Schlusnus's every performance and concert. He supervised, tormented, and guided him – until the day Schlusnus could say: "Louis Bachner has given me freedom of voice, my vocal technique, and an understanding of proper singing. What I am, is thanks to him." Nonetheless, he remained under Bachner's tutelage.

At one point in his youth, Schlusnus had possessed the instinct of free and unaffected natural song. This became obscured during his Frankfurt studies, it being fashionable at the time to "cover" the voice, making it throaty, dark, and limited in tone.

However, now the valid timbre became liberated like the pearl out of its oyster. His recordings from before and after embracing the Bachner method provided solid proof. The voice gained an effortless, scintillating height, which Schlusnus retained right up to his final concert – without the slightest decline in quality. Thus, it is said, he could have continued singing until the age of seventy, as Battistini had.

The principle was: the voice sings from out of the person. Because singing is something enacted by the body as a whole, not the function of vocal organs divorced from the rest of the body. "He sings as he speaks" – so simple, so natural, so distinct was his singing, that printed programs became superfluous, since every word was clearly received in the furthest corners of even the most cavernous auditorium. "Singing with yield, not with capital," as Bachner's saying went, and Schlusnus was living proof of this.