

PEOPLE WE MEET

MME. ISIDORA KLEIN.

I found Mme. Klein at home, on the day following her successful debut at the Massey Hall. She is a bright and pleasant young lady, whose portraits hardly do her justice since in her expression when speaking lies much of her charm.

Mme. Klein is a Toronto girl, whose school days were passed at Loretto Abbey, and whose early vocal training was received there.

After her marriage she gave up all thought of singing for a year or two; but, finally, was persuaded to take it up again. She spent last winter in New York, under the training of Elliot Haslam, who has been so markedly successful in bringing out many young Canadian singers.

It may be said that Mme. Klein's studies have just begun. Yet what has been accomplished is shown in the fact that she is able to appear on the same platform with velvet-voiced Lillian Blauvelt, one of New York's first sopranos, and hold her own beside her.

Mme. Klein shows excellent facility of vocalization; her voice is large, her method artistic. She would do excellent work in light opera, and will probably find a career awaiting her in that department of musical art. But she wisely purposes taking up oratorio singing for a time to give steadiness and breadth to her style.

Mme. Klein purposes remaining in Toronto during the winter months, in order to carry on her lessons with Mr. Haslam. Afterward, she hopes to continue her studies abroad.

There is little doubt that if this young Canadian singer carries out her intention she will become one of the successful operatic singers of the day.

MRS. HALL CAINE.

Much has been written concerning Mr. Hall Caine, since his arrival in our country; but little or nothing has been said of Mrs. Hall Caine.

That comes of being the wife of a celebrated personage. But it is much more desirable to be the wife than the husband of such an one. I have seen husbands of celebrated personages, and, as a rule, they are not to be—well—envied.

Mrs. Hall Caine is quite content to be the wife of a famous man, and indeed it is difficult to imagine her in any capacity that is not simply womanly—I had almost written girlish.

Through the courtesy of a lady whose guest she was, I met Mrs. Caine first at an afternoon tea. Entering the pretty parlors to greet our hostess, she turned, and murmured a few words of introduction to the slight figure at her side, then moved to meet a new arrival, while we chatted with her guest.

A girl of twenty, one would say at first glance, slender and petite; with soft, fair hair, smiling grey eyes, sweet lips, a delicate, unlined face, and a speech and manner as natural as a child's. It is one of the impossible things to realize that Mrs. Caine has been a wife for fifteen years—and that the bright boy beside her is her son. There is no one who can cheat time so successfully as a pretty little woman who possesses

health and love, and equable temperament. The years pass her lightly—not caring to touch so fair and bird-like a life.

We chatted for a few moments about our Canadian cities. "They are each so different from the other," Mrs. Caine said. "I like Toronto; your suburbs are beautiful, and your big lake is so close at hand. But how utterly unlike it is to Montreal; and is not the French spoken in that city a dreadful jumble! The mountain is splendid, though. The view over the city is unrivaled, I suppose, in Canada."

"You mustn't say that in Hamilton, some one remarked, mischievously.

We spoke about Quebec, and the little lady was much interested in hearing of our dear old walled city, and its magnificent approach. She hopes to see it before leaving finally for the old land.

Mrs. Caine is devoted to housekeeping, and is very fond of pretty things. She is æsthetic in her tastes, and trims a hat, or makes a gown as prettily as any professional.



MME. ISIDORA KLEIN.

Six months of the year she lives in London, where Mr. Caine entertains largely. During the summer they reside at their home in the Isle of Man.

One of the questions asked of the pretty little visitor was whether it was really true that Manx cats have no tails.

"I hope you do not mind me asking, but we are so curious to know," said the questioner, hesitatingly.

Mrs. Caine laughed merrily. "It is really true," she said. "We have two Manx cats at home, and they have no tails. At birth they have just a trifle of an appendage, an inch or less in length, but it never grows. In appearance they resemble rabbits rather than the ordinary cat."

Mr. Caine is frail in health, a man apparently whose very life goes out into his books; and his pretty wife is his devoted and careful attendant in all wifely ways.

One grey Sunday afternoon we gathered down in one of the reception rooms at the Queen's—journalists chiefly, who, being busy folk through the week, were thus courteously and thoughtfully invited to become the guests of Mr. and Mrs. Caine on their one leisure day.

Both the famous author and his wife are perfect entertainers. Being at ease and natural in themselves, they make everyone else so. On this grey afternoon there was a haze and fragrant odor of cigars and coffee, a tinkle of tea cups, and murmur of easy, informal chat. Mr. Caine was in a delightful vein, while his pretty wife made a dear little picture in a soft crepe tea gown, with roses in her hair.

Thrice we essayed to leave; and thrice she merrily detained us.

"No, no," she said. "I am going to remain, and you must stay also."

Thus she gathered the ladies of the party about her, and presently we were writing autographs in her album. Then we crept softly up to join the circle about the novelist, and the only sounds to be heard were the steady dropping rain without and the soft, clear voice of the author as he told how he had written "The Deemster," and drew from his experiences a store of interesting incidents for our pleasure.

I turned for a moment to take a flash-light memory picture of the scene.

Without—the grey murky dusk; the glistening rain-dropped windows. Within—a lazy, fragrant atmosphere, through which the lights shone softened; a small group of ladies, and a wide circle of Toronto's journalists and press men—with faces turned intent toward the nervous face of the central figure—that of the author of "The Manxman."

He sat in easy attitude, his cigar forgotten, sometimes leaning forward with quick, nervous gesture, his words running easily, fluently, graphically—his voice clear and low, yet vibrant—absorbed in the sensations and emotions of the moment, giving out, yet in utterly receptive attitude for the impression that might come.

"Sensitized" is the word that leaped to my lips as I watched this brilliant writer, who seems, indeed, to be made up of nervous and emotional force; yet who has depicted the strongest, most rugged and heroic male characters the literary world of the last decade has known. He seems rather as a vehicle, through which the tide of virile strength and passion and grand heroism passed into his characters, leaving him only a mass of nerve and emotion. I fancy Hall Caine's very life blood drains itself into his books.

* * *

Darkness fell, and still the rain dropped steadily, evenly. The church bells were ringing the six o'clock chime. The circle was a charmed one, the soft, vibrant voice and Venetian face of the speaker, a magnet; but we broke away with effort, and went out into the night.

FAITH FENTON.

AT KING ARTHUR'S TABLE.

Listen to the enumeration of good things described by Whistlecraft to have been served up at King Arthur's table on Christmas day. If the list be authentic, there is less reason to wonder at the feats of courage and strength performed by the Knights of the Round Table:

"They served up salmon, venison and wild boars, By hundreds, and by dozens, and by scores.

"Hog-heads of honey, kilderkins of mustard, Muttons, and fatted beeves, and bacon swine, Herons and bitterns, peacocks, swan and bustard, Teal, mallard, pigeons, widgeons, and, in fine, Plum puddings, pancakes, apple pies and custard. And therewithal they drank good Gascon wine, With mead, and ale, and cider of our own; For porter, punch and negus were not known."