

## A PRIMA DONNA'S FREAK.

There are two great "artistes" in this world who thoroughly hate each other. One is the beautiful, talented and merry Lillian Asdelade Neilson; the other the cold, stately, punctilious Clara Louise Kellogg. They never approach each other nearer than a distance of ten feet if they can avoid it, and their glances are not those of affection when they do come together. What "the beautiful Miss Neilson" ever did to provoke the reprehension of "the magnificent Kellogg" is not known. But the truth is that the jolly, fun-loving and somewhat reckless English beauty is the horror of the propriety-loving prima donna.

As a fact no two women were ever more opposite in their natures. Neilson is gay frolicking, fond of a practical joke, a girlish romp, preferring the society of men and never better pleased than when she is treated as "a good fellow" among them, without any of the nonsense which straight-jackets the two sexes in their social relations. Kellogg is the reverse. She is all woman. There is no good-fellow about her. She is the very pink of propriety, and a stickler after etiquette. You must approach her with the graces of the drawing-room upon you, and must address her in the tones and terms that are prescribed in Japonicadom. Not one of the most intimate of her gallants would dare salute her with a slap on the back and a hail, "How are you?" as in the case of Neilson. The man who would dare to do that to Kellogg would be brave indeed, and he would need be, too, for some awful fate would doubtless befall him.

Neilson's good-fellowship has evidently shocked Kellogg some time back and the latter believes terrible things about her. The English beauty, on her part, rather encourages than seeks to break down this aversion, and never goes out of her comfortable way to how to the prudery demanded by rigid society rules. She is all mirth and happiness, and is the most popular "fellow" among men of any woman of modern times.

The aversion between these two great artistes was not particularly noticed until the month of October, 1876, when in the excitement of the closing Centennial Exhibition at Philadelphia Neilson was playing Juliet at the Walnut-street Theatre, while Kellogg, at the head of the Hess Troupe was warbling the grand opera at the Academy of Music. Both artistes were stopping at the Continental, and occasionally met in the hallways of that grand hotel. When such an encounter occurred, it was amusing to see Kellogg sweep aside grandly, and the pair pass each other hugging close to the wall on either hand. Charley Crosby, Kellogg's agent, and Neilson's business representative were worried for the details; neither could account for the aversion on any other than the general ground that the two beauties were magnetic opposites.

The opera company went West after a week's sojourn. Neilson travelled West after a fortnight. A month after, in the hotel in Cincinnati, Neilson and Kellogg met again in the hallway. They hugged the wall, as before, when they passed. Kellogg, however, indignantly changed her hotel that very day, and the fun was spoiled. The next "stand" of the opera company was for two weeks, in De Bar's, St. Louis. Neilson's next engagement after Cincinnati was in the St. Louis Olympic, for two weeks. Kellogg learning that Neilson had secured rooms in the Southern Hotel, carefully avoided it; so, beyond the rivalry of the two artists at rival theatres, there was no chance for manifestations of opposition. Neilson, it is true, delighted in taking horseback exercise with a troop of admiring good-fellows, and never failed to gallop daily by Kellogg's hotel, deporting her self in the gayest manner, but the effect (if any) on the prima donna was not visible. They met once or twice in their promenades, and one sought the curbstone and the other the shop windows in passing, to the astonishment of all who witnessed the manoeuvre, but nothing came of it.

This was fun for Neilson and gratification for the stately Kellogg, but the agents of the two artistes began to foresee trouble in it. They were good friends and mutual sufferers by the whims and tyrannies of their respective charges and they thought it best to exchange views in regard to the situation. To their horror they learned that the routes marked out for the operatic and dramatic "star" were identical—they were booked to fill the same time at rival theatres in every city on the way back to the last. Here was a prospect that was not relished by either agent. Nothing but a state of war for the whole trip; and yet there was no way out of it.

Neilson was very particular about her travelling accommodations. She must have the drawing-room of the parlor-car all to herself. Her maid and her French companion must each have a compartment adjoining, while the leading man and agent must each sleep within easy call of the imperious beauty. These arrangements could never be varied. The agent could not dare propose a change. So he was always very careful to get at least three days ahead of time to the railroad office, and secure the drawing-room for his charge. This time, however, the ticket-agent replied that Miss Kellogg had secured the only drawing-room for herself, and that the principal members of her company would half fill the car, so that nothing but a sleeping berth was left for Neilson. Unfortunately Kellogg was even more exacting than the English "champion heart-breaker" in the magnificence and comforts of her travelling accommodations.

Her business manager had made his peace with her certain by securing the only palace-car drawing-room a fortnight in advance.

What was to be done? The Neilson agent was in despair. How could he ask that dainty creature to content herself with a mere compartment in a railway car? And above all, in the same car in which Kellogg magnificently occupied the drawing-room? Oh, this would never do. He must devise some means to get over the difficulty. And he did. He argued with the railroad men; he quarreled with them; he bribed them. For twenty-five greenback dollars they agreed to telegraph to Chicago and have a car sent down, in which there were two drawing-rooms—one at either end. In one room should Neilson be installed, with her party near her; in the other end Kellogg should reign over her melodious company.

This was satisfactory as far as it went, but either agent would have preferred that the other "star" were not going along. The train was a Sunday night one. Kellogg reached it first, and was shown to her apartment. Neither agent had had the courage to tell his "star" that the enemy was going on the same train and in the same car. So Kellogg was in splendid humor, and Neilson was never merrier than when she burst laughing into the car in search of her "drawing-room." Imagine the situation when she found Kellogg—yes, actually Kellogg—already installed there!

"How is this? I thought—"

"This way," said the porter, and the agent hurried the "famous Juliet" away to the opposite end of the car, pursued by a scowl from Kellogg.

It was noticed that the latter sent for her agent immediately and had a long conference with him. There was trouble at both ends of that car, beginning at once, but the Neilson end recovered its balance first. Kellogg closed the door of her room early and retired, as did her company, out of deference to her prejudices against the awful Neilson at the other end. But the beautiful Briton was not to be "squelched" in this summary fashion. She laid herself out to do something that Kellogg would consider "awful." The opera party had just settled down to repose, and a solemn stillness pervaded the heavy atmosphere of the car, when Neilson's voice was heard summoning her agent familiarly by his Christian name—a familiarity she was not accustomed to:

"I say, Johnny, don't break that bottle the hotel-keeper gave me. And I say, John, you may as well open that bottle for me."

Neilson was not in the habit of indulging in liquor, and even if she had been, the bottles she spoke of so loudly existed only in her imagination.

The agent rushed to her with a deprecating gesture: "Hush! Why, Miss Neilson—what will these people think?"

"Pshaw! Kellogg can't have a worse opinion than she has. I'll gratify her."

There was a stirring and groaning in the other end of the car among the opera people. They had heard. But Neilson burst into a merry laugh, regardless of consequences, and kept up her chatter for an hour. Then she retired. So did her maid, her companion, her "leading man" and her wretched agent. The other end of the car slept uneasily. It was easy to detect that it was "shocked."

A full hour of quiet passed, broken only by the snores of the opera people and the "leading man." Miss Neilson was heard moving again. She could not sleep. She arose, threw open the door, and resumed her reading of "Helen's Babies," in which she was deeply interested. At every funny point she burst out into a loud laugh that echoed through the car, and finally, throwing down the book, came forth from her lair, imitating the peevish whine of Toddie and repeating the cry "I want to see wheels go round!"

This was given with a faithfulness of intonation that was absolutely aggravating. There was a movement among the opera people, and the baritone mumbled a request to "Give us a rest," but it was unheard in the repetitious, shrill, peevish childish cry.

"Come," said the great actress to her party, "I can't sleep, and you shan't. Get up!"

The maid was roused up. The "leading man" was hauled out, grumbling; the agent was stirred up with a parol, and the porter was summoned and ordered to put up the beds. Then pandemonium reigned in the Neilson end of the car. A nursery of squalling children could not have done more damage than did "the great English actress" with imitations.

Sleep was impossible. The magnificent Kellogg, the sleepy baritone, the indignant tenor, and the horrified contralto, all arose and listened to the discord, with no attempt to disguise their rage. It lasted all night. At early dawn Chicago was reached, and Kellogg rushed from her car before it had fairly stopped, evidently eager to escape her torture.

## VENNOR.

A writer in the *Globe*, signing himself "Observer," thus discourses about the weather prophecies of Mr. Vennor:

In your daily issue of the 9th ult. we were furnished with a series of Vennor's weather predictions, all of them having reference to the month of April, with the exception of his last prediction which referred to the first half of May. On reading these predictions which, perhaps, had mainly a reference to Quebec, but

which most people would apply to Ontario also, I resolved to note down the actual weather in this city, Toronto, from the 9th to the 30th of last month, and then to compare these notes with Vennor's predictions, so as to see how far he might be correct, and how far he might be astray. And now let me give the comparative statements:

| Vennor's Predictions.          | Actual Weather.                    |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| April.                         |                                    |
| 9. Fair, warm, spring like.    | Rain, cloudy, and cool.            |
| 10. do do                      | Showery and rainy.                 |
| 11. do do                      | Fair and moderately warm.          |
| 12. do do                      | Fair, cloudy, and breezy.          |
| 13. Change.                    | Much same as yesterday.            |
| 14. Wet, and cold winds.       | Very fine and clear.               |
| 15. do do                      | Cloudy and cool.                   |
| 16. do do                      | Very fine, cloudy a.m.             |
| 17. Probably fair.             | Shower.                            |
| 18. do do                      | do                                 |
| 19. Cold, wet, change again.   | Shower till 8 a.m., then fair.     |
| 20. With frost and snow.       | Thunder and rain early, then fine. |
| 21. do do                      | Fine and cool.                     |
| 22. do do                      | Thunder and heavy rains.           |
| 23. Fair, spring like, with    | Cloudy and variable.               |
| 24. Warm days.                 | Heavy rains, thunder, etc.         |
| 25. do do                      | Fine, spring like.                 |
| 26. do do                      | Warm a.m., breezy p.m.             |
| 27. do do                      | Sultry a.m., fine p.m.             |
| 28. Cold rains, snow flurries. | Cloudy, mild, and fine.            |
| 29. do do                      | Cloudy and showery.                |
| 30. do do                      | Good, but cooler.                  |

It will thus be seen that on seven of the days above spoken of, and partly on another, Vennor's calculations happened to be verified, while on all the other seventeen days, if not eighteen, his calculations were quite falsified. He said also that "the first half of May will be wet and backward." Not so, however, the first day of the month, at least in the region of Toronto, for the weather to-day is exceedingly warm and beautiful. And as for the other fifteen or sixteen days, we may hope that they will continue on the whole favourable to the interests of vegetation.

Speaking generally, I have no faith in Vennor's predictions, nor in those of any other man, unless they are limited to four and twenty hours, or somewhere thereabouts. It certainly stands to reason that weather sages, with the signs of the sky and with the aid of instruments and telegrams from a distance, may reliably prognosticate a few hours ahead. But to speak of seeing a long way farther, whole weeks, and whole months, is to make a pretension, in my opinion, which neither the acquirements of science nor the facts of observation go to sustain.

## SNARED BY A "PERSONAL."

A newspaper came as a package wrapper into a farm-house near Cleveland, O. It was a very innocent-looking sheet but was full of buzz and hum of the great world outside of this secluded farm. Clara, an 18-year-old daughter of the house, was charmed with it, and charmed with its column of personal advertisements. They were new to her, if a newspaper was not entirely new. She had never seen such confidential communications made public before. She was fascinated with the romance of such a method of acquaintanceship as it prescribed. One young man of easy means, living in a city, wanted to make the acquaintance of a lively country girl, through a correspondence. It was just to have a little fun—that was all. Clara thought she filled the conditions of a lively country girl and wrote. He wrote; his letter looked right. It was fair writing, all modesty and good-breeding. It was delightful to Clara to have a city correspondent, a nice young man whom she had never seen, but already admired for his penmanship and sentiments. Besides, he told her in his first letter that he had received a hundred answers to his advertisement, but had singled hers out as the only one to which he made reply. This was flattering to her. She knew no better than to believe it, and her own girlish vanity helped to snare her. Of all this Clara's parents knew nothing for some time. At length he wanted a meeting and she told the old folks how she had been amusing herself. A meeting could do no harm, she thought, it was all pure fun. Her parents thought differently, but through her earnest solicitations they at length consented and Clara and her correspondent met. She thought his person as fine as his writing and as noble as his sentiments. He loved; she loved, but the parents they did not love. The young fellow was too flashily dressed to suit them—plain, country people as they were. He was too loud for the modest scope of a farm house. But at length the old folks gave way to an engagement and in a short time there was a marriage in that house, and the flower of the farm left for the city a happy bride. Her romance had become reality. What money the old folks could scrape together went with her to make easy the beginnings of life. In less than two months the girl returned to her country home with the look of twenty years more age and experience stamped on her face. She had lived a long life in two short months. He did not turn out to be what she expected. He was a gambler, and luck was against him. She thought he was a broker and the deception broke her heart. He spent all her dowry and pawned her extra clothes and then she was forced to return to her parents in rags, for something to eat. That's what came of the fun of answering a "personal," addressed to any lively country girl.

THE musical critic of the *Times*, according to a Milan paper, receives only £20 per month for his services. Critics must be fairly well paid in Italy.

## VARIETIES.

## MOURNING FOR THE DEAD.—

FOOL.—Good Madonna, give me leave to prove you a fool.  
OLIV.—Can you do it?  
FOOL.—Dextariously, good Madonna.  
OLIV.—Make your proof.  
FOOL.—I must catechise you for it, Madonna? good, my mouse of virtue, answer me.  
OLIV.—Well, sir, for want of other idleness, I'll bide your proof.  
FOOL.—Good Madonna, why mourn'st thou?  
OLIV.—Good fool, for my brother's death.  
FOOL.—I think his soul is in hell, Madonna.  
OLIV.—I know his soul is in heaven, fool.  
FOOL.—Then more fool you, Madonna, to mourn for your brother's soul, being in heaven.—Take away the fool, gentlemen.  
*Twelfth Night*, Act 1, sc. 5.

DEPOPULATED FRANCE.—A French writer is amazed that those statesmen who moan over the stagnant condition of the French population should have apparently overlooked the cause of it. Although the majority of the French families to day are, he asserts, quite cured of pursuing that phantom *la gloire*; and warn their children against its delusive glitter, which in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, merely conceals invalidism, mutilation, and death, nobody seems to have thought of the part it has played in depriving the country of young men in their prime, who, but for it, would have been the fathers of tens of thousands of children, and whose death on a hundred battle-fields sent thousands of women into nunneries, or compelled them to lead a single life. No nation in the world, he thinks, has suffered in this wise so much as France.

STAGE BOUQUETS.—As in London, so also has attention been called by some of the New York papers to the "theatrical flower humbug," meaning by this term the practice which many managers indulge in of having bouquets thrown to popular performers, or of having expensive floral pieces passed from the auditorium to the stage by the ushers employed in the theatres. It is a custom which deceives no person of intelligence, and which reflects no credit on either artiste or manager. It certainly must be determined to the self respect of the first mentioned, and it causes the public to look upon the last as a flowery impostor. It serves no good purpose. The fame of great actors or actresses needs no floral adornment, nor perfume from the hot-house and the garden—especially if such incense originate in box-offices, and is not the spontaneous offering of youthful and enthusiastic admirers of genius. It ought to be put down by an expression of derision from the humbug-detesting portion of the audience.

BOTTLED SPITE.—Mr. Hardy was very angry the other night because Mr. Gladstone characterized a certain passage of Lord Salisbury's despatch as shewing the spirit of a mean attorney and the meanness of attorneys. Some of those who heard Mr. Hardy must, however, have had their memories carried back to a debate in the House some fifteen years ago, when, as now, Lord Salisbury and Mr. Gladstone were opponents, and when much the same terms were used. But on that occasion Lord Salisbury, then Lord Robert Cecil, was the aggressor. He compared Mr. Gladstone's financial policy to the practice of a pettifogging attorney. The House murmured, but did not interfere. The next night, however, Lord Robert Cecil rose to express his regret for words used in the heat of the previous night's debate, words which he felt were not justifiable. He, therefore, begged to tender his sincere apologies to—the attorneys. It is an interesting example of bottled spite that Mr. Gladstone should have waited so long after to couch an attack on Lord Salisbury in almost the same language.

A DIALOGUE.—The *Russki Mir* gives the following anecdote as narrated by a ventriloquist to his guests. In the Sultan's palace, he says, there is a great echo, to which supernatural power is attributed. The Sultans always inquire there whenever there is danger imminent. Abdul Hamid also consulted this echo:—

"L'Angleterre?" he asked.  
"Erre par mere," answers the echo.  
"L'Autriche?"  
"Triche."  
"Russie."  
"Ruse" (a trick.)  
"Mes Principautés?"—(My Principalities?)  
"Otées."  
"Mes Cuirassées?"—(Ironclads?)  
"Assez."  
"Mes Pashas?"  
"Achats."  
"Et Suleiman?"  
"Ment."  
"Mais j'ai Moukhtar!"  
"Tard."  
"Qu'ai-je pour payer tant de milliards?"  
"Lards."  
"Tout es perdu! . . . mais l'Asie me reste."

AN ENGLISH ARMY CORPS.—In round numbers an English Army Corps contains, when all its several parts are placed on their full war-establishment, very nearly 37,000 of all ranks. Of these, in round numbers again, 5,000 officers and men belonging to the medical, commissariat, and administrative departments, leaving 32,000 of all ranks belonging to the Infantry, Cavalry, Artillery, and Engineers. There are three div-