

STAGE JEALOUSY.

Examples of the "Cussedness" of Rival Actors and Actresses.

The proverbial jealousy of actors has been a frequent subject of dissertation, writes Alfred Trumble in an exchange. I observed an evidence of it the other night, and I will venture to say it was one of the very few people in the audience, which filled the house, that noticed it. The star had had some row with his leading man that day, and the latter, at the commencement of the play, his superior's speeches to him, suddenly commenced to back up the stage. You must understand that in a stage management, when an actor has an important speech to deliver, the person or people to whom he is supposed to be speaking occupy positions a little in advance of him, down stage, so that he may address them, and at the same time have his face turned to the audience. A speech with the back to the spectators loses all its effect, which is rarely the case, that position is actually called for by the business. If the listeners move up stage until the speaker is between them and the footlights, he naturally has to turn his back to the audience or talk over his shoulder to a person behind him, either of which operations utterly destroys the effect of what he says.

This is exactly what the leading man did. Moving back, step by step, he forced the star to turn and speak to him, and the best and most effective lines in the play thus were delivered without a whisper of applause when, by all experience, they should have provoked a roar.

The leading man was discharged that night; but, as he remarked to his friends next day:

"I got even with him, the loafer! He'd rather lose a thousand dollars than a round, and the whole piece went for nothing after that."

Next to depriving a rival of applause, the jealous actor loves to destroy the effect of that which is accorded him. Thus you find him ever ready to interrupt the plaintiffs about to be in course of being restored. To explain, in every part of any prominence on the stage there are certain speeches, or as they are professionally called "lines," which can be relied on to provoke applause. Consequently, when these are spoken, there ought to be a brief pause after them, to give the applause a chance to start. This privilege is tacitly conceded, and one actor is supposed to accord it to another.

But often the jealous player, as soon as a rival finishes one of these speeches, will commence his reply before the audience get a chance to applaud. Then the bravos are either checked short, or are without force, as most of the people, who would otherwise be applauding, are listening in order not to lose the thread of the scheme.

Actors will coolly take to themselves applause showered on another, too. Thus, during a performance of "Olivette," the lady singing the Countess de Rousillon made a hit which was by no means to the liking of the artist impersonating Olivette. In the second act a duet occurs between them, and at its conclusion a tremendous round of applause was sent up for the countess. Olivette calmly walked to the center of the stage, and, with her hands raised, acknowledged the praise which belonged to another, and repeated her verse of the song without paying the slightest attention to the anything but subdued hiss which ran through the house.

One night at the Bowery theatre, New York, an actor with a somewhat indistinct voice was playing a part in a rather "pianissimo" tone. A boy in the gallery called to him: "Why don't you advise for your voice?" and one of the other actors on the stage nodded at the poor player and made a movement as if carrying a glass to his lips. The hint was taken at once, and a chorus of cries broke forth, and a perfect tempest of hisses.

The wretched actor became confused and almost lost what little voice he had. This confirmed the impression conveyed by his enemy's pantomime, and the whole house broke into a pandemonium of hisses, catcalls and objections. The man was not in the least degree intoxicated, but shame and terror actually drove him frantic. He rushed off the stage, pursued by the curses and derisive cries of the audience and out of the theatre, and never stopped till he got home in his stage dress, and a fever followed that nearly killed him.

What the English call "mugging" is a favorite means adopted by malicious actors to spoil a rival's scenes. One has an impassioned speech, or a noble deliver himself of. During this time the other is idle. If he makes a face at the speaker or a derisive gesture, scores of the audience see it, a ripple of laughter runs through the house, and the scene is spoiled. Thus, a few years ago, while Charles R. Thorne, Jr., was leading man at the Chestnut street theatre, Philadelphia, a super whom he had cursed for being in his way, nearly got him hissed from the stage. The play was Bulwer's "Money." Thorne played Alfred Evelyn. In the gambling-house scene there were super scattered about the stage, supposed to be playing. The insulted one was among these. At the decisive epoch of the scene, when all eyes were upon Thorne, and all were bent forward for his words, one gamster laid his finger alongside of his nose and communicated a most ludicrous contortion to his face. Some gallery boys saw it and commenced to titter. The super winked and rolled his eyes, and the great scene of the act ended in roars of laughter, to put an end to which the curtain had to be rung down.

"Gruing a scene" is a term well known, probably, to all players. How many, however, are aware of its meaning? To "grue" a scene or a piece means in plain English, to make fun of or burlesque it. "Gruing" is a terrible weapon in the hands of an actor enemy. Suppose Miss A. and Mr. B. have a scene together in which Miss A. is all fire and passion, while Mr. B. has to listen and "feed" her, that is, speak lines on which her replies depend for their effect. Mr. B. has a grudge against Miss A., and whenever he has a line to speak, does it as he ought not to; repeats it flippantly if its import is serious, or with mock solemnity if it should be light and airy. The result is that the audience laugh at him, and the serious efforts of Miss A. go for nothing.

"Gruing" does not rely on their chances of distorting the meaning of their speeches alone. They will dress a part improperly, wear the wrong wig, make up as they ought not to, in order to perfect their work. There was once a performance given here by a well-known actress, who was taking a benefit.

THE "VAN-DEN-BELTZ" FAMILY.

An Old Lady of New Brunswick (N. J.) Tells of a Reincarnated Family's Ancestress.

"R. D. B." in Chicago Herald. The old lady sipped her tea complacently. "Cornel Vanderbilt's people," she went on, half reproachfully, "were not, of course, people that we would have been apt to know personally," and she smiled at her granddaughter. "Of course I hear a great deal of their doings now, but it makes no impression on me, except as illustrating the power of money and impudence."

At this point The Herald man ventured to ask if the Vanderbilts had really not descended from an ancient Dutch family called "Van der Belt." "No sir," thundered the old lady. "I have seen this statement going the rounds before, and it is an impudent assumption. The old and honored name is Van-den-beltz—a mixture of Holland and Flemish. In the sixteenth century it was simplified to Van Derg Belt. Those who came to Long Island finally got it down to Van-Belt, and now the old family are known as 'Van Pelt.' The Vanderbilts—I don't know where they came from, but they claim—or at least, old 'Cornel' used to claim—were an old Abram Wyckoff, who knew him well, when Cornel used to keep the old tavern down there, that 'he was Dutch, but didn't know how much Dutch he was.'"

"What are your reminiscences of the original Vanderbilts?" The Herald correspondent ventured to ask. "Oh, I hardly know—let me think. You see my family never knew them, of course. Dear, dear, no. If they had not got so rich, and my father wasn't, I suppose I would have forgotten them altogether. Let me see"—and the granddaughter filled up another cup of tea. The kind old lady sipped it, the while deep in thought. "I was born eight miles from here, and I was 12 years old when I came in town to school. Then the 'Raritan house' was in full blast. 'C. Vanderbilt, proprietor.' I remember was on a big sign. We school girls, I know, for several summers used to go from here, and I was the steambot docks and up on Shinnelon's hill, to pick blackberries. We were always a little shy of Vanderbilt's hotel, for even away back in those days it was rich. But old Mrs. Vanderbilt was kind and good, and when she wasn't too busy scrubbing and so on, she always had a kind word for us. She was a young woman then, and vigorous, and how she did work. Of course we girls from 'up-town' didn't dare to let anybody know that we ever spoke to any of the inkeeper's people, but she was good to us. Many a glass of milk I've had from her. But I never liked to see her serve out rum to people. She did that while 'Cornel' was away. The Vanderbilts used to be, William—he's now the great William H., I remember well as a chubby-faced little chap about 10 or 11 years old. His father used to bring up in his shallop in the spring—Hudson river shallop. Mr. Vanderbilt used to have a market for it always and the boy would deliver it about. I know in our old boarding-school we never could get shad in the spring till Capt. Vanderbilt's shallop got in. Since they've all got so rich, a shallop or a rowing boat, I don't derbil's veritable old basket in which he used to carry the shad is still in existence here, but that is untrue. The boy never had a basket. He carried the shad hanging on a wicker 'withe,' such as they use to have in the old days. I remember it well."

"When did the Vanderbilts leave New Brunswick, madam?" "Oh, that I couldn't tell you. I left school in 1833, and I believe they were here then. I remember hearing it said that more children were born here, but then, you see, we never knew them at all—they were, of course, not in our circle. Since they have grown so rich we naturally know of them and hear of them, and remember to their glory, but that is all. I remember old Mrs. Vanderbilt most kindly. She was a good, motherly woman, and by her thrift, excellent sense and untiring industry, I've heard she made a fortune out of her needle. I am glad to have seen you, sir. You will excuse me now. While I always like to talk of old times, I'm just now a little tired."

What the Cranky "Doctors" Write.

[T. C. Crawford in Chicago News.] During the management of Garfield's case Dr. Bliss received in all 7,000 letters from various people throughout the country. Four thousand of these letters related to patent appliances in the shape of beds, pillows, and cooling apparatus. Thirty-five hundred of the letters came from all classes of individuals, some of the most silly and idiotic of the letters received were from men calling themselves doctors. One fool suggested that the pus should be drawn out of Garfield's wound with a syringe, and the vacuum filled up immediately by British oil. Another advised the placing of a number advised the application of cow-milk to the wound. A spiritual medium wrote that the lad, in a trance, received a revelation from the spirit world locating the bullet. She said it "lay between the bowels and the ovaries." One letter-writer advises the placing of a piece of steel under the president's pillow to prevent nightmare. Another advises the raising of the president's hips so that the ball would have a chance to drop out.

An Embryo South American Republic.

[San Francisco Chronicle.] Now here is the South American republic of the future in embryo. With a sensible constitution, a congress of two houses like ours, a president salaried at \$200,000 a year, vice president \$10,000, cabinet ministers \$9,000 each, free religious, most sily and idiotic of the letters received were from men calling themselves doctors. One fool suggested that the pus should be drawn out of Garfield's wound with a syringe, and the vacuum filled up immediately by British oil. Another advised the placing of a number advised the application of cow-milk to the wound. A spiritual medium wrote that the lad, in a trance, received a revelation from the spirit world locating the bullet. She said it "lay between the bowels and the ovaries." One letter-writer advises the placing of a piece of steel under the president's pillow to prevent nightmare. Another advises the raising of the president's hips so that the ball would have a chance to drop out.

A Quaint Old Medical Work.

[Haynes's Foreign Letter.] Dr. Grooley, of Providence, R. I., has a large collection of old and new books. Among others is one over 200 years old, called "English Physician Enlarged, with Three hundred and Sixty-nine Medicines, made of English Herbs, that were not in any impressions until this being an Astrologo-Physicall Discourse of the Virtue Herbs of this Nation; containing a complete method of Physick, whereby a man may preserve his body in health, to cure himself, being sick, for Three Pence Charge, with Things only as grow in England, they being most fit for English Bodies." The table of herbs and the planets by which they are governed is quaint and interesting. Cucumbers—spelt "Cow-cumbers"—are governed by the moon, Mint is also a plant of Venus, so pennyroyal and primrose, while Jupiter claims the red rose, Venus the damask, and the moon the white. The thistle is ruled by Mars, and so on through a numerous list of herbs, most of them unknown to the average reader.

Virtues of the Toad.

[Longman's Magazine.] An ointment of toad's fat was supposed to give immortality, muscular strength if applied to the body at the moment of conjunction of certain favorable planets. A cubic inch of dried toad worn round the neck on a string was an infallible antidote against many diseases of the body and mind, and powdered toad, swallowed in spoonfuls, formed a love philter irresistible by the most obdurate swain, perhaps because the nature of the medicine was such as to compel him to throw up his previous engagements. The common garden toad of the present day must, indeed, admit with sorrow that virtue has gone out of him.

A FIREMAN'S FORTUNE.

The San Francisco (Cal.) Chronicle, in an article on the Fire Department of San Francisco, gives the following from Assistant Chief Engineer Matthew Brady:

"I. N. Andrews, dealer in General Merchandise, Postmaster and Agent Wells, Fargo & Co's Express, Elk Grove, Sacramento Co., Cal., December 8, 1883. Messrs. D. S. Brown & Co. GENTLEMEN—Please send me another six-gallon Harkness Fire Extinguisher as soon as you can. I had occasion to use the one I bought of you a short time ago. Last night the hotel adjoining my store caught fire in the hallway to the second story from the explosion of a lamp and the building being cloth and paper was immediately on fire in several rooms, but in less than two minutes after getting the extinguisher to work the fire was out. As soon as this one arrives I will send the other one down and have it replenished. Also please inform me if I cannot draw off the fluid remaining in the tank and save it for future use, or shall I send it as it is. Yours, etc., (Signed) I. N. Andrews."

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A FIREMAN'S FORTUNE.

The San Francisco (Cal.) Chronicle, in an article on the Fire Department of San Francisco, gives the following from Assistant Chief Engineer Matthew Brady:

"I. N. Andrews, dealer in General Merchandise, Postmaster and Agent Wells, Fargo & Co's Express, Elk Grove, Sacramento Co., Cal., December 8, 1883. Messrs. D. S. Brown & Co. GENTLEMEN—Please send me another six-gallon Harkness Fire Extinguisher as soon as you can. I had occasion to use the one I bought of you a short time ago. Last night the hotel adjoining my store caught fire in the hallway to the second story from the explosion of a lamp and the building being cloth and paper was immediately on fire in several rooms, but in less than two minutes after getting the extinguisher to work the fire was out. As soon as this one arrives I will send the other one down and have it replenished. Also please inform me if I cannot draw off the fluid remaining in the tank and save it for future use, or shall I send it as it is. Yours, etc., (Signed) I. N. Andrews."

"ROUGH ON COLICUS," 15c. 25c, 50c, in less than two minutes after getting the extinguisher to work the fire was out. As soon as this one arrives I will send the other one down and have it replenished. Also please inform me if I cannot draw off the fluid remaining in the tank and save it for future use, or shall I send it as it is. Yours, etc., (Signed) I. N. Andrews.

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