

SOME SINGERS I HAVE MET.

BY A PROFESSIONAL VOCALIST.



MADAME PATTI, 1898.
(Photo by Chancellor, Dublin.)

that she is best known to the world at large, and most dear to the hearts of the huge audiences who throng to hear her wonderful singing.

My first meeting with the *diva* was in this wise. I was engaged to sing at a "Patti" concert in the Albert Hall, to my huge delight, as it is both an honour and a very important advertisement for any vocalist.

The enormous building, as viewed from the platform, nearly takes one's breath away, and packed as it was that night, with not even standing-room left, it gave me the sensation of being out-of-doors surrounded by a sea of human beings, and with no way of escape but down the gangway into the artistes' room behind me.

However, the B. P. is noted for its kindness, to young artistes, and my reception made me feel happy at once, so that my first song received unqualified approval, and I was recalled very heartily after it.

Just as I returned to the green-room after acknowledging the applause, I heard someone remark, "She has come!"

That "she" could mean anyone but "Patti" never occurred to me, and I was right, for on looking through the rooms (three communicating) a radiant vision presented itself to my eyes.

Dressed in ivory satin embroidered in shining sequins, and her corsage, neck and hair blazing with magnificent diamonds, there stood the *diva*. Among her ornaments was the famous Beethoven gold medal presented to her by the London Philharmonic Society, and which, set round with diamonds, was worn on the left side of the corsage.

After greeting those whom she knew, the *diva* seated herself, and I, who had unconsciously moved forward, took a chair opposite. We both smiled, and then with the most

"*Place aux dames!*" and I might as well add "*Place à la 'Diva!'*" For, seeing that I have had the pleasure of meeting that great songstress, it would ill become me to begin this article with an account of any other singer. "Adelina Patti, Baroness Cederström." An imposing name truly when written in full, but it is as "Patti" pure and simple

charming manner Patti stretched out her hand to me and said—

"My child, I know who you are, and"—with a little laugh in which I joined assentingly—"you know who I am; so don't you think we may as well shake hands and make friends at once instead of sitting here smiling at each other all the time?"

It was said in such a droll way, for Patti has a keen sense of humour, that I laughed very merrily, and taking the outstretched hand replied—

"With the greatest pleasure, madame; I only waited for you to say so."

"You have not sung yet, I hope?" was her next query; and her face fell when I said I had just finished my first contribution to the programme.

"Oh, I am so sorry! I came early because I wanted so much to hear you, for I am told you sing beautifully, and I must go before your other song."

That my disappointment was as keen as hers can readily be imagined; indeed, I felt ready to cry, when she suddenly said—

"Never mind, we shall meet again, I hope, and then you will sing for me."

Just at that moment Charles Santley, who had been singing when the *diva* arrived, came into the room, and an affectionate greeting was exchanged between the two old comrades in Art. He raised her hand to his lips, and then, as she put up her face, reverently kissed her forehead. Inquiries mutual as to health and voice followed, and almost immediately afterwards Patti went on to sing, all of us thronging the gangway to listen to each precious note. When she came running back into the artistes' room at the conclusion of her song, she gasped out to me—

"Oh, child, how silly it is! I am always so nervous over my first song. Oh, how my heart does beat!"



MADAME BELLE COLE.
(Photo by Robinson, Grafton Street, Dublin.)

And so it did, so violently that it shook the bodice of her gown.

I remarked, "And after the first song, I suppose you feel you can sing all right? I do."

With a smile she assented, then hurried on to sing as an encore "*Pur dicesti.*"

On her return she seated herself, and my enthusiasm



MADAME ALBANI.
(Photo by Lafayette.)

burst out into the exclamation, "Oh, madame, that was the most perfect piece of vocalisation I ever heard."

Affectionately taking my hands in hers, Patti said tenderly and laughingly, "Oh, you foolish child!"

"I mean it, madame," I repeated, and just then a voice exclaimed—

"Oh, you dear little thing, how you did sing that!" It was Santley.

Immediately there followed recollections of old operatic experiences, and "Do you remember this, and that?" etc. Suddenly the *diva* said—

"Do you remember how carefully you used to carry me off the stage in —?" (referring to an opera). "No one

laugh against Santley, he joining in the roar which followed as heartily as anyone.

Then we were informed that the *fiancé* was very nice, well off, of good old family, younger than herself, and a Swede. We all offered our congratulations and best wishes for the happiness of the "Queen of song," and soon afterwards, with her devoted companion "Carola" (I do not know her other name) the *diva* took her leave. The marriage with Baron Cederström has

proved, I believe, a thoroughly happy one in every way, at which no one rejoices more than the writer of this article.

My first meeting with Clara Butt was at the same concert, and was a revelation to me as regards the depths of a human speaking-voice. Quite unconscious of the fact that she had come into the room and was sitting behind me, I wondered to whom that genial *impresario* Percy Harrison was speaking when he said—

"Now then, Kitty, it is your turn."

"Oh, you naughty tiresome daddy!" was the response in a voice that made me jump, so deep was it. Turning round I saw the tall figure of the well-known contralto.

A pretty incident followed, for, rising, Clara Butt knelt down before Patti, and winding her arms about the *diva* said—

"A kiss, madame, please! We have never begun a concert together without, have we?"

"No, my child!"

So the famous soprano and contralto exchanged a tender kiss, and the "six-foot-two of voice," as she is sometimes called, went on to sing.

It may not be generally known that Clara Butt is actually six foot two in her stockings. For her height she is well



MR. EDWARD LLOYD.
(Photo by Elliott and Fry.)



MISS ADA CROSSLEY.

ever used to carry me off like you did. I was always afraid of the others dropping me!" She made a comical little *moue* that set us all off laughing.

Directly afterwards, looking down demurely, and playing with a pen on the table, Patti demanded imperiously—

"Why do you not all congratulate me?"

Thinking she referred to her singing of "*Pur dicesti*," we all said, "We have done so, just now."

"Oh, not that!" she remarked quickly.

"Well, what about?" we asked.

Blushing like a girl, and without looking up, the *diva* said in a rather low tone—

"I am going to be married again."

"What!" cried Santley laughingly, "going to be married again, and you never asked me?"

Quick as lightning, with all her old sauciness, came the retort from Patti—

"You never asked me, you mean. Why didn't you?" which turned the



MISS CLARA BUTT.



MR. KENNERLEY RUMFORD.

(Photos by Window and Grove.)

proportioned, and has very beautiful eyes, and perfect teeth. With a red rose tucked low down in her dark hair, and a lace shawl flung round her head, she might have stood for a portrait of Cleopatra that night. We were all struck with the same idea apparently, and the *diva* remarked upon it openly.

I do not think I shall be far out if I say that Clara Butt is, without exception, the most absolutely natural woman I ever met. As light-hearted as a child and foad of fun, she might well be deemed a tomboy, because of her buoyant spirits. But underneath all this lies a deep and true nature, generous and kind-hearted to a fault. That this is a fact can be instanced by the following remark made to me by Madame Belle Cole on our way to the wedding of Miss Butt and Mr. Kennerley Rumford. We were discussing the bride, and with tears in her eyes, Madame Cole said to me, "When I was so ill last year, of all the contraltos in town, the only one who either came or sent to inquire for me every day, bringing fruit and flowers, was Clara Butt. One does not forget those things, especially when done by another contralto."

It was very evident that the recipient in that case of such kind thoughtfulness, had not forgotten, and that a very tender corner in Madame Cole's heart was occupied by the bride of the day.

En passant let me say that Madame Belle Cole strikes me as belonging to a rather rare type of woman. She has her own ideas, and while she scorns to meddle with other people's affairs unless consulted, she will, if asked for advice, give as sensible and straightforward an opinion as could be wished for. Some private affairs which she mentioned to me, and which I do not feel at liberty to repeat, made me remark, "I wish other people would speak out as plainly as you do, and in the same kindly spirit." Perhaps in the last few words lay the crux of the matter; for no one, looking at the genial face of the American contralto, can doubt the kindly nature that lies behind it. No one will more unstintingly praise a singer of whatever nationality, whether a contralto like herself, or one possessing some different voice, than the lady I have just spoken about.

Madame Albani, with her peculiarly bright face and happy expression, was standing with her husband Mr. Gye, close to Mrs. Kennerley Rumford when she cut the cake. According to the bride, "Mother" was to have the first bit, and as it was handed over the tenderest of kisses passed between the mother and daughter. Then "Madame Albani" was called for to have the second piece; and I received mine from the bridegroom at the same time. Madame Albani and I exchanged some pleasant remarks, and after we parted my thoughts ran upon the extraordinary resemblance in certain particulars between our three most famous lady singers. Each has wonderful bright dark eyes, full of expression, each a happy smile, a keen sense of fun, and each is so light-hearted.

Mr. Kennerley Rumford is well known as one of the most artistic and refined baritones we have, and is a thoroughly charming man. Whether he or his bride should be the more congratulated on their marriage is impossible to say, but that the union is one of love, and that they are a well-matched couple, no one can doubt who has seen the two together.

Miss Ada Crossley is a universal favourite, and a singer whom it is a pleasure to meet. Bright, courteous, kind, a conscientious and sympathetic artiste, one could wish for no more charming companion on tour, where amiability in one's comrades means much added comfort and happiness. I should say no vocalist works harder than she does. With a good appearance, which she increases by her conspicuous good taste in dress for the platform, Ada Crossley is a success wherever she goes; and deservedly so, for her lovely voice and convincing manner of singing all she undertakes, win her unstinted approval.

Once when she and I were singing in the "Messiah" together, the interval was so arranged that she had no need to come on to the platform after the first half of the concert.

"I shall wait for you, dear," she said (we were staying

at the same hotel, and going to sup with some friends), "and am going to sit just here" (pointing to the foot of the stairs leading on to the platform), "so that I can hear you and applaud," which she did most heartily.

After supper that night she came into my bedroom and unfastened my dress for me, gossiping pleasantly, and discussing femininities, among them (perhaps chiefly) clothes, in which, like most women, she takes a great interest.

If any reader of the "G. O. P." desires athletic training, especially in walking, let me recommend her to make Miss Crossley's acquaintance! We have had one or two walks together, and I would as lief run a race with a steam-engine. I cried for mercy at last, and she said—

"Oh, I am so sorry, I forgot that others do not walk so fast as I do."

We proceeded a few hundred yards when off she shot again, and finally I leaned up against some railings, after a vain endeavour to keep pace, panting hard.

"Do stop," I cried, laughing. "I feel as if I were the tail of a comet trying to catch the rest of it. If you go on like this, I for one shall have no breath left for to-night."

With a merry laugh she slackened her pace, and in more sober fashion we arrived at the hotel.

"What are you going to have to eat?" queried Miss Crossley.

"A small piece of steak, and some watercress and bread. No vegetables," was my reply.

"Oh, well, I've ordered buttered eggs, tea and toast, and jam."

We ate our evening meal together, but at the end of it Ada Crossley said—

"I feel as hungry as ever."

"I don't wonder," I replied serenely. "You know," I continued, "we have two hours and a half yet before the concert, and what we need is something to sustain the system for at least five hours from now. A little roast chicken, a couple of mutton cutlets, or a piece of steak, are, I find, the best things for singing upon. Hunger or faintness caused by hunger invariably produces breathlessness, and tea is bad to sing on, because it so frequently produces indigestion."

"Next time I shall try your plan; it seems to me very wise. Oh, I hope we shall often be together," and with an affectionate hug, we separated to dress for the concert.

When Edward Lloyd shortly retires, we shall miss one of the most genial of men and vocalists. When I first met him, he came into the green-room where I was sitting, and walking up to me with a pleasant smile, held out his hand, saying—

"Miss —, is it not? And this is your first — concert? Let me wish you all sorts of good fortune, won't you?"

The proffered hand was gladly taken, and the warm kindly grasp told me I had found another friend in the musical world. Mrs. Lloyd frequently accompanies her husband to the concerts at which he appears; and she and their married daughter are both charming.

Ben Davies and his wife (who was Miss Clara Perry of Carl Rosa Opera fame) are another delightful couple. She says, "Ben is always just as you see him now; always bright and jolly."

He says the same of "Clara," and is as proud as can be of her and their children, especially the boy, who was born some years after the girls.

Besides singing beautifully, Ben Davies is an expert at mixing a salad—two odd things to be found in the same person, but perfectly true nevertheless. I wonder how many housewives can qualify in that respect.

Travelling back in the "special" from Clara Butt's wedding, we had great fun. At the end of the saloon was a brake-van, where we boiled the kettle for afternoon tea; and when I first went in to speak to Mr. Andrew Black, I was hailed with "Here's —! Come along and sit here." "Here" was half of a hamper, of which Ben Davies occupied the other half.

"I don't mind coming there, Benjamin," said I, in mock severity, "if you can manage to take up a little less room. I am not very big, but—"

There was a general laugh, in which Ben joined, at the same time endeavouring to squeeze himself into the smallest possible space. I sat down on the hamper, though several others courteously offered me their seats, but they were all my seniors, so I could not let them move. Presently after a few minutes' interesting talk, music was proposed. So Ben Davies and Andrew Black sang duets really beautifully, the only thing which was unexpected being that M. Tivader Nachéz, who was present, chimed in with a top C. The effect was so comical that everyone exploded with laughter.

"Sing again," I pleaded.

"No, it is your turn now."

So I sang an old Scotch ballad, which found great favour. Then speech-making followed, and a toast to Mr. Vert, who was with us, and to whom we sang "For he's a jolly good fellow." We had toasted bride and groom before. So with merry jest and song the time passed till—all too soon—Paddington was reached.

"Father Santley," as I call him, deserves more mention, if only for his goodness to all he comes in contact with. It was once remarked to me, "Everybody loves Santley."

Upon one occasion when taking part in the same performance, I had been very ill, and it was only with great

difficulty that I managed to get through my work. Here let me mention that Santley carries a wonderful bag about with him which always seems to contain what one most needs.

After we finished the concert, Santley sat quietly down at the green-room table, and took out of his bag a large parcel. The wrapper taken off disclosed part of a Vienna loaf, split in two, buttered, and with some tongue between.

"Have a bite?" he asked me, with a merry twinkle in his eyes. I could only laugh and say I feared no efforts of mine would enable me to encompass such a thing. Forthwith he attacked that same sandwich with great gusto; then when his repast was finished, he put his belongings together, turned to bid us all "good night," adding in his fatherly way—

"God bless you, children."

"God bless you," we echoed reverently, and wended our different ways home.

Here, dear girls, I must leave you too, as I have to dress for a concert myself at once; and only that our dear Editor wants this paper immediately I should not have written so long to-day. Next time there will be some chit-chat about musicians—instrumentalists—as well as more singers.

THE ORGANIST AT ST. OLAF'S.

BY EGLANTON THORNE.

CHAPTER III.

HOW HARMONY WAS RESTORED.

"WONDER how it will end?" Ruth was saying to herself three weeks later as, surrounded by books, she sat knitting and musing. Her mind was dwelling on the fact that the organist and the choir were still at variance. The Rector, in

his annoyance at what he termed the "disgraceful exhibition" on Easter Sunday, had addressed the choir with more warmth than tact, with the result that Joe Blewitt's will had become as adamant, and Nankivell's mild remonstrances were of no avail. The choir were now "on strike," not one of them having appeared at the services on the previous Sunday. The Rector talked grandly of forming a new

choir, but this was not easy in a little place like Ottermouth, of which St. Olaf's was not the principal church. The organist was said to be making some experiments with the elder boys in the school. It was also rumoured that he was about to resign.

"The best thing he can do," Ruth said to herself, "though I think, if I were a man, I would not give in so easily."

At that moment the door opened, and a stranger, ignorant of the fact that one had to descend by a deep step into the library, stumbled heavily into the room. To her surprise Ruth perceived before her the man with whom her thoughts had been occupied. Recovering himself immediately, Sylvester Cox advanced towards her, lifting his hat with the foreign grace he had acquired during a long residence in Germany.

"Pray pardon my clumsiness. I was not prepared for so sudden a descent. I presume that I have the pleasure of addressing Miss Nankivell?"

Ruth made a sign of assent. She was agreeably surprised by the unassuming, deferential manner in which he addressed her.

"May I ask," he continued, "if you have Ruskin's works in the library?"

She shook her head.

"Most of our books are novels," she said, "we have little demand for anything else. People who come to Ottermouth for a holiday do not, as a rule, care for solid reading."

"That is a pity," he said with a smile, "and I suppose the natives do not read much. I have learned that they are highly conservative in their ideas. They would probably disapprove of new books as they disapprove of new tunes."

As he looked at her with a humorous gleam in his fine dark eyes, Ruth found herself obliged to smile in response to his words. Then he turned aside and began to examine the bookshelves while Ruth covertly observed him. His face was thin and worn; but, in spite of her desire to think the worst of him, Ruth could not but own to herself that it had a bright and pleasing expression. He bore himself like a gentleman, but his clothes were well worn and did not denote affluence. Then suddenly he turned, and his eyes once more met Ruth's frankly.

"Don't you think the choir has been rather hard on me, Miss Nankivell? Of course I know that they resent my appointment, but it is not my fault, is it? I had no wish to supersede your father. I knew nothing about him till I came here; but I know now that my predecessor must have been a man of singular patience, perseverance and nobility of spirit, and that I shall need to strive hard if I would perform the duties of the post as worthily."

A flush of pleasure overspread Ruth's countenance.

"You are right," she said, "no one knows how hard father has worked in training that choir, although the Rector thinks that they sing so badly, and how he has practised for the services. And then to be told that he is old-fashioned and past work!"

"Oh, was it so?" cried Sylvester Cox, his voice full of sympathy. "I am very sorry; I don't wonder you feel it, Miss Nankivell." There was a pause. The young man's eyes were watching the changes of the girl's vivid, expressive face. Then he said, "I have told myself that I will not be driven from the post, but I would resign it to-morrow if I thought the Rector would reinstate your father. Do you think he would?"

"No," said Ruth decidedly, "I am sure he would not. Nor would my father go back to the organ now, if he were asked to do so. He would feel that he was unequal to the post, since he knows that the Rector thinks so."

"Would you advise me to resign?" the young man asked.



Mrs. Rendell shrugged her shoulders.

"I am not particularly anxious to be turned away from the door, and I see no reason why I should be treated better than Mrs. Maitland. The servant is evidently entrusted with a general message. I think the best thing will be to send father across on Saturday afternoon, to see if the rule applies to ladies only. If Mr. Vanburgh really wants to be quiet, we can't force ourselves upon him. I am sorry the Grange is not let to more interesting people, but we must make the best

of it. It has evidently been chosen as a museum, in which to store a collection of art treasures, and, after all, you must remember it is no more closed to us now than it has been for years past."

"Dear me, no! We can live without the Grange, I hope. Let the poor old dear shut himself up if he likes. He will be the loser, not we!" cried Mrs. Maitland, laughing. That was the worst of grown-up people! They were so aggravatingly reasonable and resigned!

(To be continued.)

MORE CHIT-CHAT ABOUT SINGERS.

BY A PROFESSIONAL VOCALIST.



MADAME ALBANI.
(Photo by Elliott & Fry.)

have not even caught the tail of my own gown.

Let me see. Where did I leave off? Oh, I recollect. It was with the ever-sweet Benediction uttered then by dear old "Father Santley."

Well, now, I am going to "hark back" a little bit, and tell you that I had another chat with Madame Albani since I last wrote to you all, and such a pretty remark was made about her to me by a gentleman, that I want to tell you of it.

He said, "One always feels better for a chat with Albani!"

"Yes, bless her!" I rejoined. "There is something so pure and womanly, warm-hearted, and tender about that dear woman. Why, the other evening, when she had been singing most beautifully, we were talking in low whispers while she wrote her name in my birthday-book, and before leaving me to go on to the platform again, she suddenly turned, and lovingly stroking my cheek with her hand, just breathed the words, 'Dear child.'"

There was something so tenderly loving in the action that I felt a warm glow about my heart then, and ever since when thinking of it. No wonder her husband, Mr. Gye, almost worships the ground his wife treads on.

Evangeline Florence has a very gentle nature, yet one with plenty of decision when required.

She is married most happily to a man who never, so he

HEIGHO, dear girls! I am under orders to "hurry up" with my gossip, and, as usual, it is more easily said than done. I have been so busy learning new works and singing old ones, and trotting round this dear old country of ours, that I feel as if, to use an expression of dear Louisa Pyne's, I was "running after myself," and trying to make up for lost time. So far I

says, entertained the idea of matrimony till he saw her, and fell in love at first sight with her sweet face and true blue eyes.

She herself has a peculiar characteristic, or perhaps I should say, idiosyncrasy, viz., a great and unreasoning terror of horses. She never drives or rides anywhere if she can manage to cycle, and never rides in a cab if she can make an omnibus do; though why she thinks an omnibus safer than a cab, I can hardly say. Possibly she thinks it is too big to run away with for very far.

It was once my fortune to be with Miss Florence in a cab, and I shall not soon forget it.

She sat, as she always does, with her back to the horse, so that she might not see its vagaries if it suddenly developed any. Yet this same terror of the animal compelled her to have one look at the dreaded object.

"I must just look at it once to see if it is likely to run away," she said.

"My dear," I replied, laughing in spite of myself, "this poor old gee-gee could not run away with anything, I believe. Why, it can hardly get along at all!"

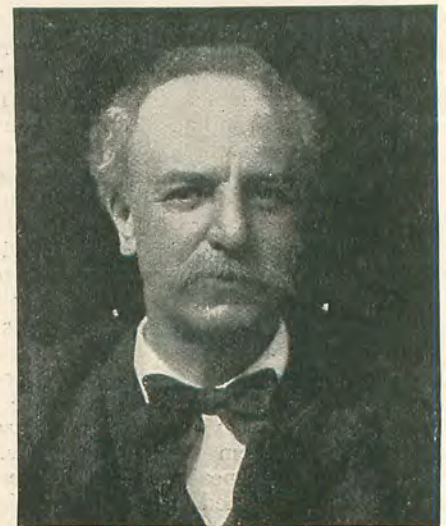
She gave the "one look," and breathed a sigh of relief, for certainly the poor old horse looked anything but ferocious. The next moment the cab swayed a little, and with a terrified "Oh-h!" Miss Florence stretched out her hands to seize something for support. I promptly grasped them and held them tightly in my own. We had only come into contact with a tram-rail, and the momentary



MR. ANDREW BLACK.
(Photo by Ellis & Walery.)

jar passed. I said gently, "Why do you not try to conquer this fear of horses? It must be terrible to suffer like this every time you drive."

"I have tried," pathetically. "All my life I have tried,



MR. CHARLES SANTLEY.
(Photo by Elliott & Fry.)

but I don't seem to get any better of my terror, though I would give a great deal to lose it."



MISS LIZA LEHMANN.
(Photo by A. Deneulain, Baker Street, W.)

"Well," I said, "for the present occasion, if you feel afraid, grip my hands as hard as you like, not that I think it will help us if any accident happens, but it may comfort you a little."

So we remained with hands tightly clasped, until we reached in safety our destination.

Miss Florence has a sweet voice, and sings very daintily, giving great pleasure to her hearers. Her high notes are wonderfully clear and true, and she is thoroughly in earnest in all she undertakes.

A singer who has now retired from public life, whom it has been my privilege to meet, is Liza Lehmann. All of you, dear girls, who remember hearing her, will agree that she was a truly "sweet singer." Her retirement was not only due to her marriage with Mr. Bedford, but also to the fact that after sitting in a draught upon one occasion, she contracted a severe chill, which caused partial facial paralysis.

As she said to me, "Nobody notices it, and generally I can control the muscles quite well; but I am not always sure of them on this side of my face" (pointing to her cheek), "and it does not do to be uncertain of anything like that in singing. And then you know," smiling, "it was always much more of a penance than a pleasure to me to sing in public," and seeing my incredulous stare, she added, "I was always so terribly nervous, you know."

"Nervous!" I exclaimed. "I should never have guessed that."

"But I am," she rejoined, "so I have had no regrets in giving up a public career, and devoting myself to composition."

"Well, the artistic world has a vast amount to thank you for, as far as composition goes," I cried heartily, "however deeply and truly it may regret your retirement from the platform. But you have

given us so much that is beautiful in your writings, that we feel it is a fair exchange, even if we are robbed of the pleasure of hearing you sing."

"Thank you, dear," she responded simply but earnestly. "I am glad you like my work, and no one ever interprets it more truly than you do."

"Ah! now, is not that just because you are so good in going through everything with me, and explaining your intentions so clearly, that I seem to know the very thoughts you had in your mind when you wrote each phrase? If every composer did as you do, viz., wrote to the vocalists who are advertised to sing their works, and asked them if they would like to run through the part with them first, there



MISS ELLA RUSSELL.
(Photo by Ellis & Watery.)

would be fewer inadequate interpretations. Of course in some cases such a thing is impossible, but where possible, if it is done, I am sure the satisfaction gained is an ample reward for the trouble taken."

Liza Lehmann's "In a Persian Garden" well repays study. The more I sing it the more I like it; and as I write I am looking forward to singing it again tomorrow evening.

Two bonny little boys call Liza Lehmann "mother," and her domestic life is entirely happy.

About Ella Russell I should like to say a great deal, for she is a universal favourite, yet, because I have not come much into contact with her, it is not possible to tell you much that is fresh. Her marriage was one entirely of love, and has proved very happy. How can it be otherwise when "he and she" are as



LATE SIGNOR FOLI.
(Photo by Elliott & Fry, Baker Street, W.)

much in love with each other now, after years of married life, as they were when first united?

In her home the American *prima donna* is thoughtful and considerate for everyone, and a delightful hostess. On the platform her fine presence and handsome face are always a matter for admiring comment.

I heard a rather amusing story one day concerning an afternoon tea-party at Madame Russell's. It so happened that she was left without servants, and friends



MR. H. GREGORY HAST.
(Photo by Alfred Ellis, Upper Baker Street.)

came in to tea, among them being Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Black. It was summer-time, so tea was to be served in the garden. "On hospitable thoughts intent," Ella Russell ran away to make the tea, and, on returning to the garden, brought first of all a dishful of particularly dainty sandwiches which she put on a little stand near the tea-table and next to Mr. Black. Going back to the house to fetch the tea, she remained rather a long time. Perhaps the kettle was not boiling or something, but presently she brought the tea-tray and, setting it down, began to pour out the fragrant beverage. Soon after serving her guests with their cups of tea, Ella Russell looked down at the stand, and exclaimed in utter amazement—

"But where are the sandwiches?"

"Andrew has been eating some," said Mrs. Black tentatively.

"Eh? What?" said Mr. Black. "It can't have eaten them all, surely."

But he had! In an absent-minded way he had kept on stretching out his hand for another and yet another sandwich, until he had polished off the dishful!

Gregory Hast is an artistic singer, and an extraordinarily emotional one. I remember once saying to him—

"There are some things I can never sing without being on the verge of tears; in fact, if I feel the spirit of a song intensely, it is most difficult to keep them back."

"No one can understand that better than I can," was the rejoinder.

That very evening, after he had sung, at a concert we were both engaged in, a beautiful but most pathetic song, Gregory Hast came into the artistes' room, his eyes suffused with tears, and his face pink, and working with emotion. It was my turn to appear on the platform, so I had only a minute in which to whisper as I passed him—

"Pull yourself together, and come and listen to me while I sing."

A grateful look was the only response then, but afterwards he said—

"Bless you for that! I believe I should have made a goose of myself if you had not pulled me up sharp, 'little mother.'"

"Little mother" is the pet name that my brother and sister artistes have given me, and of which I am very proud.

Mrs. Hast is a dear little woman, who, although a fine pianist, has sacrificed her own career in order to further her husband's. They have one child, a boy, who is the joy of their hearts.

Just before the sudden death of Signor Foli I met him for the first time, and only for a few moments. Never until I stood talking to him had I realised his great height. He must have been about six feet three, and had a very fine, upright bearing, and was extremely dignified. Yet

through all that was the warm-heartedness of the Irishman, the kindly *bonhomie* which was conspicuous in the man, and a something which told one instinctively that wherever you were, if Foli was there, you were as safe as if your whole family were travelling about with you.

Somebody once said to me—

"Foli is very gallant."

"Perhaps," I replied; "but gallantry may mean various things. In his case, I take it, you mean he is a *preux chevalier*—one who protects and defends those who are weaker than himself."

"Precisely," was the answer.

A week or two ago I was entering the Queen's Hall in the morning for a rehearsal. As I passed through the doorway I noticed a rather excited-looking individual, who seemed to be in some difficulty about something. As I paused to listen, with the idea of helping if possible, this foreigner addressed the porter first in French, then Spanish, and then Italian. Needless to state that the porter grew more and more bewildered.

"Qu'est-ce que c'est que vous voulez, monsieur?" I asked.

"Ah, mademoiselle, la répétition," was the reply, given with great effusion.

"Venez avec moi, monsieur. Je vous donnerai la direction," I said.

"Avec plaisir, et mille remerciements, mademoiselle."

Oh, dear girls! I had not the least idea what I had let myself in for when I volunteered to help this bewildered foreigner. It turned out he could not speak a word of English; but I found out (which has its advantages) that I could speak much more French than I thought I could! It is marvellous how much one can speak when one is obliged to do so, or remain dumb. For an hour and a half I held an animated conversation with my new-found friend, all in French. Previously, my great desire when anyone spoke French to me was to get under the table or in some wise bury myself, because I have a morbid horror of being laughed at if I make a mistake. Now, I find that if only they cannot speak English I am quite bold, and can chatter away quite fluently, which has a grotesque side to it, has it not? Do not be afraid! I can join in a laugh against myself as well as anyone, and enjoy it too. By the way, the foreigner who was stranded was Señor Antonio Paoli, a Spanish tenor, who has only recently appeared in London.

I have not nearly finished what I want to say, but there is an empty valise staring me in the face which I have to fill before going to rest, and I have to travel by an early train to-morrow. So you must take this as a "sop for Cerberus," something to keep that dear Editor of ours quiet until I get time to write some more.

More singers and instrumentalists will be talked about in my next letter to you all. *Au revoir!*

VARIETIES.

EXPANSION AND CONTRACTION.

Teacher: "It is a well-known natural phenomenon that heat expands and cold contracts. Give me an instance."

Pupil: "Please miss, the holidays. In summer they last six weeks, in winter only two."

STOP AND THINK.—Can any girl say that on any day she has done her whole duty, that she has done all that she ought to have done, that she has uttered no hasty word, entertained no wrong thought, and passed no harsh judgment upon her fellows?

POOR GIRLS!—In the beginning of the nineteenth century it was thought to be "good form" for a girl to faint often. Robust health was considered indelicate, and it was thought that there was something immodest in a display of mirthful spirits.

TO MAKE THEM ELASTIC.

A gentleman was doing his best to explain national finance to his wife. "What we need," he said, "is an elastic currency."

"Then why doesn't the Government print bank-notes on thin sheets of india-rubber?" demanded the lady with the air of one who knew all about it: "that would make them elastic, surely."

A FAMOUS COMPOSER.—The power of Handel, the famous musical composer, lies in his combination of pathos, sublimity, and humour. He lived in the world; this gave him breadth of view and a large air of life together with a cosmopolitan style which had German harmonic structure and an Italian feeling for the treatment of the voice.—*H. H. Stratham.*