

and Mr. Belmont continued his devoted attentions. Early in the season of 1893 Mrs. W. K. Vanderbilt returned to Newport and opened the marble house, and matters were much the same as usual until the arrival of Mr. Vanderbilt on his new yacht, Valiant. After that there was a visit to Chicago, with Mr. Belmont in the party as usual, and then came the projected trip on the Valiant, which ended as every one said it would, disastrously. O. P. H. Belmont was, it is believed, persuaded with great difficulty to go by Mrs. Vanderbilt. F. O. Beach, who was one of the party, is the great friend of both Mrs. Vanderbilt and O. P. H. Belmont. He is not a man of any means. Dr. Keyes, who was paid a great price to be one of the party, is one of the most entertaining men in town, and had previously been off on long trips with W. K. Vanderbilt. He left the Valiant after India and Egypt had been visited, and joined his wife in Rome. It was the talk at the time that W. S. Hoyt, who was urged to join the party, declined entirely when he ascertained that O. P. H. Belmont was to be along. General gossip at Newport now is that William K. Vanderbilt wants to be free and marry the Duchess of Manchester, nee Yznaga, whom he has long loved as long as the Duke of Devonshire did her own titled predecessor, before he got his chance to marry. This is what many of the society women are whispering.

The Drayton divorce suit is still a reigning sensation among the exclusive set of Gotham's four hundred and speculation is rife as to the probable outcome of the family trouble which has been stirred up between a jealous husband and a wife, who to say the least, seems to have had very independent ideas of marital life. In fact, it is a momentous issue for society.

Mrs. Drayton's friends are convinced that she is a much injured person and the victim of an insane jealousy on the part of her husband. They say that she can easily disprove all the charges which he makes against her concerning her alleged intimacy with Hallet Alsop Borrowe, and that, at the most, she was only guilty of indiscretion.

Mr. Drayton, they say, has brought his divorce suit mainly to offset the proceedings begun by his wife in the Surrogate's Court in New York last spring to get possession of her children. In her petition Mrs. Drayton alleged that although her husband has the nominal custody of her four children, he seldom visits them, but that they are in the actual charge and custody of servants employed by him. All the children are of a tender age and need the care and control of a mother, she says.

The trustees of the estate of the children, it is further alleged, have been paying out \$25,000 a year for the past two years for their maintenance, while she (Mrs. Drayton) has been reimbursing them to the extent of \$10,000 from her own income, and now they refuse to pay out any more money in this way.

In conclusion she asks that a citation shall issue to J. Coleman Drayton, the father of the children, and to the trustees of the will of the late William Astor, to show cause why she should be appointed such guardian.

The matter has never come up formally in court, and no citations have yet been issued, but it is said that the case will be pushed as soon as Mrs. Drayton's counsel can arrange to do so.

Mr. Drayton's friends, on the other hand, make him out a much injured husband, who long had just cause to complain of his wife's actions, but who, for family reasons, and to avoid scandal, held his peace and allowed things to go on, until he was obliged to take public notice of the matter.

Mr. Borrowe, who is busy just now running a Newark trolley line does not seem to be worried at all about the case, and treats the whole thing with the greatest indifference.

The Mallock article in the *North American Review* on London society has made much comment. The following are brief extracts:

Many critics of society—of London society in particular—especially those who have little personal acquaintance with it, are accustomed to denounce it with righteous and somewhat acrimonious indignation, for the way in which it neglects persons of moral and mental worth, the earnest worker, the great artist or writer, the profound scientist or philosopher; and courts those who are distinguished by mere frivolous or adventitious advantages, such as beauty, *chic*, wealth and titular rank. And the undoubted though partial truth contained in these familiar remarks has inspired for ages a success-

ion of unceasing sarcasms which have been a great comfort to their authors without disturbing their objects. But when the truth of the matter is considered more completely, there is found to be in reality little occasion for sarcasm at all; and the conduct which is supposed to be peculiar to a heartless and iniquitous aristocracy is seen to be essentially that natural and inevitable conduct which is followed, in social intercourse, by all ranks and classes.

But granting the position of everybody to be rightly estimated, how far do persons, merely by their high position, as such, add legitimately to the social brilliancy of an entertainment? The answer is that if they have nothing but their position to recommend them, they add to the brilliancy of an entertainment in precisely the same way as a great genius would had he no power of conversation. Many people would denounce a hostess for inviting a duke merely because he was a duke would praise her for inviting a great philosopher merely because he was a great philosopher. But if the philosopher were not an agreeable man personally, his social value would be of exactly the same as the duke's. It would be derived altogether from the exceptional prestige of his name. He might be the soul of his books, but he would be only a name at the dinner table. If these social censors are right who think that a dinner party would be improved by the presence of a man merely because he is distinguished as a philosopher, for precisely the same reason is a dinner-party improved by the presence of a man distinguished merely because he is a duke; only the duke is far more likely to be a pleasant man of the world.

A good deal has been said about the omnipotence of mere wealth in modern London, and how of any vulgar man, by the brute force of his millions, can make his way in society and command the homage of everybody. And in all this there is some truth; but there is more exaggeration. In the first place it is only fortunes of exceptional magnitude that will of themselves give their possessors any exceptional social advantages. Modern fortunes may supply the means by which persons with social ambitions can make their personal qualifications felt: but of enormous fortunes the total number is very small. New men have been raising themselves for the last ninety years, but there are not in the whole kingdom more than some 250 with more than £50,000 a year; and between seventy and eighty of them are old-established landed magnates. But it is still more important to observe that whatever new members may add themselves to the *de facto* aristocracy of the kingdom, they do this only by coalescing with or in so far as they coalesce with the old.

According to the *Arkansas Traveler* society is as natural as the breath we breathe. Two men meet and shake hands; perhaps they merely pass the favors of the day. That is society. Two girls meet, they kiss and smile and gossip and take an inventory of each other's apparel and pass on with the air of released convicts, glad it's over. That is society. Two boys meet, they are in too big a hurry to come to a dead halt, so they exchange a few questions as to whither and pass on. That is society. Gaze into the crowded ball room. That is society. Behold the good sisters of the W. R. C., or the Royal Neighbors or the W. C. T. U., or any church working their fingers to the bone, wearing out shoe leather, exhausting patience, donating dollars and netting pennies in some good cause. That is society. See two old ladies sipping tea and recalling the events of the shadowy past. That is society. Feast your eyes on the dark denizens of Ebony alley, hilariously happy in the go-as-you-please indulgences of a cake walk. That is society. Take note of the assembling of the camps, lodges, cantons, associations, clubs, garrisons, posts, etc. This is all society. Life is a social scheme. Man is a social animal. Society is a blanket term and embraces human existence. Robinson Crusoes and hermits are rare. It is well that it is so. Everybody is "in society."

Mr. Zehring's debut as a theatrical manager may be said to have been fairly made now. Years ago, when he began to take an active interest in theatricals, it became inevitable that at some time in his career Mr. Zehring would have a theatre of his own. Mr. Zehring as was remarked in THE COURIER when the announcement was first made that he would manage the Funke, has some proper ideas of how things should be done in the theatre and if he does not get discouraged, and he will not, he ought to add to his successes that of theatre management.