

The Vanderbilt Feud--The Theater of Snobbery.

(Special Correspondence.)

So the Vanderbilt feud is not to be ended by reconciliation. New York society thought it was to have peace when Mrs. Vanderbilt came back from Europe more than a week ago. It was believed that her mother heart would lead her to the bedside of her eldest son, who is slowly regaining his strength after having passed within a hair's breadth of death, and the bitterest war in the history of the city's exclusive set would be over. But she did not go, and all the stories that have been told of this most remarkable incident are being retold and the most dramatic of them believed.

What everybody would like to know is just what occurred at a certain interview between the elder and the younger Cornelius Vanderbilt one day several years ago. That it was a stormy one is freely admitted. The son, who had just risen from a sick bed, went away from the interview, leaving his father's roof forever, and a few days later married Miss Grace Wilson, over whom he had quarreled with his parents. Wall street then had a shock, for it was announced that Cornelius Vanderbilt, head of the great Vanderbilt railroad system, had been stricken with apoplexy.

The father never recovered. He went away to the continent and then to Egypt and traveled until he could not travel any longer. Then he returned to America and remained until he died. He did not see his eldest son before his death and when his will was read the great bitterness in his heart was realized for he left the younger Cornelius almost without inheritance and gave the bulk of the Vanderbilt millions into the keeping of his second son.

It was believed that with the death of the father a way would be found to make peace. Stories got out that William K. Vanderbilt, the head of the family, had endeavored to induce everybody to forget the past. Instead of reconciliation the bitterness deepened. Cornelius Vanderbilt, living at Newport, was as much apart from his mother, brothers and sisters as though he had lived on another planet. How deep was the feeling was shown when he battled in recent weeks with typhoid fever that threatened to cause his death while his mother and one sister remained in France and a brother and a sister only made formal calls at his house and left their cards.

So society is now asking if the story is true that there were more than words at that stormy interview between father and son. One of the stories had it that the father—filled with the stern Vanderbilt spirit—brought to bear every argument he could against the marriage of his son to Miss Wilson, and that when he finally went to an extreme in his remarks the Vanderbilt blood in the son was roused to such a pitch that he struck down his father for something that was said about his fiancée. There are many who believe that story now.

And what is to come out of this momentous quarrel? The greatest houses in America are concerned in it. The young Mrs. Vanderbilt comes from a family remarkable for its cleverness. She has set out to make herself the head of the Vanderbilt house despite the advantages of millions that the other members have. She has been as determined as those who are fighting her—asking no quarter and giving none. She has made it a rule that those who are not with her must take a stand against her.

So she has divided society into two hostile camps. With her are the puissant Astors, for her brother married into that family, and her sister, the powerful Mrs. Goelet, whom the nobility of Europe are glad to entertain, and her sister, the wife of the British Ambassador. Against her

are all the great connections of the Cornelius Vanderbilt family.

So far the younger woman has made the winning fight. Did not the Kaiser especially choose her to entertain his brother, Prince Henry, when he came to visit this country? Did not the Duchess of Marlborough take her side when she came on a visit to Newport last summer? Has she not already planned a campaign in the now brilliant official society of the national capital and found allies who are ready to welcome her warmly.

Aye, it is a feud worthy of the writing by one who has told us of the quarrels of the nobles of royal courts. I warrant there was never one of them when so much wealth and real power was involved.

There has been a lot of experimenting with New York theatrical taste during the present season, and it is still going on. The managers do not know exactly what is wanted, now that the book play and the swashbuckling drama have both gone out. In fact, there is little except musical comedy, and Clyde Fitch plays to amuse the theatre-goers.

Charles Frohman started the series of "freak" ventures when he brought over "Every Man," the sixteenth century morality play, and showed it for awhile with varying success on Broadway. It was shocking even to the very up-to-date persons who attend the theatres, however, to have God represented to them by an actor whose chief attraction was an immense false beard, and so "Everyman" did not have a long run.

Of an exactly opposite nature was the attempt of Mrs. Robert Osborn to start a theatre of snobbery. She took the Berkeley Lyceum, which is only a little way from the corner where Delmonico's, Sherry's and Canfield's gambling houses cluster, turned it into an artistic creation so far as the interior decorations were concerned and then produced musical comedy that was especially designed to catch the society faddists and those who would attend because the faddists did.

There were many pretty girls in her chorus and if stories are to be believed, there were protests from several wives whose names figure prominently in the lists at society events, because their husbands attended the performances too regularly. Perhaps Mrs. Osborn would not deny it too strongly if she was accused of having made this feature a part of her plan for making profits.

However, the faddists did not care to go by themselves. They showed an inclination to go to the theatres that are attended by the common folks and take boxes where they could attract attention by their costumes and their chatter. So the theatre for snobbery failed.

Now at this same place, near Delmonico's and Sherry's and Canfield's, another manager is giving us Shakespeare, just as Shakespeare did it. It really is a worse offense than it would have been to dare the curse which the eminent playwright left to be transcribed on his tomb. To see how Shakespeare had to put on his plays after witnessing Richard Mansfield's superb production of "Julius Caesar" was disillusionment that no devotee of the theatre would care to taste. Therefore it is to be feared that this latest "freak" plan will follow the others and the managers will turn to something more legitimate to stir up the weary public.

E. J. Y.

"So you think she could learn to love you?" said the close friend.

"It isn't impossible. She likes caviare and olives and anchovies and all sorts of odd things." —Washington Star.

HY DUNNETS.

A Little Sausage is a Dangerous Thing.

"Then," said Mr. Hyrum Dunn, the efficient passenger agent, and cornet soloist, "I'm awfully sorry I went to that gathering the other evening. I had a mis'able time. Why, actually, I was compelled to loiter about the rooms until breakfast time waiting for some one to make a jovial break in the nature of an invitation to that entrancing meal.

"In the meantime, my identity was mistaken several times, and I was asked to coquette with Bacchus. This I did, but used the stuff more in the nature of a beverage than any other guise. In such manner, conspiracy and John being bold, I personally conducted an excursion of prominent citizens to the mazes of one, Johnson's, the same being a banquet hall of no mean proportions, where I also conducted a Hamburger revel.

"My guests were taken to the cafe in all available autos, and alighting, they entered a room uniquely decorated in red and yellow, with all procurable viands of the day spread temptingly before them. Honestly, I was sorry that that fresh society reporter who is queen of the telephone gossipers couldn't see what I had made ready for my guests.

"Much eggs were spread in profusion, and neighborly spare ribs frescoed in brown made a really lovely contrast. Being generous, and having descendants of the Tea Party with me, four kinds of pie were served, and some gents had the crust to eat all kinds.

"Not to be satisfied with this, coffee cupped in the prevailing style of the day was served to all, after which the guests giving thanks to the popular and efficient agent, rambled their different ways, much to the delight of the genial proprietor. Owing to the demand for another entertainment, it is more than probable that the indispensable agent, which is I, shall entertain again shortly in the near future."

Mother—Johnny, how is it you stand so much lower in your studies in January than you did in December?

Son—Oh, everything is marked down after the holidays, you know, mother.—Puck.

WHAT ONE WOMAN SAID

to her friend—Bread baking is the terror of my life; good one time, passable the next, and just when I expect company, unspeakably bad.

WHAT HER FRIEND SAID

I once had the same dread of bread baking, and the same luck; now all is changed for me, and can be for you—use

RIVERDALE FLOUR.

Get rid of your
Coal Troubles
That Good Coal...
Bamberger,

The Man on Meighn St.