

## SOME NOTED MEN AND WOMEN

## II.

AFTER a single eventful season Jay Gould and Jim Fisk gave up theatrical management. The Erie Railroad offices were moved from the Grand Opera House, and it was leased to Augustin Daly, I remaining as his treasurer.

It was during the first winter of Mr. Daly's control that I made my initial essay as a manager.

Jacob Grau, who had given me my start, had died suddenly, and my friend Maurice Grau had taken over a contract his uncle had made with the famous Russian pianist, Anton Rubinstein, for a series of concerts in this country. The musician was to be paid a sum of money which for those days was exceedingly large. It was a big undertaking for a young man of not more than

twenty-four; but Rubinstein came, and under the management of young Grau the concerts were proving a great success. One evening I went down to the youthful manager's house on Eleventh-st.

"Maurice," I remarked, "what shall I have to pay for Rubinstein for six Sunday nights in New-York?"

"A thousand dollars a night," answered Maurice promptly.

"I'll go you," I replied, and then there we drew up an agreement. I couldn't sign my name to that brief contract quickly enough, for I had figured that the pianist, who was creating a sensation, would draw at least twenty-five hundred dollars a concert, and perhaps five hundred or a thousand more. It looked like plain sailing. There was, however, one factor in the situation that I overlooked. I forgot to take into account the eccentricity of genius.

Immediately I busied myself with completing the arrangements, engaging P. S. Gilmore's band for the intervals between Rubinstein's solos. For the first concert we decided to give some of the music of Johann Strauss, which was light but charming, and was much in vogue. The great night came—a fine night, and before the tired box-office man was through with that crowd there was over three thousand dollars in the house.

I was in a state of exaltation, and yet in a fever of worry too—Rubinstein had not arrived. Where was he? He had to come down from Springfield, Massachusetts, and while I had received a telegram that he was on the way I pictured all kinds of accidents and delays at the last moment. Finally, however, a carriage rattled up to the stage door, where I was waiting, and the celebrated musician bounded out, an active man in a big, fur-lined coat. I remember that he had penetrating black eyes that looked out from a strong but homely face.

He shook hands with me in the abstracted way that genius has, and demanded to be shown to his dressing-room immediately. Once there, thinking to win his approval and occupy him till the time came for him to play, I handed him a program of the concert. He glanced at it indifferently for an instant, and then jumped from his chair, holding the paper at arms' length and glaring at it.

"Vat iss dis?" he cried.

"What is what?" I asked.

"Your people may like it, monsieur. They such music may like, maybe; but I, Rubinstein, cannot play."

"Why not?" I inquired as calmly as possible.

"Why not!" he cried. Do you need to ask me that, monsieur? Vat, I, Rubinstein, on the same concert play mit this Strauss, this—this jingler? Nevare! nevare!" He kept tapping the offensive name of Strauss vehemently with his forefinger. "I would be disgraced!" he burst out again. "It is an insult! From here I go!"

With an impetuous movement my star seized his hat and bolted through the door. I stared after him for an instant, paralyzed with astonishment. Then I started in pursuit. He made quick time down the passageway, gained the street, leaped into his carriage and slammed the door.

"Stop that carriage! Stop that carriage!" I shouted.



Anton Rubinstein

I cannot play," was all he would say.

When I got him up-stairs I said with all the earnestness in my power: "Now see here, Herr Rubinstein, this is my first attempt as a manager. If you fail me this evening, if I have to dismiss this great audience that has gathered here to hear you play, I shall be ruined financially and discredited in reputation. I—"

"Oh, but the rebutation of me, Rubinstein, you forget," he broke in. "Vat about me? Vat about



P. S. Gilmore

my friends, the great musicians in Europe, saying: 'Oh, Rubinstein in America forgets everything but money. He vill blay mit a jingler. He forgets his dignity, his art. No, no, monsieur, dollars are nothing to me, nothing. I live for my art. I cannot blay.'

"But if I change the program," I suggested quickly. I didn't see how I could at that late hour; but I was clutching at straws. Rubinstein shrugged his shoulders. "They are in the hands of the audience," he remarked.

"But I'll get them back again," I announced. Without waiting for his reply, I ran to the door and called for the head usher. I gave him an order to send all the men he could through the house gathering up the programs, and then to set these men all at work crossing out the name of Strauss and the selections from his music. I next went to Pat Gilmore, whose band was to have played the Strauss music, and explained the situation to him.

"So Johann Strauss is too frivolous for him?" Pat remarked smilingly. "We forgot that he was a musician of a heroic mold. You would never have suspected it from this little affair, would you? Still we must make allowances for

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The driver heard me coming, and was hesitating before gathering up the reins. I reached the carriage door, and jerked it open.

"This is lunacy, Rubinstein," I cried, breathing hard. "I have thousands of dollars in the house. We can't send all these people home. Come into my office, where we can talk this thing over like sane men."

He shook his head. "But you must come," I insisted.

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genius. Don't worry about us, Morrissey. You have troubles enough. My men have nothing except the program music with them, but we'll pull through with well-known airs."

That cheerful speech made me Pat Gilmore's friend for life. I went back to Rubinstein, fearing that he would escape again. I asked him what he thought about this country and its music, to give him a safety-valve for his surplus spirit. In a few minutes the head usher brought me a pile of programs, with the name of the hated Strauss crossed out. I showed them to Rubinstein. He merely shrugged his shoulders. Another heap of programs were soon brought in. The musician glanced at them coldly. When a third lot were brought in and taken away to be again distributed, he suddenly asked: "Iss dat all?"

"Well, nearly all," I answered hastily. The truth was that those in the balcony and gallery had not been touched, but I did not feel that it was necessary to mention this.

"Vel den, I blay, because I feel ligk id."

And he did play—magnificently. As I stood listening to that wonderful, uplifting music it was hard for me to realize that the great musician who was producing it was the same man who a few minutes before had stirred up such a furious little tempest in a tea-pot. In the following concerts, which were highly successful, you may be sure that the program suited Rubinstein.

Of a vastly different type was the next musical star I managed. My pen fails me when I try to pay a fitting tribute to the memory of Emma Abbott. She was a most admirable artist, but her nature compassed far more than her art. Her voice was noble, but her character was nobler. Her heart went out to all who suffered. Many times I have seen her eyes fill with tears at the mention of some one's misfortune. In the days of her early youth she had known what struggles and hardships had meant to her, and she never forgot what they must mean to others. In short, she was one of the most sincere, kind-hearted and brave little women I have ever known. "Honest little Emma," we used to call her.

One day I was sitting in the treasurer's office at the old Fifth Avenue Theater, which had been leased to Mr. Daly after he had given up the Grand Opera House. The door swung open, and in walked a young woman with big, earnest eyes of an azure tint, softly rounded cheeks, a beautiful complexion, a mass of light hair, and an exceedingly winning smile.

"You're Mr. Morrissey, aren't you?" she said. "Well, I've heard about you, and I've come to ask you to be my manager. Will you?"

For a moment words failed me. Never before had an important proposal been put to me in such a breezy, off-hand manner.

"Why—why, I don't know, madam," I stammered. "Pardon me, but may I ask your name?"

"Oh, of course," she laughed, "I forgot to tell you—just like me. Why, I'm Emma Abbott."

In her mind that seemed to settle it; but in mine it did not. The truth was, I was raking my brain to think who Emma Abbott was. I had heard of her, but for the life of me I couldn't place her. It was at the beginning of her career.

"Oh, I see," I exclaimed, taking the small hand which she had held out impulsively. "I'm delighted to meet you, Miss Abbott; but this of course is an important question. I'll have to think it over. Could you come in again to-morrow?"

"Why, certainly I can." We had a little further chat, and then, smiling brightly, she bade me good-by, remarking "I'll be here in the morning. Mr. Morrissey, to complete arrangements. I'm sure we can agree."

I immediately consulted Mr.



Clara Louise Kellogg



Emma Abbott