

MME. AMBRE'S ELOPEMENT

SAD FLIGHT IN WHICH OPERA SINGERS FIND THEMSELVES.

ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY LEFT WITHOUT MONEY OR FRIENDS—CIRCUMSTANCES OF AMBRE'S FLIGHT WITH TOURNIE—HER BAGGAGE ON THE AMERIQUE.

Whether M. Tournie and Mme. Ambre, the eloping couple, were on land or sea; whether they were stowed away in the bowels of the *Amerique*, which proudly bore Mlle. Bernhardt from our shores, or were secreted in some New-York hotel; whether they were aboard some railroad train bound either for Canada or New-Orleans—were questions which were anxiously discussed yesterday by Mme. Tournie and 150 members of the De Beauplan French Opera Company. For the welfare of the tenor no great concern was manifested. As to the whereabouts of the prima donna, there was the liveliest kind of interest. She was the financier of the troupe, the person who gave orders which were recognized as imperative, who fined the members late at rehearsals, and who hired and discharged employes at her pleasure. M. de Beauplan was without funds. He simply lent his name and presence to the troupe and signed the contracts of those members who were particular enough before leaving France to insist upon contracts. "Mme. Ambre promised everything," said one of them yesterday; "she signed nothing." She is very wealthy. She owns a chateau at Mendon, one of the suburbs of Paris. Its furniture and paintings are valued at \$120,000. When she left France for America she stored with the Rothschilds silver plate worth \$40,000. With them, also, were lodged money, bonds, and other securities. "She had only to telegraph them and money was immediately forthcoming," said one of her victims. While in Philadelphia, she cabled to the Rothschilds and received an order on August Belmont for \$3,000. Through the same banker, last Friday, she received \$1,200, and on the following day \$3,000 more. The salaries of the members of the de Beauplan troupe are alleged to be in arrears six or eight weeks. Not a penny of the last installment from Paris, the company avers, was applied to the liquidation of the indebtedness. The only explanation of Madame's elopement that found favor among the members yesterday was her anxiety to get away from too pressing creditors, and to avoid any financial responsibility which might be pressed upon her. The Frenchmen laughed at the idea that M. Tournie alone was the cause of her disappearance. Their relations had long been food for gossip. There was nothing to conceal, said the members; nothing to be gained by flight together.

De Beauplan and Mme. Ambré, Tournie and his wife, a niece of Mme. Ambré, a valet of de Beauplan, and the German book-keeper who managed the troupe's accounts, all boarded at the Westminster Hotel, in Irving-place. On Monday the book-keeper was directed by Mme. Ambré to find lodgings outside the hotel. On Tuesday night about 11 o'clock Tournie and his wife retired to their room. Said the tenor to his spouse: "My dear, you must be very tired. Do you retire. I will run down and see de Beauplan and Madame a few moments, and will immediately return." Three-quarters of an hour elapsed and her husband was still absent. Robbing herself, Mme. Tournie came down to learn the reason. His luggage was gone; so was that of Mme. Ambre. The two had just entered a carriage, accompanied by the niece, and had been driven off—none of the hotel employes knew where. An alarm was raised, and Mme. Tournie and some of her friends hastened to Police Headquarters to secure assistance in the search for the fugitives. One of the first persons whom Mme. Tournie met in the street was a German musician belonging to the troupe. "It's no use to hunt for them, they've gone to sea," said he, mournfully. He explained himself more fully by reading the following tender missive: "I am sorry I cannot be in your arms to-morrow at 2. We sail in the morning." The note, it is asserted, was from Alice Jullien, the niece of Mme. Ambre, a pleasing damsel of 16, with just the faintest suspicion of a cast in one eye. She had captivated the German and completely won his affection. It was generally agreed that Tournie and Ambre would take passage on the steam-ship *Amerique*, which was to sail the following morning. Inspector Dilks heard the excited story of his visitors and decided that he could do nothing, that the fugitives had committed no crime known to Mulberry-street, and that a Justice, if anybody, alone could take steps to stay the flight. Meanwhile, M. Tournie and Mme. Ambre had driven to the Gramercy Park hotel and applied for quarters for the night. The clerk curtly informed inquirers yesterday that they came too late to secure rooms; that they were not received into the hotel in consequence, and that he, for one, was quite thankful for it. He had answered all the questions he cared to for one day about these people. Whither they wended their way after leaving Gramercy Park neither Mme. Tournie nor her friends had learned up to a late hour last night. It is certain, however, that Mme. Ambré's trunks were placed aboard the *Amerique* as part of the baggage of the Bernhardt troupe.

M. Tournie is 35 years of age, of medium height, somewhat slight of figure, and has a full beard. His hair he wears à la Capoul. Mme. Tournie is 40, and quite stout. Formerly she was a ballet dancer. The couple have lived together, it is said, 10 years. Once during that time Tournie lapsed from the path of rectitude and eloped. He repented; she forgave him and as a sort of recompense nine months ago he summoned a minister who pronounced them man and wife. The Tournies have some property in France. Mme. Tournie is left penniless in a strange land by this desertion. On Tuesday night she, too, abandoned the Westminster and lodged with a friend at Larru's French hotel, in University-place. By yesterday morning's post came a letter to her in Tournie's handwriting. He said: "When you receive this, I shall be on the sea on my way to London. Go to Havre at once. There I will meet you and explain all." The letter could have been no more formal if addressed to a stranger. She was indignant. Hurrying to the Jefferson Market Police Court she swore out a warrant charging her husband with abandonment. The instrument was given Detective Dunn to serve, but he has not yet learned which way to turn to serve it.

Meanwhile a dozen members of the opera troupe had hurried to the dock to learn whether Tournie and Ambre were really among the *Amerique's* passengers. They saw nothing of the couple, but suspect that they were hidden below the decks. Capt. Santelli, said one of them, is a great friend of Ambre's. Probably everything was managed as she desired. Another person said he was not permitted to go below to see whether she was on board. Some of the members were fortunate enough to raise the means for a steerage passage back to France. Among them were M. Bazin and wife, M. Escalla, the second tenor, M. Pontus, Mme. Romain, Mlle. Duverge, M. d'Armand, three musicians, and four choristers—in all fourteen. Mme. Romain is the grandmother of Mme. Ambre and is 81 years of age. She was among the members of the comedy company which de Beauplan and his wife left in New-Orleans six months ago. In charge of M. Bazin and his wife she came North, reaching New-York on Monday. Her two friends paid her passage, and all three were given quarters in the third cabin. Members of the troupe say Mme. Ambre refused to furnish the old lady with any means whatsoever. M. Escalla is said to have been more fortunate than any of the others in his dealings with Ambre. He confronted her in her own room at the Westminster on Tuesday, and by divers threats secured her signature to an order for the \$25 due him. Pawning his watch and chain he was enabled to raise his passage money.

M. de Lestrac, leader of the musicians in the abandoned comedy company, and his wife, through an interpreter, outlined to a Times reporter the history of the De Beauplan French Opera Company: "We left Havre 200 strong," he said. "To-day 150 of us are stranded in New-York without money, without friends, without tongues that will understand in this country. We landed at New-Orleans and were there nearly four months. When de Beauplan started North, he left behind him the comedy company in a destitute condition. The rest of the troupe played in Cincinnati, Chicago, Philadelphia, Brooklyn, and New-York. Here they, too, were wrecked last week. The receipts in New-Orleans were \$108,000. On the way to New-York they were swollen \$20,000 more. De Beauplan salaries to have lost \$80,000 altogether. He owes as salaries aggregating about \$50,000. He left New-Orleans in debt for horses and carriage hire and wines. Who drank the wine? The reportaires after the opera was over. Two weeks ago we telegraphed de Beauplan from New-Orleans: 'Send us money. We have no bread.' The answer came back: 'Send me the scenery of "Aida" and the *terre de Sienne*.' [The latter a mixture for coloring the faces of actors a dusky hue.] Finally we got together ourselves and gave four performances. Everybody in New-Orleans was good to us, butchers, and bakers, as well as the rest. We scraped enough money together from these performances to pay our passage to New-York. Here we are, 12 of us. We left New-Orleans the same day that de Beauplan announced to his company that the troupe had gone to pieces. Among those left behind in New-Orleans is a nephew of Mme. Ambre, the brother of Alice Jullien.

"And what do you propose to do now?"

(Shrugging his shoulders as only a Frenchman can.) "Look at the sun."

"De Beauplan has no money," continued he. "We have no legal hold on Mme. Ambre. We can have him arrested if we ever do get back to France. But I don't think we shall ever find de Beauplan there. May be we'll build him a statue in some quiet corner of Paris then. And Mme. Ambre! She no more will send out 400 free tickets to fill the house whenever she sings. Poor Ambre! Unfortunate Tournie!"

Some of the members of the wrecked troupe have reckoned up the amounts due them. Their names and the sums are as follows:

M. Henry Utto, first baritone, and wife.....	\$996 45
Mlle. Suzanne Delprato.....	612 25
M. Jourdan, first basso, and wife.....	852 98
M. and Mme. Flewry.....	480 00
M. and Mme. Flewry Pillard.....	477 00

M. de Beauplan disappeared from the Westminster Hotel yesterday, and, although search was made for him by some of his creditors, he could not be found. His valet, Gollath, a lad of 16, who

gives little promise of ever attaining any such size as his biblical namesake, said his master was in town, and was quartered at the Gramercy Park Hotel. This statement was denied at the hotel office. Gollath said, also, that Mme. Ambre and Mr. Tournie had not left the City. The accuracy of this statement is doubted by the troupe. De Beauplan comes of one of the best families in France. His father is the Count de Beauplan, who holds the municipal office of Director of Fine Arts in Paris. He is wealthy. The marriage of his son to Mme. Ambre, who has a Continental reputation that is hardly enviable, leagued the entire family against the young man. This marriage ceremony is alleged to have been performed in this country three months ago. Mme. Ambre has an eventful history. She was born in Algeria, and is 36 years of age. Her father was a non-commissioned officer in the French Army; her mother a native of Algeria. She attracted the attention of the Third Napoleon when she was 14 years of age. He became her patron, and she was educated at his expense in Paris. Her relations with the King of Holland are well known. He wanted to marry her. His relatives and Ministers interposed objections, and, according to one account, she was bought off with a million dollars, the understanding being that she should leave Holland at once and forever. Another version is given by members of the De Beauplan troupe. It is to the effect that there was such a storm of indignation aroused against her among the Hollanders that she was only too glad to don male attire and escape from the country under cover of darkness. Betaking herself to Paris, she took quarters in the Rue de Clichy, where she became acquainted with De Beauplan. She attracted the attention of Col. Mapleson in Paris by her singing in the opera "Italiens," and by him was engaged for a trip to this country.

"Has she never been married before?" asked the reporter of one of the members. "Yes, to several. She is the mother of three children, all of whom are dead."