

# WOMAN'S SUPPLEMENT

A FEW PAGES PREPARED TO MY LADY'S TASTE

## As We See Others

### Bigness and Importance

**L**ORD COLERIDGE it was, I think, who reminded an over-buoyant orator who was discoursing on the bigness of the greatest Republic that the countries which have played the most significant part in history have been "little lands." Lord Coleridge referred pointedly to Egypt, Greece, Italy and England, and urged the necessity for considering greatness rather than bigness. Of course, it sounds very impressive to talk of the immense expanse between the Atlantic and the Pacific, and the many miles which stretch between the forty-ninth parallel and Dawson City; but, after all, there is something rather paralyzing about vastness. Have you ever seen a picture of the mountains, for instance, which possesses the artistic fidelity of a sketch of woodlands or a bit of sunlit pasture? The mountains, in their loftiest aspects, the sea, in its stormiest moods, are not for mere mortals to grasp and interpret. We have become so accustomed, on this continent, to the praise of bigness, that we are in danger of assuming that it is some surpassing national virtue which has given us Lake Superior and the Rocky Mountains.

There is a certain breezy boastfulness, which has a picturesque quality of its own and adds to the variety of dinner-talk. We know of the man from Missouri, who informed the Englishman that the Thames would not make a gargle for the mouth of the Mississippi. Yet the Tiber and the Thames have meant more in the history of modern civilization than any stream of the New World, and the little Kingdom of the Netherlands has played a part in diplomacy, war and art, which makes such spacious territories as Russia or Brazil appear suddenly shrunken. It is not necessary to abuse the big country or the imposing enterprise—merely to be on the guard against confusing bigness with significance.

There is evidence lately that the world is rather tired of Chinese gong methods in business and society—to say nothing of religion. With regard to the latter, nothing more delightful by way of satire than Professor Leacock's "Whirlwind Campaign" in his "Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town" has ever been written. The "booms" which have built cheap towns have nearly always resulted disastrously for the community, and the noisy years in national life have not been the most productive. There is a certain dignity about contentment which bestows a charm, unknown to envious striving. This contentment has tended too much to incompleteness and hastiness in execution, with a consequent loss of distinction. Bigness is not to be despised, but it is not an essential of eminence.

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### A Western Story

**A**S a rule, we prefer optimistic to pessimistic fiction, and yet it is edifying occasionally to pursue the chronicle of a hero's tribulations. Such a story is found in a recent tale of our Canadian West. However as "The City of Hope" has a joyous ending, and the real estate is fairly remunerative in the course of its many transfers, the narrative can hardly be considered entirely one-sided. The author is Miss Cicely Fox Smith, an Englishwoman, who is now a resident of a city in British Columbia. Her poetry, especially that in the nature of sea songs, is of remarkable quality, and her acquaintance with nautical affairs is such that it is not matter for surprise that some book reviewers should refer to the writer as "Mr. Fox Smith."

The earlier chapters remind one, in their description of the young Englishman who has been swindled in a far country, of the adventures of Martin Chuzzlewit and Mark Tapley in the swamps of Eden. In fact, we have another Mark in this story, of the surname of "Russell." If the latter does not succeed in the role of being "uncommon jolly," as well as the immortal Mark of Dickens fame, he, nevertheless, proves himself an extremely plucky young hero, who deserves the charming heroine who has come bravely through the most appalling afflictions—as is the way of heroines in all climates and cen-

turies. The most repulsive man in the story is Ray Mundy—and here we are reminded again of Dickens and that dreadful Hannibal Chollop. However, Roxie Mundy is even worse than her father, and only a woman writer could have made the details of Roxie's manners and morals so superlatively disgusting. Like the unspeakable King John, as described in the old green-backed history with which we were acquainted in the days of childhood, the character of Roxie bears no redeeming feature. For the benefit of our readers, we may state that Miss Roxie came from Dakota, while the heroine, Frankie Wallis, although the daughter of English settlers, may fairly be considered a Canadian.

The book shows the folly—nay, the cruelty—of leading a young Englishman of fairly broad education to expect that



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A Toronto hostess who is also a past mistress in the art of dress. The grace of her toilettes is invariably remarked at the functions she attends in the gay city, and the one she presents in our picture is no exception. Lady Sybil Grey, not many months since, was one of the house guests of this charming hostess.

he will find much more than hard work, sometimes of the most menial nature, in the small towns of the West. There are many pitiful instances of young lads coming from comfortable English homes into conditions for which they are totally unprepared. Is it wonderful, then, that so many of them should take John Barleycorn for their own familiar friend, with results that are invariably tragic? We have some contemptible "remittance men" from the Old Land, who have done both the country they left and the country to which they condescended to come, infinite harm. But we have also held out to young Englishmen prospects which were all too alluring, while townsites artists have painted pictures, in which the colours were merely chromatic falsehood.

Our West is a land worthy to stand on its own merits. That it has been hurt by the exploiters of mines, containing no minerals, and real estate agents, whose property was as aerial as Castles in Spain, is not to be gainsaid—but other and older provinces of the Dominion have suffered in the same fashion from the foes in their own households. We

are assured of the ultimate prosperity of the West, and the greatness of her destiny. Yet, this novel, by a British Columbia writer, is well worth reading, although it cannot be called a notable work of literary art. It is not all the truth about the City of Hope, but it is a wholesome slice of it.

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### A Cessation in Muck-Raking

**C**CHEERING it is to notice that the magazines have paused in their mad career of exposing all manner of wickedness in high places and low places, and are disposed to allow us to be amused or edified for a few months, with such stories and articles as are not an exploitation of the seamy side of existence. At least, we should infer that such is their kindly intention, judging from a few stray "popular" issues we have seen. No longer is the awful fate which awaits the girl toiler in the large city impressed upon us on every occasion, no longer are the dark doings of the political "boss" proclaimed by a pure-hearted cleanser of civic by-ways. It is a genuine relief to be able to pick up a magazine which does not display in startling type on the cover the title of the latest masterpiece in muck-raking.

There can be no worse literature for the young person than that which deals continually with the exposure of vice and villainy. Youth is so impetuous in its judgments that it is of the utmost importance that the earliest ideas should be those of hope and faith, rather than of cynical disbelief. Of course, someone may object that our periodicals are not intended for the young person, and that mature minds should be able to contemplate all this corruption with more or less benefit to the soul. But we have a right to consider the young reader—and in any case, a steady course of muck-raking is bad even for the elderly imagination. Exposure is often necessary and desirable, but there is nothing more disheartening than the constant dwelling on the failures of humanity. So, we greet with gladness the silver side of the shield, as it shows its bright surface once more.

ERIN.

### Rudeness in High Places

**R**ECENTLY it happened to be Mrs. Longworth, formerly Alice Roosevelt, who, not understanding that Sir Edward Carson is not exactly the type of human (?) from whom to extract particulars relating to private business, questioned that "uncrowned King of Ulster" at a dinner in London as to when his rumoured wedding was likely to be. For that is the sort of inquisition which is altogether too common if Americans, Canadians included, are anxious to be thought to have any respect for the excellent if sadly neglected dogma that minding one's own affairs applies here also.

Now the shame of the questioner, according to hearsay, lay less in the fact of asking the question than it did in the fact of her having been roundly snubbed. The chances are that drawing-room talk would have let Mrs. Longworth down more softly had the questioned gentleman chosen to respond with confidences concerning his intentions.

"He was not the sort of man you'd feel like quizzing about himself," said a very much wiser than average person in one of Van Dyke's stories, about an artist. And that person further excels in wisdom who abstains from putting personal questions to any "single" member of his acquaintance, including his friends. Matrimony is an intimate matter. Few things are more so. And the uncontaminated person of good breeding will refrain from seeking to exact knowledge the confiding of which would be a signal favour.

A story is told of the exquisite Beau Brummel, who, after his fortunes had suffered reduction, was recognized in Paris by an Englishwoman beneath whose window he happened to be passing. The lady evincing extreme interest in the sometime butterfly friend of the King of England, leaned patronizingly forth from the casement and invited the Beau to enter and "take tea" with her.

"Take tea," offended the hero as vulgar, to say nothing of the misplaced enthusiasm. Said he: "For myself, I take a walk; but you, madam, you take a liberty."

And that is the feeling in the normal bosom which is probed too closely about its private contents, though the Carson snub may fail the busybody.