

CHILDREN'S CORNER. MARIAN PLAYS WITH A PRINCESS.

It was in Vienna that Marian played with the princess, and a glorious time they had of it.

We went to see the Lichtenstein gallery, in the great imposing Lichtenstein Palace, that shows its front to a lovely smiling flower garden, and turns its back on a very pompous park.

Now Marian don't care for pictures, at least not such pictures as we are going to see. She has a copy of "Mother Goose," and "Alice in Wonderland," that she thinks more of than all the galleries in the world; these books are all ablaze with pictures, and she knows every picture by heart, and all about it. Marian didn't like to see these pictures, so she begged us to leave her outside in the garden.

"Won't you go off the paths?" said her aunt.

"Or pick the flowers?" said I.

"Or get stones in your shoes, or lose your hat, or get your sash untied, or your face dirty?" said Aunt Elmor.

Marian promised she wouldn't do any of these things, but would be as good as candy, if we'd only let her stay and play in the garden while we went inside.

So we let her stay. We had only left her a few moments when Marian saw, on the other side of the garden, a very prett little girl, who was with a very be-yew-ti-fulest young lady, and a maid-servant with a cap, and behind them all a man-servant with a yellow coat on, and in front of them a little dog with a pug like a door knob, and no ears to speak of, and not even the thought of a tail.

The little girl had a hoop—the be-yew-tifulest (that's Marian's word, not mine) hoop and hoop-stick, and the maid-servant had a whole lot more toys, and the man servant, he had battle dores and grace hoops and a balloon.

The little girl fascinated Marian immensely; and Marian fascinated the little girl; so when they met on the walk both stopped and looked at each other.

"How dy'e do?" said Marian, in her best French.

"Pretty well," said the little girl. "How do you do?" in equally good French.

The lady smiled, and the man-servant looked amazed, and the maid-servant didn't have any expression to speak of.

"Are you out here to play?" said Marian.

"Yes; are you?"

"Yes."

"Then let's play together," said the little girl.

"Oh, no," said Marian, "I'd like to, but I'm not allowed to play with strangers—but I should like to so much."

Then the lady laughed, and the man servant looked more horrified, and the maid-servant never stirred a muscle.

"Do you know my uncle?" said Marian, thinking that might be a way out of the difficulty.

"No, but I dare say you've seen my papa," said the little girl, "most everybody has."

"What is his name?" said Marian.

"His name is the Emperor," said the little girl, "and mine is Marie Valerie."

"Oh, my!" said Marian, "are you the Emperor's little girl! Then you're a princess. Why, where's your crown, and all your gold coaches and everything! I'm so glad to speak with a princess, for there are ever so many things I want to know. May I ask you some questions?"

"Yes, if you like."

"Well, then—do you ever have your mother's crown to play with?"

My! how horrified the man-servant looked, and the little princess replied, "No, but I'd like to."

"We saw your mother the other day, and she had her crown on," Marian continued; "how does she keep it on with an elastic?"

"I don't know," said Marie Valerie. "I'll ask her when I go home."

"Please do," said Marian, "and tell me the next time you see me. You don't look much like a princess—you look just like a real sweet little girl."

The lady smiled and the man servant looked as if he had had an electric shock, and the maid-servant put a piece of bread into her mouth on the sly, and began munching it.

"Why, I've got a picture of you at home," said Marian, "but I should never have known it—never! You were standing up to a chair, and looking at pictures in a book."

"Oh, that was when I was littler. They gave me the book to keep me still. I sit as still as a mouse now when I have my pictures taken."

"You had a lovely dress on—all lace and sashes. And that's such a pretty dress that you're wearing now. Why, it is almost all lace! Do you wear lace dresses every day?"

"When I go out, I do."

"How many have you?" asked Marian.

"I don't know," continued the Princess.

"Ten?" asked Marian.

"More than that."

"My!" exclaimed Marian. "Do you ever wear aprons?"

"Oh, yes, when I eat my dinner."

"A Princess with an apron on! Why, I never heard of such a thing!" said Marian, and she opened her eyes with surprise.

In a minute she recovered herself enough to ask, "How do you like being a Princess?" for our little lady meant to improve the opportunity to get all the information she could.

"Pretty well," said Miss Marie Valerie, "but you haven't told me yet what your name is—and I've told you all about myself."

"Oh! my name is Marian. I am an American. Are those all your toys?"

"Yes—do you want to play?"

"Why, yes, if you'll let me take that hoop for a little—I should like to take a run with it. We might take turns."

"Yes, we might," said the little Princess, looking at the lady, who nodded a consent. So off they went, romping, just as you do, little reader; and so when we came out of the palace we found Marian playing with a princess—and a right merry, good-natured little princess she was.

But we had to call Jehu, and go away at last, and when we did what do you think the little girls did? Why, they just put their arms about each other, and kissed with a smack that startled the grave man-servant like a fire-cracker; and the princess said:

"I like you very much."

And Marian said, "So do I you; and I never should have taken you for a princess—never!"—Wm. M. G. Round, in Wide Awake.

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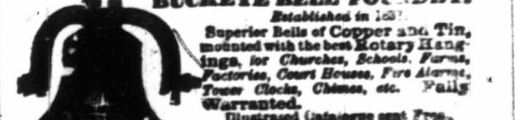
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