



AT THE SIGN OF THE MAPLE

LADY LAURIER.

THE "session" is now fairly in swing in Ottawa and the Capital makes an ideal winter city, with its stately grey pile of Parliament Buildings, its snow-laden pines and white hills across in Quebec. The legislators are absorbed (supposedly) in business of state and are earning their indemnity by their faithful attendance in the House of Commons. The feminine members of the legislators' households—or such of them as have elected to spend a few weeks in Ottawa—are enjoying a life which is hardly less exacting, in attendance at innumerable teas.

The social life during the session is one of decided brilliance, when the members have an opportunity to relax their party vigilance and forget about vexatious committees and long-drawn debates. In this pleasant whirl of gaieties, the wife of the Premier is always a dignified and distinguished figure. It is more than forty years since Mademoiselle Zoe Lafontaine became the wife of Monsieur Wilfrid Laurier, a brilliant young lawyer with political aspirations. During the years which have seen his successful progress to the highest office in the bestowal of the Canadian people, the tact and gentleness of his wife have made no small contribution to his triumph and Sir Wilfrid, gallant gentleman that he is, would be first to pay tribute to his consort's sympathy and help. Lady Laurier is said to have a distaste for politics and for party strifes and to be a thoroughly old-fashioned *madame* in her appreciation and practice of the domestic virtues. She is not "modern," in the breathless force of that adjective, but moves through life with a leisurely grace which is serenely comforting.

As a hostess, Lady Laurier has made the Premier's home a delightful social centre, where there is no hint of party difference. There are no children belonging to the Laurier household, but Sir Wilfrid and Lady Laurier are so fond of entertaining young guests that there is a bright and gladsome atmosphere in the Prime Minister's home, to which Gallic courtesy lends a charm. That his gracious wife may long be spared to share the honours which Sir Wilfrid has won, is the wish of all Canadians.

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CUPID AND A CAKE.

IT is generally admitted that the Hamilton girls are as bright and lovable damsels as may be found in this broad and prosperous Dominion. They are a happy blending of the lively and helpful, and the visitor is likely to discover that their gaieties are usually associated with some cause to help distressed humanity. Their dances are not altogether remote from donations and Hamiltonians are the most cheerful givers that ever the sun shone on.

Now it happened that the Daughters of the Empire in that city on the Bay held a Feast of Blossoms last spring which gladdened the eyes and incidentally filled the coffers of the deserving. Among those who happened to attend the festivities was a young man from the "States," who straightway forsook his republican principles and surrendered unconditionally to a Daughter of the Empire, who annexed his heart without causing any international complications. The progress of this interesting bit of Canadian invasion reached a climax last month when the Hamilton maiden became the wife of the Man from Iowa.

The newspapers have published entertaining paragraphs on the wedding cake provided for this event. A friend of the bridegroom insisted on having it ordered in Chicago, and, according to the press of that thriving western town, the stately struc-

ture was six feet eight inches high, five feet in diameter at its base and weighed three hundred pounds. Reflect upon three hundred pounds of wedding cake! The very thought of such richness is enough to bring on an attack of indigestion. Hamilton was duly impressed with this lordly cake and gave it an elaborate description.

Those who know the bonnie bride hope that she may not forget old friends in her new home and that she may remain a Daughter of the Empire, although a wife in the Republic.

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ALARMING COIFFURES.

THE *London Chronicle* says: "The American lecturer who tried to persuade the women in his



Lady Laurier.

audience the other day that their own hair was a prettier, not to say less obstructive, sight than their spacious hats, ignored the warnings of history. No matinee hat of to-day is so high as the lofty head-dresses worn by Marie Antoinette, which were the despair of poor simple-minded Louis XVI. But when deprived of all possibility of being able to see a performance at the opera he presented his wife with an aigrette of diamonds, in the hope that it might supplant a head-dress forty-five inches in height, the queen promptly had the diamonds incorporated in a new head-dress which was taller than all its predecessors."

It is difficult, indeed, to bind Dame Fashion by any rules of convenience or common-sense. It seems at times as if woman perversely arranged her hair or fashioned her hat, so as to inconvenience those unfortunate men who wish to see the stage or the speaker. Even the demands for space in modern business life cannot compress where Fashion chooses to expand. On a street car at the crowded

hour one may see girls with the hair fearfully and extensively puffed, crowned by a hat of mammoth dimensions while the passengers in the vicinity of these unwise young persons are made supremely uncomfortable.

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TOWN AND TRAIL.

WHEN the Ontario young men who have gone West come back on a visit to Toronto, London or Hamilton, they are wonderfully glad to be home for the first few days—and then they begin to find everything rather small and to wonder what is the matter with the sky and the atmosphere. The month of holidays drags a little after all and they turn their faces willingly towards the setting sun when it is time to go back beyond the prairies.

One of these boys, who is "mighty glad" to see Ontario again and who will doubtless be longing for Alberta, before it is time to go back, told me emphatically: "If you want to know what the West is really like, read 'Town and Trail' by Mrs. Watt. It's fair to the country."

So I went in search of "Town and Trail" one afternoon and found that it consisted of vivacious sketches, some of which I had already become acquainted with in the *Edmonton Saturday News*, for Mrs. Gertrude Balmer Watt is the "Peggy" of that lively journal. Those who have the conventionally picturesque ideas of the West, as a district where handsome cowboys ride about the town and where even the women disfigure every sentence with strange oaths may find enlightenment in these eighty-five pages of glimpses of a kind of electrified East.

"The Men Who Make Good" is a chapter which might be read with profit by Old Country citizens who are thinking of settling in Canada and have not the remotest idea of how long it takes to walk from Montreal to Edmonton. The author makes it plain that degenerates and incapables are not wanted in the West and, while she shows a proper scorn for the remittance man, she also appreciates those Englishmen who have shown the pluck of the best of their breed, the stuff of Raleighs and Livingstones. The delicate darlings who have written home to the English papers about the hard times they were having and have whined weekly for the space of a column are not the material of which pioneers are made.

"This is a new country and many trails have yet to be blazed," says the writer. "We want pioneers, men who don't know when they are beaten. And to get the men we want, we say, 'here are one hundred and sixty acres, a free gift, take them and make a home.' And the right men set to their task soberly, with stout hearts, and in time I see a snug farmhouse, many cattle and great wheat fields, all, all the gift of this wonderful new Dominion, while the other set of men are loafing about town, demanding 'where are the brass beds and the parlour rockers?'"

In a country of wide opportunities and stern demands, the words of Kipling or Service seem to spring readily to the lips. The latter's "Law of the Yukon" is found to be only too true to the facts wherever there are new worlds to be made:

"This is the Law of the Yukon, that only the strong shall thrive;
That surely the weak shall perish, and only the Fit survive."

These bits of Western life, some of them so familiar and others so strange to the more sheltered East are such as to increase the Canadian's pride in this bright, brave Dominion where there is so much to be done and so rich a reward for daring and endeavour. The life of the new country is harder on the woman sometimes than on her brother but the women of our West like their grandmothers in the older provinces will doubtless do their own good share in making homes as far as the pioneer spirit may wander, west or north.

CANADIENNE.