

THE CRICKETER

"I'LL PUT A GIRDLE ROUND THE EARTH IN FORTY MINUTES."

Inning 1.

ST. JOHN, N. B., MARCH 1st, 1886.

Score 1.

Grand Opening of the National Exhibition in aid of the St. John Cricket and Athletic Club.

The decree has gone forth, the work of creation is finished, and where all was once chaos and dire confusion, a beautiful order now reigns, wrought out by the skilful hands and willing hearts of the Ladies Committee. But where are the ladies now that their work is done? All seems strange and foreign in this new world. We see French and Italian, German and Spanish, early English and Oriental Ladies presiding over their respective countries, but nowhere can we see the authors of this work. We look in vain for the President, unless we can discover her in some of these disguises, yes undoubtedly that is she in Old English costume with Britannia at her side presiding over the destinies of England. Once in the secret we discover the Vice-Presidents in various disguises, one in India loses her identity in the ceremonial dress of a Hindu Woman, while the others have migrated, one to Italy, another to the Wilds of the Forest of British North America, while the last remaining one has taken a trip to Turkey to study the manners and customs of that much abused country. This new world, like the world of the ancients, is a level plane, but here the comparison ends, for while to the ancients, the earth terminated abruptly in space, no such uncertainty is found here, the further horizon is bounded by a sort of paradise, where all nations mingle and lose their differences, while engaged in the absorbing task of dispensing ambrosia and nectar to the denizens of this new world. It was first thought that this would be the site of the Tower of Babel, but the "International Tea Room" has taken its place. The nearer horizon terminates in the children's Fairy-Land of Dolls. Here are to be seen weddings, and games, and sports of various kinds, all represented by dolls. But no general view can give an idea of this world. We must visit in turn the various nations, and learn the customs and laws of each.

We first pay a visit to

ENGLAND.

A Queen Anne drawing room, presided over by one of England's stately dames,

invites repose and refreshment. Here blossom the red and white roses of York and Lancaster beneath the sunny influence of the queen of the May; here, too, a wrinkled beldame from some wooded deep has strayed, and stayed to tell with many mystic mutterings the fortunes of all who cross her hand with the proverbial silver. Beside the glowing yule log, whose dancing flames play hide-and-seek with the grim shadows that linger round the massive armor, lies the little page, ready to spring with activity at the call of lord or lady, or to display to the visitor with eager hands, the beautiful needle-work, paintings and various articles of virtue that brighten the room with their dainty loveliness; around the holly and mistletoe trimmed plum pudding, the children linger wonder-eyed at its strange contents;—for them, truly, this is "Merrie England." But we are off for

SCOTLAND.

"The Land of Cakes and Brither Scots." Here we come in view of an old ruined Abbey, and as we seek repose in this scene of beauty and fragrance, like the poet in his dream, there passes before our eyes the fair vision of the fated Mary Queen of Scots who lingers as if by right in this fair garden, in melancholy contemplation of her wrongs and sorrows. But what hath wrought this magic? was it the draught of Athal Brose a kindly house-wife gave us on our way, or the Bannocks we have partaken of that seemed to recall so vividly those Scottish memories. Again we see the Lady of the Lake, she too seems much at home in this enchanted spot. Surely there is a spell about the place, perhaps this piper can explain the mystery. "Yonder," he tells us "comes the magician," it is the Caledonian Spae-Wife, the seventh daughter of a seventh son. This is all illusion, but stay she will reveal to us our future. Will it be joy or sorrow, we must know and we resign ourselves to her spell.

IRELAND.

Before us, as we travel on, rise the gray walls of Tara's Hall; beyond we see the ruins of Blarney Castle. Here, if anywhere, we will meet with a hearty welcome, and here we stop. The spacious hall, hung with familiar emblems, is presided over by a courtly Irish gentlemen, and its treasures

are guarded by valiant knights. Upon the walls we recognize the "Harp that once through Tara's Hall its soul of music shed," now as "mute as if that soul were fled." The "Last Rose of Summer" has unfolded to newer beauty its petals, and blossoms in this ancestral hall as though beneath the sun's rays. Colleen Bawn and Kathleen Mavourneen attend to the wants of weary travellers with true hospitality, "welcoming the coming and speeding the parting guest."

Having completed the tour of Great Britain, we set out for the continent. First to

GERMANY.

The simple ways of the Germans are so well known that when the familiar figure of the Crown Prince is noted in the pleasant garden of Frau Bettine, no surprise is felt. Indeed so lovely is this particular garden that to lounge among the blossoming flowers beside the sparkling fountain, or consume chocolate cake or beer, at the table is a temptation to many beside Germany's Crown Prince. It is too a paradise for the "Kinder," for here may be had the lovely toys that delight the little ones; the building blocks, the famous "schloss," the delightfully odd animals, the many curious toys make us long to be children again, and our flying visit to the "Faderland" is likely to extend beyond the time allotted, but we tear ourselves away promising to come again and see the Rhine by moonlight, or pay a visit to the great Bismarck.

We journey on until a quaint gabled chalet with latticed window, arched doorway and gray stone laden roof attracts our gaze; the smiling maiden, the gleam of whose scarlet skirts arrests the eye of the traveller, proclaim that here may be found the simple, ever kindly welcome that the hardy peasant of

SWITZERLAND

extends to all. Entering the room, with its furnishings of straight-backed chairs and plain deal tables, the eye turns reluctantly from the groups of rosy checked, bright eyed girls, engaged in animated conversation with the peasants, whose short jackets, knee breeches and tall hats, trimmed with a single feather, show them to be natives of Tyrol, to the stands laden