

sons) in the spring to Canada, and that the Lady Mercedes was to be of the party. The following mail brought the artist another letter from the same friendly correspondent, with an explanation of the Lady Mercedes' design in consenting to come to Canada. The explanation was not needed by Leighton, for he had already, and from a more direct source, been apprised of the purport. It is, however, due to the reader that we should divulge this lover's secret. It is that the Lady Mercedes is coming to Canada, not this time as a visitor, but as an immigrant and settler. Leighton, though he could not go to England in person for a wife, found that the woman he loved was gracious enough to consent to be wooed and won by correspondence!

Our story is now told. In the spring the little chapel at Quebec

is to be decked with flowers, not for a peasant's, but for an artist's wedding. For the happy event, Leighton has already written a nuptial ode which is at once a Song of Welcome and an Epithalamium. The ode, which is being set to music, is to be sung by some of the best voices drawn from the choirs of the Quebec and Montreal churches. Nor is the event to be commemorated only by human agency. Nature even now, as we write, gives indication that she will awake from the torpor of her winter sleep and break into the glorious rhythmic chant of summer. Not man merely, but the whole world about us, is under the thrall of love. The woods, therefore, are to deck themselves in their brightest attire and every stream under Canadian skies is, at the coming of the Lady Mercedes, to rejoice and be glad.

[THE END.]

A WOMAN AMONG SIBERIA'S LEPERS.

Miss Kate Marsden, has been telling the British public about her work among the lepers of Siberia. Her undertaking is one of no common interest.

She is a Red Cross Sister, both in England and Russia, and was engaged with some English companions in tending the wounded in the Russo-Turkish war, where her devoted ministrations, and those of her colleagues, endeared them greatly to the objects of their care. One day she and a companion were seeking for any scattered wounded they could find, and strayed into a deserted barn, whose sole inmates were two wretched lepers who had taken shelter there. One of these was so utterly maimed and disfigured as to have lost almost the semblance of a human form. The sight made so strong an impression on her, that she then and there resolved to devote herself to trying to ameliorate the condition of lepers.

After the war she was called to another field of labor in New Zealand, and it was some years before she was free to follow out her own plans. As soon as she could, she began her researches in several countries as to the mode of treatment, etc., followed, her main object being on unfortunate fellow subjects in India. She revisited Russia, and found she could gain much information there. Backed by royal patronage, and accompanied by Miss Field, whose perfect knowledge of Russian enabled her to be a fitting interpreter, she set out, and, before she had reached the last railway terminus, she met with one able, and willing to be her best informant, in an aged missionary bishop of the Russian Church, who had spent forty years among the Siberians of the northeast, beyond Yakutsk, and had translated a great part of the Scriptures into their language. He told her that in that remote part there is a large colony of lepers, outcasts from all their countrymen, living a wandering life among the forests and marshes of that inhospitable climate, and obliged to make their sole food from the fish in the lakes, which have been found to contain germs conveying the taint of leprosy. These poor creatures are very anxious for a hospital, and have been hitherto unable to find any to plead their cause. But they are said to have discovered a remedy, an herb known only to themselves, which, though their wretched mode of life hinders its good effect, is believed to cure the disease when it can be fairly administered under favorable circumstances.

Miss Marsden resolved to go on in search of this remedy. The kindness of the Russian officials, and of many in positions to help her, has been great, and this it was which made the journey possible, for they had always an escort, and every facility afforded them; but the hardships were such as would have been felt severely by the strongest and most active men, and for two young and delicate women they were an ordeal, which nothing but the courage born of devoted benevolence and lively Christian faith, could have enabled them to face.

It was midwinter, the frozen rivers prevented steamers from plying; the only land conveyance was by sledges of the roughest description, with a head covering behind, but no seat; the travelers must lie on their backs on the luggage stowed in the bottom, shaken fearfully by the rough snowy roads. No sleeping places but a kind of "caravanserai" post houses, no beds attainable but the floor on their outer coverings of reindeer skin; none but the coarsest food, supplemented by such tinned provisions as they could bring; and this mode of traveling had to be carried on for weeks, with only rare and occasional intermission, where a more habitable place could be reached, and a little rest taken.

Their chief earthly consolation was the power of visiting the sick and prisoners in the hospitals and prisons they passed, and giving them little comforts, principally squares of "brick" tea and sugar, and kindly words of sympathy and Christian love.

At last it became clear that Miss Field must return to seek further help in England, otherwise means would not be forthcoming. Miss Marsden proceeded alone on her difficult enterprise. The last part of her journey was to be performed on horseback, over the roughest and most primitive bridle paths in the remote country beyond the Yakutsk. There she hopes to discover and test the remedy, to see how the discovery can be applied to the amelioration of the state of the lepers in India, and to plead the cause of a hospital for the poor Siberian lepers, and then return to England. Nothing has been heard from her for some time, but contributions in her behalf are being asked for in England. It is one of the strangest and most self-sacrificing undertakings of the present day.

