

THE YOUNGEST EDITOR IN THE WORLD.

It is the fashion from time to time to talk of the most popular woman or the most prominent man in a community. But in this happy end of the nineteenth century the children are having their day, and grown people are fond of talking of the most popular girl or the most promising boy. The little girl who will be most before the Canadian public for the next five years is Lady Marjorie Gordon, the only daughter of our Governor General and his wife, Lord and Lady Aberdeen. Those who attended the meetings in the Vics' Armory Hall, Montreal, last autumn, for the organization of the Montreal Branch of the Canadian National Council of Women, will remember how naturally Lady Aberdeen referred to 'the small magazine for children edited by my little daughter.' It is owing to her work on this magazine almost as much as to her position as daughter of her noted father and mother that little Lady Marjorie is so well known in the social and literary world to-day.

They say abroad, says Hulda Friederichs, in a character sketch of Lady Marjorie written for 'The Young Woman,' that in no other country does a woman remain young so long as in England. As far as my observations go, there is a good deal of truth in this theory. It is because she is allowed to take a fuller share in the work and play of her brothers. It keeps her bright, occupied with impersonal matters, and consequently young in heart and mind.

I have known the child—for the daughter of Lord and Lady Aberdeen is hardly more than a child—for a good many years of her little life, and from the time when first I saw her, a small maiden of six or seven, working and toiling to help her mother in the arrangement of some bazaar stalls at their house in Grosvenor Square, up to the present day, when she is rapidly growing into a tall and beautiful girl, she has always seemed to me an exceptionally interesting child. Lady Marjorie is a very clever as well as a very attractive girl.

When I first heard of Lady Marjorie editing the 'Children's Page' in her mother's monthly magazine, *Onward and Upward*, I naturally thought that she only played at editing, and that the real work for this page, which afterwards grew into *Wee Willie Winkie*, was done by others. But no, the child took her full share in the work, and took it as seriously as she had been taught to do any other work that had been given to her. Others might help her to judge and 'set' competitions, to select the most suitable from among the contributions of youthful friends and admirers, but the Editor was fully aware of everything that went into her magazine, she read every 'Letter to the Editor,' and I have more than once seen her busily engaged before a large billiard-tableful of strange and wonderful drawings, paintings, pieces of needlework, toys, and MSS., sent in by a great army of competitors for prizes. 'I really don't know which of them are the best,' she says, half puzzled and half amused, as she looks upon these treasures. But after carefully weighing the matter and appealing to the Supreme Court constituted by her parents, she decides upon the prize-winners; so far, I believe, always to the satisfaction of all concerned.

I have before me as I write this, the first volume of *Onward and Upward*, where Lady Aberdeen, in a letter 'To the Children,' characteristically addressed 'My dear Chicks,' says, 'My little daughter Marjorie is going to take charge of the "Children's Corner" for me.' A month afterwards the first 'Children's Page' appears. As yet the little editor has to write the whole page. She does it in a charmingly simple and natural manner. First she writes a letter to her 'Dear Comrades.' They have been invited to send letters to the Editor, but plainly the bairns are shy, and no letters have come. Therefore, with the same tact which distinguishes her parents, Lady Marjorie shows them how to set about it by herself writing a letter:—

'As this number of *Onward and Upward* comes so soon after the Christmas one, none of you will have had time to write for the "Children's Page," and so I will tell you some interesting things about some animals which I have known.'

And after some really amusing horse

and dog stories, she ends up by saying, 'Please send me some letters about your animals soon, and remember that there will be some prizes given to those who send the best stories.—I am, yours faithfully, MARJORIE A. H. GORDON.'

Since then, Lady Marjorie, besides sitting in the editorial chair, has always remained a diligent contributor to her paper. Once she took up her pen with evident delight to tell her 'comrades' how she and her three brothers had suddenly become landed proprietors in their own right. It is a very pretty story, that of Holiday Cottage, which stands about half a mile from Haddo House on the borders of a wood.

In order that their children might be better able to appreciate the difficulties and delights of housekeeping, Lord and Lady Aberdeen had this cottage fitted up with all the goods and chattels of a humble home, except that there is no sleeping accommodation in it. You walk across the

pride and pleasure in this sanctum of theirs. LADY MARJORIE AS COOK AND HOUSE-KEEPER.

One February day last winter, while we were skating on the curling pond in the Haddo grounds, Lady Marjorie, gliding past on her skates, asked a friend and myself a little shyly, but with a roguish look in her dark velvet eyes, to come to Holiday Cottage next day and see her and her brothers 'at home.' The snow lay deep in the fields, but a small snow-plough had cleared the path to the cottage. A thin cloud of blue smoke was rising from its roof, and the red flag was up, indicating that 'the family' were at home. As we approached, Lord Haddo was toiling with a load of coal from the small outhouses behind the cottage towards the kitchen; and Lady Marjorie, her Gordon tartan gown hidden under a big kitchen apron, opened the door to us. 'I am not quite ready,' she said presently, when we had been shown the chief beauties of the sitting-room.



LADY MARJORIE GORDON.

field and turn into the wicket-gate of a small cottage-garden, where Lord Haddo and the Hon. Dudley and Archie Gordon grow potatoes, cabbages, and strawberries, and where, perchance, you may see the three brothers dig and delve, fetch water from a pump in the neighboring field, mend fences, polish door-knockers, chop wood, or make themselves otherwise useful. Lady Marjorie grows roses and other flowers in this garden, and all the four owners of Holiday Cottage are intensely interested in a tiny rockery close to their door. This door you reach by a little verandah, and against the verandah four ivies are merrily growing up. They are interesting ivies; each is different from the others, and each belongs to one of the young people, and is watched over with tender care. For in the solemn deed of purchase, which hangs over the mantel-piece in the cottage parlor, it is expressly stated that four ivy leaves must annually be paid for the lease of this estate.

The cottage door is of the correct kind, not too high or wide; and it has a small knocker and a letter-box. On entering it, you step into a cheery little sitting-room, simply furnished, but with a thousand signs everywhere that the owners take great

'If you will excuse me, I'll go back into the kitchen for a while.' And away she flew, eager, happy, and a little anxious about the success of her luncheon party. 'Dodo, come here at once,' she called out presently; 'and you too, Archie!' and her two brothers went obediently into the kitchen. Everything was ready now; the kitchen apron had been doffed, and Lady Marjorie came to do the honors of her luncheon-table, at which her youngest brother acted as page. Lord Haddo had disappeared. 'He is the postman,' our happy hostess, who was forgetting her girlish shyness, explained, and looked delightedly at the door as the postman's double knock was heard, and a letter came flying through the letter-box into the room. It was quite touching to see the three children's beaming faces during the whole entertainment. Lady Marjorie had been cook as well as housemaid, as her brothers told us with great pride. When the cheerful banquet was over, and we begged to be allowed to peep into the kitchen, her little ladyship was again enveloped in her apron, zealously washing up the luncheon things. 'Oh, you oughtn't to look in now,' she said somewhat uneasily; 'it does not look quite tidy yet. When I have finished, you

will see what a lovely kitchen it is.' In this kitchen Lady Marjorie practises all the details of housekeeping. If the floor is dirty, she scrubs it; when the grate is cold, she kneels in front of it and cleans it, and lays the fire; the brightness of the cutlery and crockery depends on her handiwork; and if the owners of Holiday Cottage invite guests to tea or luncheon, she must prepare whatever refreshments she offers to them.

HER BROTHERS.

The boys are devoted to their sister, and she in turn is their best friend and comrade. She may 'keep them in order' in a very energetic way, but they look to her for help and counsel in the manifold difficulties and awkwardnesses into which lads of the schoolboy age are apt to fall.

THE VIRTUE OF SELF-CONTROL.

Another virtue which I have noticed, with the more admiration in Lady Marjorie, because she is naturally a quick, impulsive child, is that of self-control. It is the result of wise discipline. Once when Lady Aberdeen had been good enough to allow me to have the nurseries at Haddo House photographed for my 'Children's Page' in the *Westminster Budget*, I kept little Archie for quite an unconscionably long time, trying to get him, in his riding attire, into one of the pictures. His sister was waiting outside on horseback, for the two were going to take their morning ride together. 'Archie, Archie, make haste!' I heard her call, after she had waited patiently for nearly half an hour. Both horse and rider were getting very restless, but the only thing she said when, after a period of waiting which I know would have exhausted my patience twice over, the boy came out, was this, 'Well jump up quickly, and don't waste another minute; I know you couldn't help it.' And she said it with a smiling face.

By nature Lady Marjorie Gordon is shy and very reserved with strangers, though she is so impulsive and lively a girl. Shyness and sensitiveness, much lamented though they too often are, are excellent safeguards with all clever children, and much odious forwardness is checked and prevented through them.

LADY MARJORIE'S 'MAIDEN SPEECH.'

Even in her own home circle her girlish timidity overcomes her occasionally. There was a debating night, a short time ago, at the Haddo House Club; a 'hat-night,' as it is called. Papers on which subjects for debate are suggested are thrown into a hat, and members who are willing to practise extempore speaking for five minutes are asked to possess themselves of one of these slips of paper and discourse on the prescribed subject. Owing, perhaps, to the presence of rather a large number of strangers at the Club, there was rather a dearth of orators that evening. At last somebody suggested that Lady Marjorie should join their ranks, and the suggestion was loudly and vigorously seconded. She clung to her mother's arm, and looked very shy at first. But there was no help for it, and when Lord Aberdeen encouragingly said 'Come along, Marjorie, and make your maiden speech,' she obeyed. 'Professor Henry Drummond' was the subject. 'Surely you ought to be able to talk five minutes about him,' Lord Aberdeen urged; and Lady Marjorie's face brightened indeed, for next to their own parents I should fancy that Professor Drummond holds the first place in the hearts of the four children of Haddo House. I could not but feel a little sympathetic pity for the blushing youthful orator as she faced her audience and vainly sought for words, or as she turned to her father and pleadingly whispered, 'Haven't I spoken five minutes yet?' But all at once she forgot her shyness, remembering only that Professor Drummond could tell delightful stories, and praised him in a way in which he has probably never before been praised. And then she went quickly back to the protecting shelter of Lady Aberdeen's arms.

But a few more happy years, and Lady Marjorie Gordon will have reached the age when she will become the Countess of Aberdeen's helpmate in all her good and unselfish work. She is being trained for it in the best possible way. May she lose nothing, with the development of her many talents, of the sweet girlishness which now constitutes one of her greatest charms!