



AT THE SIGN OF THE MAPLE

The New Queen.

IN this epoch-making hour in England's history it is only natural that the keen searchlight of human curiosity should be directed upon those central figures in the great drama, King George V, henceforth the ruler of Great Britain and Emperor of India, and Her Majesty, the new Queen Mary. On account of her comparatively quiet and secluded existence very few details of Her Majesty's life and characteristics have reached the public eye, therefore the accounts which come to us at this time concerning her bear an added interest.

The present Queen is the daughter of the late Princess Mary Adelaide, Duchess of Teck, and was born at Kensington Palace one minute before midnight on May 26th, 1867. As a child she and her brothers were intimate friends of the children of the Prince and Princess of Wales, there being very little difference in their ages, and many happy hours they spent in gay company with one another. Her girlhood was passed in close companionship with her mother, and the tender relations which existed between them was a very beautiful phase of their lives.

The Princess attended her first royal drawing-room in the spring of 1886, at the age of nineteen years, and later was very often seen with her mother at private gatherings and at the theatre. The Duchess at this time was deeply interested in charitable work in which the Princess took an active part and the work accomplished by their joint efforts was of tremendous magnitude.

Her engagement to the Prince of Wales was announced in May, 1893, although she had previously been betrothed to his late brother, the Duke of Clarence, and the marriage was celebrated in July of the same year. During the years that followed six children were born to them, five sons and one daughter, and never was there a more loving or devoted mother than the Princess proved herself to be. In spite of the vast number of her obligations her children always had first claim upon her time and attention and in consequence there exists a very charming air of understanding between the little ones and their royal mother.

Queen Mary, as she is to be called at the express desire of the late King, has very strict views with regard to propriety, and it is the popular supposition that the members of London's smart set will find little favour in her eyes. Naturally of a reserved and retiring disposition, the pomp of court life has never appealed to her, and she has always held herself aloof from the showy side of royal existence.

Above all, the Queen is a womanly woman, possessed of the sterling qualities which make her a most desirable sharer of England's royal throne. Whatever feeling of uncertainty there may be in the minds of her people at the present time, will no doubt be soon dispelled when the strength and beauty of her nature become common knowledge.

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The Heroines of Hardy.

WE occasionally encounter the person who considers herself well read but is apt to confound Thomas Hardy with Arthur Sherborne Hardy, the names of whose works one forgets. One does not forget "Tess of the D'Urbervilles" or "Far from the Madding Crowd," but it seems as if these books were not sufficiently in circulation. The annual meeting of the Society of Authors, London, Eng., took place the other day, when Mr. Hardy was elected president in place of Geo. Meredith, deceased, Meredith himself having succeeded Lord Tennyson in an office which is probably a good deal of a sinecure. Thomas Hardy was warmly spoken of at this meeting as one who as "poet, philosopher and moral force" was easily the most distinguished writer in England. Certainly the word of praise is not too eloquent for all those who admire the sincerity, truth, and humour of over a dozen novels, nearly all of which are laid in the southwest of England. The immense sensation created by the

appearance of the novel "Tess," followed by the equally striking interest taken in the play based on the book, has perhaps blinded the critical faculty of many who delay in becoming familiar with his earlier works. Doubtless few are entirely aware of the talent he has shown in depicting the various phases of womanhood. Fancy Day, the inconstant maiden in that pretty pastoral "Under the Greenwood Tree," is a kind of preparatory sketch of or understudy for the more tragic and ill-fated Tess. How graceful is the picture of Fancy in her blue gown and curls as she fascinates the young minister and manly Dick, not quite knowing her own mind but not intending deceit! The transition in Fancy's case from an unsophisticated country girl to a school teacher deeming herself superior to the vil-



Her Royal Majesty, Queen Mary of England.

lage folk is managed with consummate skill. The end is artistic if disappointing. The minister will always remember and Fancy will never forget, the one tender passage between them, while honest Dick will never know. In those days Thomas Hardy did not trouble himself much with Nemesis and after-results; he only concerned himself with setting before us some intimately painted picture of girlhood or more mature charms. One of the most poetic and alluring of his maidens is the dark-haired Eustacia Vye, whose tragic fate seems hard, yet we feel that moral justice must be done. Poor Eustacia! Always sighing for a wider sphere and fated to turn the head of every man she meets! Mrs. Charmond, the chestnut-haired widow, in "The Woodlanders" is drawn also with lifelike touches; her languor, love of admiration and warm, impulsive heart seem to suggest another lovely figure in "The Mayor of Casterbridge," that of Lucetta, who is brought before us in absolutely living lines. Her mastery over men, her costume of cherry-red sent down from London with hat and parasol to match, her inability to steer her fortunes wisely and her sad end make her a very convincing person indeed. Poor Lucetta—we echo! Elizabeth-Jane, her more fortunate rival, is just the reverse in all her characteristics and her creator here proves himself entirely capable of doing a very difficult thing, that of drawing for us an every-day sort of young girl, who is innocent, open, natural, and simple-minded,

without being in the least dull, prim, awkward, or commonplace. Dear Elizabeth-Jane, who marries happily after all and who floats into serene waters while she is young enough to enjoy the good things of life—we rejoice with her when the stormy Henchard and the elusive Lucetta are at rest.

What of the brilliant Ethelberta and the lovable if unequal Bathsheba? These are two fascinating figures of English origin; the one, a study of a woman who makes her way, despite disadvantages of birth and station, into society, and the other, a portrait of a type almost unknown in America and rare in England, the woman, country-bred but well-to-do and her own mistress, sought by several men and for a long time without the necessary standards in her mind to judge them by. Bathsheba, in her black silk gown talking to her men, and Ethelberta, dining at an aristocratic table where her own father serves as butler, cannot be matched in literature for distinction and reality. But many others remain almost equally attractive; perhaps more charming than any of those quoted already would be deemed the unhappy Viviette, or Lady Constantine, so sympathetically drawn for us in "Two on a Tower." Cytherea, in "Desperate Remedies," and Thomas in the "Return of the Native," are intensely sweet and feminine, full of domestic virtue and gentle feeling. The figure of Grace in "The Woodlanders" appears at first a little wooden but that is, no doubt, the result of her mixed origin and schooling.

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Queen Alexandra's Message.

EVERY Canadian woman will desire to read, and many will wish to keep, a copy of Queen Alexandra's message to the people of the Empire on the occasion of the King's death. She wrote as follows:

"From the depth of my poor broken heart, I wish to express to the whole nation and our own kind people we love so well, my deep felt thanks for all their touching sympathy in my overwhelming sorrow and unspeakable anguish.

"Not alone have I lost in him my beloved husband, but the nation, too, has suffered an irreparable loss by their best friend, father and sovereign, thus suddenly called away. May God give us all His divine help to bear this heaviest of crosses which He has seen fit to lay upon us. His will be done.

"Give to me a thought in your prayers which will comfort and sustain me in all that I have to go through.

"Let me take this opportunity of expressing my heartfelt thanks for all the touching letters and tokens of sympathy I have received from all classes, high and low, rich and poor, which are so numerous that I fear it would be impossible for me ever to thank everybody individually.

"I confide my dear son into your care, who, I know, will follow in his dear father's footsteps, begging you to show him the same loyalty and devotion you showed his dear father. I know that my son and daughter-in-law will do their utmost to merit and keep it."

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The Shadow Man.

BY VIRNA SHEARD.

LITTLE honey baby, shet yo' eyes up tight.
(Shadow-man is comin' in de door!)
You's as sweet as roses, if dey is so pink an' white
(Shadow-man is creepin' cross de floor.)

Little honey baby, keep yo' footses still—
(Rocky-bye, oh! rocky, rocky-bye!)
Hush yo' now an' listen to dat lonesome whip-po'-will—

Don't yo' fix dat lip an' start to cry.

Little honey baby, stop dat winkin' quick—
(Hear de hoot-owl in de cottonwood).
Yes, I sees yo' eyes adoin' dat dere triflin' trick.
(He gets chillern if dey isn't good).

Little honey baby, what yo' think yo' see?
(Sister keep on climbin' to de sky.)
Dat's a june-bug—it ain't got no stinger lak a bee.
(Reach de glory city by-an'-by.)

Little honey baby, what yo' skeery at?
(Go down Moses—down to Phar-e-oh).
No; dat isn't nuffin' but a furry fly-round bat.
(Say he'd betta let dose people go.)

Little honey baby, shet yo' eyes up tight.
(Shadow-man is comin' in de door.)
You's as sweet as roses, if dey is so pink an' white
(Shadow-man is creepin' cross de floor.)

—Canadian Magazine.