

THE
Ladies Pictorial Weekly.

FOR SALE BY NEWSDEALERS EVERYWHERE.

EDITED BY

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AND PUBLISHED BY

THE LADIES PICTORIAL CO.,

To whom all correspondence and remittances should be addressed.

BUILDING 192 King St. West, - - - Toronto, Canada

Terms for Canada and the United States, \$2.00 per year; \$1.25 for six months; 75cts. for three months; single copies, 5 cts.; \$1.00 extra per year for postage for other countries in the Postal Union.

Advertising, 10 cts. per agate line for each insertion, for display; reading notices 25 cts. per line.

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The LADIES' PICTORIAL WEEKLY is for sale by every newspaper dealer in Canada, at five cents per copy, and by newsboys in principal cities and towns.

Visitors to the Sanctum.

"Like the swell of some sweet tune,
Morning rising into noon,
May glides onward into June."

—LONGFELLOW.



MADAME was not able to get to see me as she promised, so she wrote out the rest of Marie's love affair and sent it. Here it is:

Madame's Story.

"Well, my Marie is a very strange girl, very strange. When she see the two gentleman sitting there very grave, and I, her mother, sitting in my chair with my hands folded, she laughs out, (afterwards she tells me that it was very funny but I do not know why) and we all are very angry and the gentlemen look fierce at her. Then I ask them what they want and they both say:—

"Marie!" and Marie, she say:—

"But you cannot both have me. Is it not so?" and the one that comes in the afternoon say very angry:—

"You must decide now which one you will have—now." Then Marie looks at him and frown and says quickly. "Very well, then, I decide, now, that I will not have you." Then the other gentleman smile a little, and the first man walks quickly out of the house, his face like the storm-cloud, and then Marie sits down and cries. She will not speak to the other one at all, although he tries very hard and coax her. She only says that she will stay with me, her mother. Then the gentleman he say to me that he hope my health will keep good and Marie stop crying and make him a grimace and after that he go away too. After while they both come back, often. But she cannot tell which she likes best, ever, and I am very weary. Almost I would be glad that she leave me and marry. So one day she tell me that she will marry next week and there is no time to get her the clothes ready and she will not tell me which one. I like them both very well and I feel bad. On Thursday she would marry, just quiet-like only I, her mother, there and we go to the church together. When we get there I look to see which gentleman and I see no one. At last I see the one that came, last, that night, coming around a corner and Marie ran to meet him and her eyes shine and she look very glad. When he come near I see that he look—oh!—horrible! He had his arm tied up and his coat is torn and one of his eyes has a black mark, and he go lame on one foot. His hat is gone and I could not see his collar or his neck-tie. Oh, it was dreadful! But I do not say anything. I am afraid that Marie change her mind again. But

after they are married I ask him what it mean and he laugh and say:—

"Marie say that she will marry the one that get to the church first and we both start before day-break and took the same road and I keep him back a little that was all."

A Turkish Bath.

The Lady and I went together. She had been before and I—am going again. What did I think of it? You do not do much thinking. It is mainly a sensation, or a succession of sensations each more delightful than the last. A more blissfully happy two hours it would be hard to imagine. The woman who has lived without a Turkish bath has lived in vain. To a rightly constituted person a bath of any kind is one of the joys of living and the luxury of a Turkish bath adds a new delight to earth. You will please excuse me from going into details of costume. I shall likewise refrain from commentary on the appearance of the other bathers. Suffice it is to say that the Lady thought Toronto women owed their pretty feet to their shoe-makers and I could not gainsay her. And did I really and truly like every bit of it? Yes, assuredly yes. The hardest thing I found to do was the remaining quiet afterwards. To lie still twenty minutes when one is not sleepy or ill or tired or reading! It's hard. The first few minutes there is a delicious, dreamy languor and—but I am beginning with the ending. To go back.

But I really cannot describe the process. First a hot room, where you perspire until a wet rag is a back-board in companion with you, then a hotter room where you speedily become merely a spot on the floor, then the hottest, whither you, the spot, cook, boil, and go off in steam. Then you are someway captured and once more an entity are stretched out on a marble bier and buried in lather. As I was frightened to death and had my eyes shut tight all the time, I don't know exactly what went on except that I seemed to be substantial enough, once more, to be rubbed and pounded and splashed into a jelly. Someway, I'll never know how, I found myself swimming in a tank, of cold water, this time, and hitting my head against another girl every time I tried to turn around. Then I was hurried around to get my hair dry and made to lie quiet to cool off—I think at the same time. And our Turkish bath was over.

But that delicious afterlude! The delightful weariness, the soft couch, perfect comfort and a charming picture to look at. Opposite was an indolent young beauty, the early morning dewiness on her face, the memory of love's whispers in her eyes, soft masses of fair hair falling in sweet disorder, and a half-wistful, sweet, dreamy curve, to the daintiest of crimson lips. Was she not fair; my lady?

I am such a beauty-worshipper that I hope I shall never know that girl. Why? Because it is often saddening to know the owner of a beautiful face. Beauty of soul is alas! more common where outward beauty is not. I am content to watch her and think—as indeed, likely it is, that her soul is as lovely and as loveable as her face.

Book-Treasures.

A few issues since, I was describing a jaunt through some book-stores, and telling of some new editions of favorites I had purchased. The names of the books were wrongly spelled, and my friends, who are in the habit of borrowing my books, are unduly anxious to see these rare and wonderful volumes with the extraordinary title. I have been poked fun at so much that I rise in self-defence, and tell what really were the books on which I spent my last cent. Now read the list carefully: "Virginibus Pueribus," "The Little Minister," "Obiter Dicta," and "Ballades and Rondeaux." If you don't know them all, you ought to. The first named, "Virginibus Puerisque," is a book I would never care to be without. It is a collection of essays of Robert Louis Stevenson so called from the first essay, which is "To Youths and Maidens," and contains advice to young men, not to get married. Every girl should have two or three copies in her library to loan. The essays are delightful. They are full of delicate, satirical humor, and of solid common sense. The author is certainly one of the most reasonable and sensible of men. The writing is in the very happiest style, very clever, scholarly, witty, tender and pathetic, at times, and ever intensely human. One can never feel out of touch with the writer.

"The Little Minister," I shall speak of soon in connection with its author, Mr. J. M. Barrie, than whom no writer of the present day is more loveable. The other book—to be Irish—is two volumes "Obiter Dicta." It is by Augustine Birrell, and is not half so widely known as it ought to be. It is likewise a collection of essays, principally literary. Mr. Birrell is one of the justest and most charitable critics I have ever read. Such a kindly mantle he draws over the lives of those whose lives are not so noble as their works! That is the real spirit of criticism; to show where the man was great, not where he was small. He only has the very best to say for Lamb, the kindest for Carlyle, the most pitying for Pope, the most charitable for Burke and the most admiring for Dr. Johnson. Milton looks out from his pages with new virtues, Falstaff with fresh jokes, and Browning with noble human majesty. The author is a

man fit to read their works, and to write of them, because he brings to his work no carping, no littleness, no envy.

"Ballades and Rondeaux," how fascinating that sounds. Here are triolets, ballades, villanelles, Rondels, virelais, chants royaux, a book to have with you all summer long. Many of Dobson's famous triolets are collected here. Do you remember this one?

"Rose kissed me to-day,
Will she kiss me to-morrow?
Let it be as it may,
Rose kissed me to-day.
But the pleasure gives way
To a savour of sorrow;
Rose kissed me to-day—
Will she kiss me to-morrow?"

Madge Robertson

Our English Letter.

(From our own Correspondent.)

LONDON, May 18th, 1892.

Here I am, back again in dear old London, and I am glad to find that things are looking rather more lively than when I went north for my short visit. May is with us, and you know we expect all sorts of delightful events to take place in May. Slowly but surely all the royalties are returning to England. The Duke and Duchess of Connaught and the Duke and Duchess of Fife are already in town, and the Prince and Princess of Wales and their family will return this week. The Queen is now in Darmstadt, where she has gone at the solicitation of her grandchildren; she will not remain quite a week, and, according to our daily papers, matrimonial projects will occupy much of her time while there. The Empress Frederick and Emperor William are to stay in Darmstadt during the Queen's visit, and both will doubtless assist in these aforesaid projects. The newspapers are by no means agreed on the subject of the royal betrothals; from one we learn that Princess Marie of Edinburgh is to be betrothed to the Crown Prince of Roumania, while another assures us that this match was stopped by the Emperor of Russia at a very early stage in the negotiations. It is a commonly accepted fact that Princess Victoria of Edinburgh is to be betrothed to the Grand Duke of Hesse, and our most reliable papers have settled that Prince George shall marry Princess Alix of Hesse. One of the leading Provincial papers has had temerity enough to publish, on "good authority," that the official announcement of Prince George's engagement to Princess May will shortly be made. Such an item of "news" must be excessively irritating and annoying to all members of the royal family. Surely good taste should forbid the publication of such rumors. A rumor such as this reminds one of the Court of Claudius, in Hamlet's time, rather than of the Court of a Queen who has ever been so faithful to a memory. There has actually been a plot quite recently against the life of the poor little baby King of Spain. One cannot help feeling renewed sympathy with Queen Christina, for, besides her constant solicitude about her beloved little son's health, this ever-present danger to his life from political motives must be a cause of constant grief and anxiety. We have been hearing a good deal lately about the Czarina of Russia; in many respects she seems in character exceedingly like her sister, the Princess of Wales. Of course she is never free from anxiety on account of her husband's safety. He, being a Russian, is very superstitious, regards her as his protecting spirit, and will go nowhere without her. She is also a devoted mother, and has now gone to the Caucasus to be with her second son, who is again in a bad state of health. There has been quite a small excitement lately on the woman's suffrage question. I consider the matter as practically settled—at any rate for some time to come, for not only has the bill not passed a second reading, but Mr. Gladstone has plainly shown his violent opposition to the measure, and there are many arguments in his letter on women's suffrage which, I take it, cannot be effectually answered. Is it not perfectly true that at present the great majority of women are either quite indifferent to the question or hostile to it? As to myself, I must plead indifference. Will you think me very old-fashioned or un-English if I say I cannot feel much interest in politics? Have you ever been to the new gallery? What a charming place it is, with its square hall, cool fountain among flowers, the sculpture and the pictures. There was a private view of the spring exhibition a few days since, and, according to my usual habit on such occasions, I noticed the ladies and their gowns more than the pictures. What pictures I saw I did not care much about; there is nothing very new or very attractive, either in subject or treatment. Of course, all the best artists reserve their best works for the Academy, and I am looking forward to a treat next week. With regard to the dress and fashion at the new gallery, as a dear old friend of mine used to say, "It was much of a muchness"—very plain skirts with demi-trains, large hats or very small bonnets and the ugly sacque coats. One gentleman remarked, "The only figures to be seen are in the pictures." I find most gentlemen think the loose jackets with full sleeves now so much worn "are not neat, and want taking in somewhere." By the way, I hear there were no less than 12,000 pictures sent to the Royal Academy for exhibition this year. Only about 1,500 can be hung, so just think of all the disappointed men and women who are the unhappy possessors of rejected works. And why do so many send year after year? Surely, it must be a well-known fact that, it is of little or no use to send a picture to the Royal Academy, unless you have a friend in some way connected with it. Of course none of the pic-