



This series has thus far contained sketches of Countess of Aberdeen, Mrs. George Kirkpatrick, Mrs. J. C. Patterson, Lady Chapleau, Madame Laurier, Mrs. Mackintosh, Lady Galt and Lady Tupper, sen.

My eyes were delighting in the superb old tapestry that hung beside the fireplace in the drawing-room of Sir Donald Smith's beautiful Montreal home, when a woman's step paced across the polished floor, and I rose to receive the kindly greeting of Lady Tupper.

It was my first meeting with one who, as the wife of one of Canada's chiefest officials, whose life for half a century has been entwined in the political history of our Dominion, must occupy a large place in our regard; and my glance was full of interest.

A handsome and stately lady of elder years is Lady Tupper, with classic face, snowy hair and grave, grey eyes that look thoughtfully yet kindly out from keen, perceptive brows. I perceived instantly that here is well-defined character, determination and unusual executive ability, an excellent judgment, also, with a big benevolence and much gentle charity.

It is the face of a clever woman, yet one splendidly motherly.

Lady Tupper has a gentle voice, a thoughtful speech, a manner simple and womanly. Very pleasant was our little talk together in the shaded drawing-room.

She is fond of pictures, and for a few moments our words concerned the beautiful masterpieces that hung about us, which topic presently brought us to speak of London. As wife of the Canadian High Commissioner, Lady Tupper's pretty English home was always the centre of a large and gracious hospitality; but of this she said nothing.

"One has opportunity of seeing such beautiful pictures in London," she said. "It is the centre of art, as of music and literature. One can live quietly in London—that is, in comparative retirement,—and yet have the best of everything. I like London life very much. It is fascinating."

"It must have been quite a wrench to leave London and return to Canada," I remarked.

"Yes; in twelve years one grows to feel at home, and it is rather a break-up. Yet I am not sorry to come. We always purposed returning to spend the closing years of our lives with our children in Canada."

"That is what a full and complete life means, I think," added the lady, musingly. "To be with one's children and children's

children until the end. Not that I ever meant my husband to return to active political life," she continued, with half smile, half sigh. "I had hoped that all that was over—for him."

"Canadian winters suit me better than English ones, and my ideal life would be to remain in Canada and journey across once



LADY TUPPER, SEN.

a year to spend two or three months in London."

Since their return from London Sir Charles and Lady Tupper have been the guests of their son and daughter-in-law in their cosy Ottawa home.

The past winter, which is the first Lady Tupper has spent in Canada for many years, proved rather trying, and she was confined much to the house, but with returning health came returning energy, and our brief chat came during her day's pause in Montreal before leaving for England, where she has gone to supervise the closing up of her London home.

"When we left," she said, "we only expected to be absent six weeks; and there is

much to pack up. The Canadian High Commissioner's residence in London is partially furnished, and someone is needed who can distinguish between our private possessions and those belonging to the residence."

"Will you live in Ottawa, Lady Tupper?"

"That depends," she answered, with a smile. "But we shall live in Canada, anyway."

"Ottawa must seem crude in comparison with London," I remarked, with a dreadful disrespect toward Canada's capital.

"Ottawa is wonderfully improved," said the lady. "You would realise its growth if you had known it as I did when the Parliament buildings were first erected. Of course, it will always be essentially official in civic and social life. But London is also changing much in this direction. The official element now constitutes a large factor in London society, and it is representative of many social grades. I think it is well that it is so."

Society needs the constantly fresh infusion of brains and character in order to retain its savour."

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Lady Tupper is very retiring, almost too much so, her children, who know and admire her ability, think. She is a perfect housekeeper, a good manager, and devoted to her children and grandchildren. She is also an excellent correspondent, as many friends can testify. "Her exceptional beauty would always be marked, but her sweetness and motherliness and kind ways are more of the kind that get into hearts than into newspapers," writes an admiring friend.

Thus it is that Lady Tupper has lived through the years of her high social position, fulfilling all its claims, yet ever retiring, and devoted to her family,—an idolised wife, a beloved mother.

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Before our chat ended we touched lightly on matters political.

"I do not like leaving my husband just now," she remarked. "Indeed, I much dislike leaving him, and having a stretch of ocean between us. But I can hardly help it. Thus far he seems to be bearing the campaign work wonderfully well, and, of course, our children will take all possible care of him. Sir Charles never did spare himself, and never will, I am afraid."

"Yes," she continued presently, looking thoughtfully out upon the lawn, with its white blossoming trees, "political life is hard; but it is rendered harder by the false statements made and circulated by opponents. If a politician had only the truth to contend with, it would be easy for him, and certainly happier for his family. But these false and malicious statements do hurt—even the wife of as old a politician as Sir Charles."

Again came the little half-sighing smile. "Anxious about results in the elections? Oh, no," she said, except in as far as my husband's health is concerned.

"If we succeed, it shall be good; if not, we must believe that the success of our opponents is also for some wise and good purpose,"—which was altogether a lovely, womanly way of regarding the matter.

FAITH FENTON.