

[For the CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.]

THE LILY OF THE TOWN.

"AMANTIA LILIA VALLIS."

Graceful, slender, soil-free,
Emblem of all purity.
How this flower resembleth thee!
Lissom and pale.

Chaste though wanton winds blow by,
Constant though the zephyrs sigh,
And woo thee with their lullaby,
Lily of the vale.

F. C. E.

Quebec, 1875.

HOUSE HUNTING.

The first month of fine spring weather is one of busiest activity in all large cities. It is the season of house-hunting. The marvel is how so many people are homeless just about that time, roaming disconsolately through the streets, seeking for a hospitable roof to shelter them, and a cosy nook wherein to lay their weary limbs. Another wonder is how many are suddenly taken with the fever of "moving," and give up comfortable quarters for imaginary reasons, to exchange them against the chances of a new and untried house.

One consolation is that if there are people who want to change houses, there are houses in plenty for the seeking. All up and down the great streets running parallel to the river, and all along the narrower streets starting from the river and scrambling out into the prairie, placarded boards dangle from door frame or window sash, to catch the eye of the houseless wanderer. Column upon column of advertisements in the newspapers, "only a cent a word," give notice of "house wanted," "house to let," and any number of furnished or unfurnished rooms, every one of them within the convenient distance of "five minutes' walk from the post office."

Human perversity is so great that this very abundance is set down as an additional grievance. How is one to choose among so many? How can one be expected to run all over the town in quest of only one house? Yet the thing has to be done and speedily too, for after the first fortnight it is understood that the best houses are gone, leaving to potterers and laggards only the chances of leaking roofs and tumble-down porches, or the risk of kitchens and pantries infested with rats and cockroaches.

So the family council is duly held at the matutinal board, the map of the city traced out on the table-cloth, and a plan of operations decided upon. Who is to go? Paterfamilias knows nothing about such things, of course, and solemnly avers that, provided a snugger and a bath-tub are reserved for him, he cares nothing for the rest. So "Mother" (if a matron) or "Pussy" (if a *nouvelle mariée*) is delegated to do the work.

Out into the inclement weather, with the snow, one day, blinding her pretty eyes, and her pretty feet pattering in the slush, on the next, she sallies forth, like a bird, to find her new nest for the summer days. Ah! the weary tramp. A lady has assured me that these house-hunting times were among the dreariest of her married life. So many streets to thread, so many stairs to mount, so many rooms to visit, so many questions to ask, such shootings of terror at the monstrous big prices demanded! And then the silent calculation, on the tips of half-raised fingers, of how much the city tax will be, at about ten per cent on the rental; how much the water rates will amount to; how much must be calculated for gas, which, contrary to the dynamic law of all foul vapors, is always rising in this city, instead of falling. Meanwhile, the landlord looks on with cool complacency, in the provoking attitude of a master dispensing favor to a postulant. And why not? He has a house to spare and you have none. Hence you may take it as a grace if he have "no objection" to letting you take his.

Some house-seekers, however, are by no means so meek. They stalk up to the door with quenchless determination; give a masculine pull at the bell-wire; flap their mantles like great birds' wings, going up the stairs, to the awe of the chaperoning housemaid; take eagle glances at the rooms; peer under the furniture; turn up their noses at the ten cents' wall paper or the chintz window curtains; put their fingers in the water sink, asking awful questions all the while; dive down into the black cellars and penetrate even into the arana of the back yard. Such women are the terror of those whose houses they visit, and the landlord need put on no airs with them, for they are armored in brass. Such persons, too, are the greatest hagglers of all. They will chisel and whittle were it only for the reduction of one pound.

All sorts of amusing incidents occur in this house-hunting season. I have been told of one case where a lady, having nearly concluded a lease with an ancient landlord, was slyly asked whether she had children. Like Cornelia, she proudly answered that she had such jewels. "Then," said the old man, "you cannot have my cottage. Children are little devils. They tear the tapestry, drive nails into the walls, and are a nuisance to the whole neighborhood." The old mandrake! He was a married man, as was afterwards found out, but because he had not fulfilled the Scriptural injunction to increase and multiply, he wanted to punish those who had been more observant of their duty. Contrariwise, another landlord that I heard of made it a point that his tenants should have children. He contended that they scared mice out of the house and beggars out of the neighborhood, while their scampering helped to make the

house "settle." A landlord was asked why he charged ten pounds more for a house on University street than for a precisely similar house in a side street, a little further down. "Because the street is more fashionable," was the reply. "Bosh!" exclaimed the intending tenant, "that is ALL A PREJUDICE." "Granted," said the philosophic landlord, "but every thing in this world must be paid for, even a prejudice. That prejudice is worth ten pounds." A friend of mine went to see a room advertised as spacious and elegantly furnished. He was shown into a garret apartment, about the size of a German principality, that is, with barely place to shift his position in bed. He tumbled down the stairs in high dudgeon. On reaching the street, the first thing he knew, he got a dipper full of water in his face from a fellow who was pretending to wash windows. My friend was about to indulge in profanity, when he thought better of it and picked up the bucket to quench his assailant. Timely flight, however, saved the latter. My friend has since been averse to any conversation about furnished apartments or window washing.

Rents in Montreal have risen very much in the past few years. It is next to impossible to get a separate lodging for a small family, at less than fifty pounds. Indeed, they are considered lucky who secure good houses at that price. And, after all, the chief thing is to have a home—one's own home, in sweet isolation and retired domesticity. After the work of the day, it is the dearest of human comforts for the weary man to return to his own hearth, where the smile of his own is there to welcome, comfort and reward him. With these and a bird in a cage, a few flowers in the window and a favorite volume on the table, no better companionship can a man of lettered mind or cultured heart require.

Even to the solitary man his own room should be a home and a sanctuary, where he can sit and think at times, with his eyes fixed on the arabesques of the ceiling or the immobile figures of the papered wall, and feel with grim satisfaction what it is to be alone in the world. Or if he wishes to commune with the past—as we all love to do, and are blessed in doing—he should still have the uninvaded solitude of his own warm chamber, where he can sit and dream of bygone days; see the dear familiar faces beaming through the closed shutters with eyes brimful of tearful love and lips that murmur blessings; croon once more the songs of his youth, and travel again the hills and plains that once were his before the yellow primroses budded or the winter snows fell chill on the graves where those he loved lie sleeping.

A. STEELE PENN.

SCHOOL BUILDINGS.

The best plan of a country schoolhouse in the whole Province seems that of the Academy at Sherbrooke. The front of the building is at the gable end, and should face the South. One front-door, on the right, enters into the lower or boys' room by a passage which acts as a porch and hat-room. Another front-door, to the left, opens on to a staircase leading up to the room above; and the space between the passage to the right and the staircase to the left, is utilised as a classroom. The girls upstairs can enter the downstairs room through the classroom without going out of doors, and can also enter and leave the building quite separately. A three-story building could, as at Richmond, have a basement room with entrance and play-ground on the other side, quite distinct. If a woodshed be attached, the girls' closet can be in the upper part of it, on the same flat as their room, (as at Waterloo) and they can enter and leave it in perfect privacy.

Only one schoolroom in the Province, that at Phillipsburg, has a floor sloping upwards from a point near the Master's desk. This gives the master an excellent view of the whole school, and gives every pupil an excellent view of the Teacher when he performs experiments, delivers lectures, &c. A sloping floor is a great advantage, but not so indispensable as the

DAIS

for the Master's desk. This dais should be two footstep high and extend right across the room. It is cheaper thus, as it can be made by letting the floor joists less deeply into the sill, and forms a flat form for school exhibitions, &c.

THE OUTSIDES

of our school buildings seem to have too much money spent on them, while far too little is spent on the inside, where the children are immured day after day, and all day long. Tastily tinted or papered walls, bright maps, or "History Charts" will have a wonderful effect on the happiness of every scholar. Colour is a great element in pleasure; and the sum of many little innocent pleasures is happiness.

We hope, some day, to see flowers in every lady teacher's room. It would be the surest indication that she took the most vivid interest in her work.

It would be an invaluable boon to the Province to have a bean ideal plan of schoolhouse determined on, to be imitated, with modifications, in all future erections.

THE HEATING.

of the upper room is effected satisfactorily at Magog, both as regards the heat of the room and the purity of the air, by mere holes, with registers, opening into the lower room. In this case the upper room only need be ventilated by shafts leading to the roof or open air. So long as

people will keep all ventilating openings closed, high and lofty school-rooms are as necessary as they are handsome. Otherwise, low rooms are cheaper, and more cheaply and rapidly heated. Several extra feet of height in a room will not let in as much fresh air as an opening an inch square. And the marvellously instantaneous dissipation of gases gives an opening, a much greater oxygenating power than seems yet to have been taken account of. If this opening be a little tube passing through the wall high up, and slope upwards and inwards into the room, it will cause no draught and let in much air with little cold. "Experto crede."

When buildings are irregularly occupied, like churches and schools, the walls should be airtight but thin. They are then instantaneously heated, while it takes forty-eight hours sometimes in a "cold snap," to get the biting frost out of the massive walls of a "handsome, warm, stone church." This truth should be more widely recognized.

If the upper room can be heated, as it certainly is at Magog, by the (otherwise) wasted heat of the lower room, it will be a great saving to the whole country. The fact is important and might be noted by householders as well as school builders.

THE OUT-BUILDINGS.

should be of unplanned lumber, and the entrances to the main building should be of "sanded" rather than painted boards, to prevent the "excothos scribbendi" which prevails here as it did at Pompeii. The master can hardly prevent it, as it is often done when the building is used for other than scholastic purposes. Here the rule, "obsta principis," or "vip badin the bud," is sovereign. Punish for, and erase the first word written. But mechanical prevention is better than penal cure.

HOUSE ACCOMMODATION

for the Dominic is mostly thrown away. A married man would generally prefer an increase in salary equal to the interest on the cost of erection. To a bachelor, the teacher's house is useless of course. Out of seven places with good good house accommodation for teachers, it is quite unused in six, and lightly esteemed in the seventh.

However, having considered the rival advantages of nearly a thousand different houses, which we have entered from end to end of the Province, we commend the plan of one—at Stanbridge—which seems to us far better than any of the rest.

It can be heated by one stove, the brightest of welcomes can be given to a guest by an open fire-place, (the best ventilation in the world), no space is wasted in halls or passages, the kitchen is next to the dining room, the closet is accessible under cover, and so is the woodshed which acts as a summer kitchen in summer. Being nearly square, this house has the most space for the fewest feet of (cold-admitting) outside wall. Verbum sapienti satis.

Quebec.

E.

THE GREAT METROPOLIS

EMPERESS-QUEEN—A FREE-THINKING LORD—ATHLETICS—PERSONALS—IRISH AND SCOTCH WHISKY—OFFICE—LITERATURE.

LONDON, April 7.—The excitement about the new title of Empress of India has died out in one sense, but it is none the less deep because it is smothered for the present. It is now known that the Queen has set her heart upon the additional appellation, and that gives a character of sincere regret to the general hostility. Her Majesty is a great stickler for form and official etiquette, and the fact that she really forced her Ministers to take this unpopular step makes even her staunchest friends shake their heads in dubitation.

There is no doubt, whatever, that the Government will be permanently injured by the measure. Not even the excuse that they have chivalrously assumed the responsibility to obey the Queen will help them with the people. If the Opposition were not so hopelessly disorganized, I should not wonder to see a vote of non-confidence attempted this session.

The most painful sensation has been created in aristocratic circles by the proceedings of the veteran Earl Russell with regard to the will of his son, the late Viscount Amberley. The latter, in his will, appointed a Mr. David Spalding as the sole custodian of the education of his children. When the will came before the Master of the Rolls, Earl Russell objected on the ground that Mr. Spalding was an Atheist, and would not bring up the children in any recognized form of religion. Mr. Spalding consulted eminent counsel, but was advised not to fight the case, as he would be certain to lose it. He, therefore, signed a paper renouncing his right to act as tutor of the children. The old Earl likewise attempted to prevent the publication of a free-thinking work by his son, but in this he was not successful. Your readers will remember that the Viscountess of Amberley was a strong-minded woman in religion.

The exploits of Weston, Spencer, and Gale, of Penarth, in walking one hundred miles within twenty-four consecutive hours do not meet with hearty appreciation in England. They are generally characterized as "brute endurance feats," and while Englishmen are not precisely theatrical in their athletics, they like a show of skill and dexterity nevertheless.

The venerable Father of the Free Church of Scotland, the Rev. Dr. Ingram, of the parish of Unst, has just completed the 100th year of his

age, and the 74th of his ministry. He is therefore the oldest clergyman in Europe, and perhaps in the world, though some of the Oriental Derivishes are known to live almost beyond calculation.

An amusing debate on whiskey took place the other night in the House of Commons. Mr. O'Sullivan advocated the claims of Irish Usquebagh, which he pronounced the finest spirit of its kind in the world. It is a little raw at first, and has rather a strong favor of fusel oil, but after a while that evaporates into other essences which bestow a charming flavor on the pure spirit. Mr. Anderson took up the cudgels for Scotch "whuskey," which he said to be simply unsurpassed anywhere. He condemned the Irish spirit as the most dangerous stuff in the world for a stranger to drink. No one but a native can drink it with impunity. "It is full of headaches to the brim." Sir Wilfred Lawson chimed in between the two champions and contended that it was good whiskey, whether Irish or Scotch, which does all the harm. "Good whiskey is what will make you all drunk pleasantly."

One of the new features in fashionable society is the introduction of the cotillon at balls. It closes the entertainment, and is danced by the hostess and the best gentleman dancer among the guests, and contains sometimes as many as sixty figures. The cotillon, which is essentially French, has also become very popular at the Imperial Court of Russia.

The Queen and the Princess Beatrice are at Baden Baden. Notwithstanding the privacy in which they travelled, they were made much of throughout their passage in France. From Cherbourg to the frontier they were accompanied by General D'Albaze, Aide-de-Camp of Marshal MacMahon. Her Majesty is expected back by the 20th of the month, and will therefore be in time to meet the Prince of Wales on his arrival.

The charming Empress of Austria leaves tomorrow. She will go through Paris without stopping. Her sister, the ex-Queen of Naples, and the ex-King will remain at Park View till after the hunting season.

The Duke of Edinburgh is expected at Portsmouth on next Monday, when he will take command of the Sultan for a prolonged cruise in the Mediterranean.

The Royal Italian Opera is in full vogue, Mr. Gye having got a fortnight's start of Mr. Mapleson. He is drawing good houses, although the London season will not properly begin until the week after Easter. The opening was consecrated to the greatest of all modern operas, Rossini's *William Tell*, but the act was unequal to the work. Tagliani, the veteran basso, is wearing fast. Maurel was hoarse, and Mile Bianchi was only a fair Mathilde. Much of the opera was cut down, a process which is intolerable anywhere, but which I wonder that a London manager is venturesome enough to attempt.

Since then we have had Verdi's *Requiem*, *Macbeth*, *The Huguenots*, *La Favorita*, and *Don Pasquale*. In *Don Giovanni*, Mile Thalberg made her reappearance as Zerlina, and with marked improvement on last year. Albani and Patti have not yet arrived, and before they come the operatic season will not have really begun.

There is little interest in the literary world at this city. Jenkins' "Blot" is said to be amusingly true to its name, but it was made to sell and will sell. It jinks makes a few hundreds by it, that will compensate in some measure for his pecuniary loss as your Agent-General. The most successful work of the hour is the life of Norman MacLeod, by his brother, Daniel Deronda, by George Eliot, does not excite enthusiasm.

HOW BELLS.

WHICH SHALL I TAKE?

This is often a serious question with the invalid. He finds the market flooded with proprietary medicines, scores of which are recommended as certain cures for his peculiar ailment. He reads the papers, circulars, and almanacs, and finds each sustained by plausible arguments setting forth its virtues and specific action. The recommendations are as strong for one as for another. The cures claimed to have been wrought by one are as wonderful as those claimed to have been wrought by another. In his perplexity and doubt, the sufferer is sometimes led to reject all. But it should be born in mind that this condition of things is one that cannot be remedied. In a land where all are free, the good—the truly valuable—must come into competition with the vile and worthless, and must be brought to public notice by the same instrumentality, which is *advertising*. In such a case, perhaps the only absolute proof that a remedy is what it claims to be, is to try it. The "test of a pudding is the eating of it." "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good," is the apostolic injunction. There may, however, be stronger presumptive evidence in favor of one remedy than there is in favor of another, and this should be allowed its due weight. A due regard to this may save a vast amount of experimenting and a useless outlay of money. As presumptive evidence in favor of Dr. Pierce's Family Medicines, the proprietor desires to say, that they are prepared by a new and scientific process by which the virtues of the crude plants and roots are extracted without the use of a particle of alcohol. Not a particle of this destroyer of our race enters into the composition of either his Golden Medical Discovery or Favorite Prescription. This consideration alone ought certainly to rank them high above the vile compounds saturated with