

THE LADIES' JOURNAL.

At Twilight.

I hear the sound of a soft footfall,
A laugh that is elfin sweet,
A lisping word and a cooing call,
As down the length of the shadowy hall
Falter her baby feet.
She pauses a-tiptoe at the door,
With her bonny eyes ashine,
Her face holds wisdom beyond my store,
And I clasp her close to my heart once more,
With her fair little cheek to mine.

But my arms clasp only the empty air,
The lullaby dies unsung.
I lose the gleam of her golden hair,
And the little face, so childish fair,
And the lip of her baby tongue.
And then I remember; she lies asleep,
Her story has all been told,
And whether I wake or whether I weep,
There still is a mystery strange and deep,
Which Time can never unfold.

But I sometimes fancy I catch the gleam
Of her hair, in the still of the night,
And the tilt of her hand in a pale moonbeam,
Or her eyes meet mine in a waking dream
As I sit in the dim twilight
'Tis then, I fancy, she turns her face
That has grown so heavenly fair,
From where she stands in that shining place,
And looks toward me thro' the starry space,
With the smile that the angels wear.

RINGS AND RING-LORE.

Cromwell's signet ring bore his crest, a lion rampant.

The finger ring was the earliest ornament adopted by man.

Every Roman freeman was entitled to wear an iron ring.

Wedding rings were used in Egypt 3000 years before Christ.

Augustus wore a ring charm to protect him from thunder storms.

Betrothal rings came into use in Europe as early as the ninth century.

The ring of Childeric is still preserved in the Imperial Museum in Paris.

After Hugh Capet every French King wore a ring as part of the royal regalia.

Rings with bangles attached have been worn in India from the earliest times.

Chaucer in more than one place alludes to the thumb ring as common in his time.

Roman ambassadors sent abroad wore a ring as part of their State dress.

Early Celtic rings were executed in interlaced work, often of very intricate patterns.

The State ring of the Pope is set with a large cameo bearing a portrait of Christ.

The ring of the Jewish high priest was invested, by tradition, with many mystic powers.

Luther habitually wore a small ring, in which the setting represented a death's head.

In many female religious orders the ring is used during the ceremony of receiving a novice.

When peers are created in Great Britain a ring is used during the ceremony of investiture.

Down to the sixteenth century every physician in Europe wore a ring as a badge of his profession.

Greek legends declared that the mystic ring of Gyges, the King of Lydia, made the wearer invisible.

Lorenzo de Medici wore a ring which, according to tradition, had once belonged to the Emperor Nero.

Most of the mediæval kings wore and used signet rings because they were unable to write their names.

Anglo-Saxon rings were fashioned after knotted cables, the knot being worn on the outside of the hand.

In the later Roman Empire rings cut from solid stone, generally agate or onyx, became fashionable.

The serpent ring, or ring made in the shape of a serpent, was a favorite in Rome during the æter republic.

Until the seventeenth century a ring formed part of the official dress of every priest in the Roman Church.

At various times during the Roman Empire loyal subjects wore in their rings portraits of the reigning emperor.

In the tombs of ancient Egypt, dating probably not later than 3000 B.C., are found gold rings of fair workmanship.

Shakespeare's ring, or at least a ring supposed to be his, was found a few years ago in a meadow near the Avon.

Wedding rings of plain gold, without outward ornament or inscription, were in use as early as the sixth century.

According to the traditions of the East, Solomon conquered all his enemies through the mystic properties of his ring.

Roman gladiators often wore brass rings so heavy that a blow from the fist was sometimes known to kill an adversary.

Three wedding rings were used at the marriage of Mary Stuart, and all three did not keep her faithful to her husband.

Anglo-Saxon and Celtic rings commonly bore the name of the wearer, and are believed to have been used as signets.

The "fisherman's ring" is the signet of the Pope. Its bezel bears an impression of St. Peter in his boat with fishing nets.

The bishop's ring was formerly set with any gem. Generally, however, it is at present set with an amethyst or sapphire.

The ancient Egyptians and Israelites, in addition to finger rings, wore rings in their ears, and frequently also in their noses.

At the death of the Pope, it was formerly the custom to break his ring. This practice was discontinued in the present century.

All the state rings of the British sovereigns are preserved, either in the British Museum or among the regalia of the crown.

Richard I. of England had a ring set with a bloodstone. His enemies attributed his daring and success to the influence of this jewel.

In the fourteenth century astrological rings were fashionable in Italy. The settings were carved with various emblems and symbols.

Roman Generals were permitted, by an edict of the Senate, to wear rings bearing portraits of the adversaries they had overcome.

The Empress Plotina had a gold thumb ring weighing 6 ounces, which bore her portrait. This ring is now in the British Museum.

Trinity rings were formerly fashionable in France. The setting was in three divisions, and bore representations of Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

After the battle of Canae, Hannibal sent to the Carthaginian Senate 3 bushels of gold rings, taken from the fingers of dead Roman Knights.

During the reigns of the first ten Caesars no Roman citizen below the rank of knight might wear a gold ring save by permission of the Emperor.

Among the Greeks, after the time of Alexander the Great, the portrait of that monarch set in a ring was supposed to bring the warrior good luck.

Queen Elizabeth was extravagantly fond of rings. In her jewel case after her death there were found 752 rings of various descriptions and value.

The mummies of the royal Princesses of Egypt often had rings on their fingers. In one case twenty-three were found on the hands of one mummy.

In both Egypt and Assyria porcelain rings were in common use. They were often painted with great delicacy, the painting being burned into the enamel.

In the seventh and eighth centuries, at every wedding among wealthy Saxons, numbers of gold rings were given away to friends as mementos of the occasion.

Dial rings were common in France and Germany during the last century; by holding one up to the sun the time of day could be approximately ascertained.

In the time of Augustus portrait rings came into fashion, probably for betrothals or engagements. The portraits of the happy pair were graven on the setting.

Roman dandies in the first, second and third centuries of our era wore heavy rings in winter, which they exchanged for others of lighter weight during the summer.

Among Solon's laws there is one forbidding jewelers to retain copies, models or impressions of signet rings which they had made. This was to prevent forgery.

Pliny tells of Arellius Fuscus, who, being expelled from the equestrian order and therefore not permitted to wear gold rings, replaced them with those made of silver.

The ring composed of several loops, which fell apart when a spring was pressed, was frequently used in the fifteenth century as a betrothal, and sometimes as a wedding ring.

The Princess of Wales.

The Princess of Wales' birthday is December 5. A ball is always given at Sandringham in honor of the occasion, which is attended by the "county" families as well as the tenants of the estate.

The invitation cards always say 10 o'clock," and shortly after that hour the beautiful white and gold ball room at Sandringham is crowded with guests, the brilliancy of the same being enhanced by the members of the West Norfolk Hunt Club, who all wear pink hunting coats.

Soon after 10:30, the royal party enter the ball room to the strains of the national anthem. Some duke of high degree, possibly the duke of Cambridge, comes first, leading the Princess of Wales, followed by the prince, with a grand lady on his arm. Upon one occasion, the Duchess of Manchester was thus honored. The princess Victoria of Wales comes next, escorted possibly by the high sheriff of Norfolk, with the princess Maud following, led by a prince or a duke or a lord.

After the procession, which is made up of a lot of royalties and nobilities, has made the grand tour of the room, the first quadrille is formed, in which the Princess of Wales as well as others of the royal party join.

At the last birthday ball, one old tenant was heard to remark.

"Year after year, the princess looks just the same."

Indeed, she is always lovely and charming and so beautifully dressed; for instance to again quote "The last ball," her gown was of black satin and black lace, with large clusters of deep red roses, nestling in the lace ruche around the hem of the skirt and continued up one side.

The bodice was also trimmed with red roses, in her train she wore a diadem of brilliants and red roses and around her throat a lovely necklace of diamonds and the order of Victoria and Albert. Her ball dress was made with the old-fashioned court bodice, the shoulder strap drooping onto the arm.

The Princesses Victoria and Maud are usually dressed alike and more often than not in white—possibly white silk and tulle, with silver embroidery.

The Prince of Wales always wears hunting pink upon these occasions, and the broad blue ribbon of the star of the garter. The royal party leave the ball room about 3 o'clock, but it is considerably past 4 before the last carriage rolls through the Norwich gates.

The programme of dances is always printed prettily in various colors and kept as a souvenir by the guests to remind them of "My last ball at Sandringham."