



## AT THE SIGN OF THE MAPLE

### OUR SONG QUEEN.

**T**HERE was one link that connected Canada with the now ruined city of Messina. It was the voice of song, for in Messina Madame Albani made in 1870 the brilliant debut that launched her out upon the tide of an artistic career which has borne her triumphantly to the summit of fame.

Success comes easily to some, as if it were a birthright. So it seemed with Albani, but in reality she possessed an indomitable perseverance and an ambition which were strong, invisible forces behind the genius that made her divine voice a medium of revealing to the world the universal soul by which man recognises in man his brother man.

Madame Albani is not only a Canadian—she is a French-Canadian, and, although she has thrived in Paris, it is in London that she has for many years found a home and a congenial atmosphere in which her art has brought forth some of its choicest fruit. Albani has been England's favourite, and she has been more. At the royal palace she was beloved and received much on the footing of a friend. Some of the most treasured possessions of the great prima donna are gifts from the late Queen, and hers has been a prominent figure in many of the important functions of the nation. In the glorious pageants of the Diamond Jubilee, at the funeral obsequies when an Empire mourned, amid the imposing ceremonies of a coronation it was always the voice of Albani that was raised in song to represent the spirit of the nation.

But her conquest was not confined to England. All Europe honoured her, and America rejoiced in her glory with parental pride. The Emperor William I was so charmed with her singing of "Lohengrin" in German that he appointed her "Hof Kammersängerin." But above the voice and the genius and the ambition it has ever been the simple nobility of soul, the life irreproachable, and the fidelity to the highest ideals of womanhood, combined with the greatness of her art, that has won for Albani an enduring place in the hearts of her countrymen.

And could we be more critical? Is the summer ending, and are the once fresh and tender tints of springtime turning to autumn richness? We can still adore our own, knowing that the beauty of truth remains even though its medium of expression may change.

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### A YOUTHFUL ROYAL.

**A**PRIL 25th marked the twelfth anniversary of the birth of the Princess Mary, only daughter of the Prince and Princess of Wales. The youthful princess is a bright, happy child, fond of pets and evinces a decided preference for out-door sports. Even now she is considered an excellent "horse-woman" and it is said that her royal mother, who supervises her education very carefully, has decided to place her in a school, instead of adhering to the usual custom of keeping governesses. In feature and temperament the princess resembles her mother, and is considered a very promising member of the Royal House of Great Britain.

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### OUR GREAT NORTHWEST.

**"I**'M glad I am a Canadian!" were the words with which Miss Agnes Deans Cameron opened her lecture before the Women's Canadian Club on the subject, "From Wheat to Whales," and it is safe to say that before the audience, travelling with the speaker, crossed the Arctic Circle where goldenrod and wild roses bloomed, where a sweet conception of home life prevailed among the Esquimaux, and a beautiful little church, decorated by the hands of self-sacrificing nuns, invited with open doors, the patriotism of each person present had received a dynamic stimulant.

At the outset Miss Cameron paid a tribute of praise to three great forces that have been influential in the development of the Canadian Northwest, namely the Hudson's Bay Company, whose dealings with the Indians prepared them to honour the word

of the white man, which was no small thing; then to the Northwest Mounted Police, whose fine characters are clearly silhouetted in the scantily populated regions; and to the missionaries, whose heroic devotion is unquestionable. After noting the difference between the conditions which greet the settler to-day and those with which he had to contend before steel rails penetrated the country, Miss Cameron led the way from the "melting pot" of the so-called wheat belt of Alberta where are gathered people of all nations and tongues, through Edmonton, the fascinating city of activity and youth, along the great lakes, down the great Mackenzie River and out upon the waters of the Arctic Ocean where the whale fisheries, a source of much wealth, are monopolised by the United States.

Vividly and with lantern slide illustrations, the lecturer described the journey of their scow flotilla as it drifted down the stream, encountering now and then wild rapids past which they had to portage, passing the abundant resources of the land in the



MADAME ALBANI

Somewhat of a sensation was caused by the announcement that Madame Albani had accepted an engagement to appear at a Variety Hall in Glasgow, where she was to receive a thousand pounds for an engagement of two weeks' duration.

form of magnificent forests, animals, tar, salt, oil and gas, touching upon romantic spots and visiting quaint settlements where life seemed to be one long day of contentment, varied, however, with an occasional scene of tragedy, divine or otherwise. It is not a barren land, this great "dream continent," but all good and livable, and replete with a rich experience of adventurous and self-sacrificing heroism. Daring and novel as the expedition seemed to be for a woman to undertake, it is evident that the travellers were well repaid for their ambition. No hardships, worthy of the name, were encountered and the greatest inconvenience was the "insistent mosquitoes" of Fort Smith, and the greatest regret, perhaps, the conscientious leaving behind of a coveted volume discovered in that far-away, unknown pathetic library at Fort Simpson, which contained original sheets of the *Spectator* and the *Tatler*. Surely some interesting tale is attached to the founding of that library. Too much consideration must not be lavished upon the material resources of that land of midnight sun, but no stars; it has a soul as well, and it was that that pervaded the picture story lecture with a richness, a pathos and a humour that held the audience entranced.

Miss Cameron is one of the leading figures of the Canadian literary world, and the Women's Canadian Club expect to receive in October another treat from another Canadian woman of distinction, a native of Winnipeg, now residing in New York—Miss Agnes Laut. Miss Laut is a very successful

writer of fiction who gathered much of her material from the region of the Rockies and the Selkirks, and her visit to Toronto in the autumn may be looked forward to with much pleasure and interest.

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### A MILLENNIUM OF ELECTRICITY.

**T**HE prophesies of old are being gradually fulfilled and this generation is coming in for a goodly number of the benefits. The latest, and in many respects the greatest, scientific advance of the age is the equipment of an electric villa at Troyes, France, where to replace the hand of man, electricity has been turned to account in a thousand ingenious ways and conveniences are multiplied a hundredfold.

In this paradise below no servant ever enters. The dining-table descends into the kitchen, and reappears with each fresh course. The kitchen, itself, is run by electricity, which prepares the food, makes the sauces, grinds the coffee, and does all the cooking. After the meal is over the utensils are washed, and the work all done by electricity. At night the curtains close of themselves and the lights go out, and if one requires the little night-table to glide towards the bed with the required petit breakfast all laid out upon it, merely touch the button and it is there.

It is a wonderful place, this Ferie Electric Villa, and the *Graphic* has devoted a whole page to illustrations of it which conjure up in the brain alluring visions of the approaching millennium, especially when such inventive genius will have penetrated the world of business. But our castles totter upon reading the comment which states that, beyond all praise as the villa is, probably most of us would prefer to rely upon the human agency after all. I wonder why.

The owner and inventor of the enchanted house is M. Georgia Knap, who is also the author of an important book on the manufacture of motor-cars. We shall hope to learn more of him.

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### THE EXPERIMENT.

**I**T seemed a frivolous thing and I told Maud so, yet she would persist in going. Aunt Jane supported my opinion and declared, moreover, that the motive was one of unpardonable vanity. "If women want complexions and eternal youth, the best way to secure them is by plenty of exercise and fresh air," she affirmed with a good deal of emphasis.

Mrs. Marsden asserted that in her day such a thing was unknown and undreamed of, and she couldn't see but that women then got along as well as any. To Mary Woodlands it was a profound surprise to think that a B.A. like Maud Marsden could stoop to anything so commonplace.

It was time for Maud to rise in self-defence. She explained, with a touch of hauteur in her manner, that it was merely an experiment, but she had made up her mind to try it. "However, I'll be home in time for tea," she called out triumphantly, and the door closed behind her and she vanished into the street.

In the evening her brother happened in. "Have you taken to snow-shoeing, Maud, or given up mid-night vigils? You're looking better."

The next day Mrs. Fanning did stop in the middle of a sentence to say, "How well you are looking, Maud!—but then, you've been having a long walk!"

But when some one else remarked with a glance at the perverse one, that there were cases in which time enhanced rather than diminished beauty, it was the last straw. Mrs. Marsden became agitated, Aunt Jane never would have believed that a "face massage treatment" could so transform one, and Mary Woodlands decided then and there to go down the next day—"that is, if you are quite sure it is not painful, Maud," she added.

"No, no, I have arranged for a whole course—"

"Oh, Maudie," ventured her mother, "but aren't you afraid that will be too much!"

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### SCIENTIFIC HEADGEAR.

**O**F all the fearful and wonderful creations displayed in the great emporiums of trade, has there ever been anything to surpass the hats of this season? One devotee to fashion declared that her courage failed in the mere attempt to try one on. One woman lifted up her voice in open revolt, another so trembled at the prospective loneliness of being out of style that she has trained her vision so as to enable her to embrace the change out of pure admiration.