

WOMAN'S SUPPLEMENT

A FEW PAGES PREPARED TO MY LADY'S TASTE

The Editorial Table

A Mist of Green

THERE are two months of the year when work of any kind seems to be an unwise waste of human effort. Of course, some readers may hasten to add that there are ten other months of the year in which it is foolish to toil. May and October are the halcyon time for the vagabond, and it is well in the days of green orchard or the days of brown woodland to have afternoons to devote to "just trifling." This continent is filled with impertinent advisers who put up bits of advice in vulgar "Americanese"—to the effect: "Get Busy" or "Do It Now." These are the utterances of cheap and fussy persons, who confuse hurry with progress, and who are nervous wrecks before they are forty years of age. The English poet who lamented that "we lay waste our powers" and that much of Nature's most intimate loveliness escapes us, would be horrified, indeed, at our modern world, in which gasoline plays so malevolent and malodorous a part.

But in these hours of May's first fortnight, when the summer fabrics bestrew the counters, and the blue bay waters invite the fancy to sail across lakes and rivers to St. Andrews-by-the-Sea, even the business man forgets the cash register and goes a-fishing. Then the girl, whose lot it is to spend the shining hours in an office, escapes in the evening to one of the city's open spaces, where the flowers and the foliage are in the gladdest of spring's adorning. It is a comfort to forget all the fashions which have bewildered us during the last few months, to ignore the vagaries, which warring Balkan States and lunatic Cubists and Futurists have thrust upon us, and consider only the raiment of the trees, which is now a veritable symphony in green. So, we forget the evening paper and the popular magazine and settle down in a corner of the garden to read an old-fashioned poem which has two lines with the best description of this blossom month:

"Such a time as goes before the leaf,
When all the wood stands in a mist of green."

The Browning Love Letters

"ISN'T it hopelessly vulgar?" said a girl graduate to me, as she indicated the headline in the morning paper on the first Saturday of May: "Browning Letters Realized Big Sum."

Tears of vexation were in the girl's voice and almost in the girl's eyes and I knew just how she felt about it, although I have learned that crying over anything is briny foolishness.

"How could they do it?" she continued. "That son of Browning's must have been hateful. Those letters should have been burned and the ashes buried in Italy with Elizabeth Browning."

Certainly, it was with distaste that most of us read: "The whole collection of the love letters of the two poets brought £6,550." Over thirty thousand dollars for these letters may seem a "considerable sum" to the person with the soul of the auctioneer—but those letters should never, never have been handled by the "going-going-gone" public. Someone may say that the world will now learn more of the love-story of these two great souls and will profit thereby. All that the world had any right to know is written in the rose-hued "Sonnets From The Portuguese," by the woman poet, and in the invocation "O Lyric Love," "One Word More," and the passionate triumph of "Prospice," by Robert Browning. That inspiration which each found in the brain and the heart of the other is given to the world in those perfect poems, but the intimate tenderness of the letters is another matter altogether and belongs to the lovers alone. That their production in the auction room caused

a "buzz of excitement" among the dealers must make every true reader of Browning feel that such a scene is the most vulgar manifestation of the modern publicity craze. As for Browning's own views of the dignity and reticence which should guard the experience of the individual we turn once more to "House."

"Shall I sonnet-sing you about myself?

Do I live in a house you would like to see?

Is it scant of gear, has it store of pelf?

Unlock my heart with a sonnet-key? . . .



A LEADING LIBERAL LADY.

Mrs. Rowell, Wife of Mr. N. W. Rowell, K.C., Was Elected President of the Toronto Women's Liberal Association—Formed the Day of the Laurier Visit. Mrs. Rowell is Also an Office-holder in the Y.W.C.A., and Was Recently Elected President of the Dominion Council of That Body.

"For a ticket, apply to the Publisher."

No; thanking the public, I must decline.

A peep through my window, if folk prefer;

But, please you, no foot over threshold of mine."

Neither Tennyson nor Browning cared for publicity, while Nathaniel Hawthorne shrank from the public scrutiny of his day. The big drum and the advance agent belong to the star of the "chorus," not to the writer of true poems, nor the singer of great songs.

Weary William

IN all the bloom and beauty of May, there can be found weary creatures who are tired of life and who seek to leave it. Such a case of unseasonable suicide was recently chronicled in our indefatigable press about a man residing in New Jersey who cast himself into a quarry and found relief from household cares. The man, whose name was William, left an explanatory note behind him—these desperate creatures are often thoughtful correspondents—declaring that too much housework had driven him to this headlong course.

"I can't beat carpets, or clean house," ran the

pitiful post-mortem message, "and it ain't no use of your trying to make me. When you read this, I hope you will give up your habit of cleaning house every time you hear a robin sing."

Poor dear William! Our sympathies go out to the down-trodden soul, who found dust-chasing so depressing that he determined to return to the dust itself. That last touch in the farewell note is of infinite pathos and might move the heart of Sylvia Pankhurst. William must have possessed the artistic temperament, to which the robin's note makes an appeal which is not to be resisted. William should have been out in the woods, listening to robins and orioles and blackbirds, instead of answering the stern call of the carpet-beater, or responding to the lure of the window-washer. The untidy housewife has frequently been held up to scorn, as a provoker of domestic discomfort, who drives her unfortunate husband to tarry at the cocktail. However, the other extreme may be even more painful, with quite as tragic results. There are not many, however, even among the over-cleanly Marthas who send an unfortunate man to his death at the bottom of a stone quarry. William must have been a poor creature, after all, to submit to such a heavy course in domestic science. He should have taken the law and the broomstick in his own hands and given the lady a demonstration of the rights of man.

Our Public Playgrounds

AS the summer months approach, the subject of public playgrounds becomes of absorbing interest to all kind-hearted Canadian citizens. Every year sees more money spent on sending little children and their mothers, who would otherwise have to spend the heated term in the slums, out to the country or the lakeside for two weeks of fresh air. But why have slums at all? If the Capital of Germany can get along without them, then the cities of a bright new Dominion like Canada should certainly be able to abolish them utterly. However, to return to the public playgrounds, where ever so many youngsters will be waiting for something to do! A woman who is well acquainted with such undertakings in large cities of the States has assured me that thorough supervision is absolutely necessary, if the "playing" is to result in any real physical or moral benefit. It is rather difficult for a Canadian who has been brought up in the normal healthy home of a small town, where there is plenty of room in the backyard for the exercise of juvenile activities, to realize that there are hundreds of small persons in Montreal, Toronto and Winnipeg, who have not learned to play, and whose instincts for clean and joyous sport require most careful and intelligent development. Here is a task for our grown-up boys and girls which the future will doubtless prove to have been well worth the time and trouble.

The Council and the Kindergarten

MISS CARRIE M. DERICK, Professor of Botany in McGill University, who took a prominent part in the discussions at the annual meeting of the National Council this month, was eminently sensible in her remarks on juvenile education. The delegates were considering the age-limit for young pupils, when Miss Derick somewhat startled them by saying that four years of age was not too early for the first school experience. It must be remembered that kindergarten classes can hardly be regarded as serious school work, and certainly involve no exhausting brain fag for the small pupils. Exercise is considered very carefully in the modern time-table, and even five or ten minutes of variety will make the needed break in the routine. The delicate or neurotic child is hardly fitted for school life, at all, but the healthy youngster is not likely to take early instruction too seriously and to suffer thereby.