

## LETTERS FROM LIFE.—No. 4.

Graithwaite.

DEAREST PHYLLIS,—How absolutely absorbing Hospital work seems. From your letters I imagine that the average Pro. does not indulge in the daily paper, and for matter of that takes little interest in the great and terribly interesting doings of the world in general "beyond the gates." I feel sure I should experience the sensations of Rip Van Winkle after his prolonged slumber, if I could not peep into the *Pall Mall* at breakfast time, when the Dad becomes invisible behind the *Globe*, and if, after the day's labours, we could not exchange sheets of the *Times*. Any way, I think your suggestion excellent that every now and then I should compile a *rechauffe* of current events, and keep you *au courant* with them, just to prevent you becoming dull and *groovy*; don't get narrow, whatever you do, and in consequence uninteresting to healthy mortals—if not a *bore*. Well, the royalties of Europe are all more or less *en evidence* just now. The Emperor of Germany has grown a beard, has telegraphed for Angeli to paint him forthwith, and has become a fortune, for the time being, to the photographers of the Fatherland. He has a great grasp of detail, and has gladdened the heart of Levy, the conductor of the orchestra at Munich, by perusing the performances of the *corps de ballet*. "Your ballet girls are dressed with much more *chic* than ours," he remarked; "at Berlin they wear starched frocks, which I can't bear." The Queen of Denmark has had a seventy-fourth birthday in the bosom of her family, and received a large number of presents, including a tortoise-shell fan, studded with diamonds, from the Emperor of Russia; some superb black lace interwoven with diamonds, a bracelet, and a rug of cloth-of-gold, from the Empress; a large settee, ornamented very tastefully with embossed leather, from the Princess of Wales; an antique porcelain watch from the Prince; and two silver candlesticks from the Duke and Duchess of Fife.

What a grief the sudden death of the poor young Grand Duchess Paul of Russia must be to her family. You know she is the daughter of the King of Greece, and a grand-daughter of the King and Queen of Denmark.

The Crown Princess of Sweden is not to be allowed to remain long in her home in the North. Though her health has been much improved during her long stay in the South, and there is not now any immediate danger of a fatal termination of her chest disease, her medical advisers do not advocate her wintering in Sweden, and she will therefore again spend the winter abroad. Egypt has been chosen as the "health resort"

where her Royal Highness will spend the first few weeks of her exile.

Everybody will be glad to hear that the diagnosis of "Carmen Sylva's" malady which threatened her Majesty with spinal paralysis and sudden death, was altogether too alarmist. Queen Elisabeth is only suffering from a bad attack of "nerves," precipitated by her excitement over the love affair of the unhappy Mdle. Vacaresco, and the mischief is in the brain, not in the spine. Poor Queen! she has never ceased to grieve for the loss of her only, and deeply-loved, child, and is a beautiful and sympathetic woman. What a splendid feature in modern history is Christina, Queen Mother of Spain, and how promptly and courageously she has acted for the good of the sufferers in the late calamitous floods.

Everyone in society seems hoping that a rich Earl is to have the Garter, and a dukedom, and that our Princess Maud of Wales will marry his son. In these Radical days a slice of London is a very good *pièce de resistance*.

I see there is to be a new Ladies' Club. At a meeting of lady journalists, held at the rooms of the Society of Authors last week, it was decided to start a club, to be called "The Writers' Club," and to be confined to ladies who are engaged in literary pursuits. The entrance fee is to be a guinea, and it was decided to take at once temporary premises in the Strand as the headquarters of the club.

Miss Clementina Black lately remarked that journalism is one of the very few callings in which a woman may, if she is fortunate, arrive at an income calculated rather on a man's scale than a woman's—that is to say, in which an able woman may earn enough to live, not on bare, but on ample, means. To succeed, however, demands a rather special combination of qualities—strong, physical health, good taste (the power of perceiving and avoiding the border-line of vulgarity), and fine discernment. How shall a girl learn the calling? Speaking generally, it has to be "picked up." A girl living in a provincial town can begin by trying in a local paper, sending in notes carefully modelled upon the methods of the particular paper, and can at the same time be sending work in the same way to some one or more London papers. The success of a woman in journalism depends upon two points—her abilities and her regularity of work. She must have the power of writing, in a way that the public cares to read about, a thing that the public cares to know, and she must have this power as nearly as possible always at command.

Have you read the Bashkirtseff Letters? If not, do so; though I must own the fair Marie's

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