

ASTRA'S TALKS WITH GIRLS.

[Correspondents seeking information in this department should address their queries to "ASTRA," Progress, St. John.]

My dear girls, I wonder if any of you have ever read a beautiful poem called *The Knight of Intervention*? I am not quite sure of the author's name, but I think it was the Rev. M. A. Stone. It is the poem from which the song, *Brief pour Elle* is taken, and it tells how a knight of old who was scorned by his haughty lady love, went out into the world and did battle for her sake. His mission was to defend the helpless, to raise the fallen, and to rescue the weak from oppression. His visor was always down and no one had ever seen his face, but when those whom he had befriended asked how they could repay him the answer always came from that closed visor, "Pray for her." No one knew who she might be, and yet they all complied with his request and prayed for the unknown lady, for "her." At last he was slain in battle, and his lady wife, "Pray for her." So all her life she was prayed for, and unconsciously to herself the prayers of thousands were daily ascending in her behalf to the throne of Grace! A pretty story, is it not? And now for the application, which is that I spent a particularly happy New Year, and as you have all been so kind in wishing me a very happy one, I think your good wishes must have had something to do with it, and so I beg to express my gratitude for your many good wishes, and also to hope they reacted upon your own heads and you had delightful times, too.

LUCILLE—NOVA SCOTIA.—Yes, indeed, I did appreciate your gift, Lucille, more than I can tell you, and when I said I thought I knew whose hand tied the pink ribbon, I only meant that, although there was nothing about the box to tell me who it was from, I guessed at once that it could only come from you, and I scarcely know why, but somehow, as soon as I caught sight of the pink ribbon I thought of Lucille. You see, I did not remove the cover, or untie the ribbon. I merely peeped in and then kept the box to look at, so I only found your little note a few days ago, and I think I was pretty clever to make such an accurate guess, was I not? Yes, thank you, I had some very pretty gifts and all from near, and dear friends, only two handkerchiefs, though, and no gloves, I wish I had been as fortunate as you. You put it in a very amusing way, it must have grown a little monotonous "towards the last." Are you going to give your friend the situation? Thank you for the New Year's wishes, and "the same to yourself."

FORTY-NINE, Bridgeville, N. S.—I believe you belong to the wicked sex, my friend, but as you do not say, I suppose I haven't anything to accuse you of because if I said "You are deceiving me, I believe you are a man" you could answer, "Who said I wasn't?" Thank you, we had a very happy New Year indeed. (1) Well yes; I really do not see why a girl should not be fully justified in keeping up a mild flirtation with two men at the same time, and then saying yes to the one who is sufficiently enterprising to propose first, because you see, if she said no, what guarantee has she that the other one will ever propose at all? You know a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, so I say success to the one who first tries his fate. (2) It is supposed to be quite proper for a girl to propose in leap year, especially if her beloved one is a bashful youth; but remember that if he should say, "No, thank you," she must take the consequences and bear her defeat like a man. (3) That is too hard a question for me to answer, Forty-nine, the dividing line is too delicate! Some women are old maids at sixteen, and others are girls at 40, so you must ask me an easier question. What woman ever really admitted that she was an "old maid?" (4) My opinion of elopement marriages? Good gracious, my boy, are you going to elope with anyone? What a dangerous character you must be! Where's the pup? Why, I think they are awfully old-fashioned, and out of style, of course; even our mother's did not elope, it was going out of fashion in their day, and only those gay dames, our grandmothers, indulged in such vagaries. Better have a quiet wedding, my boy, with the consent of all parties. "How hard can a young man hug a girl without danger of her calling out for help?" and do I think she would resort to such a remedy or would she scratch him and pull his hair?" Oh, this is really dreadful! I am afraid you want a straight jacket you bold, bad man you, to talk about such matters in cold blood! But still I don't mind whispering in your ear, Forty Nine, that if he understands what he is about he can hug "mildly hard" before she will shriek for assistance; it is mercy she would have to call for if she got into your clutches. As for the other alternative, scratching is very bad form, and hair pulling! Why, she would be clever indeed if she succeeded in pulling that pepper and salt stubble field of yours; it would be like trying to make an impression on a barbed wire fence, besides, none of us object to hugging in moderation. Why, I remember the night that Geoffrey proposed to me—well! never, mind, I wish you a happy New Year, Forty Nine.

MARIE N., North End.—If you were really in earnest about wishing to get an authentic portrait of Mary Queen of Scots, I am in a position, through the kindness of a correspondent, to secure one for you; and if you will send me your address in strict confidence, of course, for you must understand that I have no object in wishing to know your name or address, and am only trying to do you a service, I will send you the address of a lady who has one to dispose of, and also a description of the portrait, which was taken just before the execution of the ill-fated Queen, and bears the date of 1587. It is a correct likeness as she is described in history, and represents her kneeling, praying, surrounded by maids of honor and priests. The picture was sent out from Edinburgh to St. Andrews in 1800, or earlier, and the owner thinks it could be easily photographed, as the features are very distinct. So, if you would like the picture, or a copy of it, I shall be happy to assist you in any way in my power.

MRS. MARIE, St. Stephen.—I did not like to use your name, and you did not give any *nom de plume*, so I hope you will see this. Thank you very much for taking so much trouble, and you will see that I have used your information. No references were required; your letter was a sufficient reference in itself. Thank you also for your kind words about Progress, and my column in particular. I wish very much that I could really see you and talk to you, for you know written words seem so formal. I can see from your letter that the lonely life you speak of does not narrow your mind, nor dull your sympathy. The passage you quote is a little difficult to discuss in print, but I should take from it the meaning that the one reason women should fear man is because he possesses the power to lead her into temptation. The "hundred reasons why man should fear woman" are more difficult to understand, but I fancy the author must have meant that our sex were so many-sided, so difficult to understand, so gifted with powers of dissimulation, and at the same time possessing such a terrible fascination for the stronger brethren that we must ever remain an inscrutable mystery to them, to be admired from a distance, and both loved and dreaded at closer quarters. The reasons why one woman should fear another are, I think, manifest. We understand each other so well that we know all the weak spots in another woman's armor, and I am afraid we are so utterly merciless, most of us, to the rest of our sex. This I think must be the meaning, and he was a clever man who wrote it. Don't think that I do not love my own sex, for I do, and I think a good woman the noblest of God's works, but so many of us have mean little ways, you know, that I cannot help seeing them. Write to me again, I shall be very glad to hear from you at any time.

CAPE BRETON, Bras D'Or—Scat! Cape Breton. Nothing but the pretty little card you sent me, and the atty of the legend on the back of the same, prevents me from chasing you right out of my column, and over the back fence. I would set the pup on you only I am sure he would pick you up and bring you into the house if I did, he brings in such strange things. You poor dear, perhaps you have been having too much essence of New Year's day, and it has gone to your head, and made you foolish. You want to know "what I think of a young lady who is engaged, sitting on the knee of another girl?" In the first place the other girl has not got a knee, no lady ever has, you know, she has a lap. But to go back to your question. If you had asked me what I would think of an engaged young man sitting on another girl's lap, or even an engaged girl sitting on another young man's knee, I might have done the subject something like justice, but as it is, I acknowledge myself beaten, and my head swims to such an extent that I can only say, I should think the young lady in question was so accustomed to sitting on some one's knee that she seated herself on the "other girl's" lap in a fit of absence of mind. So you "take great pleasure in reading my answers to questions asked in Progress?" I am sincerely glad to hear it, and only hope that you will derive much profit, as well as pleasure from my answer to your own question. Good bye, "Cape Breton!" be a good boy, and don't go sitting on other people's knees. I am really afraid you are not a very good boy at all, though.

SCHOOL BOY, Nova Scotia.—Oh yes; I like to have letters from boys as well as girls, and I don't mind how many write to me, provided they are nice boys. So you think I "sat upon" "Myself" and the "United Rivals." Well, I certainly tried to sit upon the latter, to the best of my ability, and I hope I succeeded. I never get offended at honest, innocent fun, such as "Cape Breton" and "Forty Nine" have just been "poking" at me, because I like to think my correspondents feel as if they knew me well enough to venture on a joke now and then, and you see "Cape Breton" confined himself to one solitary question, the intense obscurity of which was obvious at the first glance; but when anyone takes up my scanty time with an endless string of foolish questions, why you know even a worm will turn at last. I should think you could easily get the music of the "Confidence Militaire" at any music store. I have not seen it myself yet, but if your music dealer does not happen to have it in stock he will send for it, for you. Never mind about the curiosity, we all have our share, I think, I know I have, but it wasn't curiosity that killed the poor cat, it was care. Send the MS. to the publisher with a wrapper closed stamped, and addressed to yourself, as the editor will not be responsible for its return otherwise. Buy two American two cent stamps, and unless the MS. is very bulky that should be sufficient to pay for its return; that is, of course, if it is folded and left open at the ends, but you must not roll it. I scarcely know how your friend could treat the person you mention, except to be very firm, distant, and dignified with him, but he should certainly rebuke him decidedly for being impertinent and familiar with guests. A man like that would soon be master, instead of servant, and I would rather let him go, a hundred times over, than put up with impertinence from him. It was indeed most presumptuous for anyone to predict the end of the world. I was very glad to hear again from "that troublesome boy," as you call him, and I saw very few mistakes indeed; both your composition and writing are very good. Good-bye for the present.

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WHAT TRIMMINGS ARE WORN.

Some Things that Set off Gowns and Beautify the Fair Sex.

Jetted net for plastrons appears with jet gimps.

Long scarf veils may bring the scarfs of real lace in once again.

Jet buttons should accompany the narrow jet gimps now worn.

France encourages a combination of blue and heliotrope in broches.

Tabliers of jet are shown in many designs, but the girdles take better.

The light and medium shades of bengaline are exquisite this season.

Thick rolls like moss are placed on the bottom of skirts and basques.

A passementerie of pink pearls and gold cabochons is beautiful and costly.

Green crystal buttons appear on a brown gown trimmed with dark green velvet.

Shaded pearl buttons may be found to agree with any of the fashionable mixed suitings.

Frizzed coque's plumes are made into edgings, likewise the ostrich feathers and peacock's eyes.

A bead passementerie has large flowers padded up so as to stand out, *en relief*, with flat stems and leaves.

Mohair braids and buttons trim the rough dress gowns in tailor fashion, and silk braid and buttons the finer materials.

Girdle belts of fur on fur-trimmed costumes are new and unique, and like many other fashions of the season are chiefly designed for slender forms.

Bands of curled silk, imitating feather edgings, are worn on hats and dresses, and in wide bands rather than edgings as a border on skirts in place of fur.

Bias-cut and doubled ruches of velvet will trim the neck, front, arm-sizes, lower edge and wrists of silk and woolen gowns, especially the latter, that are worn by slender figures.

Elegant sets of jet now include a flaring collar ending in long strands in front, girdle having a "rain" fringe fully eighteen inches long, and arm-size pieces that frequently connect at the top of the girdle.

Some sleeves are trimmed with a ruffle of lace falling below a band of fur. The lower close part of the sleeve is of velvet and the upper full part of silk gathered by a black satin ribbon tied on the outside of the arm to form a falling frill at the elbow. —*Dry Goods and Fashion.*

Two Blouses.

PLAIN, BUT PRETTY.

MILLER BROS.' EXHIBIT.

It Contained the Best Pianos and Organs and Was Admired.

At the recent exhibition, says the Halifax Mail, Miller Bros. (Granville street) occupied a large space (nearly the whole of the south end gallery), and their show presented a fine appearance. It was all enclosed by a nice neat railing (of turned bannisters) and the place raised about eight inches, while all was covered by a nice carpet, the walls and ceiling being nicely papered, and suspended from the ceiling were three electric lights, and their whole place tastefully and richly draped and some nice paintings hung. They showed fifteen fine organs and pianos. The Karn organ in church and parlor styles, some of which are very fine in both appearance and tone, ranging in price from \$75 to \$450. Also some fine Karn pianos in mahogany, walnut and rosewood finish. The Evan Bros. piano in mahogany, walnut and rosewood finish; both of those makes of pianos are becoming very popular. Prices of pianos shown ranged from \$350 to \$600. Occasionally some very sweet music could be heard from their department. They also showed in a separate booth ten of the celebrated Raymond sewing machines in different style of oak and walnut. Among them was a very fine cabinet machine, which attracted much attention, it being so simple to open and close and to operate; and when closed having the appearance of a writing desk. This machine has become of late years a general favorite with the public. This firm deserves credit for going to the trouble and expense they did in making so fine an exhibit. They received three diplomas on their organs and pianos. The highest award given, no prizes were offered. They have now been in business over twenty years and during that time have worked up a very large business in the lower provinces, which territory they control.

The monthly concerts at the school for the blind have been resumed. The first of these took place on Wednesday afternoon in the assembly hall of the institution. The visitors were conducted to different parts of the buildings, and were loud in their praises of the arrangement of the music rooms. Through the plate glass doors of each of these rooms a pupil could be seen practising upon one of the new Evans Bros. or Karn pianos recently put in by Miller Bros. of the city, who are the sole agents. Their pianofortes are particularly fine in tone and are giving every satisfaction.

MILLER BROS., Granville street, at the recent exhibition, received three diplomas on their organ and piano exhibit.

Warm Slippers FOR Cold Feet!

Ladies' German.	Ladies' Felt.	Men's.
25 Cents.	65 Cents.	Felt, 75 Cts.
75 Cents.	80 Cents.	German, 75 Cts.
80 Cents.	90 Cents.	\$1.00 German.
\$1.00	90 Cents.	\$1.00 Felt.
\$1.40	\$1.00	

Misses' German Slippers, 50 Cents; Child's German, 50 and 75 Cents.

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WINTER RESORT OF THE WEST INDIES.

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"MYRTLE BANK" HOTEL,

The Elite Hotel of Jamaica.
THE HEADQUARTERS OF DISTINGUISHED VISITORS FROM ABROAD.
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HOME OF THE INVALID AND PLEASURE SEEKER.

SITUATED on the Seashore just outside the City and within 5 minutes' drive of all Docks, Stations, Points of Interest and Business Centres. Has the finest views and healthiest location of any Hotel in the City.

Terms Very Moderate.

Swimming Baths, Salt and Fresh Water Baths, Cafe, Billiard Saloon, Barber Shop, Lavatories, Electric Light, Telephone Connection, and all Modern Improvements and Conveniences.

Ici on parle Francais. Aquí se habla Espanol.

SEE A FEW OF THE MANY TESTIMONIALS:

Opinions of some Distinguished Guests on the "Myrtle Bank" Hotel.

From the Hon. Villiers Stuart, King's House, Jamaica.—Having been staying on several occasions at the Myrtle Bank Hotel, I have found it well appointed, and the Staff most obliging. The Hotel is well situated, the verandahs have the benefit of the sea-breeze and command very interesting views. We found the beds especially comfortable.

From Arthur Harvey, Esq., Toronto, Canada.—I have spent some weeks in Jamaica, every hour of which has been delightful, and much of the pleasure has been due to the excellent accommodations of the Myrtle Bank Hotel. The rooms, the cuisine, &c., and the civility received at your hands, call for this acknowledgment.

From Hon. Thos. J. Clayton, Thurston, Penna.—We have spent ten days at Jamaica, making the Myrtle Bank Hotel our headquarters. We have found it the best Hotel on the Island. We can recommend this Hotel to our countrymen as an agreeable resting place.

From John M. Oakley, of Pittsburgh, Pa.—On leaving your hospitable house, the "Myrtle Bank," after two weeks' stay, we wish to say to our countrymen, through you, that we have found your location favored by the sea-breeze as cool as the mountain top. We shall advise all our friends visiting at Jamaica to stop at this Hotel.

From Rear-Admiral Seymour, R. N.—For the four weeks I have lived in your Hotel, I have been struck with the civility of the Staff to guests and visitors. I wish the undertaker every success. I advise any one visiting Kingston to stay at Myrtle Bank.

From Hon. T. A. and Lady Brassey.—The Hotel is about the best planned I have seen in the Tropics. The broad verandahs and passages entirely open to the air make it deliciously cool. The bed rooms could not be more comfortable.

From Senator Warner Miller, U. S. A.—I desire to express my appreciation of your Hotel. I have found it a most delightful place and have enjoyed my visit to Kingston. Your Hotel furnished me with perfect accommodation.

From Cleveland Moffett, Correspondent of the "New York Herald."—It gives me pleasure to state that during the ten days I have passed in your pleasant Hotel, I have been treated with the greatest courtesy and attention. No trouble spared in the interests of the guests. The Hotel is certainly well managed.

From John C. Kleine (Sept. 3rd, 1891), Correspondent "New York World."—During the stay of myself and wife at Myrtle Bank we have received every attention. The accommodations are most excellent, the beds could not be better, and the table is first-class.

JAMAICA can be reached via Steamer Alpha from Halifax, sailing twice a month, \$75 for return passage; or via Steamers of the Boston Fruit Company, sailing from Boston twice a week, \$50 for return passage. For further particulars address:

HERBERT A. CUNHA,
MANAGER MYRTLE BANK HOTEL CO., Kingston, Jamaica.

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