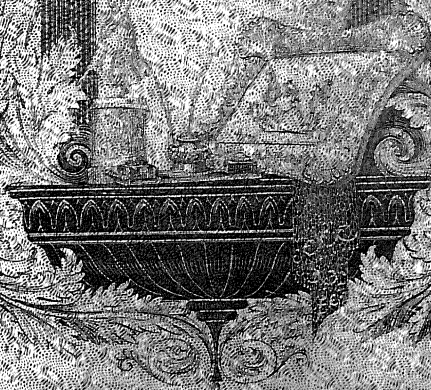




The  
Young Lady's  
Locket



THE  
YOUNG LADY'S BOOK:

A MANUAL  
OF  
ELEGANT RECREATIONS,  
EXERCISES,  
AND PURSUITS.

SECOND EDITION.



LONDON:

VIZETELLY, BRANSTON, AND CO.  
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THE  
YOUNG LADY'S BOOK.

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*The Cabinet Council.*

SEATED in front of a splendid specimen of the ingenuity of the Chinese,—a gilt and richly inlaid table, covered with a variety of beautiful minerals, shells, and articles of virtù,—the Editor, after having been duly announced by Prudence, her bower-woman, found his cousin Penelope, on his entrance into Lady Mary's brilliant boudoir. Lady Mary was standing, attired for a ride, near her fair kinswoman; and Aunt Elinor, the very pearl of the ancient sisterhood of spinsters, entered the apartment before the usual greetings were concluded.

"Your cousin, young ladies," said Aunt Elinor, "wishes to look round Lady Mary's boudoir again, to see if anything has escaped his notice."

This was a very mysterious announcement. Lady Mary, after looking earnestly, first at her aunt, and then at Penelope, as if she were desirous of reading an explanation in their eyes, exclaimed: "Escaped his notice, aunt! I cannot conceive what you mean."





The Cabinet Council

"Why, it would seem, child," was the old lady's reply, "that the arrangement and decorations of your boudoir, have, in some degree, attracted his admiration; although, for my own part, to speak candidly,—and you know I love you equally,—Penelope's seems to me by far the more preferable of the two; indeed, with one or two alterations, it might be pronounced perfect."

"The fault of Penelope's boudoir," said Lady Mary, "is superlative neatness: it looks as prim as herself; casting a glance round it, your first feeling of admiration at its order, is subdued in an instant, by a disagreeable conviction of the pains it must have cost her to drill her little squadrons of embellishments so as to produce such an effect. My dear Pen! you may smile, but you are positively as precise as a mathematician: old Euclid seems to have been school-master to the Graces who preside at your toilet. But, would you believe it?" added the lively Lady Mary, turning to the Editor, "notwithstanding she dresses in drab, and looks demure, Cousin Penelope, Sir, I can assure you, is as brilliant as possible on a birth-day; for when she does condescend to be splendid, I must confess, that few, if any of us, eclipse her."

"Yet allow me to remark," said Penelope, "that the rich and profuse negligence which reigns in your boudoir is the result of thrice the toil that I have employed in decorating mine."

"That is true enough, Penelope," said Lady Mary, while a slight blush tinged her cheek; "but the toil you speak of is not apparent. I look upon my boudoir (pardon the comparison) as upon a fine picture, in which those splendid dashes of light, which charm us,—those fine touches of brilliant beauty that seem to fall from a mass of foliage to gild the bold edge of a ruin, and finally descend to illumine and ennoble a daisy,—appear to have been the work of a moment;"—

"Or, to help you with a more high-flown simile, Lady Mary," said her cousin, who was now turning over a portfolio of engravings, "they seem to have been produced by the Muse of Painting, at a single dash of her brush newly dipped in the fountain of light!"

"And yet," continued Lady Mary, smiling at Penelope's simile, "they are, in fact, produced only by labour, both of the mind and the hand. This apparent carelessness of arrangement has, I admit, cost me considerable pains; but everybody admires the effect, because the art which produced it is concealed. Here, for instance, in this recess, is a beautiful cabinet picture,—a charming landscape, partly veiled, but not hidden, by a common, but,

in my opinion, remarkably elegant creeping-plant, which extends far enough round the corner to twine about the carved ebony frame, and festoon the polished surface of an old-fashioned glass, which I prize because it was my grandmamma's: here again, you may perceive it wandering downward, and encircling a fossil; on the other side of the window it has attached its tendrils to a tall and stately exotic, and droops from its topmost flower to garland a Greek vase. Now, although this appears to be all the result of pure accident, Penelope, who is smiling at my comparison, will tell you, 'twas I that did it. And do not imagine, I pray, that everything here is in such a chaotic jumble as to be inconvenient there is, in fact, order in its seeming confusion; I have a clue to the labyrinth, and can find a book or a butterfly in my boudoir quite as soon as Miss Penelope can in hers. Candidly speaking, which do you prefer?"

"To me," replied the Editor, to whom this question was addressed, "they appear to be exquisite specimens of the different styles to which they belong. Like every other boudoir that I have seen (although all bear a faint sort of family resemblance to each other), each is apparently embellished according to the judgment of its fair owner, of whose taste and habits it might be taken as a symbol."

"That is precisely as I think," remarked Penelope.

"Then, my dear," replied Lady Mary, "notwithstanding your reputed wisdom, I must respectfully submit,—as I am told the lawyers say, when they contradict the court,—that you are partially in error. Of a lady's taste, her boudoir may sometimes, but not always, be a visible criterion. She may possess the taste of one of those select few, on whom Apollo has shaken a dew-drop from his laurel, and yet have as little means of gratifying it as poor Cinderella, before she had a little fairy glass-blower for a shoemaker: she may also be gifted with pure taste in an equal degree, and have a kind Cræsus for a relative to allow her an unlimited account at Coutts's, and yet be possessed with a sister sprite to that which nestled in the heart of an Elwes or a Dancer. That a boudoir is not always a proof of the habits of its owner, I positively confess mine to be an instance:—those specimens of minerals are very rare and valuable,—at least, so says Penelope,—but they never struck me as being beautiful, and she knows I am little more acquainted with Mineralogy, than with the grammar of the Moslems. But to waive the question as to the superiority of Penelope's boudoir to mine, or mine to

hers, allow me to ask, why my grave cousin, who sits smiling at our debate, is so anxious that nothing in my pet apartment should escape his notice?"

"I will endeavour to satisfy you on that point," said the Editor. "About two years ago, while seated in this identical chair, I conceived the idea of producing and publishing a work that should be deemed worthy of the acceptance of every young lady in the kingdom."—

"I hope you do not intend to inflict another Annual upon us," said Penelope.

"By no means," replied the Editor; "so far from following the beautiful, but much-beaten track of my predecessors, it is my intention to offer the present-giving public a PERENNIAL,—an *evergreen*, that will not be merely looked at and laid aside for ever, but will attract notice and merit attention at all times and at all seasons;—not such a mere bouquet of flowers as, however rare or beautiful, seldom tempt their warmest admirers to a second inspection, and which are always dethroned, even if they hold their ephemeral sway for a year, by other blossoms, presented by the same hands, at the return of the book-budding season;"—

"But," interrupted Aunt Elinor, with more enthusiasm than usually beamed on her placid countenance,—“to drop my nephew’s flowery metaphors,—a volume which, although rich in beautiful embellishments, shall be so useful and instructive, as well as amusing, that it will, in all probability, be as often in the hands of every young lady of sense who possesses it, three or four years hence, as within a month after its publication.”

"That is exactly my meaning," said the Editor, looking gratefully towards Aunt Elinor; "and I sincerely trust I have been fortunate enough to accomplish so desirable an object."

"And pray, cousin," inquired Penelope, "what is the book to contain?"

"If you require a view of the contents," replied the Editor, "I have only to say, look around you!—Lady Mary’s boudoir would form a very good index to the volume, and present a capital epitome of a young lady’s best pursuits, exercises, and recreations. Flora has here a number of living representatives; Gnomes, in bronze, seem to bend beneath the weight of the minerals which are placed upon their shoulders; a sea-maid, with her conch, illumines the apartment when ‘Night hath drawn her veil o’er earth and sea;’ the insect world is represented by groups of Oriental beetles, and splendid butterflies; the humming-bird is

here, with many other of his fellow-tenants of the air, making all around them look dim by the metallic lustre of their plumage :—all these remind me of sciences which are applicable to the study of young ladies ;—I have made a ‘prief of it in my note-book ;’ and introductory papers on Botany, Mineralogy, Conchology, Ornithology, and Entomology, have been the consequence.”

“Then there is some probability,—as, of course, I shall have the work,”—said Lady Mary, “that ere long I may know something of two sciences, of which, although they are represented in my boudoir, I am now altogether ignorant.”

“One of them, I know,” said Penelope, “is Mineralogy ; and I must confess, it surprises me that it should never have attracted your favourable notice. If minerals were only to be seen in mines,” she continued, “it would be a different case ; but they have, for years, been mutely pleading to you in their own behalf : they meet your view on all sides ; many of them even in a native state. They contribute essentially to our comfort, and add to our splendour : they embellish the lofty domes and high places which are the pride of our country, and passively contribute to its defence : they adorn our parlours and our persons : some of them are almost indispensable even to the cottager’s wife ; while others sit enthroned on the brows of royal beauty, exceeding all beneath ‘the Lady Luna and her silvery train’ in brilliancy, and equalling the chaplet with which Flora would bedeck herself, in richness and variety of hue ; and although they possess not the fragrance of the rose-bud, nor the graceful form of the lily, their durability exalts them to a higher value than that of the most lovely flower that basks in the noontide ray, or blooms in the shade. The snowdrop melts away almost as soon as the white mantle that covers its birth-place ; the violet delights our eye in the morning, and is withered by sunset ; the queen of flowers endures but for a brief period, and there are few of her subjects hardy enough to bear the scorching glance of a summer sun, and the chill breath of winter : but a diamond endures for ages, and is brilliant and beautiful at all times and in all seasons ; the ruby outlives a thousand generations of roses ; and the holly and the laurel are ephemeral, compared with the emerald.”

Lady Mary was rather surprised at the unusual enthusiasm of Penelope ; without, however, waiting to make any remark upon her cousin’s poetical style of speaking, she placed her hand upon Penelope’s bracelet, and begged to interrupt her oration in favour of the mineral world for a few moments, by offering a short plea

on behalf of the subjects of Flora. "You must, I am sure," said she, "however warmly you may be attached to your pet science, allow, that flowers have one great advantage over minerals:—the latter are dead, but flowers live. We can sow their seeds, and watch them breaking through the earth, and rear them into beauty and perfection. We have sympathies in their favour: they languish beneath intense heat, and are chilled by the cold easterly blast; they flourish for a time, and then fade away like ourselves: but the gem dies not: its duration, for ought we know, may reach to the extent of time. Some may admire it for its beauty, and others doat upon or covet it for its value; but it has never that pure hold on our affections which the flower we nourish possesses. Besides, there are thousands of delightful associations connected with flowers and shrubs. The imagination of the painter, or the poet, never conceived a more exquisite picture of beauty than the dove of the ark gliding towards Ararat with the olive-branch, over the still, solitary, measureless surface of the waters, gazing down upon its own shadow, and listening to the music made by its own wings. Lectures on history, manners, or even mythology, might be given with no text but a leaf or a flower. With a white and red rose before him, the historian might comment upon the old English wars between the houses of York and Lancaster; a bouquet of Eastern flowers would recal to the traveller's memory some dark-eyed maiden of Persia, whom he had seen committing to the charge of a pigeon,—swiftest of messengers,—a billet composed of buds,—the accepted symbols, in her father-land, of hope, joy, grief, reproach, or affection; and the humble daisy of the mead might give a hint to those learned in antique lore, to depict Proserpine gathering flowers in the vales of Sicily, unconscious of the approach of gloomy Dis: a good homily, too, might be written upon a violet."

"What you have said is very true, Lady Mary," replied her cousin; "but the mineral has also its associations: it possesses a greater individuality of interest, in this respect, than the flower. You may shew me a rose of the same species as those worn by the princely Plantagenets, but it is not the same rose. The flower perishes before the hand that gathers it is cold; but the mineral's duration affords scope for the imagination to roam as far as the border-land of the probable and the possible. The wise may smile at me for indulging the feeling, or making the confession, but I have often detected something akin to awe creeping over me when gazing upon a gem:—it may have sparkled on the

arm of Cleopatra, as she sailed down the Cydnus; or enriched the crown of Semiramis, or the girdle of a Ptolemy; or been worn by the Theban mummy that was embalmed three thousand years ago, and after that immensity of time, is brought to revisit the glimpses of the moon, to be gazed and wondered at by those who have been, comparatively speaking, but just ushered into life. It may be, I have thought, when looking at an amethyst, that thou wert once contemplated by Pliny, and wilt be looked upon, a thousand years hence, by some one abiding in what are now the wilds of the New World, but then the heart of a populous city, and the mistress of the earth, with feelings precisely similar to my own! And what a harvest of rich recollections may be gathered from the sight of a suite of family diamonds! At how many birth-days have they been admired! How many brows have they adorned! The hoops and furbelows with which they were once accompanied; the myriads of fashions,—nay, whole generations of their wearers,—have passed away, and are forgotten; their names are only found on musty parchments, pedigrees, or monuments: but the diamonds are the same; brilliant as ever, they mock their transient wearers by their durability,—sparkling on the bosom of the Lady Jane of to-day, as they will, in all probability, sparkle on the brow, the wrist, or the zone, of some equally young and admired Lady Jane, some centuries to come. They have been in a side-box when Garrick played Richard, and will be worn, it may be, at the performance of some Cherokee Roscius a thousand years hence.”

“Why, Pen!” said Lady Mary, almost staring at her cousin, “I never heard you talk at this rate, and in this style, before. What has possessed you?”

“Simply a desire to make a fellow-student. I have merely adopted your own manner, because I thought it would be more likely to attract you, than the usual plain humdrum level of my discourse. You look as though you were astonished, that your Cousin Pen could mount the stilts, or rise into heroics; but, believe me, coz, ‘an thou’lt mouth, I’ll rant as well as thou.’”

“The other science,” said the Editor, “to which, I imagine, Lady Mary alluded, is Ornithology. It is certainly my intention to admit the class-mates of the humming-bird, with those of the nautilus, the butterfly, the emerald, and the rose. The mineral and vegetable kingdoms have each been so finely advocated, that it would be superfluous in me to utter a sentence in their favour. You are both, I know, very much attached to Conchology and