

Mayfair's London Letter

By Adele M Gianelli

LONDON this month just snoozes! That does not sound very elegant, but neither is London in September. Even Bond Street has a lassitude about it that suggests yawns and when Bond Street yawns, it is rather pathetic!

But around St. James' there is an air of expectation, for H.R.H. the Prince of Wales arrives back from Canada to-morrow. He, no doubt, will be surprised to see 'buses lumbering past his front door as they are doing now, during Piccadilly's upheaval. Down Constitution Hill they go, swinging by the very gates of Buckingham—along the Mall—and up past St. James' Palace. For the first time, did one glimpse a flicker of animation in the rigid sentries on guard at H.R.H.'s.

Rumpelmeyer's is just nearby—that rendezvous where the smart world drops in for a *spot of tea*—("Spot" is quite *the* thing to say these days) and I was en route there with Mrs. Eric Mieville. Mrs. Mieville, whose husband is private secretary to Lord Willingdon, leaves for Canada next month and at the moment she is very busy paying a round of farewell visits to her many friends. "We've already taken a house in Ottawa," she confided. "Now the problem is—what sort of clothes to take?" "Woolens," I advised, thinking of Marie Lohr and her Canadian experience. "Well, I've already got a ski-ing outfit," said fascinating Mrs. Mieville, "but my skating experiments were not very successful in Pekin!" Then I learned to my amazement that there is

considerable skating done at the English Club there and the Chinese themselves skate well in their flowing robes.

Mr. and Mrs. Mieville spent four years in Pekin when the former, who by the way, is of Swiss-Huguenot extraction, was secretary to Sir Ronald Macleay. Mrs. Mieville has many amusing stories to relate of oriental life. She is particularly attractive with a soft, pretty voice and I noticed a unique ring of jade which she was wearing for luck. I was speaking about the politeness of the English and Mrs. Mieville said: "But in Japan!!! There a hissing sound in their speech signifies overwhelming politeness and it's the funniest thing you ever heard!"

By this time, Capt. the Hon. Inigo Freeman-Thomas and Mrs. Freeman-Thomas will have arrived in Canada to stay with Their Excellencies. Ottawa, I know, will be charmed with them, but I am afraid it means that Misty's nose will be out of joint! Before I left Canada, Misty—their Excellencies' Scotch terrier—had become quite famous; now, indeed, he has a rival in Moses, the adorable puppy that Mrs. Freeman-Thomas has taken out to Lord Willingdon. I am eagerly waiting news of what happens when the two canines meet! My money is already on Moses, but he is such a well-bred little pet and has just completed a course in manners at a training-school, so doubtless he will disdain to fight in a gubernatorial mansion and will calmly take possession!

I spent a most delightful afternoon with Cap-

tain and Mrs. Freeman-Thomas, before they sailed. Good looks and charm of manner are theirs naturally by inheritance. In addition they are so beautifully happy that they make the most ideal couple I have met in England. Going to Canada is a great adventure to them and in the midst of the excitement, Mrs. Freeman-Thomas was trying to finish a series of water-color sketches she is doing as illustrations for a Fairy-tale book written by a friend.

They were exquisite bits of color in original themes and with a great skill shown in the design of mediaeval costumes. "I have made a special study of that sort of thing," said my hostess, "you see she also inherits the artistic talents of Sir Johnston and Lady Forbes-Robertson. Miss Maxine Elliot, the latter's sister, has loaned her niece her fascinating house in St. John's Wood as their own place is down Brighton way. So the visit was altogether a great occasion—tea with these charming people in a great actress' home! Going through the hall, Capt. Freeman-Thomas said, "Look at this!" and he pointed to the quaintest picture. It was Lady Willingdon as a tiny girl, yet in the "full dress" riding togs of the show-ring, tight-fitting habit, tall hat and boutonniere and she couldn't have been more than six!

These cosy chats are the compensations for staying in town out of season; when meeting people is to know them—not just the how d'you do and good-bye of formal affairs. Undoubtedly the most thrilling of all, was (See also page 74)



Mrs. E. R. Peacock, on the terrace of her country place near Ascot. Mr. and Mrs. Peacock will spend the late autumn in Canada



H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught, on his beautiful estate at Bagshot Park, England. A recent snapshot taken by Miss Gianelli