

# Patchwork

In Prose and Poetry.

Scribimus Indoctæ.

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OCTOBER, 1902.

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## THE WELCOME TO MADAME MELBA.

THE visit of Madame Melba to her old school gave great pleasure not only to her contemporaries, who, under Miss Fraser's direction, managed the details, but also to her old teachers, the present teachers, the boarders, and College Council, who were present in force. Everything was put in gala order. The Grand Hall was gaily decorated with flags, flowers, and ferns. The floor was nicely carpeted, and the hall dotted with chairs and tables to accommodate the guests. The arrival of the diva was heralded by the cheers of the boarders, who, with numbers of the day scholars, lined the path from the front gate to the vestibule. The band played "See the Conquering Hero," and the girls of the College's First Brigade crowded up to receive their former friend and playfellow. Madame Melba recognised many of them at once, and graciously received a splendid bouquet, provided by Lady McEacharn, from the hands of Miss Fraser. The guest of the day was formally received by the College Council, the Principal and Head Master; Mr. Lupton read an address of welcome, and Mrs. Gaggin presented the handsome gold clasp bearing the College crest and her own initials in enamel.

Madame Melba (who was "gowned in nut-brown voile, relieved with écreu lace and a touch of blue"), although she must have been the heroine of a thousand even more exciting scenes, seemed to be overcome by the cordiality of her reception and the reminiscences of the girlhood that has now, alas! passed away, and could only stammer with evident emotion and feeling, "I cannot thank you—I can only say this is the happiest day of my life." After a saunter round the rooms, and of course a visit to our handsome studio, in which she came across the admiring boarders, and to their great gratification shook hands warmly with every one of them, madame was brought in to afternoon tea. Many old friends came provided with photos, cards, and other mementoes of the past, and insisted on having her autograph. The great singer obliged until she had to drop the pen from pure exhaustion. The implement was imme-

diately seized by a leading clergyman, who declared he would write his next sermon with it. The whole afternoon's proceedings were admirably managed, and proved most enjoyable to everyone present, including, we hope, the guest of the day. The list of former pupils who were connected with the welcome is as follows:—

Lady McEacharn, Mesdames Gaggin, Burston, Syme, Colville, Clendinnen, Chapman, Couch, Phillips, Drummond, Sutherland, Cunningham, Pauli-Carter, Peyton, Kilburn, Rouse, Kenny, Bigelow, Brodsky, Allan, Prior, Buckhurst, Barber, Kiddle, Sloane, Macgibbon, Bishop, Craig, Grieve, Mitchell, Oliver, Tatchell, Buckhurst, White, Henderson, Sharp, Wanderhiten, Hyndman, Wippell, Langdon, Kerr, Robbins, Grieve, MacMeikan, Tolhurst, Simonsen, Leibect, Sharp, Thompson, Day, Hinchcliff, Brock, Keats, Austin, Lewis, Boadle, Webb, Whittaker, McDowal, Maxwell, Mitchell, Amos, Hunter, Robeley, Lloyd, Brownless, McFarlan, Davis, Harbinson, Urquhart, Scott, Valantine, Overend, Menzies, Parsons, Solomons, Attson, Collins, Rand, Nimmo, Fowler, Mackinnon, McMahan, Schuler.

Misses Paterson, Higgins, Gregory, Fraser, Rout, Taylor, Robertson, Gunn, Anderson, Cane, Hughston, Caldwell, Gresham, Hood, Henry, Youl, Merry, Black, Grieve, Leys, Clark, Lorimer, Lyttleton, Fraser, Dawson, Gordon, Scott, Paul, O'Rorke, Shaw, Blundell, Higgins, Riddock, Agg, Hentsman, Lind, Bayles, Armstrong, A. Baird, E. Baird, Wright.

Of the teachers of Madame Melba's time, the Rev. George Tait (ex-Principal), Professor Harper (ex-Principal and Head Master), and Miss Bromby sent apologies, but there were present Mesdames Mitchell and Morison; Misses Butler, Gresham, and Trickett; Messrs. Dawson, Edeson, Lupton.