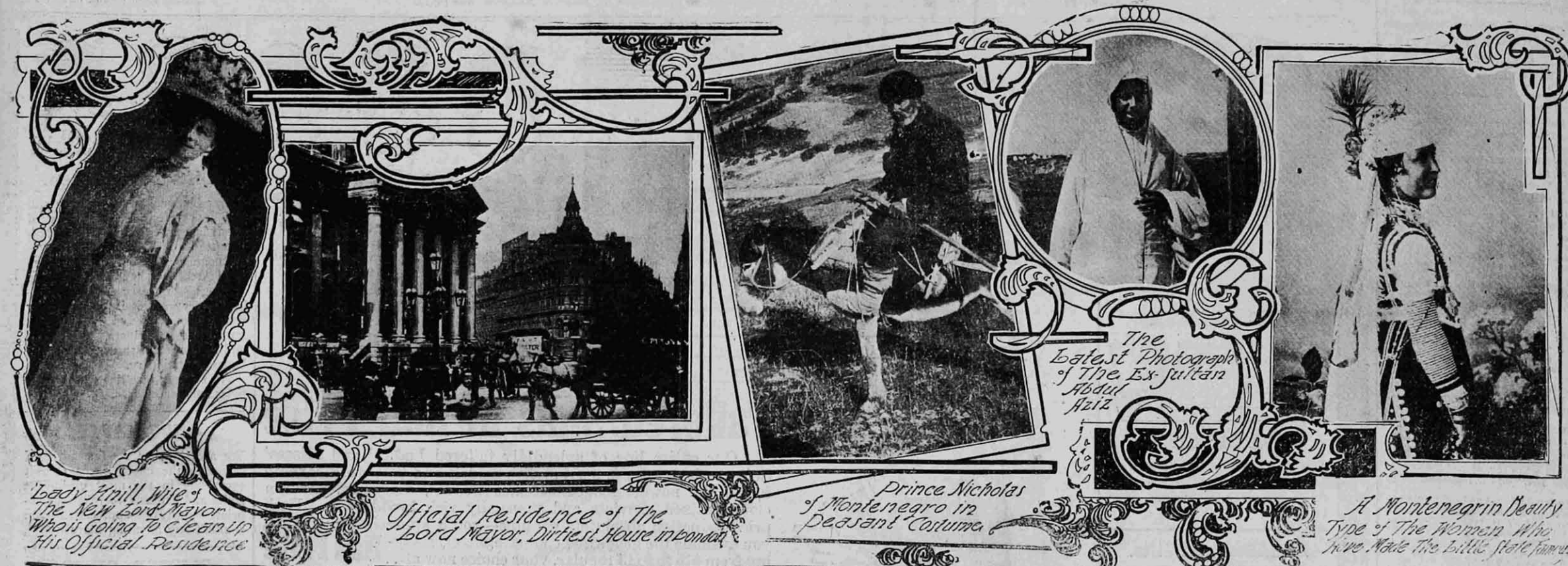


The Saturday "News" Special Foreign Service.



New Lady Mayoress of London Will Clean Up Mansion House

(Special Correspondence.) LONDON, Nov. 25.—When Lady Knill, the new lady mayoress of London, leaves her country house and grounds in Blackheath to take up official residence in the big, gloomy mansion house, she will carry with her, metaphorically speaking, a gigantic new broom. She will wield the broom so vigorously from the moment she enters, that habits of the city palace will hardly know it a few weeks afterwards.

Lady Knill, as the wife of one of the principal city magnates, knows the mansion house well, and often dines and lunches there. To her confidential friends she makes no secret of the fact that she thinks it is the dirtiest house in London, and that the food is extremely bad. She went so far as to declare that when her husband's turn to be lord mayor came she would carry out drastic reforms all round, or, if she was not allowed to do this, she would be lady mayoress at home in the distant suburb of Blackheath, just near Greenwich observatory.

Sir John Knill regarded her revolutionary proposals with some alarm, but he could not live in state at the mansion house, and have the lady mayoress doing the housework by telephone. So he fell in with her ideas, and as soon as he had been officially chosen as lord mayor, Lady Knill reached down her broom.

The first thing she did was to dismiss Messrs. Ring and Brymer, the firm who, under that name and formerly as Birch and Birch, have catered at the mansion house since long before anybody can remember.

"Thanks very much," said Lady Knill, "but we shall not want you next year."

NO MORE TURTLE SOUP.

Ring and Brymer make the best turtle soup in the world, but the new lady mayoress, who is a smart, fashionable woman of youthful middle age, says she does not want to live on turtle soup and whole oxen, and become fat like most of the aldermen. She wants to give her guests nice delicate meals like those her cook provides at home, or like those she gets at a fashionable restaurant. So she went out, and fixed up with the French chef of the new Piccadilly hotel, who agreed to superintend the cooking at the mansion house for the coming year.

MANSION HOUSE MENU.

This is a greater revolution than may appear to the uninitiated. Welcome guests who drop in to lunch or dinner at the mansion house will find a marvellous difference in the bill of fare. Below, for instance, is a typical mansion house menu at the present time:

Tortue Tortue claire
Timbales de Sole a l'Italienne
Chaud froid de crevettes en gelée d'aspic
Croustade de Moutillettes Munich
Faisans en casserole
Perdreux en casserole
Baron de beef Pates a la chausseur
Capas a la moderne
Lanques de Boeuf
Gelée a l'orange
Suedoises a la Belgrave
Cremes Medici
Gâteaux a l'Empereur
Petits Gâteaux
Glaces Dessert

THE NEW BILL.

All of which, though high-sounding, is very solid. The new order will be something like this:

Veloute Dame Blanche
Fillet de Sole Alice
Caille pochée au Vin du Rhin.
Nouilles a l'Alsacienne.
Becassine rotie. Salade.
Asperges vertes.
Poiré Melba.

Lady Knill has done more than change the official mansion house caterers. During the years she has been familiar with the headquarters of city hospitality she has noticed that there have never been any artistic floral decorations. Now the new lady mayoress has a beautiful garden at Blackheath, where flowers are always in bloom. She also has an eye for art in decoration, which is why she shivers whenever she goes to the great Greek mansion and sees quantities of indifferent blooms crowded anyhow in historic vessels of heavy gold plate.

Her remedy here was simple; she dispensed with the slovenly decorators who had never been interfered with since contracts were placed years and years ago. Then she called a motor-cab and drove to the establishment of a young woman florist she knows in Piccadilly.

The new lady mayoress told her what was wanted, and asked could she do it? The up-to-date girl was overjoyed; she had never hoped to enter professionally the extensive portals of the city palace, where she understood the aldermen who ate turtles and beef were indifferent to the charms of pretty flowers. During 1910, every room in the mansion house will be scented with sweet flowers, attractively arranged in groups, and guests will find by their plates dainty nosegays according to the season.

WAS NO SPRING CLEANING.

Lady Knill was not surprised to find the mansion house in a very dirty condition. She asked the oldest servants, with grey hair beneath their powdered wigs, when was the usual time for spring cleaning. They shook their heads, as if they did not understand the question.

As a matter of fact, the "dull and stately mansion" has never been properly cleaned and renovated since Lord Mayor Perry laid the foundation stone in 1729. Lady Knill thinks the reason for the appalling state of dirtiness is that every successive lord mayor, wishing to get the full benefit of his year's residence, has passed the spring cleaning duty on to the next.

Patching-up and surface cleaning has been done from time to time, but considerable inconvenience and annoyance to the occupant for the period. But in order to do the thing properly the great house, which by reason of its position in the heart of the city collects more grime than any other inhabited place, would have to be closed for at least eight months. That is Lady Knill's estimate.

Where is the brave lord mayor who would sacrifice so much precious time on the only occasion of his life when he can be master of those historic halls? Probably not even the president of the public health institute would have courage for that!

Lady Knill, however, is going to have all the carpets up in easy stages; the floors scrubbed, and the furniture polished, no less chairs and sideboards of whose structure dust, through long habitation, has become part, will be stored in attics, and replaced where necessary with furniture borrowed from Blackheath.

LOFTY HALL THE DRAWBACK.

The lofty Egyptian hall, where 400 guests can sit down to dinner and the total population does not exceed 250,000. Prince Nicholas, as he is till next August, has been an absolute autocrat, except for one year, since his accession. He is more independent than the czar of Russia because he is untrammelled by advisers. Montenegro is under a one-man rule and the Montenegrins seem to like it.

The prince is more like a strict father than anything else. He takes an interest in everything and the strangest thing about this autocratic country is that after the autocrat, autocrat, and the old man treated him to pork and brandy in the most hospitable way and then he began to talk about his country.



SOME OF PRINCE NICHOLAS' SUBJECTS.

A Montenegrin Family on the Road With a Primitive Ox Cart.

Fever for Kingship in the Balkans

Comic Opera Savor in the Whole Affair—Prince Nicholas, Now in His Sixty-eighth Year, Will Celebrate His Jubilee by Proclaiming Himself Regal Majesty.

(Special Correspondence.) CETTINJE, Montenegro, Nov. 29.—There is a fever for kingship in the Balkans. Last year it was the king of Bulgaria; next year it will be the king of Montenegro, for in August, 1910, Prince Nicholas, now in his sixty-eighth year, will celebrate his jubilee by proclaiming himself king.

The whole business savors of comic opera, for his kingdom is only 100 English miles long and 80 wide, and the total population does not exceed 250,000. Prince Nicholas, as he is till next August, has been an absolute autocrat, except for one year, since his accession. He is more independent than the czar of Russia because he is untrammelled by advisers. Montenegro is under a one-man rule and the Montenegrins seem to like it.

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It is not the largest country in the world," he admitted, "not even the largest in the Balkans. But I would not exchange it for any other country under heaven."

The stranger was not very convinced of its merits and the old prince said rather indignantly:

"Exports!" echoed Prince Nicholas indignantly. "How about my daughters? One is married to the king of Italy, two to Russian grand dukes, who could buy up my country and not feel any poorer, and the fourth, Zorza, was wife to Peter Karageorgievich, now king of Serbia. If those are not exports I don't know what you call them."

Like all the Balkan states, Montenegro is poor. Exporting queens and grand duchesses, though exhilarating, is not remunerative. Prince Nicholas tries to make a little on his own account, and when he goes to visit his daughters he encourages everybody to call on him. A few days after his secretary makes a list of visitors and sends each a little notice to the effect that Prince Nicholas, being very charmed with his manners and culture and certain that he has done much for humanity in general and Montenegro in particular would like to confer upon him the order of St. Nicholas, or Cetinje, or whatever it may be. Usually the object of this little attention swallows the bait and replies that he will look upon the order as the greatest honor of his life. By return of post comes a second intimation, couched in more flattering terms than the first, saying that Prince Nicholas is overjoyed to be able to confer his order on Mr. Smith, but the advance fee is \$30, which he will be charmed to have at Mr. Smith's earliest convenience. As most continentals make a point of collecting as many orders as they possibly can, the money is sent and the order conferred by the prince, with a dozen fierce-looking Montenegrin warriors in short petticoats standing round in picturesque attitudes. There is a story of one man who bought 10 at a reduced rate and distributed them among a numerous family when he returned to the states. It is now stated in Cetinje that the prices of Montenegrin orders will rise considerably after the coronation has taken place—and it is only reasonable that they should, because Prince Nicholas will have to have a crown and coronation robes. Evil tongues say that the crown is to be made of silver gilt and the coronation robes of some vestments used by the Greek priests at great festivals. This is, no doubt, nothing but scandalous report, as even if the royal exchequer falls to all expenses, the "exports" themselves will cover deficiencies.

LIKES TO VISIT ITALY. Prince Nicholas says he likes going to Italy because it makes him proud to think his daughter lives in the midst of so much wealth, but the barbaric splendor of the Russian court appeals to him far more. Queen Elena of Italy evidently inherits much of her father's decision and energy. It is recorded that a party came from Russia to pay a visit to the king and queen of Italy at the Quirinal, which is the Roman court, consisting of the queen's sisters, their husbands and some other relations. One lady of the party began a violent quarrel with the king of Italy, to which his wife strongly objected. One morning, she herself went into the flighty visitor's apartments, where the king was smoking cigarettes, boxed his majesty's ears, and shaking the Russian lady, told her to pack her boxes and be off by the next train—and she went, without being allowed to see the king.

The queen looks well after her niece, daughter, who is the King of Serbia's only daughter. The girl has a very dull time at home. Her mother died in 1887 and she spends all her days, when in Serbia, in the Konak at Belgrade, which is far smaller than many country houses to be found by the hundred up and down England, especially since her father has had that part in which King Alexander and Queen Draga were murdered razed to the ground. The consequence is that she is kept in two rooms, which she shares with her one maid of honor, a Russian lady, and has no park in which she can take exercise. When she goes to Rome, the change to a beautiful palace is very pleasant. Queen Elena has expressed her intention of making a good match for her niece, and has, rumor says, an eye on the young king of Portugal, although the Serbian princess is several years older.

"If that fails," she was heard to say, in her energetic way, "there is always a Russian grand duke to fall back upon, though they are so stupid."

Little is heard of Prince Nicholas' other daughters, who are content to read the dull and purposeless lives of Russian grand ducal families, which their sister votes so stupid. Neither do his two sons play any part in their father's dominions. His personality overshadows everybody. The Montenegrins are excessively proud of him and, like to visit Italy.

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Abdul Aziz's Crown Jewels Found to be Mostly Paste

(Special Correspondence.) PARIS, Nov. 19.—During the last five years of his reign, the Sultan Abdul Aziz of Morocco was the prey of European commercial adventurers, who well understood his taste for everything western, whether it was the newest invention or the European courts.

Prodigious was the quantity of automobiles, photographs and cameras that certain unscrupulous people succeeded in selling him. Most of these objects are what the French call "bas signals," that is to say—things long out of date. These schemes succeeded even in selling him very cleverly brightened up with some clear, highly colored paint, the old, worn out omnibuses of the Batignolles-Montparnasse and Odeon-Clichy lines which have been replaced by the modern motor bus. This was but the beginning of greater impositions that were to follow. A man named Holmes, a French Jew of German origin, wormed his way into the sultan's confidence and by his eloquence and insinuating manner convinced Abdul Aziz that such a sovereign as he should possess crown jewels like the great kings of Europe and the monarchs of the Orient.

Unlike Persia and Turkey, the treasury of Morocco contained very few of the wonderful jewels that we are used to consider as the indispensable attributes of a sultan. Some chased gold armor and belts ornamented with turquoise, an assortment of necklaces containing jewels of the less expensive variety, a miscellaneous array of rings—these were the only products of the jeweler's art then among the sultan's treasures.

STONES IN MASQUERADE.

Holmes played on the sultan's weakness and ended by persuading Abdul Aziz to buy of some "great Parisian dealers that I know" treasures to the amount of \$4,500,000. And what jewels! All the crudest designs for settings were picked up either in Paris or in the provinces and were set with stones, half of which were false. "Scientific" rubies and "scientific" sapphires, masquerading as real stones, and the sultan was happy when he saw the diamonds shine through their many flaws and featherings,—when indeed, they were diamonds at all, for many

cubic inches of these royal jewels were taken up with simple colored glass. However, some of the emeralds, pearls, topaz, amethysts and sapphires were of the first quality. The gold was of the lowest European standard, 14 carats, and often it was only blown gold—hollow inside.

In the beginning of 1907 when the sultan was short of money and could not find any more credit even at the state bank in Morocco, when defeat and ruin were facing him on every side, when tribe after tribe was deserting him and going to join the ranks of his usurping brother, Mulai Hafid, he sent the ever faithful secretary of state, El Mokri, to Paris to negotiate a loan on the security of the crown jewels of Morocco. Great was the consternation in the camp of the believers when the expert jewelers of the Rue de la Paix smiled derisively and with a shrug of their shoulders informed the anxious El Mokri of the worth of the jewels. The highest bidder among them only offered \$120,000!

"JEWELS" TO BE AUCTIONED.

Tired of bargaining and going from place to place, El Mokri at last went to the Mont de Piete, the government pawnshop of Paris. There, probably with the intention of favoring him, he was offered \$200,000. Under the suspicion that there existed a mutual understanding among the jewelers or persons having any connection with the jewelers to gain his measure by putting up the least possible cash, El Mokri decided to go to London. The offers he received in the British capital were very much lower than those of Paris. He quickly returned to the latter city and, after numerous audiences with M. Pichon and M. Clemenceau and frequent consultations between these dignitaries and the Parisian commissioners of the Mont de Piete, it was decided to grant a loan of \$600,000 on the condition that Morocco would guarantee the loan and when the time arrived reimburse the Mont de Piete. As everyone knows, Abdul Aziz lost his throne and with it almost his entire fortune.

It was not to be expected that Mulai Hafid would reimburse the French government for money lent to fight against himself, hence, the auction sale of the crown jewels of Morocco which is about to take place.

NOT VERY DIPLOMATIC.

The prince is more a soldier than a diplomat, and personally, he cares little whether he is called prince or king, but there is always rivalry between Montenegro and Bulgaria, which has also freed itself from Turkish bonds and got on much better in the world, because of its geographical position. When Prince Ferdinand proclaimed himself king the Montenegrins laughed and said:

"That won't last long." The reception he got during his recent visit to St. Petersburg, when he was welcomed with royal honors, made them gnash their teeth with rage. So they took counsel together and decided that they must have a king, too. A deputation waited on Prince Nicholas saying that the shame of having a king self proclaimed and acknowledged by the great Russian power and all the other powers—which are quite subservient to the first, in the Montenegrin mind—living next door but one, was too great to be borne by any self-respecting Montenegrin. They ended up a warm and loyal speech with the suggestion that he, too, might see his way to follow Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria's example and become a king. The autocrat demurred for a time. Kings are costly, he replied. Not only does one want crowns and robes and regalia when one is a king but one's traveling expenses mount up when he goes abroad.

LOOK FOR BIG STIR.

But when the king of Bulgaria was openly acknowledged at Rome and abroad and gossip got about as to what his new crown was to be like and how many yards of silk and embroidery were to go on his coronation robes, even the warlike old prince thought things were going too far, and he consented to think about a coronation, much to the joy of his subjects. They were very grateful to him and in a short time it was decided to let the ceremony take place next August.

(Continued on page eighteen.)