



Only Woman Member of Great Explorers' Club

(Special Correspondence.)
LONDON, April 22.—It is strange that an American should be the only woman member of the Royal Geographical Society of England. Mrs. French Sheldon, formerly of New Orleans, occupies this singular position. She is not alone the only female "fellow" but the last. After electing Mrs. Sheldon to membership, the committee of the Royal Geographical Society seemed to repent of their action in letting a woman join their sacred circle; and a rule was passed that in future, no woman could ever again become a member. So, this clever American lady boasts the distinction of being the first and last woman to belong to the organization whose members have pushed their way into almost every nook and corner of this old world of ours, seeking the bubble reputation not only in the canon's month, but in the months of wild beasts; on the edges of the world, or in the tangles of impenetrable jungles.

For some little time past, Mrs. French Sheldon has remained more or less silent as to the Congo, but recently she has been invited to give a course of lectures on this subject, and has excited great interest in London, particularly in view of the fact that she holds extremely novel views on the whole question.

AFFECTION FOR THE BLACKS.
As to the native black races themselves, she has the greatest affection for them. She has penetrated into parts of the country hitherto unexplored by any white woman, and by her extensive travels she has to record nothing but praise for the natives.

"I assure you," she said, in the course of an interview with her at her London home, 36, Pembroke square, in the West End, "that the black people are more sinned against than sinning. I went to the country prepared to meet with real cannibal tribes; and I even took with me a poisoned dagger, so that I could make away with myself in a certain emergency. But I did not meet a single act of hostility; or, I might say, even of rudeness.

"It was the first white woman," she continued, "who ever visited many villages, and I went right through the Free State unaccompanied by a single white man, accompanied only by native porters, and a few native servants.

"In all the important villages I passed through, or camped near at night, the natives would flock to see me, bring their sick and ask me to prescribe for them.

WAS A TRAINED NURSE.
"I might mention that I studied medicine and was a skilled trained nurse before I went into the country; and I attribute a great deal of my success to that fact. The natives have the greatest respect for the knowledge of medicine; and when they find that I am not coming to exploit them, but only to be helpful, they showed me the greatest courtesy. They used to bring their little ones to me to lay my hands upon them, and I was thinking that I had some strange power in my hands. They regarded me as a sort of 'Fetich,' or object of worship which brought good things to them. In the long journey I made from one part of the country to another, I never had a single occasion to fear an actual attack. Reports about me spread from town to town, and when I advanced, I could find that natives had gone before me and prepared the way for me. It is strange that such terrible reports have been circulated about the natives of the Congo; but, if you ask them and show them that they are harmless, I think they are quite happy to befriend me. They have attained to a high standard of knowledge. This idea of making everybody a mortal enemy is a very old one, and it is a good people.

FAKED ATROCITIES.
"Of course, there has been a great

agitation raised concerning atrocities, but most of these reports are exaggerated, and, what is worse, many are deliberately faked. I will not deny that occasionally outrages do occur, but they are during tribal wars when the natives are wrought up to a great pitch of excitement. Outrages of a similar character have often occurred among nations far more advanced along the scale of civilization. Photographs of hands and feet severed from bodies are often exhibited, but I have known these to have been cut off of bodies after a perfectly natural death and simply for the purpose of making up a photograph. I am trying in my lectures to avoid all controversial topics—such as these atrocities, religious matters and the like—for I know that truth must come out some day; and then the native races will appear literally not half so black as they are painted.

SIMPLY A MATTER OF TRADE.
Mrs. French Sheldon regards the whole Congo question as more or less a matter of trade. Various commercial nations, in her opinion, are engaged in exploiting the country for their own benefit, and they wish to prevent other countries from getting any of the spoils. The black people themselves seem to be getting wise to these facts and that is why every now and then the outside world hears of a matter made upon the whites.

Her opinion of the natives is a high one; and she considers that with an entirely different system the blacks would be able to take care of themselves. The situation summed up in her own words is as follows:

"The recognizable fact appreciated by the blacks when white people go into the Congo for the purpose of 'civilizing' them is that the whites do not follow their own teaching, or, to put it bluntly, practice what they preach. The white man's rule and reign is for the white man—and the blacks are only regarded as a potentiality for work, and not as participants in the result of that labor. The African is gradually awakening to the fact that he is being treated in his own land—and that if he submits five, ten, or fifty years under the present regime, he will never attain to aught else than to be the maker of the alien's fortunes. He will not advance his position, and he will not improve his lot. He is being treated as a mere factor in bringing about his own ruin."

BLACK MAN'S BURDEN.
"The white man's burden when looked at from an African's point of view is an irony, for the African feels keenly the burdens the white man's civilization and invasion have caused the entire African race. The white civilization has aroused the African's sense of his own commercial value, and he is wondering when he will come on top of the wheel of fortune."

"I cannot see that the white race is doing much good in Africa," continued Mrs. Sheldon, "save through the agency of medical missions. They are the only means of gaining the confidence of the people. The purely religious missions are much distrusted. When

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World's Largest Military Camp Is Certainly Model City as Well

Aldershot, Chief Military Station of the British Empire, is as Large as Dallas, Texas, or Lincoln, Nebraska—Has No Mayor, No Police, No Tax Collectors, No Street Cleaning Department, But is Probably the Best Organized and Best Governed City in World.

(Special Correspondence.)
LONDON, April 22.—Imagine a town with a population as large as Dallas, Tex., or Lincoln, Neb., in which there is no mayor and no civil organization, no police, no tax collectors and no civil works, no street cleaning department and no department of public works, and which is probably the best organized and best governed city in the world. Such is Aldershot "camp," the chief military station of the British empire and the largest permanent settlement of its kind in the world.

The word "camp" is a misnomer. It dates from the days when there really was a camp on Aldershot plain, and the men lived under canvas, waiting to be sent abroad or to be disbanded on their return from a foreign war. Now it is a town of splendid and permanent buildings where the British soldiers live and are cared for in a style which is equaled only by the best clubs and the best hotels of London.

Aldershot is a wonder town. It lies about 35 miles south of London on a high plateau stretching for a dozen miles in each direction, and the "camp," as distinguished from Aldershot "town" which is just a village, is a town of splendid and permanent buildings where the British soldiers live and are cared for in a style which is equaled only by the best clubs and the best hotels of London.

UNDER MILITARY LAW.
There are usually about 40,000 soldiers in the camp. At times the number rises to about 60,000, and sometimes it falls to 30,000 or so, but at all times there are enough men there to populate a first class city, and every man and every woman and child, too—in the camp is subject to the military law.

TOMMY ATKINS IN CLOVER.
I paid a visit to this city of soldiers a few days ago, and the dominant impression with which I came away was that any young man in search of comfort and a good time was a fool to remain in civil life if he could by any means get admission to the British army. The soldier of John Bull is better fed, better housed and better clothed than any other Briton outside the wealthy class. He is better cared for in illness and his health is better looked after when he is well than any one else in the country. The sanitation of his city of residence is a model to every municipality in the world and he has provided for him clubs, libraries, theaters and music halls which are the equal of any in London. His clubs, in fact, are excellent in appointments and equipment only by some of the first class clubs of the West End of London. His city is a city of wide streets and magnificent vistas. The main avenues are broader than Fifth Avenue in New York at any point, and along each sidewalk is a row of shady trees. Behind the trees is a stretch of greenward on each side as wide as the road itself, and behind this green again are the buildings. These buildings as a rule, are three stories high and are built of red brick. Each is surrounded by a little

garden, which in spring and summer is gay with flowers. The roads are spotlessly clean and splendidly paved.

WELL-HOUSED AND FED.
The British army authorities long ago came to the decision that the immense barracks housing whole regiments were not the healthiest or pleasantest method of housing the soldier. So at Aldershot the company barracks system was adopted. Each barracks houses about 100 men, and they sleep in comfortable cot beds in large, airy dormitories. Near the barracks, but in a separate building, are the kitchens and messrooms, and three or four companies usually eat together. It has been found that by this arrangement greater economy can be effected and the men can secure more luxuries by pooling their mess allowance and buying in large quantities. The government allows each man a pound of meat, either beef or mutton, of the best quality, for each man a day, and each man also receives a pound of bread. In addition to this he receives a money allowance of 6 cents a day for food, and this is put into a common fund and administered in each unit by a kitchen committee, which buys vegetables, jams and other luxuries in large quantities. In some cases the men contribute 2 cents a day more from their pay for extra luxuries, but even without this extra contribution they are enabled to live in a style which few middle class Englishmen can approach. The food is excellently cooked and served, for the army cook must pass a strict examination in his art, and he is subject to the constant surveillance of officers who have received a special training in cookery in order that they may be able to look after the health and comfort of their men.

LIBRARIES AND CLUBS.
In the center of each block of buildings occupied by a regiment is the library and club, or rather the libraries and clubs, for there are three or four. The men have one of their own, and the junior non-commissioned officers have one, the senior non-commissioned officers have one, and the warrant officers have one, and generally there is an officers' library as well. These differ only in size. The men's rooms are large and airy and are comfortably furnished. There is always a billiard room with three or four tables, and a reading room with a well-stocked general library. The non-commissioned and warrant officers' library usually contains an excellent assortment of technical military books, so that if a man wishes to fit himself by study for a commission he has the means to do so at hand.

The man who is married is even better cared for than his bachelor comrade, provided always that he is "married on the strength." That means the government provides him with quarters free of rent and with food for himself and his family and an extra money allowance for each child. Only 10 per cent of the junior non-commissioned officers can be married "on the strength," but all the senior non-commissioned officers and warrant officers have this right. To be married a soldier must obtain the consent of his colonel and there must, of course, be a vacancy "on the strength."

MARRIED QUARTERS.
The married quarters are handsome brick buildings divided into comfortable self-contained flats of varying size. Each soldier is allotted as many as the size of his family calls for, and he also receives free light and fuel. He has a right to call on the medical officers for attendance if his wife or child is ill, and he sends his children to the army school provided by the government. He does not even have to leave the soldiers' city to go to church, unless he belongs to one of the minor denominations, to which, as a matter of fact, very few soldiers do. The Government provides him with an Anglican, a Presbyterian and a Roman Catholic church and pays a chaplain for each. If the soldier cannot find the brand of religion to suit him at one of these, he may obtain permission to attend a chapel in Aldershot town.

Before leaving the subject of mar-

riage it should be said that there is nothing to prevent a man marrying "off the strength" if he so desires. In the case, however, his wife is not admitted to camp and he must maintain her out of his pay, or, as usually happens in such cases, she must maintain herself. There are a large number of soldiers' wives of this class in Aldershot town who make a living by washing and caring for the officers in the camp. When a vacancy occurs "on the strength" the soldier who is already married may apply for it, and if he can satisfy his colonel that his wife is in no way undesirable as a member of the military community he stands as good a chance as the bachelor soldier who is contemplating marriage.

CANTEENS FOR MEN.
Another reason for the excellent health of the men is probably the fact that there is not a public liquor saloon in the camp. Each regiment has its canteen, of course, but very little spirits is sold. Beer is the article chiefly consumed, and the canteen keeper must keep a strict watch on his customers. Any tendency to excess is at once checked, for if any disorder takes place in the canteen both the keeper and the customers are severely dealt with. Attached to each canteen is a small vaudeville theater where free performances are given every night for the men. There are about 40 such music halls in the camp and the artists who go from one to another are paid from the profits of the canteen. There are artists who have been at Aldershot for years and who do not expect to see outside engagements for years to come. Then there is a magnificent theater in a central position, which is engaged regularly by first class companies from London and at which the prices are so low that every soldier can afford to go and take his family.

SOLDIERS ON THEIR HONOR.
"But," one may say, "it is easy to keep soldiers in order when they are under the eyes of their officers. That is why Aldershot is such an ideal city." That used to be the idea of the military authorities, but it was abandoned by Gen. Smith-Dorrien when he took the command at Aldershot. It had been the custom to maintain a large force of military pickets in Aldershot town to assist the civil police in keeping the soldiers who were on leave in order. Pickets were also sent every day to London to patrol in the neighborhood of Waterloo station and look out for soldiers from Aldershot who were misbehaving. Gen. Smith-Dorrien's first act almost upon succeeding to the command was to abolish these pickets and issued a notice to the men that he depended on them not to disgrace their uniform by disorderly conduct. He declared that he thought the military police were quite strong enough to look out for any infractions of the military regulations without help from the allies, and he appealed to the men not to resist arrest by the civil police in Aldershot town or London, even if they thought it unjust, and he promised to stand by them in case any injustice was attempted.

This plan of putting the soldiers on their honor has been a remarkable success. The police both in Aldershot and London have had less to do and the

First Child of Jean Reid to Have King for Godfather

(Special Correspondence.)
LONDON, April 22.—His majesty has intimated to the Hon. Mrs. John Ward that he desires to be godfather to her little boy.

When the ceremony does come off it is to take place at the Chapel Royal and will be a brilliant function. The smart christening, which in the first instance was made chic and fashionable by American women, has caught on and grows more picturesque and elaborate day by day.

Mrs. Whitelaw Reid has presented her grandson with the most exquisite and costly christening robe, a veritable work of art, in Irish lace as fine as a cobweb. It is valued at over \$5,000. It was ordered through Lady Aberdeen, wife of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and the Irish Industries association.

This is but one of the numerous beautiful presents which have been showered upon the fortunate baby. All Mrs. Ward's friends and relations here and across the Atlantic have inundated her small son with gifts, some of which are as costly as they are beautiful. Some have sent a diamond rattle, while toys mechanical and otherwise fill a room.

Mrs. Reid will be one of the godmothers. Who the other will be is not yet decided. In these days very little ceremony is paid to relations in the matter of christenings, but it is a tradition that Whitelaw will also be a godmother. More often than not the godmothers are selected because they are young, beautiful and fashionable, with a view to enhancing the beauty of the ceremony.

MUST BE CALLED EDWARD.
It will be imperative, however, that the little hero of the event should receive the name of Edward, but it is understood that Whitelaw will also be given him, and it is by that Christian name he will be known later.

It is said that Mrs. Reid has already made a settlement on her grandson. She promises to prove an enthusiastic grandmother as Mrs. Bradley Martin, the apple of whose eye is little Viscount Uffington, "the most pampered boy in Europe or the states," as he has been called.

for all they were worth. There was a rush to remove them, but the hostess interfered and permitted them to continue their speeches.

At a very dull but eminently aristocratic mansion in Great Stanhope street, the other night, a crowd of people were gazing at each other and wondering when it would be time to go home when all of a sudden to the infinite delight of the audience a voice came from the end of the room enquiring "When Mr. Asquith going to give us the vote?" There were vociferous cheers when it was seen that the speaker was none other than Mrs. George West, who had been playing one of her practical jokes. The incident had the effect of putting every one into good humor and instead of departing as they intended, the guests began to be interested and made a long stay.

BEAUTY PATCHES AGAIN.
Beauty patches are once more in great vogue. Especially does the patch appeal to the numerous American women with beautiful white hair. Some of these women have never abandoned the use of the patch for certain occasions such as balls or "fancy" gatherings of any kind. The patch has always been beloved by Mme. von Anndor, one of the great leaders of Anglo-American society here and on the continent. She has hers especially made in black velvet in all sorts of fantastic shapes. Mrs. Cloman, the wife of one of the naval attaches at the American embassy, is another who has always had a regard for the beauty patch. Perhaps of all the American women with exquisite white tresses there is none who can wear the patch with such distinction as Mrs. Foster Palmer.

The new beauty patches are in black velvet and some have a wee jewel inset. The effect is most striking and fantastic. In consequence of the revival of the minuet and several old-world dances which are to be in great vogue when the season proper opens, it is certain that wigs and patches will be in favor. There is also a brown velvet patch which is quite a new idea and has been introduced for those with very pale golden hair as being a prettier contrast than the black. Old-fashioned shapes in the form of discs, hearts or stars are no longer seen. The new ones represent a motor, a balloon, an airship, Mephistopheles or a saint, and are quaint and suggestive in the extreme.

WOMEN'S RIFLE CLUBS.
To shoot or not to shoot, that is the question to be decided at the moment. Women who could not hit a haystack if it were flying, have taken it into their heads that it is absolutely essential for the protection of their country that they should go forth and learn to shoot. Just now clubs are being formed as fast as possible for the purpose of inducing women to learn how to shoot—not that there is much coaxing required.

Splendid inducements in the social way are held out as attractions, inasmuch as several of the princesses and leaders of society are interesting themselves in these institutions. One of the most representative of these clubs has been founded by the two daughters of Earl Roberts. As befits the relatives of so distinguished a soldier these ladies are splendid shots, and can do nearly as much with a gun as their father. Mrs. Chaucery, a sister of Lady Newborough, the Duchess of Marlborough, the Duchess of Roxburghe, Lady Alistair Innes-Kerr are a few of the well known Americans who have joined the rifle club in which Lord Roberts' daughters are taking such an active interest.

Lady Ernestine Hunt, a daughter of the late Marquis of Ailesbury, has just become captain of the First Aid Yeomanry corps, which is composed entirely of women, and she is recruiting as hard as she can. The first essential is that the "soldiers" must be first-rate riders as well as trained and fully qualified nurses. Their uniform is the most fetching thing going. It consists of a blue shirt with bands of white military braid, scarlet tunic elaborately braided with gold and the most engaging service cap imaginable. The applications for admission to this army is expected that when the corps is completely organized, the king will view it.

LADY MARY.