

PEERESSES TRY TO SAVE PEERS

Titled Dames and Spinsters Endeavor to Stop Flood of Democracy.

LADIES RALLY IN SWARMS.

Blue-Blooded Amazons, Led by Six Duchesses and Thirty-One Countesses Wage Battle.

Special Correspondence.

LONDON, July 4.—With the Conservative party a wreck, and the house of lords threatened with extinction, if it dares to exercise its prerogative of vetoing legislation passed by the lower house, the peeresses have stepped into the breach to save the nation from going to the demijohn of democratic bow-wows, and—merely incidentally of course—their own husbands from being tumbled off their jolly political pedestals. It is to be said of aristocratic Amazons against lowly laborers—of "vox femina" against "vox populi," of petticoats against "pants" as an American puts it.

A BIG NAME.

Nothing can be done in these days without a club, so the peeresses have started a club, christened it the "Imperial," acquired handsome premises in aristocratic Dover street, furnished them sumptuously and summoned feminine gentility to help them down Demos. And feminine gentility has responded with alacrity. The success of the club has been prodigious. There has never before been anything like it. The speedy popularity it has attained far surpasses that achieved by the defunct Empress club. The latter made its debut with 20 titled dames among its vice presidents. The Imperial club's list includes six duchesses, six marchionesses, six countesses and three score "ladieships," comprising peers' daughters and the wives of baronets and knights.

GRATIFIES AMBITION.

Never before have women had such a chance to show their social and political acumen at so cheap a price, the subscription fee being only £21 a year. It is no wonder that a legion of society women who, heretofore, have taken no interest in politics, have suddenly developed the most burning political convictions, and inspired by patriotic ardor, are moving heaven and earth to get themselves enrolled under the banner of the peeresses. The 2,500 dames and damsels who have already entered the fold are pledged to make life as unendurable as they know how to any masculine members of their households who are not Conservatives.

The club specifically disclaims any sympathy with the woman suffrage movement. The peeresses are too high-toned to ally themselves in any way with the "shrill, scolding, and belated" female enfranchisement, would they know, in the present state of public opinion, help democracy more than the aristocracy. They want feminine power in politics to be confined to influencing male voters. At that sort of game, their social position gives them a great advantage over women who are not "in the swim" in any way.

FROM POLITICAL DINNER.

The club is the outcome of a political dinner given last winter at Sunderland house by the Duchess of Marlborough for the purpose of discussing ways and means of restoring the Conservative party to power. The Vanderbilt duchess has always been rather fascinated by politics and is far more ambitious for her husband's advancement in public life than is the little Duke himself. It was she who had him pithforked into the billet of under secretary for the colonies under the late government, a position now much more amply filled by his brilliant cousin, Winston Churchill.

NOT PUBLIC SPEAKER.

The duchess is not much of a public speaker, and is somewhat too haughty and frigid in manner to make a good political canvasser, but her good looks and faultless dressing make her an attractive figure on any public platform. She has, too, what American women here so rarely possess, the air of the "grande dame" to the manner born, and that counts for a great deal. When the Conservative government was in power, she possessed great influence with the ministers and big wigs at the war office, and to her credit be it said, she used it with much discretion, a remark which cannot be applied to many society dames who found themselves able to pull the wires.

The Imperial club may be regarded as her own particular enterprise. It was she who persuaded the Duchess of Somerset, the Duchess of Devonshire, the Dowager Duchess of Argyll, Lily Duchess of Marlborough and the Dowager Duchess of Roxburghe to head the list of vice presidents. Among the 30 countesses who figure in that list, is the American Countess of Donoughmore, Lady Gwendoline Cecil, daughter of the late Marquis of Salisbury, and Miss Alice Balfour, sister of the late Conservative prime minister, are also among the vice presidents.

DUKES AND DUCHESSES.

The time has gone by when a duke's name among a list of company directors would make the most worthless shares sell like hot cakes, but in feminine clubdom, duchesses are still all potent, and countesses wield a far wider influence than their husbands can exercise in the business world. The exalted sponsors of the club are by no means depending on the dazzling attractions of their own titles to make the club a success. In the matter of luxurious furnishings and equipment, it surpasses anything yet attempted in women's clubs. Its dressingroom is the most perfect of its kind in London. There four members will be assisted in recovering from the fatigue due to their arduous political studies, by massage and electrical treatment, to say nothing of the delights of getting their hair dressed by Parisian experts, and their shapely hands beautified by an accomplished manicurist.

A FAST MASTER.

A French chef, who is past master in a French art, presides over the culinary



POPE PIUS WALKING ALONE IN FAMOUS VATICAN GARDENS.



CARDINAL MERRY DEL VAL, THE POPE'S SECRETARY OF STATE.

Tragedy of the Vatican is Killing Pope.

Pious and Holy Man Who Has No Taste or Ambition for the Leadership of Men, and for Whom Life is Reported to Have Become a Bitter Burden Through Powerful Influences that Drag Him Back and Forth.

Special Correspondence.

ROME, July 4.—"Is it the pope's fault or that of his inexperienced secretary of state, Cardinal Merry del Val, that a good start is ending so disastrously?" was asked me the other day by an interested onlooker at the great tragedy now going on at the Vatican. Fault there is with them both, but chiefly lies with Pius X., who has demonstrated, as many other well-meaning persons have done, that the man in a responsible position cannot hunt with the hounds and run with the hare. In other words, he is the victim of his own good nature.

As is known Giuseppe Sarto was elected as a good middle man, who had never shown any marked proclivities, and who would—each faction thought—be open to good advice. Those who had expected to find him pliant in their hands are just as much disappointed as those who wished a stronger man, as, although he lends an ear to them at one moment, the next he is inclining it towards the other faction.

A pliant example of this has just taken place. Mr. White, the American ambassador to the papal court, gave what is now an historic dinner in honor of Archbishop Ireland, to which he invited four cardinals, who accepted and were present. This caused a protest from the doyen of the Sacred College, in the pope's name, at which all the cardinals, even those who were not present at the dinner, took great offense. The doyen, Cardinal Gregorio, declared that he had the pope's sanction for his protest; one of the four offending cardinals asserts that when he explained why he went Pius X. said: "You did right to go—the circular note was not a condemnation of you, but to satisfy the intransigent element."

while a third prelate, who refused the invitation, says that the pontiff commended his absence, saying, "You acted with discretion, the incident should have been avoided." Talking over the matter with another prince of the church, who enters little into so-called Vatican politics, he exclaimed: "What are you to do with such a character? The church, in my opinion, is without a head. Rather would I see an absolute, mistaken direction given to affairs in the hands of a strong and determined man. All the same, I am very sorry for Pius X.; a sense of failure under great responsibilities must be a very disagreeable thing to go to bed with night after night."

GREAT CHANGE WROUGHT.

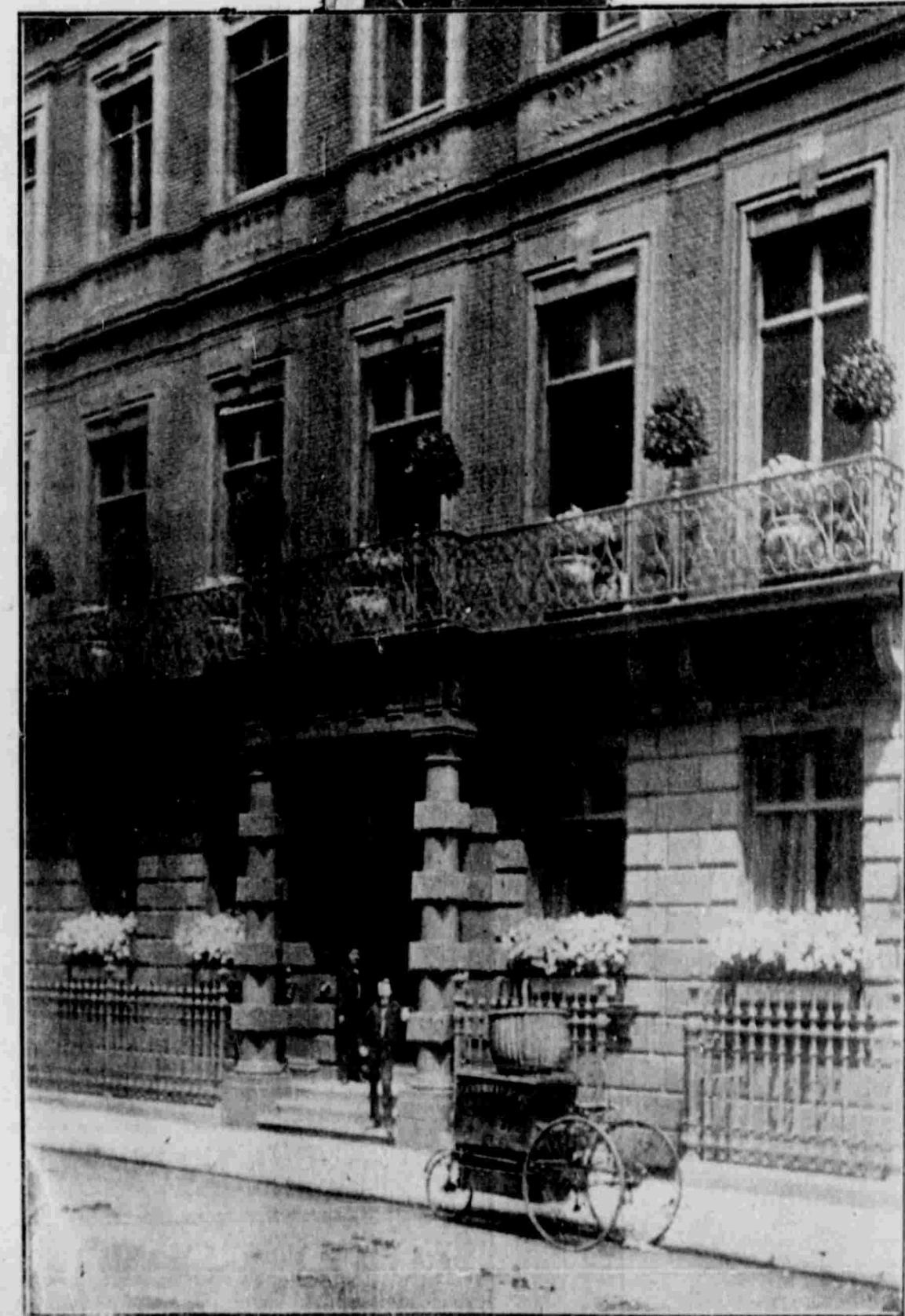
The Vatican is now so changed since the time of Leo XIII. as to make what was then considered stagnation now appear to have been a populous city by contrast. In the late pontificate there was a steady coming and going of cardinals, diplomats, great persons and lesser mortals, so that the pope's inner-chamber, that of the cardinal secretary of state and those of lower officials were constantly filled making the Vatican a living, powerful center, while now the cardinals only appear when obliged by etiquette, the general feeling being that they are tired of promises which are forgotten, and thus never fulfilled, and that it is not worth while to work hard to convince the pope when the next comer will succeed just as well in a contrary direction. This makes conversation with Pius X. constrained and formal on one side, while he, feeling the coldness, is embarrassed and silent.

Things are certainly going from bad to worse, and no one can change them, because no one can change the pontiff's character. He is pious, charitable, good, kind-hearted, pure and holy, but he is not a leader of men, and what is just as deplorable, has not the instinct which leads him to choose his advisers wisely.

DISLIKE DE VAL

Among the cardinals themselves—I speak of the 30 or so who live in Rome—there is no better feeling. The majority dislike Cardinal Merry del Val for several reasons. In the first place, he was made a cardinal "abundantly young," at the age of 38, and before he had had much experience of men and events was put into perhaps the most responsible position in the church. This naturally embittered those over whose heads he had jumped. Then

THE DOWAGER DUCHESS OF ROXBURGHE Who Has Taken Leading Part in Organizing the Imperial Club.



THE NOW RENOWNED IMPERIAL CLUB.

Started by Peeresses to Preserve the Political Privileges and Powers of the Peers and Help Restore the Conservative Party to Power.

WHAT BRAVE JAP DID FOR COUNTRY

Sacrificed Brilliant Career and Honor for Patriotic Accomplishment.

A TRUE TALE OF ROMANCE.

Wonderful Display of Heroism and Pathos That in Japan is Told in Guise of Fiction.

Special Correspondence.

TOKIO, June 22.—Japan teems with romantic stories of heroism and self-sacrifice in behalf of the state. It is religion that inspires martyrs in other countries; it is patriotism that inspires them here. For their country these wonderful little yellow men will undertake tasks and endure hardships and suffering which are only paralleled by the exploits of those who, in other ages and other climes, have cheerfully risked life itself and all that makes life worth living, for the sake of their faith and an immortality of bliss hereafter. The latter plays no part in prompting the devotion of the Jap. For the state he must, if required, even imperil his own soul.

There has recently been published in Japan a novel which has attained great popularity, telling the story of a martyr to patriotism. It so abounds in pathetic and dramatic incidents that it is shortly to be presented on the stage. It purports to be merely a work of fiction. For reasons of state it could not be presented in any other form. But from a Japanese friend—a person in high authority who has had much to do with the filing away of secret reports—I have learned that the story merely recounts what one man actually did for his country with the hope of no other reward than the knowledge that he had done his best to serve her. The names and places which are disguised in the book—the scene being laid in Manchuria—have been revealed to me under a pledge not to disclose them, as that would probably lead to the discovery of my source of information.

TALENTED AND DEVOTED.

Some years ago, a young cavalry officer was attached to the general staff at Tokio. He was exceptionally talented and devoted to his profession. Though only a lieutenant, he had been picked out by his comrades as the man among them who was likely to go farthest. He shunned delights and lived laborious days. He was temperate, abstemious, an ascetic in every habit of life and disposition. One day the chief of staff sent for him.

"What do you regard as the first duty of a soldier?" the general asked him.

"To obey orders implicitly," was the response.

"Right," said the general, "and will you pledge your honor to obey implicitly and unquestioningly whatever orders are given you by your superior officers?"

"I will. I have always done so."

A MOMENT OF PRIDE.

The young lieutenant swelled with pride. He expected that he was about to be entrusted with some dangerous mission in which he could play a hero's part and win fame and glory.

"You have never been a dissipated man," continued the general, after a pause. "I want you to change your present mode of life. I want you to become dissipated."

"But," stammered the young soldier, the flush of pride gone from his face, "that would be contrary to your orders. You have always exhorted us to work hard, live temperately and eschew vice."

"The last order always takes precedence in its claims to obedience of all the orders that have preceded it. I want you to become a dissipated man."

"But why? For what purpose?"

"You pledged yourself a moment ago to yield implicitly and unquestioningly obedience to the commands of your superior officers," said the general. "It should be enough for you to know that my orders are always prompted by the interests of the state."

AGAIN THE SOLDIER.

The lieutenant stiffened. He was again the soldier. "Your order shall be obeyed," he said, "as far as my means permit. But I am a poor man; I have little money; it is square."

"I will supply you with all the money that is necessary, but you must abandon your books for geisha."

The young man went forth a St. Anthony, pledged to yield to temptation. It proved easier than he had anticipated. After a few months of going to the geisha, he fell head over heels in love with a geisha. That sort of thing did not make for efficiency as an officer. Black marks began to accumulate against a record that had previously been spotless. After some severe reprimands, he was dismissed from the service with ignominy.

His father furiously rebuked him, his former military acquaintances cut him, he was an outcast with only the downward path that leads to destruction open to him. Again he sought the great general whose orders had brought him to such a pitiable plight and into his ears, poured his tale of woe.

A SECRET MISSION.

"You have done well," said the general. "You have reached that condition which makes you available for the work with which I am about to entrust you. It is a mission of high importance to the state. Tonight you must proceed to Nagasaki, telling nobody where you are going, not even your own father. You will take with you a box which I shall give you. When you get to Nagasaki—no, better—you will open it. Then you will learn your instructions. Fulfill them to the letter and your reward will be the knowledge that you have done something worth doing for your country. Do not give me cause to regret my confidence and trust in you."

MYSTERIOUS BOX OPENED.

At Nagasaki the young man opened the box and read his orders, to which no incriminating signature had been attached. The reason was obvious.

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