

Literature and Royalty.

In the good old days kings and queens were not expected, necessarily to know anything about literature. It was one of the prerogatives of royalty to be ignorant. The past century has changed all that.

A king now has to be a walking encyclopaedia. A queen wins admiration from her people when it is known that she loves books and has a cultivated taste. Young princes have to wade through languages, science and political economy. Small princesses are expected to have an acquaintance with poets and the better sort of novelists.

The change has come about within our own times. In nearly every case the younger sovereigns and royalties generally are highly cultivated and fond of learning and literature.

Take the English royal family for an example. The late Queen Victoria was undoubtedly a woman of great brain power and character, she probably knew as much about the ruling of her immense possessions as any of her ministers, and sometimes ran very close to violating the unwritten English constitution by putting direct personal restraint upon the responsible heads of state departments. Yet her literary taste was peculiar.

She read a good deal of Tennyson, no doubt, but it was mainly because of a certain sentimentality in which her poet laureate met her own womanly feeling. What was really fine and great in Lord Tennyson's work almost certainly left her unmoved. Her diaries—rewritten mostly for publication by a titled secretary—show that she had no sound literary judgment. And her later reading was either in books of devotion and sermons, or in novels of the least intellectual order.

Her indirectly expressed approval of a book several times sent up sales as in the case of Rhoda Broughton or "Rita," but it almost meant that the book was devoid of all real value. The old queen read simply to while away the heavy hours. She belonged, able woman though she was, to the age of uncultivated royal persons.

Her son, the present king, belongs practically to the same period. He is not in the first bloom of his youth and he, too, is no great reader, certainly not a thinker or a critic. Much less able than his mother, he practically is an uneducated man, except in the sense that he is a man of the world and knows life very thoroughly in all its phases.

It is nowhere recorded that he ever expressed an opinion of a book; probably he has read very few. Certainly his attempts at speechmaking show him to be completely out of touch with the world of thought. He represents fairly well the mediaeval monarch who paid learned men to do things for him while he himself went his way in contented indifference to all the intellectual life of his day.

The contrast of the old order with the new becomes evident in the case of his son, the Prince of Wales. The prince is not a conspicuously learned man, not perhaps a brilliantly gifted man, but he is far ahead of the king in his interest in letters and in thought.

To hear him speak in public, if only at some unveiling ceremony or the laying of a foundation stone, is to recognize at once a man fairly abreast of the intellectual achievement of his day, a man of personal convictions acquired by reading and matured by meditation. He is a well-educated, cultivated man, representing the new generation of royalty.

On about the same intellectual plane stands the much talked of Kaiser. He, if it is true, is not a great reader of books. He has been called the "yellow journalist of royalty" on account of his love for ultra-modernism, his passion for display.

He is a great reader of newspapers and magazines. He lets other people do the work of research for him, he gets his learning at second hand, but he lets nothing escape him. He is in the closest touch with modern science, art, literature, politics and personality.

It is said that his ready memory, diligently furnished by years of newspaper and magazine reading in four languages, enables him to pour out streams of talk for hours without ever being detected in error of fact, though touching on nearly every phase of human activity in the past hundred years.

His press bureau, by the way, is possibly the best equipped in the world. A numerous staff of readers wades through German, French, English and American and Oriental papers every day to clip for him editorial matter and articles on literature and science which may interest him. As a sort of side dish he devours also articles dealing with sport, especially with pugilism.

The Kaiser does some boxing him-

self in the privacy of Potsdam. It is very probable that Prince Henry of Prussia returning from the United States trip brought a good deal of ring gossip with which to regale the leisure of his Imperial brother.

The same contrast between the older and younger generations of royalty, seen in England is exhibited in the Italian court. It is well known that King Humbert contemptuously "left books to those who liked them," and contented himself with being a mighty hunter on the Alps.

Queen Margherita is equally indifferent to literature. She cares for nothing but works of piety, and simple little stories such as children read.

Their son, the present king, is of another way of thinking. He is a student, almost a scholar, a meditative, deeply-read man, while the new Queen Helena, daughter of the queer old Prince of Montenegro, is as learned a woman as lives today.

In Roman society, where deep culture is looked upon as something almost uncanny, she is pronounced a pedant. The Roman ladies that wait on her complain of having to read to her heavy scientific treatises and ponderous historical disquisitions, varied by plunges into profound tomes dealing with mysticism and philosophy. They sigh for the easy prattle and society gossip which was all that Queen Margherita's simple taste required from her companions.

In Italy there is, of course, another crowned head to be thought of—the venerable Pontiff Leo. He lives daily in the midst of the stateliest library in the world. The peerless vatican collections of priceless, ancient volumes have been for years his daily joy, and he had kept the great library up-to-date, personally seeing that no new book of real, first hand importance in any language of the world be left out.

But of late years, it is said, the Pope has practically read little that is new. A Cardinal Camerlengo keeps him informed as to the latest results achieved in science and the new departures in philosophical thought but apart from the world politics and the progress of the Catholic Church, few things interest him.

His valet told a French journalist the other day that the Pope kept by his bedside for constant perusal the works of Thomas Aquinas, St. Augustine's "City of God," the works of Virgil and the "Divine Comedy" of Dante. Besides these and his breviary he reads little or nothing.

One of the most highly cultivated reigning princes in the world is a man scarcely ever heard of in America or Europe, Abbas Hilmi, the Khedive of Egypt. It is, of course, an historical fact that of old learning came out of Egypt, but times have altered since the Greeks went to the land of the Sphinx to acquire the first training in philosophic thought and one little expects to find great knowledge now in Egypt.

It is none the less true that the young Khedive possesses one of the profoundest minds of his day. He is modern to his fingertips, but steeped also in the lore of old times, a highly skilled administrator under difficult conditions of international interference, but at the same time a dreamy oriental philosopher and a learned Egyptologist. In a downtown Syrian cafe of New York a dark-eyed Syrian was heard the other day to declare that the Abbas ("Great Father") was a reincarnation of Solomon, the mystic doctor of all Syrian and Arabian mythology.

He has the key of Solomon and the Solomon magic, because he is Solomon's soul, Abbas Hilmi," asserted this newly naturalized citizen.

He may not be that, but he is a wonderful man, perhaps one of the most learned that ever wielded princely power. He is skilled in all the knowledge of the modern world, has in his palace at Cairo as fine a library as any European capital except London possesses, and turns readily from administrative work concerning irrigation and rebellious Arabs to grind like a university professor at the reconstruction of the past of Egypt, or at the deepest problems of modern thought.

He has acquired, as much from the elevation of his character as from his practical administrative ability, an immense influence over the turbulent tribes of the North African Hinterland. They say of him in their metaphorical style:

"You go into his presence as a raging lion and in his presence you become a cat." He tames them by the magnetism of his lofty personality.

Another learned prince is Prince Charles of Monaco. He draws his income from the gilded hell of Monte Carlo—fattening on the ruin of the gamblers of the world, as an Amer-

ican preacher put it in a memorable discourse; but personally he is an estimable man, a slave to the curious conditions by which alone his little principality has been able to flourish.

He has taken science for his playground, is constantly reading German and English periodicals dealing with nature research and has himself published able treatises on astronomical questions and on various curious researches he has made into tidal laws and into the flora and fauna of the sea.

The Czar's devotion to literature, treating of occultism, thought-reading, hypnotism and kindred subjects is well known.

The King of Greece is the most voracious reader of French yellow-backs, and has first editions of practically every novel good, bad or indifferent published in Paris for the last thirty years. He has them sent to him at Athens as soon as they appear.

He may often be seen driving on a summer afternoon down to Phaleron with the carriage seat in front of him loaded with uncut volumes to be judged at a glance and either filed away in the immense bookroom of the palace or kept at hand for reading in a few days.

The Sultan of Turkey never reads anything but state papers and the very few laudatory articles upon himself which his diligent secretary now and then unearths in some foreign journal. He has, however, a favorite daughter, who is being educated in all the knowledge of the Gaiour at Neuilly, just outside the fortifications of Paris.

The Turkish princess is being made a very up-to-date young girl, learns the piano and goes to the play; cultivates, in fact, every social accomplishment, including the reading of the latest novel talked of in the Paris salons. People who have been presented to her say that she is very charming and quite European in her ways of thought, but not particularly brilliant. Her extensive novel reading is done out of a sense of duty.

Leopold of Belgium is another devotee of French novels. Sometimes during his frequent visits to Paris he meets the fine-looking, rather shady old king strolling on the boulevards with his latest three francs fifty worth of fiction staring conspicuously out of his capacious pockets.

The Queen of Roumania, the brilliant writer, whose clever stories of her picturesque country have appeared in so many American magazines, has a collection of books dealing with the folklore of all countries. This specialized library is reckoned the completest of its kind possessed by any one person; it is certainly one of the very most beautiful.

"Carmen Sylva" loves exquisite bindings and brings a refined taste to the designing or choosing of cases for the books. A well-known American writer who spent hours as the queen's guest at Bucharest to give her some personally acquired details of the religious beliefs of our own Indians, says that Carmen Sylva's library is probably the most costly collection of purely modern books gathered together in one place.

The Czar, by the way, shares the Roumanian Queen's love of dainty books. Whenever he is much struck with the contents of a new volume he has it specially rebound in some rich mediaeval style and placed in his growing collection of favorites that he keeps in his personal apartments. During his latest visit to France he brought with him two volumes of French poetry, the works of Lamartine and of Victor Hugo, which the French attendants at Compiègne declared to have been the stateliest books they had ever seen.

Either Victor Hugo or Lamartine was found by his bedside every morning. Whence it may be concluded that, though Nicholas may be a worthy young man, he has the bad habit of reading in bed.—New York Sun.

Death of Pauncefoot

He was a picturesque figure at Washington, personally very popular, and his death will be sincerely regretted.—Evening Wisconsin.

The death of Lord Pauncefoot, British ambassador to this nation, removes one of the most distinguished diplomats of this generation.—Helena (Mont.) Herald.

Lord Pauncefoot's death removes an ambassador who knew how to win the regard and friendship of Americans without any arts but those of discretion and transparent good faith.—New York Post.

His career has been an eminently useful one; his character one that pointed him out as a man well deserving of honor and trust, and, accordingly, he has been awarded both honor and trust in good measure.—Salt Lake Tribune.

Pauncefoot had often been laughed at for his little foibles and peculiarities, but was a sincere friend of this country, and he worked unceasingly to promote, foster and encour-

age the entente cordiale between America and England.—Salt Lake Herald.

Americans had a genuine liking for Lord Pauncefoot, the British ambassador, and on the other hand he may well have had a personal liking for them. It was to America that he owed his peerage and the opportunity of the greatest achievements of his career.—Buffalo Express.

The death of Lord Pauncefoot will be sincerely regretted by all who have at heart promotion of the closest relations of friendship between this country and Great Britain. It is difficult to over-estimate the value of the deceased diplomat's services in this respect.—New York Commercial Advertiser.

Five American secretaries of state he met in his negotiations, and all of them became his friends. Without a doubt a large degree of the credit for the present state of amity between the governments and the people is owing to Lord Pauncefoot for his considerate, careful, tactful handling of delicate matters, his strict observance of the diplomatic courtesies and his own personality.—Washington Star.

The Soliloquy in Ping-Pong

To ping, or not to ping—that is the question;

Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer

The slings and arrows of outrageous pongsters,

Or by engaging, end them? To ping

—to pong—

To bat the ball across the gleaming board;

To end the constant questions of the crowd

Who gaily poise the racquet in the hand

And ask us why we do not take a part,

Or if we fear the strenuousity

Which cometh with the action of the game?

'Tis a consummation devoutly to be wished.

To ping—to pong—to punt!

Perchance to pang!

Aye, there's the rub!

For in what pingful ponging of the sport

What pangs may come?

What wrenching of the shoulder-blades?

What bruising of the knuckles and the wrists?

What agonizing backache from the stoops,

The twists, the leaps, the lurches,

And the never-ending bendings of the work?

To smile with joyous countenance,

Forsooth,

Well knowing that but at the last wild dive

A villainous suspender button burst its leash

And clattered wickledly against the wall,

Caroming viciously upon the floor,

And clanging resonantly on the boards,

Apprising all who heard and all who saw

That we are but a bachelor, who pins his faith to buttons

That are pinned in turn

By aid of single nail or piece of wire?

Who would racquets bear?

To groan and sweat beneath the weary gear?

That settles paces for the ones who play

But the dread of being known

As something out of date, behind the times?

As one who lingers sadly in that bourne from which

No traveller returns—the realm of the passe—

Or else, forsooth, that he is much too fat

To spread his spryness to the world?

Ah, yes! It is this dread—this fear

Of manifesting our obesity

That makes us bear the evils that we know,

And rank among the ones who but look on,

Than fly to those we know not of!

Thus fatness doth make cowards of us all,

And cause us fear the pangful game of ping-pong!

—From the Baltimore American.

Sharp Retorts

Lord Chief Justice Kenyon, whose parsimony was well known, lived in a large, gloomy house in Lincoln's Inn Fields. Of this house Jekyll observed that all the year round it is "Lent in the kitchen and Passion week in the parlor." At this some one said that though the fire was dull in the kitchen grate the spits were bright. "It is quite irrelevant," said Jekyll, "to talk about spits, for nothing turns on them." On the same lord buying a second-hand suit of clothes and finding a pocket handkerchief left in a pocket Jekyll declared it was "the very first he ever had."

To a Welsh judge notorious for his great greed of office and his want of personal cleanliness, complaining to Jekyll as to his being neglected, the

latter said in his most amiable tones: "My dear sir, you have asked the minister for almost everything. Why don't you ask him for a piece of soap and a nailbrush?"

The Japanese Wax Tree

"Japan wax," as it is called, is obtained from a tree, Rhus succedanea, which is found in Japan, China and throughout the East Indies in general. In the Japanese language it is called haje or haze. The tree commences to bear fruit when five or six years old and increases its product every year till at the age of fifty years a single tree will produce 350 to 400 pounds of berries, from which seventy to eighty pounds of wax can be obtained.

The wax is formed in the middle of the berry, between the skin and the

seed, like the pulp of a grape, extracted by boiling the berries in water and allowing it to cool. The wax separates from the skin, sinking to the bottom of a vessel in a solid cake. The gravity of this wax is 770 and melting point 131 degrees F. It is largely used, either alone or with tallow, by the Chinese in the manufacture of candles.

This tree should not be confused with the "tallow tree" of Florida which has a pith of solid fat. All trees that have fully matured

Winks—Jinks never sees the of a joke.
Blinks—No; he is usually the of it.—New York Herald.

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