

SIDELIGHTS ON NOTABLE PEOPLE BY THE MARQUISE DE FONTENAY

Sir Claude Champion de Crespigny, in spite of his being considerably more than 60 years of age, has just started for South Africa for the purpose of devoting himself to the exploration of the almost entirely unknown Kalahari desert, previous attempts of this kind on the part of other explorers having invariably resulted in failure and fatalities. Sir Claude, who was last year engaged in fighting black insurgents in the East African hinterland, having joined as a volunteer the punitive expedition sent out by the British authorities against the Sotiks, is one of the most picturesque characters in English life. He has been in turn a sailor—a fellow midshipman of Admiral Lord Charles Beaufort—an officer of the English rifle brigade, a cavalryman in the German army during the Franco-German war of 1870, a war correspondent, a champion swimmer, a steeplechase rider, and heaven only knows what all besides. He has managed to escape without doing himself permanent injury from any of his misadventures. His catalogue of mishaps of this kind includes, among other things, two legs broken while out hunting, three ribs and a collar bone fractured while steeplechasing, another rib cracked in a cab accident in London, a finger which a horse broke for him, and two fingers which he broke on another man's face.

Three years ago, although in the neighborhood of 60 at the time, Sir Claude rode in a steeplechase with his son over one of the most difficult courses in England. He holds the Royal Humane Society medal for saving life from drowning, was bitterly disappointed when Blonfin refused to carry him on his back across the falls of Niagara on a tight rope, has figured as an amateur picador in a Spanish bull fight, was for many years the champion amateur boxer in England, and has even presided at a triple hanging, which led to the inauguration of an unsuccessful attempt to bring about his expulsion from the Army and Navy Club in London. He was high sheriff of his county, that of Essex, at the time, and theoretically the convicted murderers under sentence of death are committed to his custody, who is likewise responsible, theoretically, also for their execution. Sir Claude took his responsibility in the matter to heart, and on one occasion, when a triple execution occurred at Colchester, he insisted on being on the scaffold in order to see that there was no hitch in the proceedings. Fortunately everything went off well. For if there had been any hitch Sir Claude would have assuredly have considered it to be his duty to lend a hand.

Some years ago he came to financial grief, but quickly obtained his discharge from the bankruptcy court and did not allow such a little thing as that to mar his spirits. Nor can it be said to have affected in any degree the fortunes of his ancient family. For his son, Capt. De Crespigny, a Victoria Cross soldier, will eventually be rich owing to the falling in of an immense number of leases in the northern part of London. Lady De Crespigny is quite the reverse of her husband, being of an austere temperament and renowned for piety, which is tempered by the most boundless charity.

The baronetage is of relatively modern origin, dating from the reign of George IV. The family, however, is of old Norman descent and has been settled in England ever since the sixteenth century. Sir Claude is much liked by the royal family, especially by the King, and was with the latter when, as Prince of Wales, he came within an ace of being killed during an inspection of the fleet at Portland. The prince, accompanied by Sir Claude, was on board the man-of-war Sultan and had been watching the manoeuvres of a new gun. He had just turned to ask some question of Capt. Van Alstair when suddenly the windlass took charge, and the handle, flying around with frightful velocity, only just missed the royal head by the fraction of an inch. Had it struck him he would have been killed on the spot.

On another occasion Sir Claude, while still in the army, was taken to task by the old Duke of Cambridge, then commander-in-chief, for some mistake during the course of military manoeuvres. The duke, whose language always was picturesque, apostrophized Sir Claude as a "d-d fool," and afterwards, with his characteristic generosity and kindness, withdrew the words. "O," replied Sir Claude, "I don't mind, sir, your calling me a

"d-d fool" before all those other "d-d fools," pointing at the duke's exceedingly decorative and imposing staff. The duke was extremely tickled and was always fond of telling the story with much gusto.

I may add that Sir Claude attracted a good deal of attention some twelve years ago by claiming the honor of knighthood for his eldest son on the attainment of the latter's majority. This was formerly a sort of prerogative of the eldest son of the baronets, sanctioned not by law but by the usage, which had, however, been allowed to fall into abeyance during the greater part of the nineteenth century. Sir Claude's demand led to the matter being referred to the law officers of the crown, who decided that there was no statute that could compel the crown to knight any one upon whom it did not care to confer the distinction, and the demand was accordingly rejected. As stated above, Sir Claude's son subsequently won the Victoria Cross, which both he and his father must undoubtedly prefer to any knighthood.

Sir Claude has published a most breezy and interesting volume of memoirs. The preface is written by the late Duke of Beaufort, who rightly describes therein Sir Claude as "the pluckiest and hardest man I ever knew, full of kindness, most considerate to others, and most unselfish."

One by one the old landmarks of London are disappearing, and now Willis' rooms, in King street, St. James Square, are to be torn down to make way for buildings of a more modern date. It was in Willis' rooms that Almack's held social sway throughout the greater part of a hundred years, that is to say, from the beginning of the reign of George III. until some years after the marriage of Queen Victoria, during all that time Almack's, in Willis' rooms, was a temple of fashion, the ark and the sanctuary of society. During twelve weeks in each London season a weekly subscription ball took place there. The subscription was 10 guineas—\$50—but not 10,000 guineas would have availed to secure admission. The candid nature had received the approval of that board of "lady patronesses," who wielded the most arbitrary and despotic sway over the English great world. Smaller in number, but equal in power, to the Venetian council of ten, this feminine oligarchy exercised the most jealous watchfulness to prevent what the Hon. Granville Berkeley describes in his memoirs as "the intrusion of plebeian rich or untitled vulgar; and they drew up a code of laws for the elect who received admission, which were as unalterable as those of the Medes and Persians."

The lady patronesses were not necessarily all English, nor were they all titled. Thus, in 1814 they consisted of Lady Castlereagh, Lady Jersey, Mrs. Drummond Burrell, Princess Esterhazy, the Austrian ambassador, and Princess Lieven, the Russian ambassador. On one occasion these fair ladies issued a solemn proclamation that no gentleman should appear at the weekly Almack dances without being dressed in knee breeches and black silk stockings. The great Duke of Wellington, ignoring this rule, was about to enter the ballroom one night dressed in black trousers, whereupon he was immediately stopped, and in spite of his request to the lady patronesses to make an exception in his favor they refused, and he was turned away at the door.

The Almack dances owed their name to William Almack, who came to London as valet of the seventh Duke of Hamilton, and retiring from the latter's service, invested his savings in a coffee house in St. James', which eventually he transformed into the "Thatched House Club." A little later he moved to 60 St. James' street and there founded the club so famous in the annals of Whiggery as Brooks', and which flourishes today; while in 1765 he opened the assembly rooms now known as Williams' rooms, but which in those days bore his name. Horace Walpole describes the stately grace with which old Almack, with powdered hair and silk stockings, welcomed his guests, his wife, Mrs. Almack, in hoop and ruffles, making tea, for the great ladies while their daughters were dancing.

For many years after Almack's had passed out of existence, and throughout the greater portion of the reign of Queen Victoria, the rooms were let for an entertainment it was always stipulated that only wax lights should be used—a tribute to the past. Durable attempts have been made to run the place as a restaurant. But the glory of the place had departed from it. Few of its frequenters even knew that it had been the scene of those famous Almack balls which enjoyed an altogether international celebrity a hundred years ago, and so thoroughly it has been forgotten that the destruction of the rooms is creating little or no attention.

So little is known outside our circles in England of Col. Charles Arthur Frederick, who has just been appointed to succeed Lord Farquhar as master of the royal household, that it may be as well to mention that he is a 47-year-old officer of the Coldstream Guards, with which regiment he served in Egypt, and that he has been assistant master of the household since shortly after the King's accession. He is a member of a family of which Sir Charles Frederick, seventh baronet of the line, is the chief. Its founder was Christopher Frederick, principal physician to King James I., and whose son, Sir John Frederick, was lord mayor of London in 1662, and one of the principal benefactors of Christ's Hospital, furnish-

ing most of the money needed for the rebuilding of the hall after the great fire. Col. Frederick has been Lord Farquhar's principal lieutenant in that radical reorganization of the royal household which has taken place during the present reign, and is therefore pre-eminently the man of all others qualified to succeed Lord Farquhar.

The master ranks next to the controller of the household, and his office corresponds with that of controller of the household in ancient times. He lives entirely at court and is responsible for the discipline and for the management of the royal household. It is the master of the household, too, who sends out all the "commands" of the sovereign to the dinners, visits to Windsor, and to the smaller banquets at the castle and at Buckingham Palace. Col. Frederick is a bachelor, an extremely religious man, devoted to his duties at court, goes but little into society, and enjoys the highest regard of the King, and especially of Queen Alexandra.

Henry Chaplin, M.P., one of the most picturesque and popular figures in English politics and society, has just furnished a striking illustration of the extent to which agricultural depression has affected the fortunes of the great English landowners, the number of whose acres is but rarely nowadays indicative of the extent of their income. Henry Chaplin, who has held cabinet office in Conservative administrations, and who has always declined the offer of a peerage, following in this particular the example of his father before him, inherited, when he came of age, an estate valued at half a million of pounds sterling in Lincolnshire, and yielding in those days—that is to say, about fifty years ago—an income of about \$150,000 a year. In most English works of reference he is rated as owning that amount of property and of enjoying that income. This was laid at his door the other day by a Socialist lecturer.

Thereupon Chaplin issued a statement, setting forth what his friends and acquaintances knew already—namely, that his rentals have fallen, owing to agricultural depression, between 70 and 80 per cent, leaving him after the defraying of charges and cost of maintenance, with absolutely nothing whatever. He adds:

"No man was ever more fortunate than I was in the tenantry on that estate. A better, more straightforward lot never existed, and I was confident that none of them would ever ask me for assistance or appeal to me for a reduction of rent unless absolutely driven thereto by necessity. After this condition of affairs had endured for nearly twenty years, Chaplin sold the major part of his property, and his ancestral home, Blankney Hall, has now passed into the possession of Lord and Lady Londesborough.

Chaplin was exceedingly fond of Blankney, and was proud of his title of "Squire of Blankney" than of any other distinction, save, perhaps, that of having won the Derby in 1867 with his horse Hermit. That victory not only brought fortune to Henry Chaplin, but likewise to his trainer, Capt. Machell, whose son, now holding high office at Cairo, in the Anglo-Egyptian administration, there is married to the Countess Valda Gleichen, grandniece of the late Queen Victoria, and cousin, therefore, of King Edward, who has directed that she should be styled "Lady" Valda Machell. Incidentally the victory of Hermit ruined the last Marquis of Hastings, who had run off with Lady Florence Paget and married her on the eve of the date appointed for her wedding to Henry Chaplin. Naturally Chaplin did not feel kindly toward Lord Hastings, whom he regarded at the time as having wrecked his happiness. But his resentment was mild compared to the bitter animosity entertained by the marquis against the present Duke of Sutherland, that induced the peer to bet so recklessly against Hermit that when the horse won his ruin was complete. Lord Hastings died shortly afterwards, and his widow afterwards became the wife of Sir George Chetwynd, and died last year. Henry Chaplin afterwards married another Lady Florence—namely, a sister of the present Duke of Sutherland, and the closest ties of friendship and affection have always existed between the two brothers-in-law. Indeed, after Lady Florence Chaplin died her daughters were brought up by their aunt, the Duchess of Sutherland, and made their home with her, while their father, Henry Chaplin, always had his apartments at Stafford House, the stately palace of the duke in London. His son, Eric Wilson, sister of Lord Chesterfield, and daughter of Lord and Lady Northbourne, while the elder of his daughters is the wife of young Lord Castlereagh, who will on the death of his father become Marquis of Londonderry, and one of the wealthiest peers of the realm.

A reader writes to me for the remarkable pike story to which I referred the other day in connection with the Swan Lake in Dunham Park, where Lord Stamford was so nearly drowned a fortnight ago. It seems that in 1830 Dr. Warwick, a well-known local physician, while passing through Dunham Park, frightened a six pound pike which was basking in the sun on the surface of the lake near its edge. Darting suddenly away, it struck its head with great force against the tender hook fastened to a post to prevent poaching. The fish, evidently badly injured, swam toward the shore, and after several times throwing itself out of the water, fell on the bank.

Dr. Warwick, with the aid of a keeper who meanwhile had approached, took the fish, and, examining it, found that the hook had damaged the skull,

raising one bone and depressing the other, and cutting the head. The doctor replaced the bones in position, the fish remaining perfectly still. He then returned it to the water, and made a little cradle by the bank in which it could rest in the water. When the next morning the doctor passed the lake and looked out for his finny patient, the pike came to the edge of the pond, rested his under jaw on the toe of his boot, and allowed him to examine the wound. After this, whenever he visited the pond he always found the pike on the lookout for him, and it was not on the spot when he arrived, a sharp whistle attracted his attention. His children, and afterwards many other people, visited the fish and frequently fed it, but it only showed attachment to the doctor. The fish was eventually shot by accident by a relative of the seventh Lord Stamford, who knew nothing of its history. The latter was well-known throughout the entire countryside, and is to be found recorded in the annals of the Liverpool Literary and Philosophical Society, to which it was communicated by Dr. Warwick in Chambers' Journal and in the London Field, so that, marvelous as the story may appear, it does not seem to be a case of nature faking.

Among the new forms of persecution to which royalty, and especially personages of sovereign rank are nowadays subjected is that of being stalked by perfect strangers whose friends or confederates seize upon that moment to snapshot them with kodaks. The photographs thus obtained show the stranger, who is sometimes a man and as often as not a woman, engaged in apparently friendly and intimate conversation with the monarch, and are then used by the individuals in social ambitions, or else for perpetrating swindles.

Photographs such as these, unless one happens to know how they are obtained, prove even more efficacious than letters of introduction. For whereas the latter may be given to anyone for the purpose of getting rid of an importunate visitor, it seems at first sight that a man or woman shown in a photograph to be on terms of apparently intimate social intercourse with the anointed of the Lord must necessarily be all right. That is why royalty is becoming more and more afraid of the approach of strangers and why the European police are becoming stricter than ever in protecting their royal charges from being snapshotted.

An amusing incident in this connection took place the other day on the occasion of King Frederick of Denmark's visit to Iceland. At Gulfoss, which boasts of the most beautiful water falls in Europe, the king got into a long conversation with an old English lady. Finally he desired to speak to the other people present. But she would not permit him to take his leave. She caressed the king's horse and then kept hold of the animal's trappings. It finally turned out that she had sent for a photographer with the object of being snapshotted together with the king. As soon as he understood the object of the old lady's maneuvers he gave way and waited smilingly until the picture had been duly taken, which represents him apparently in close conversation with the delighted old maiden English lady.

SERVED HIM RIGHT

A very absent-minded member of the French Institute was reading the newspaper in the casino at Dieppe the other day. He was absorbed by his reading, and with his left hand he unconsciously pushed the files of newspapers on the table. Beyond the papers was an inkstand, which at last the moving papers pushed over the side of the table. It fell on the trousers of a Paris banker, who was furious at the accident.

The absent-minded man offered his best excuses without appeasing the banker's wrath, who shrieked that his new trousers were ruined.

"But, sir, I will cheerfully pay for them. Be good enough to give me your card, and I will send the money to your hotel."

"To my hotel, sir! I don't know you. I must instantly have the thirty francs these trousers cost."

The member of the Institute drew forth the thirty francs, and handed them to the banker. Then he said: "Now that you have been paid, I hope you have too much of the delicacy of a gentleman to remain in my trousers. You know they are mine, and I insist upon their immediate delivery to me. You have no confidence in me; I have none in you. My trousers!"

The banker protested against such haste. The crowd that had gathered about the dispirited member of the Institute was right, and the banker, after sending for another pair of nether garments, surrendered the ink smeared ones amid the laughter of the bystanders.—Tit-Bits.

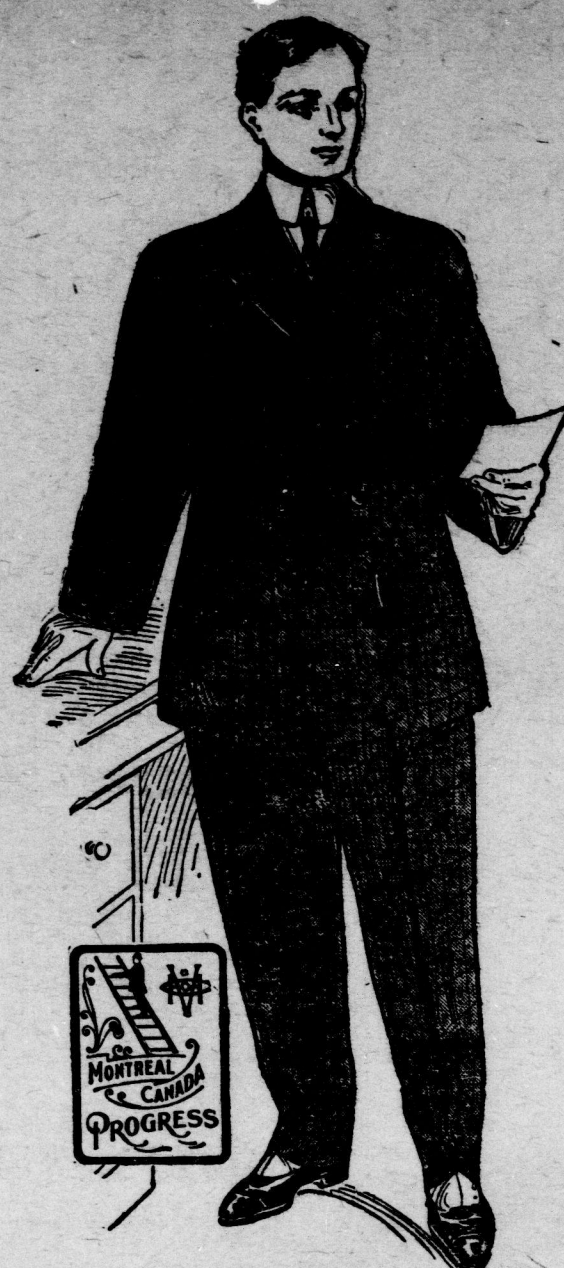
Professor E. Clayton Wyland, of the School for the Deaf, in Frederick, Md., himself a mute, is the first person so afflicted to be admitted to membership into the Knights of Pythias. He is a member of Lodge 29, and it was necessary for the initiating committee to learn the sign language.

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SOME CITIES THAT MIGHT-HAVE-BEEN

FOR VARIOUS REASONS THEY
FAILED TO REALIZE
EXPECTATIONS.

Scarcely a township in Illinois but contains the site of what was once thought to be a "future great" city, and this state has the unique distinction of possessing more instances of disappointed hopes relative to boom towns than any other in the Union.

Illinois was settled more rapidly during the pioneer era than any other state of the middle west, and hundreds of villages were founded which were believed by their enthusiastic progenitors to bid fair to become the metropolises of the west. Now the plow grates upon the forgotten homes of their foundation, says the Chicago Daily News.

One of the most interesting cases of departed greatness applies to Postville, which in 1841 was made the county seat of Logan County. In 1848 the Legislature changed the county seat to Mount Pulaski, and when suit was brought the various courts, from the lowest to the highest, decided against Postville, all holding that a conveyance of land to a county in consideration of the location of the county seat does not deprive the Legislature of the right to remove it when the public good shall require a change. In 1856 the county seat was again changed, this time to Lincoln, and Postville, a few miles distant, packed up and moved to Lincoln. Had the Legislature not interfered Postville would now be the leading city of Logan County instead of Lincoln.

Recently the postoffice at Elmore was discontinued, due to the advent of rural free delivery. This place has also been known as Rochester. It was at one time the principal rival of Peoria.

Now it has been officially dropped from the map and will be heard from no more. The village of Richmond, in Livingston County, was once a rival of Postville going through it boomed prospects of the Chicago and Alton Railroad going through it. It boomed and then it died. It was the most important town of Livingston County. The railroad instead passed two miles to the east, and there is no trace of the once populous and thriving village.

Cleveland, another rival of Peoria, on the Tazewell County side of the Illinois River, is also only a memory. It was laid out in 1835. Extensive wharves were constructed and many steamboats touched there. For some reason the people preferred Peoria and Pekin, and Cleveland slowly sank into ruins. Now the site is farm land. In 1836 the town of Bloomington, six miles southwest of Atlanta, Logan County, was launched. It was founded by the so-called "Smithfield, Emigrating, Agricultural and Milling Association" of Rhode Island. This association of Rhode Island. This asso-

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and sold them in small parcels to young men of the east, the sum of \$100 buying 80 acres and a lot in the village. The scheme worked well for a time, but most of the purchasers were stricken with ague and other diseases and the colony dissolved, most of the members returning to the east. The village was heard of no more.

The New York Tribune was 60 years old a few days ago. Among the letters of congratulation received was one from David P. Gardner, of 560 Washington avenue, Brooklyn, who has been a regular reader of the paper since its first issue. He is 92 years old.

At present German capitalists have loans in Turkish securities amounting to about \$50,000,000, invested chiefly in fisheries, railways and armaments, drawing interest at the rate of 4 and 5 per cent. The railways in which Germany is interested are the Anatolian and Bagdad.

Frank Steinhart, American Consul-General at Havana, speaks four languages. He wishes to resign to take a \$25,000 position in New York. The United States considers him too valuable a man to be allowed to leave the consular service.

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