

SIDELIGHTS ON NOTABLE PEOPLE BY THE MARQUISE DE FONTENAY

FRANCE'S new premier, Senator Monis, who rejoices in the Christian name of Antoine, is, like so many other men who hail from the Gironde district and from Bordeaux, a Protestant, and a devout one at that, differing in this respect from most of his predecessors in office, who were either Catholics, or at least, or Roman Catholics at war with their church.

The fact of his being a Protestant will have the effect of making him more conciliatory in dealing with the Roman Catholics, for in France all the better class of Protestants dread being counted fanatical, and are anxious to avoid being regarded as desirous to avenge the two centuries of persecution suffered by their co-religionists.

Moreover, the Marquis de Fontenay, as much as the Catholics to the endeavor to instill atheism into the boys and girls attending the public schools, and are anxious to be made by the teachers to destroy every vestige of religious belief in the minds of their pupils.

Besides being a distinguished lawyer, who was leader of the bar at Bordeaux before joining that of Paris, Monis is one of the most successful distillers of cognac in France, and a part owner of the Continental Hotel in Paris, where, indeed, he makes his headquarters when in the metropolis, and where the construction of his administration was arranged.

In living at the Continental, he is guilty of a violation of one of the ethics of the Paris bar, which requires that its members should be living in a residence where the furniture belongs to them. In fact, before a young man is admitted to the bar in Paris he has to satisfy the board of examiners that he is "dans ses meubles" (in his own furniture).

Monis is a man with a singularly genial manner, much lucidity of mind, a keen sense of humor, and, above all, a great amount of tact, which he showed as minister of justice, in the Waldeck Rousseau administration in his management of the court of cassation, or supreme court of appeal, in the Dreyfus affair.

He is short, with grey, close-cut hair and a pleasant smile. He is 55 years of age and seems thoroughly to appreciate the fact that the dominant figure of his administration is M. Delcasse, minister of marine.

Lady Anne Blunt, whose inappropriately named house, New Buildings Place, near Shipley, in Sussex, was partially destroyed by fire the other day, is the grandchild of the celebrated Lord Byron, being the only daughter of Adam, the only child of the poet, to whom he addressed so many of his love letters.

New Buildings Place is a picturesque old manor, which dates from the reign of Charles II, when it was built by one of the Carrell family. The Carrells who owned New Buildings Place in the reign of James II, sided with him in the revolution, was created by him Lord Carrell at St. Germain—the title being decided recognition by the British Government—and sold his ancestral estates to an ancestor of Lord Blunt in order to convert their confiscation. It is a queer place, with stone floors, all sorts of hiding places in the walls, and in the enormous chimney stacks, and is, of course, equipped, not with one, but several ghosts.

Wilfred and Lady Anne Blunt make their principal home when in England at New Buildings Place, maintaining

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their Arab stud at Crabbet Park, also in Sussex, in the Brighton line. Their winters they invariably devote to Egypt, where they have a beautiful place at Matarieh, outside the walls of Cairo, and close to the site of the sacred tree still in existence in which the Virgin Mary is asserted by tradition to have successfully concealed herself from the infant who, pursued by the soldiers, a spider having quickly woven its web over the entrance of the hollow so as to convey the impression that no one could be hidden inside. While at Matarieh the Blunts don Arab dress and live entirely as Arabs, restricting their association, so far as possible, to the natives, being on intimate terms with the Khedive, whose principal champions in England they have always been.

Ever since Wilfred Blunt retired from the diplomatic service over thirty years ago, he has devoted himself to the study of Oriental life, the taste for which is shared by his wife. Speaking Turkish and the various Arab dialects like natives, they have travelled all over Arabia, in native costume, living on native food, and establishing the closest kind of friendship with the various sheikhs and emirs.

Their hold on the goodwill of the latter has been strengthened by the great popularity which they enjoy throughout the Moslem world, by reason of the advocacy by Wilfred Blunt of every Moslem cause against the white races and the Christians. He has repeatedly defended in the Nineteenth Century and other English reviews, in the London Times and in other organs of the British press, the cause of the Sultan, the cause of the Khedive, and of his grandfathers, old Ismail. In fact, his enthusiasm in their behalf compelled Lord Cromer, when plenipotentiary at Cairo, to have him expelled on two occasions from Egypt on account of the trouble that he was stirring up against the English authorities among the native dignitaries and clergy.

Being regarded throughout Arabia as the most powerful friend of the Arabs, Wilfred Blunt and Lady Anne have been able to obtain from the various sheikhs, chiefs and emirs, horses and stallions of the most famous and purest breeds, horses with pedigrees as highly prized as those of the descendants of the members of the aristocratic family, that not even the Sultan himself could buy.

Moreover, Wilfred Blunt managed to obtain the famous stud of Arab horses belonging to the late Ali Pasha, shah of Cairo, whose stock was also secured from the celebrated courses of the Khedive, who, I. of Egypt, obtained from Arabia for the then phenomenal cost of \$500,000. These horses they have been endeavoring to acquire, and have succeeded in so doing, in improving the breed of English horses, and they are known from one end of Europe to the other as the finest of the kind.

One of the strangest treasures of Lord Rosebery at Burdass, his favorite home on the Epsom Downs, close to where the great forty is run each year, is a birch, such as is used in the door of English "misanthrope" public schools, for the chastisement of the pupils.

It is preserved in a glass case, in the corridor, enclosing the ground floor room, and is a familiar sight to those who have been entertained there by this statesman, who is not happy in spite of his having achieved the three objects of his ambition avowed when he left Oxford.

They were that he should become prime minister of Great Britain, that he should win the Derby, he has done this twice, and that he should win the hand of the greatest heiress in the world, which he managed to do when he married Miss Hannah Rothschild, far and away the richest of all the Rothschild women.

There is no truth, however, in the story that the Mirror was stolen by Lord Rosebery while at Eton. At any rate, there was no necessity for his stealing it, since birches can be had for the asking by Etonians, when they are in the college for good, and few boys quite the school without carrying away one as a memento.

Flogging in Europe has been abolished by law in educational establishments frequented by children of the middle and lower classes, as well as in those of a national, municipal and charitable character.

The aristocracy and upper classes in Great Britain, however, always have refused to take advantage of this legal emancipation of their sons from the rod. Their attitude on the subject is mainly attributable to the conservative instincts which are ingrained in every Englishman of good birth, whether Whig or Tory, and which make them averse to new-fangled changes of a non-political character. It is due also to a desire on the part of the ladies themselves, who are, of course, the principal parties concerned, to avoid being associated in any way with the common herd of boys, even when this association would involve exemption from flogging.

"They would be the first to rebel

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