The Prince at Malta.

FIRST PARLIAMENT OPENED BY H.R.H. — HISTORIC SPEECH FROM THE THRONE.

Malta inaugurated a new era this week when the Prince of Wales paid his first visit to the island and opened its first Parliament. When H.M.S. Renown cast anchor the Governor, Field-Marshal Lord Plumer, the Archbishop of Rhodes and Malta, Admiral Sir John de Robeck, and H.R.H. Prince George were on board. At 10 o'clock the Prince of Wales landed amid a picturesque pageant, his pinnace steaming through a sea lane formed by ships' cutters, a striking sight against the warm brown-gold historic background of the fortifications. Sir M. A. Refalo, Chief Justice of Malta, welcomed him, and after having inspected the naval guard of honour the Prince drove up to Valetta. Near the Sarria Church, where he received a rousing welcome from the assembled school-children, the Prince alighted and went among them amid indescribable excitement. In Valetta itself there was great crowds assembled to cheer the Prince as he passed through the densely crowded streets. At the Governor's Palace the Prince inspected a guard of honour from the Essex and Malta Regiments, and then proceeded to the Great Hall of St. Michael and St. George in the Palace, where the members of the Senate and the Legislative Assembly awaited him, besides a large concourse of the leading naval, military, ecclesiastical, and civil officials. Lord Plumer then read the King's Commission authorizing the Prince to inaugurate the Parliament. In the course of his speech, the Prince recalled the ancient glories of the island. "Since the time, 120 years ago, when, by their own request, the peoples of Malta and Gozo became a part of the inheritance of the British Crown, their story has been one of peace and prosperity. They have given many tokens of loyalty, and on their part felt, I trust, the benefits of wise, sympathetic administration. Malta was held in affectionate regard by my grandfather, and my father retains pleasant memories of his visits to the Island and his naval duties here. Now that in the fullness of time His Majesty

Grants Responsible Government

to Malta and its dependencies, he is confident that the old loyal spirit still prevails, and that the people will so administer affairs as not only to advance the welfare of their own community, but to further the interests of the Empire as a whole. No one who knows the patriotism, thrift, and industry of the people of Malta can doubt that they will worthily acquit themselves of this trust. The Government of Malta is assuming office at a time when difficult problems present themselves everywhere to those in authority. The war, in which Malta played a distinguished part, is over, but has left in its wake in all countries an aftermath of poverty, dislocation, and unrest, from the effects of which the people of Malta and Gozo are not exempt. These times and their ordeals call for wisdom, courage, and perseverance on the part of all classes and sections of the people. I cannot doubt that good years will return, and that a happy, prosperous future awaits these islands, whose people, ever clinging closely to the religion of their fathers, have steadfast faith in the guidance of the Almighty." After this speech, which made a great impression throughout the island, the Prince declared the Parliament open, whereupon the Governor asked the Prince to honour the Maltest patriot, Mr. Filippo Selberras, by conferring upon him the honour of knighthood, and the accolade was given amid great cheering. Then followed the presentation of the leading officials of the University of Malta and the

Students Offered a Silver Model

of a sailing boat to the Prince, who then motored to the Cathedral of St. John, where Mgr. Caruana, the Archbishop-Bishop, and his clergy received him. After luncheon at the Maltese Club the Prince attended a garden party at the Governor's country house at San Antonio, where he shook hands with all the guests. In the evening there was a gala performance of "Aida" at the Theatre Royal. Inside the theatre all the company sang the National Anthem, and the audience rose and clapped and cheered. After the end of the second act the Prince went into the foyer amongst the people. Next day was made a public holiday; the shops were closed and all business was stopped. Whereever the Prince went the route was packed with people. After visiting the battleships Iron Duke and Benbow and the naval establishments, he inspected some Maltese ex-soldiers, and presented a banner to a civilian band. The Prince lunched at Admiralty House, and afterwards played polo at a gymkhana. In the evening there were illuminations in the harbour, and a State dinner and ball. When the Renown sailed next morning thousands of people gathered on the foreshore and gave the Prince a rousing send off. The next place of call is Port Said. —News of the World, Nov. 6.

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The Freedom of the City.

DIFFERENT IN YE OLDEN DAYS.

NEW YORK. (Associated Press.)—"To one freedom of the city—6 beaver skins." Entries like this would have dotted the debit side of the expense accounts of Foch, Diaz, Beatty, Jacques and others of the brilliant procession of old world figures, drawn to Amtrica in the wake of the world war, had they come about three centuries earlier. And instead of riding at the head of triumphal processions to the city halls of various municipilities, there to receive the freedom of the city at the hands of respectful mayors, to the accompaniment of bands and cheering throngs, they would have had to file petitions in court for their freedom and take oaths not to offend against the law of the land. Conferring of the freedom of a city on a visitor has come to mean almost precisely the opposite of what it meant in the young days of America and—earlier—in the medieval days in Merrie England.

Lost in Antiquity.

"The origin of the custom of granting the freedom of the city to aliens is virtually lost in antiquity," said Professor Harold McBain, instructor in municipal government at Columbia University, commenting on the round of brilliant receptions that have kept the mayors of New York and other cities almost constantly in tall hats and frock coats in recent months. It appears, however, to have grown directly out of the medieval organization of industry on a monopoliatic basis, and was originally an economic measure, pure and simple. In the old English borough it amounted to a license to carry on business and, later, to vote. Without the status of a freeman, conferred by the grant, a man could not rise above the class of employee.

Six Beaver Skins the Fee.

The early Dutch setters of New Amsterdam—now New York—set up a similar status, called the Burgher Right, in 1648, as a protection against "Scotch Merchants and Petty Traders who spoil trade and business by underselling." Persons not holding the Burgher Right were prohibited from conducting business either with Christian or Heathen. The fee was six beaver skins. "Freedom of the city was provided for in the Dongan charter of 1686—the first English charter of New York city, and its dispensation was entrusted to ye mayor or any three or four of ye aldermen. The fee by this time was reckoned in British pounds instead of beaver skins—3 pounds, 12 shillings for the shopkeeper class, and 1 pound, 4 shillings for handicraftsmen. Persons receiving the grant were required to take the oath, "Obeysant and Obedient Shall ye bee to the Mayor and Ministers of this Citty,' and swore to take turns at the watch, pay their taxes, and warn the mayor of 'Any Gatherings, Conventicles or Conspiraries made against the King's Peace.' It was in the latter part of the eighteenth century that the practice of bestowing gratuitous, honorary freedom of the city appeared. Early New York records recite the bestowal of the freedom of the city of New York on Capt. Sir Peter Warren for his exploits against the French and to Generals Shirley, Monckton and Gage. Later there is an entry showing the honor was bestowed on three sailors of a vessel lying in New York harbor, in recognition of their services in helping extinguish a disastrous fire." The formality had nearly died out when the termination of the war brought a revival, designed to honor noted visitors. Professor McBain said he knew of no records showing the origin of the practice of delivering the "keys of the city" to persons receiving the honor.

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