

SIDELIGHTS ON NOTABLE PEOPLE BY THE MARQUISE DE FONTENAY

From Madrid comes a report of the impending announcement of the engagement of the widowed Don Carlos of Bourbon, brother-in-law of the King of Spain, to Princess Louise of Orleans, youngest daughter of the late Count of Paris, and sister of the present Duke of Orleans, as well as of the Duchess of Aosta and of the Queen of Portugal. Princess Louise is a handsome girl, extremely accomplished, and, having spent a considerable portion of her life in Spain, at Villa Manrique, her mother's magnificent place near Seville, is almost as much of a Spaniard as she is a Frenchwoman. In fact, the Countess of Paris, as the daughter of the late Duc de Montpensier, and of old Queen Isabella's younger sister, ranks as an infanta and as a full fledged princess of the royal house of Spain.

An attempt was made at one time to bring about a marriage between Princess Louise and King Alfonso, but the scheme did not materialize, owing to Alfonso's infatuation for Ena of Battemberg. As wife, however, of Don Carlos of Bourbon, the princess might nevertheless be called upon to play a notable role in Spanish affairs. For, in the event of King Alfonso dying childless, it is the little 4-year-old son of Don Carlos who would at once succeed to the throne, and in that event the child's parents would naturally become the de facto, if not the de jure, regents of Spain throughout his long minority.

Don Carlos, it may be remembered, married the eldest sister of King Alfonso. She had been Queen of Spain as a little girl during the seven months which intervened between the death of her father and the birth of her brother, and at the time of her demise she bore the title of Princess of the Asturias, which was shared, according to Spanish custom, by her consort, but which he has now dropped. He is a younger son of the head of the Neapolitan branch of the house of Bourbon, the brother of Caserta, who at the death of his half-brother, the ex-king of Naples, proclaimed his pretensions to the crown of the two Sicilies, now merged in the Kingdom of Italy. Carlos has been brought up wholly in Spain under the direction and at the expense of his mother-in-law, Queen Christina, to whom he is devoted, and served with considerable gallantry in Cuba during the insurrection which preceded the war between the United States and Spain.

While a pleasant, well-bred man, whose life has been singularly free from scandal, and who as mentor of his young brother-in-law, King Alfonso, has succeeded in keeping the latter out of many a scrape, he is perhaps wrongly credited with exercising a reactionary influence upon the latter in politics and in the responsibility of every act of Don Alfonso that does not meet with the approval of the Liberals. Owing to this Don Carlos is not popular with the people of the land of his adoption.

Lord Aberdeen, the viceroy of Ireland, although he is a member of the Church of England, is also an elder of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, and takes advantage of his position as such when staying at his place in Aberdeenshire to occasionally occupy the pulpit of the parish church at Methlie, and to preach on the Sabbath morning. In fact, Lord Aberdeen is imbued with the conviction that he possesses remarkable gifts of pulpit oratory, and is fond of preaching, his tastes in this particular being shared by his son-in-law, the Right Hon John Sinclair, who was formerly his private secretary, and who now is the secretary for Scotland and the representative of the interests of the northern kingdom in the cabinet.

Lady Aberdeen, in spite of her predilection for public speaking—she is one of the leading women platform orators of the day—has never yet ventured to try her hand at preaching in the parish church at Methlie. But, inasmuch as she has been invested with all kinds of honorary university degrees of doctor of this and doctor of that, there is no knowing but what one of these days she may don her college gown, hood and mortar board headpiece, and take her place in the pulpit, in defiance of the recommendations of St. Paul as to the attitude and behavior of the fair sex during divine service.

It speaks volumes for the personal charm of the Aberdeens that they should have succeeded in rendering so popular among the Roman Catholic population of Ireland the rule at Dublin Castle of a viceroy who shines as a Presbyterian preacher.

Although Count Stackelberg was one of the generals who at the close of the war with Japan, had a greater number of defeats and disasters to his credit than any other Russian commander, yet he still continues to enjoy the favor of the Czar, and indeed of most of the members of the reigning house of Romanoff. This is ascribed by the great world at St. Petersburg to his wife, who, in spite of her 50 years of age, is still a remarkably handsome and wonderfully preserved woman. In society on the banks of the Neva she goes by the name of "La Ciniselli." It was in 1879 that at that time famous Ciniselli circus made its appearance at St. Petersburg and at once acquired a great vogue, partly by reason of the superb horses ridden by the daughter of the proprietor of the circus and presented to her by the late King Humbert, but still more by reason of the beauty of the daughter herself, Mile. Dora Ciniselli. That she was the heroine of a romance in which the King of Italy had figured, and the fact

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notable a role in the English great world fifty years ago, Lord Grantley's sister, the Hon. Carlotta Chiara Norton, remained with her peasant mother, was brought up as a peasant, and still lives at Capri.

Lord Grantley is now a man of 50, has figured on several occasions in the divorce court as co-respondent, which indicates that he is disposed toward romance, and with Italian peasant blood in his veins, will probably one of these days answer "the call of the blood," and, following the example of his father, will withdraw to Capri to spend the evening of his stormy life among his mother's people as a Capriote contadino and fisherman.

Field Marshal Sir Evelyn Wood, whose interesting reminiscences, "The Reminiscences of a Soldier," are written with all the modesty regarding his own achievements characteristic of the man—though perhaps, natural in one who wears on his breast the Victoria cross, granted only for heroism of an altogether exceptional order—has just published her with the late Charles Stewart Parnell, a cousin of Mrs. Annie Besant of theological fame, and a grandson of Sir Matthew Wood, the famous Lord mayor of London who braved the enmity of King George IV. by befriending Queen Caroline. Sir Matthew not only provided her with the funds needed for the defense of the suit for divorce brought against her in the House of Lords, but also offered her a home at his house in London, and furnished the money necessary for the conveyance of her corpse from England to Brunswick, where she is entombed.

Much of the high favor in which Sir Evelyn was held by the late Queen Victoria throughout her reign was due to the fact that his grandfather, this same Sir Matthew Wood, had been a staunch and generous friend of her own father, the Duke of Kent. The latter was living in Germany in a considerable amount of penury with his wife just before the birth of their only child, who afterwards became Queen Victoria. It was considered not merely a matter of vital importance but absolutely indispensable that the child should be born in England, in order to insure its rights of succession to the throne. For there was the danger that if the child was born abroad the Duke of Cumberland, who would follow the child in the line of succession, would take advantage of his birth abroad and of the absence of the child's father, whose presence at the royal birth is required by statute, to usurp the throne of England. But the Duke and Duchess of Kent were so poor and so debt-ridden that they did not have the money either for the journey to England or to effect such a compromise with their German creditors as would admit of their departure.

It was at this moment that big-hearted old Sir Matthew Wood came to their rescue. He paid off their debts in the town they were living in in Germany, and furnished them with the means for their journey to England, where they arrived two or three days before the birth of Victoria. When one recalls the attempt made by the Duke of Cumberland (afterwards King of Hanover) to secure possession of the English throne on the death of his brother, William IV., an attempt in which he was encouraged by the avowed sympathies of a large element of the Tory aristocracy, it will be appreciated why Queen Victoria was accustomed to regard herself as in a measure indebted for her possession of the British crown to the generosity of Sir Evelyn Wood's grandfather to her parents.

These facts are not contained in the "reminiscences" of Sir Evelyn Wood, but they are of timely interest, nevertheless, in connection therewith. Sir Evelyn likewise neglects to mention in his book the true reason of his failure to receive any command in the Boer war, in spite of his soldierly offers to serve under Lord Kitchener and Sir Redvers Buller, both of whom were his inferiors in rank and seniority. The fact is that he is appallingly deaf, an infirmity regarding which he is extremely sensitive. True, his hearing was affected through gunfire. But still at the same time deafness such as he regarded as disqualifying a general from an important command in the field.

With all that, he is a most polished courtier, and when the Empress Eugenie insisted upon going out to Africa after the death of the Prince Imperial in order to visit the spot where his body had been found, Sir Evelyn Wood was designated by the Queen to act as her escort. Sir Evelyn started his career as a midshipman, and won the medal of the Legion of Honor at the age of 17 in the Crimean war, at the close of which he entered the army as a cavalry officer, winning the Victoria cross in the Indian mutiny. He is as clever in handling infantry as cavalry, and after becoming a general took the trouble to study for the bar, of which he is now a full-fledged member.

HOW TO PROPERLY CARE FOR PALMS

SOME USEFUL POINTERS FOR THE
AMATEUR HORTICULTURIST.

While a palm may be kept entirely away from the sunshine to advantage, it cannot be kept in a shady place at a distance from good light, without injury.

If you use your palms for decorative purposes around the mantel or in corners of the room, do not allow them to remain there longer than is absolutely necessary.

Give them a place near the glass again as soon as possible. Never shower a palm and allow the sun to shine on it while the water stands on the leaves. If you do, more than likely the brown spots that are so disfiguring will appear, or the foliage will become blistered or scorched.

The best soils for the varieties of palms in general cultivation are made up of ordinary garden loam and a little sand.

Palms have very heavy roots and like a heavier, firmer soil than do most plants.

If the roots won't stay in the soil, but are inclined to take to stilt, no harm is done to the plant by this elevation of its crown above the soil. If unsightly, pot the plant lower when you give it a shift.

While the palm is able to endure a good deal of heat, it does not require the degree of heat which many seem to think is necessary for its successful cultivation.

Some of the finest specimens will grow in a room which is several degrees cooler than the living rooms are usually kept.

Some amateurs always apply the same quantity of water to palms daily.

POPULAR DELUSIONS REGARDING THE IRISH

STAGE IRISHMAN IS ANYTHING BUT "TYPICAL."

Cork is far more Irish than Dublin. Here I feel I am beginning to get a foretaste of the real thing. A foretaste rather than anything more actual, because Cork is too busy and prosperous to be wholly typical of Ireland. Incidentally I am beginning to doubt whether that phrase "typical of Ireland" may not conceivably be a visitor in a strange country is apt to be almost morbidly on the lookout for "typical" in other words, for what will fit in with his preconceived notions. Everyone has felt this temptation. You land with an assortment of expectations as to what you are going to see, expectations derived from reading, seeing plays, listening to previous travelers, and generally assimilating such knowledge of the subject as is common property in your neighborhood. You see something that corresponds with these preconceptions, so you at once exclaim, "How typical!"

So far from being typical, it may be and most likely is a distortion or exaggeration or caricature. This is peculiarly the case in Ireland, for Ireland is the most written about and the least known of all European countries. If a grinning, blue-eyed joint in tight knickerbockers were to enter my room at this moment, brandishing a shilleagh and muttering "Begorra" or "Acushla," or something of that sort, I should instinctively murmur "How typical!" Yet, I doubt if you will find such a creature from one end of Ireland to the other. And even if this mythical being did actually exist, I do not know that it would be right to describe him as typical. There are in Ireland so many Irelands, and each seems so abnormal, so wholly beyond the range of one's ordinary experience, that the most cautious tourist is obliged to pause before saying that this or that is a bit of the veritable Ireland. When you hear priests of forty years' standing, peasant-born themselves, and spending their whole life in the innermost confidence of the people, confessing that the Irish are as much a mystery to them as ever, it makes you abstemious of ready generalizations and rushing inferences. Sydney Brooks, in Harper's Weekly.

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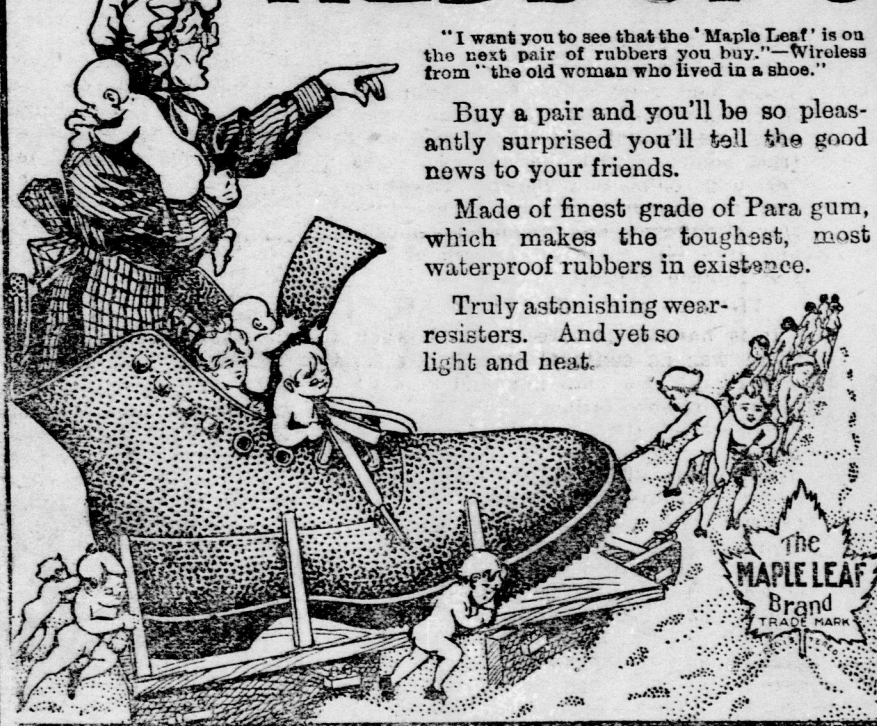
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