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LONDON GOSSIP.

LONDON, June 14. M. KRASSIN'S HUMOROUS WHIMS.

Mr. Krassin is evidently gifted with a rather grim sense of humor, or rather irony. This representative of the Russian proletariat is said to be vastly tickled by his renting of a luxurious flat at 20 guineas per week in elegant Mayfair; a flat, moreover, previously occupied by a Grand Duke—Dimitri—as also by Nabokoff, Kerensky's former Ambassador in London. The elegant Madame Krassin is no doubt even more enamoured of her new surroundings and associations than M. Krassin. It is true that at Stockholm she did not disdain to lead the plumes and coy life of the haute bourgeoisie. Not less significant than M. Krassin's choice of an ex-Grand Ducal apartment for his private residence in London is his selection of offices situated over that great capitalist institution, the London Joint City and Midland Bank. And yet there is no evidence of the bank having added to the existing locks of its strong room.

AN ICELANDIC VISITOR.

An interesting stranger in London is Mr. Fredericson, the editor of the Red Star Socialist daily paper. The winning of independence in 1918 has not, he thinks, affected the general condition of the country, though it has of course gratified Nationalist sentiment. On the other hand, not even Iceland has escaped from the economic effects of the war. Big fortunes have been made in the fishing trade, especially by the consignment of dried fish to Spain and Italy, and the new rich have been eagerly buying up landed property. The result is that land is now fetching five times the pre-war price. A corresponding growth of class-consciousness has taken place among the workers. The old trade unions used to include the employers, but now the employers have been turned out, and it is possible to run a Socialist daily in Reykjavik, whereas a weekly used to suffice. The situation is developing, in fact, on orthodox European lines. Mr. Fredericson has stated that the new rich Icelanders are buying up the salmon-fishing rights on the rivers which used to be purchased by wealthy visitors from England to make a summer holiday. Formerly the English outbid the natives for these rights, but now the biggest offers are made locally, and there is likely to be a falling away of the summer migrants.

THE HOUSING INTERNATIONAL.

The interesting point for an English patriot, at any rate in the big international housing congress that opened last week, is the unswerving belief in this country that is held by social reformers all over the world. Newspapers here are full of complaints of what is called the failure

of the Government housing scheme, and yet it is worth while for large delegations of experts to come here from every quarter of the globe to see what we are doing, and with the intention—avowed by many of them—to copy. This attitude is expressed most clearly by the French, but it was heard in various accents from countries in every possible stage of social development. One of the first things Finland did when she started to set her house in order after obtaining independence was to adapt the best parts of Dr. Addison's (the Minister of Health) policy to her own needs. At the other end of the scale is America, where, as her chief delegate bitterly confessed, the individualistic spirit of the people is against the Government doing anything for housing. The conference—the first big international meeting since the war—is the most extraordinary assembly of races that London has seen for years. If Germany was there it would be an epitome of the modern world. The spokesmen of over a score of nationalities have been making speeches, and it was striking that, with the exception of the French and the Italians, everyone spoke excellent English. One got the impression that English is in truth the modern language. The formal discussions, which tended to be more complimentary than pointed, are likely to be less useful to our visitors than the tour they are making of the British housing scheme. We are at any rate building houses, and faster, apparently, than any other country in the world.

WOMEN AND THE MONOCLE.

Women appear to be using the monocle more this year than ever before. I counted ten at an afternoon dance in town the other day. They manage them remarkably well, but it is not becoming in a ball room, and surely a glass is not necessary to see to dance with. Big rings in the ears are quite to the fore again, also, and a good deal of amusement was caused at a dance recently by quite a young girl, exceedingly smart and pretty, who wore a bored expression, huge rings in her ears, and a monocle. Everyone said it was for a bet.

TOP HATS AND CHECK TROUSERS.

The optimists who declared that the war had killed the vogue of the silk hat should have been at Epsom for the races. The monocles were full of morning coats and top hats, although outside on the cars round the course most of the men were wearing soft felt hats. There is strong evidence, however, that younger men, although conventionally garbed in morning coats, are striving after more originality in their trousers, and some truly amazing check confections are to be seen at race meetings and in the Park. A bold check of narrow black and white lines, with a blue or mauve thread running through it, is a bold

by a Savile Row (where are London's smartest and most expensive sartorial establishments) tailor, the very last word in designs. These trousers are cut rather full at the top, and are made of an ordinary cloth, and not of cashmere, the material which was at one time necessarily the complement to a morning coat.

NO PHOTOGRAPHS AT ASCOT.

The brilliance of Ascot week is not likely to be dimmed this year. The great fashion parade begins to-day. It is one of the most important society events of the season. Ostensibly it is a race meeting, but the sport is little more than an incident. The real interest is in the display of the latest creations of the dressmakers and the triumphs of the milliners' art. Whereas the Derby is the resort of all classes, Ascot by use and wont has taken on an exclusiveness entirely its own. The general public's interest is a second hand one, and is provided for by the picture press. But this year the exclusiveness has been made more stringent by the issue of an edict forbidding the taking of photographs. Whoever is responsible for the ban has shown a lamentable lack of appreciation of public opinion. One can hardly imagine that those most likely to be the subjects of the photographs will welcome the prohibition. There is a touch of personal vanity in all classes. Nor is it conceivable that the King—the most photographed man in the country—has objected to the attention of the camera man. Apart from the fact that unless the embargo is withdrawn thousands of men, and particularly women, will be denied the opportunity of gratifying their innocent curiosity, the high-handed action involves an infringement of the liberty of the subject which may have been justified during the war, but which is no longer necessary.

LOCAL COLOUR IN THE THEATRE.

In these days of critical and well-travelled audiences producers have to take great pains to secure correct local colour on the stage. In the Chinese American play, "East is West," which was produced in London last week, the producer, Clifford Brooks, spent ten weeks in the Chinese quarter of San Francisco in order to secure the correct atmosphere. "I originally produced the play in New York, where the Chinese are so well known that the conventional piglin English and sing-song tone of voice would not pass muster," he said. "Several of the actors stayed with us in Chinatown to pick up all they could about the walk, tone, habits, and appearance of the Celestial. The play was produced with similar care in London, and we went to some considerable trouble to secure Chinese instruments for the orchestra. Moon-harps and Chinese xylophones played with wooden hammers, were purchased with difficulty in Limehouse London's Chinese quarter, and two Chinese artists advised us about the costumes." "The Garden of Allah" is due at Drury Lane Theatre this week. Arthur Collins, the producer, went to Africa for the local color, and brought back several Arabs and camels and many of the costumes from that district.

DANCING CRAZE ENDING.

Dancing mistresses are nervous about the dwindling enthusiasm for dancing. Several charity balls have had to be abandoned because tickets could not be sold, and it is plain that the public is not so ready as last year to pay several guineas for dancing. Several instructresses have made hurried visits to Paris in the hope of discovering something new, and now advertise "new pair dances," but friends from Paris say the dancing slump is as noticeable there.

Mainly About People.

Speaking of the movies, the latest wild rumor is that former President William Howard Taft is the head of a new film syndicate, which will film patriotic features.

An American once wrote to Rudyard Kipling: "Hearing that you are retelling literature at \$1 a word, I enclose \$1 for a sample." Mr. Kipling complied with one word: "Thanks." Two weeks later the American wrote: "Sold the 'Thanks' anecdote for \$12. Enclosed please find 46 cents in stamps, being half the profits on the transaction, less the postage."

There are over a hundred books to the credit of the Rev. S. Baring-Gould, who recently entered his 87th year. But one of his most popular achievements was the writing of that famous hymn, "Onward, Christian Soldiers." In his early days, Mr. Baring-Gould fell in love with a mill-girl. With her parents' permission he sent her to York to be educated, and then married her, the union being an ideally happy one.

Three columns of The Times were occupied one day recently with memorial notices to those who fell in the Somme battles. One of the most striking was the following: 9th Bn. K. O. Yorks. L. L. To the honored and ever-glorious memory of the Officers and Men who fell at Fricourt on 1st July, 1916, at the opening of the Battles of the Somme.

"Gentlemen, when the barra lifts."

General T. Coleman du Pont, multi-millionaire powder manufacturer and owner of many hotels, is an accomplished cook. He proved it the other day when he, with a party of friends, found themselves at the Marion Club, with nobody in sight to cook breakfast. "Now," said General du Pont, "if you fellows will all clear out I'll cook you a breakfast and serve it." Whereupon the General took off his coat and rolled up his sleeves. Thirty minutes later he marched into the dining room with a huge tray bearing about two dozen eggs fried "straight up," a platter of fried ham, a stack of toast and a pot of coffee. Also, he served the meal.

Marshal Foch is a great smoker, but spends most of the time in lighting his pipe. At Boulogne the conference took place in the mayor's villa, in a very moderate-sized room opening out on to the garden. While the ministers were conferring on subjects with which the marshal was not concerned, it was interesting to see him walking up and down devising elaborate precautions to light his beloved pipe afresh, watching the wind, investigating the suitability of different walls by way of shelter, making experiments in protecting the light with the match box, and usually ending by utilizing a friend's extended coat. The marshal dresses in a faded grey-blue uniform, with worn, shiny brown leggings. He has the legs of a man who has spent much of his life on horse back—rather bowed at the knees.

The little town of Spa, lying securely sheltered in a valley of the Belgian hills, has had a very exciting existence in the last few years, as, during the later stages of the great war, it was the headquarters of German high command. There passed daily through its picturesque streets such important personages as the Kaiser, Hindenburg and Ludendorff, whilst occasional glimpses were obtained of the Emperor of Austria, the Turkish ambassador, and various German kings and princes. It was in the Brooks, spent ten weeks in the Chinese quarter of San Francisco in order to secure the correct atmosphere. "I originally produced the play in New York, where the Chinese are so well known that the conventional piglin English and sing-song tone of voice would not pass muster," he said. "Several of the actors stayed with us in Chinatown to pick up all they could about the walk, tone, habits, and appearance of the Celestial. The play was produced with similar care in London, and we went to some considerable trouble to secure Chinese instruments for the orchestra. Moon-harps and Chinese xylophones played with wooden hammers, were purchased with difficulty in Limehouse London's Chinese quarter, and two Chinese artists advised us about the costumes." "The Garden of Allah" is due at Drury Lane Theatre this week. Arthur Collins, the producer, went to Africa for the local color, and brought back several Arabs and camels and many of the costumes from that district.

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