

# DODGING A DUCHESS TO FLIRT WITH PRINCESS

## How the Noble Duke of York, Future King of England (Some Day,) Went Off on a Man-of-War, to Meet the Fascinating Princess of Pless (a Beauty) and Was Pursued from Port to Port by His Jealous Wife, the Duchess (Not a Beauty).

**T**HE Duke of York, son of the Prince of Wales, and probable successor to Queen Victoria's throne, has been conducting a flirtation on the war ship *Crescent*.

The Duke was smitten a year ago with the charms of the Princess Henry of Pless, a beautiful English girl, married to a German prince.

The Duchess of York was furious with jealousy. The Duke went to sea in command of the British cruiser *Crescent* as a compromise.

The Duchess went from port to port, and visited her husband when his ship called. The Princess of Pless, who had been taken to Germany by her husband, returned to England and visited Cowes. The Duke immediately took his war ship there.

**T**HE Duke of York, son of the Prince of Wales and heir to England's throne, has had a flirtation with a pretty woman, and consequent trouble with his wife.

Flirtations have not been uncommon in the British royal family. But the Duke of York has given an original turn to this one. He has carried it on with the help of a war ship—a first-class cruiser. It is one of his first attempts at originality.

The woman in the case is the Princess Henry of Pless, daughter of the famous English beauty, Mrs. Cornwallis West, and wife of an immensely wealthy German nobleman.

She belongs to a wonderful family. Her grandmother, now known as Lady Olivia Fitzpatrick, gave the Queen cause for anxiety by her flirtations with the usually irreproachable Prince Consort. Her mother, Mrs. Cornwallis West, twenty years ago, was a thorn in the side of the long-suffering Princess of Wales. To-day the granddaughter raises a storm in the family of the Prince of Wales's son. To none of these fascinating women has attached any serious scandal, but the heart-burnings they have caused have been not the less fierce.

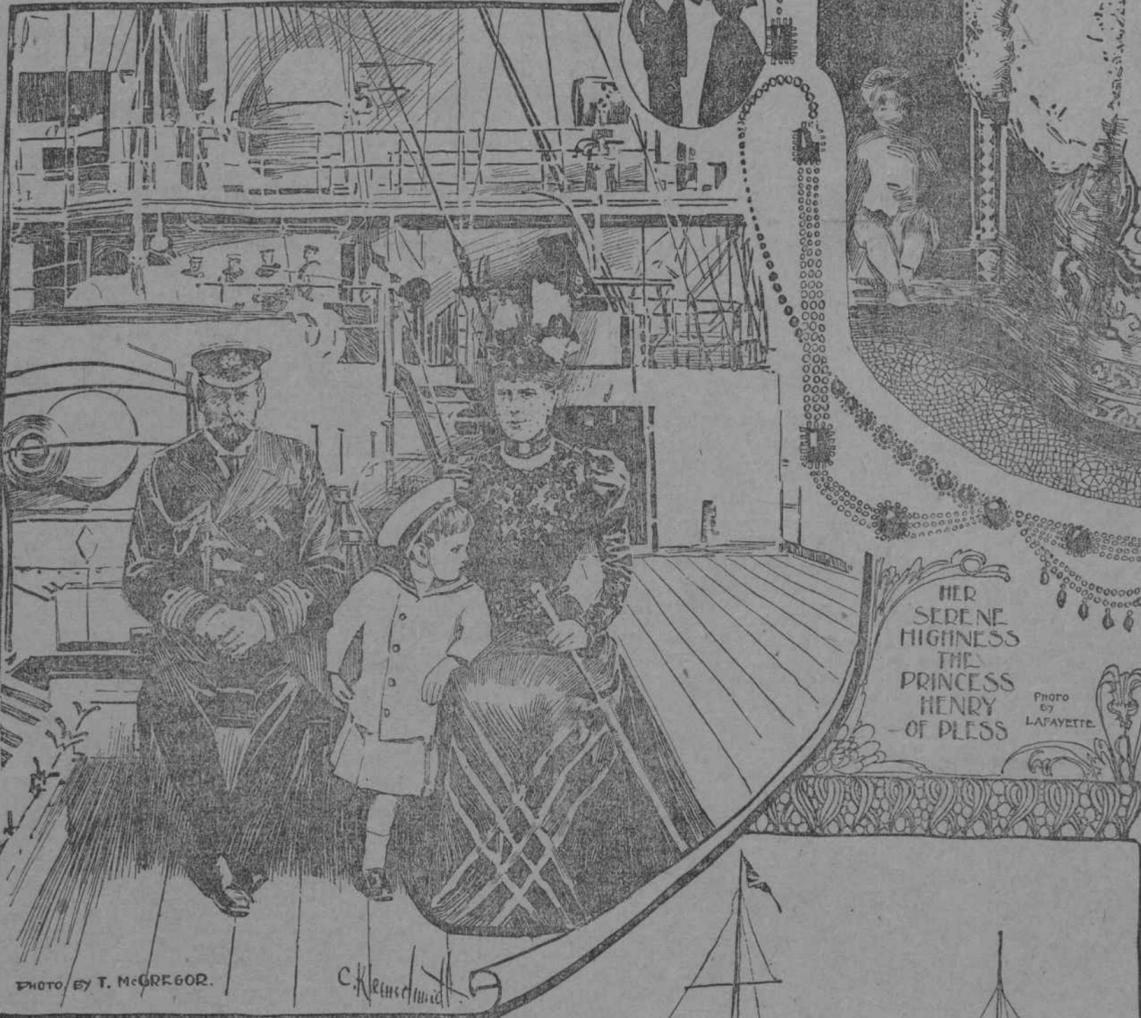
The Duke of York is a rather feeble, colorless young man. He has not the qualities which have made his father admired by the sport-loving public. If he has any strong inclination it is toward the eternal feminine. It is believed that he married a naval officer's daughter before his older brother died, and was compelled by his family to discard her.

When the Duke of Clarence died the Duke of York became heir to the throne. He had been educated for the sea, but in his new position he had to stay ashore most of the time.

The Duke of Clarence was engaged to his cousin, the Princess May of Teck. When he died she became engaged to his brother, the Duke of York—an arrangement both convenient and consoling.

The Duchess is not beautiful. Her looks do not improve with age. She is said to have a temper of alarming quality.

Her trouble with her husband began in this way. Last year the Duke and Duchess of York paid a visit to Ireland, the British Government wishing to show that the royal family loved "our warm-hearted and loyal fellow subjects in the sister isle," as the Tory newspapers put it. At a great reception given by Earl Cadogan, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, the Duke of York met the Princess Henry of Pless and was smitten. The Princess spared no pains to hold her royal admirer. She flirted with him outrageously. She displayed her prize too publicly.



THE DUKE AND DUCHESS AND PRINCE EDWARD OF YORK ON BOARD THE "CRESCENT"

The Princess was to have been present at house parties given by the Duke of Abercorn and the Marquis of Londonderry, but the Duchess of York protested so violently to her husband that the Princess was omitted.

Later, in London, the Duke and the Princess met again, and the flirtation was renewed. The Duchess was furious. She threatened to leave her husband. The British public caught a glimpse of the trouble in the form of two contradictory official announcements. The first stated that the Duke would visit the British colonies in command of a naval squadron. It was issued by the Duchess in the hope of forcing the Princess's hand and getting him out of harm's way. The second came from the Duke, and denied that he was about to leave England.

At this point the Prince of Wales hastily returned from the Continent and effected a temporary truce. It was brief. The Duchess, who is not patient like her mother-in-law, the Princess of Wales, found cause for complaint. It was rumored that a separation was imminent.

The Prince of Pless, who seems to have figured hitherto as an impartial onlooker, then became a factor in the situation. When the talk about the Duke of York and the Princess of Pless became unpleasantly general her husband carried her away from the gayeties of the London season and took her to Germany. He thought that the quiet and seclusion of his vast country estates would be beneficial to her health and reputation.

The Duke of York then became very unhappy. He missed his bright and beautiful friend. His homely, jealous and treacherous wife appalled him. Therefore he concluded that the naval cruise would be a good thing.



HER SERENE HIGHNESS THE PRINCESS HENRY OF PLESS PHOTO BY LAFAYETTE



THE DUKE OF YORK

It was given out that His Royal Highness would complete his naval education. "It was inspiring it," said the English papers, "to see our sailor Prince thus devoted to his arduous duties regardless of the delights and comforts of home."

The Duke was appointed to a captain's rank in the Royal Navy, and entered on his duties on the first-class cruiser *Crescent*. He started out in June and was at sea for ten weeks.

The Duke's cruise may be defined as a series of strategic coastwise manoeuvres, with the object of evading the Duchess of York and finding the Princess of Pless. The Duchess represented the enemy and the Princess an ally. The incidents of the cruise were varied. Sometimes the Duchess scored a success; sometimes the Princess.

The Duchess with her two children went from port to port along the British Channel to meet the *Crescent* and its commander. This was partly to calm public opinion. They were photographed in domestic groups at the various ports.

Plymouth, Portsmouth, Devonport, witnessed their affecting meetings. On this page you may see one of these photographs. Note the dejected appearance of the Duke.

Then the Princess of Pless escaped from her husband's custody in Germany and went to Cowes to participate in the gayeties of the yachting season.

Immediately the Duke, having given the Duchess the slip, turned about and brought the *Crescent* into Cowes under full steam. It was a brilliant piece of seamanship.

The Duke was more devoted to the Princess of Pless than ever. Their conversations, promenades and flirtations were the talk of everybody during the yachting week.

Much of the flirtations took place on the deck of Her Majesty's war ship *Crescent*. The turrets, guns and barbettes of that gallant ship could tell some amusing stories if they could talk.

The Duchess stayed at home, speechless with rage and jealousy. When the Princess left Cowes again for Germany the Duke went to London. At the same time he gave up the *Crescent*. He was tired of it. It had lost its chief attraction. His trip cost the taxpayers \$40,000, and it is doubtful if his naval education was greatly advanced.

When he returned to London the Duchess took him and the children away to Copenhagen to visit their Danish relations. Undoubtedly the Duke had an unhappy time when he returned to the domestic hearth. Evidently he does not mean to be bad. He does not wish to break up his home or he would not take so much trouble to prove to the British public that he and his wife are on the best of terms.

But once within the charmed vicinity of the Princess of Pless—the Princess of Flirts—he has no more power of resistance than the moth against the flame.

The Princess Henry of Pless is one of the most fascinating women of the European aristocracy. By her mother she is Irish, by her father English, by her husband German.

Her mother is Mrs. Cornwallis West, who, twenty years ago, was the greatest beauty in British society. She engaged the attention of the Prince of Wales at the same time as Mrs. Langtry, but, unlike that famous woman, she never suffered the same public reprobation. She was a daughter of Lady Olivia Fitzpatrick, who in turn was the daughter of the Marquis of Headfort, a great Irish nobleman.

Mrs. Cornwallis West married Colonel Cornwallis West, an English landowner with vast landed estates chiefly in North Wales.

## THRILLING HUNT FOR ALLIGATORS.

**P**ERHAPS the most exciting alligator hunt ever known is the one in which the attacking force were a party of English officers of Her Majesty's ship *Pelican*, and two other young Englishmen, Harry Forbes and Frank Winters. The latter are authority for the story as it is now being told in Panama, near which place the hunt for the saurians took place.

The party left the Bay of Panama in the *Pelican's* launch, accompanied by native guides. They were armed with Remington rifles and with revolvers. The launch made a run of twenty miles to the mouth of the Rio Saco without incident.

The river narrowed gradually, its banks clothed with gorgeous tropical vegetation and indented by little back waters, which seemed to be the abode of myriads of solemn cranes and flamingoes. The hunters heard the strange cries of brilliant plumaged birds, and passed close enough to see the humming birds darting like scintillating rays of light in the foliage.

An occasional alligator could be seen basking in the mud on the banks. When fired at the ungainly reptile would plunge into the river with a tremendous splash, and a few minutes later an ugly spot would protrude out of the murky river and give a snort of defiance.

As the boats ascended the gators became more and more plentiful. Some of them were twenty feet in length—veritable monsters. The river was now not more than thirty yards wide.

The hunters presently reached a kind of open pool, with small streams and backwaters radiating in every direction. The air was heavy with the sickening, heavy smell of musk, which indicated the heavy probability of the haunts of the saurian.

Guided by a peon the boats turned up a small creek, and upon rounding a sharp bend the hunters were greeted with a wonderful spectacle. A vast stretch of mud was entirely covered with a living mass of basking alligators. There were hundreds of the repulsive reptiles. The place was literally paved with scaly saurians, big and little. A person could have walked all over the island without once touching the mud itself.

In attempting to get closer to the vast herd both boats grounded. The occupants were so excited that the grounding was considered a small thing. With one accord the men stood up and began pumping lead into the unconsenting gators. The scene that ensued is beyond the power of words to describe.

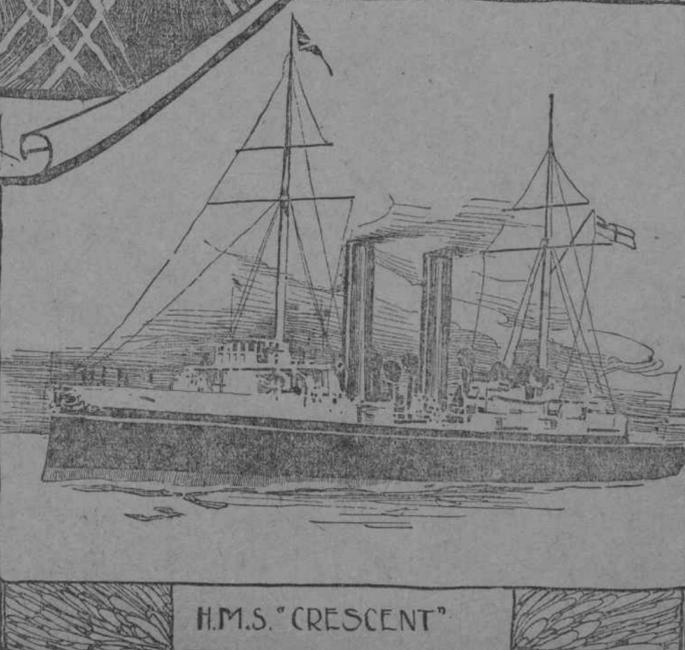
Up to this time the hunters had not realized the gravity of their predicament in being aground. The unpleasant fact dawned upon them that the boats were between the hundreds of angry alligators and the river behind, so that in order to escape the reptiles were compelled to pass them by some means. No sooner had every rifle been discharged than the whole hideous herd made a dash for safety, which was right over the boats. It was a question of courage and promptness then.

At the critical moment an accident occurred which for a moment palsied the nerves and froze the very blood of the men, whose eyes shone with the light of battle. Several of the brutes dived into the mire under the canoe, which had the effect of heeling the little craft over. The sudden movement threw Winters, who was standing in the bow, into the semi-liquid mud with a tremendous splash. The gators snapped at him from all sides, and he was rescued only after a terrific and well directed fire had created a diversion in the unhappy man's favor.

Presently the saurians began to whip the mire with their tails. There was a general tattoo, and as a result of the tremendous blows it raised foul-smelling, green and black mud. In a salute or two the boats were nearly half filled with blood and water, and the men's clothes were covered with the lathsome mixture. A peon was in a stooping posture slinking at the boats with his machete, when his arm was nearly broken by a blow from a swinging tail.

There were numerous accidents that heightened the excitement of the struggle. The greater number of the reptiles had passed the rapids. As a result of the accidental battle there were about 150 dead reptiles. It was a hunt that will never be forgotten by those who participated in it.

The boats started back for Panama the next morning, a night being spent on the bank upon which they were aground. The night was not one of rest, made so by the festive mosquitoes, which arose in clouds from the adjacent swamps. After an absence of thirty-six hours the young men got back to Panama, sufficed with alligator hunting. The clothes of each were torn and covered with the maddening slime. Their eyes were swollen, their noses twice their ordinary size owing to the attacks of the mosquitoes. The sun is pooled off the skin, and they were swarming from agone and fever through the tainted atmosphere of the swamped mud. But they endured all with the stoic British fortitude, and were happy in the enjoyment of a day's good sport.



H.M.S. "CRESCENT"