

# ONLY AMERICAN GIRL WHO EVER MARRIED A KING



THE GREAT PALACE IN PORTUGAL WHERE THE COUNTESS OF EDLA LIES DYING

### The Love Romance of the Poor Little Boston Singer, Elise Hensler, Who Captivated the Heart of King Ferdinand of Portugal by Her Voice and Her Beauty.

**T**HE Countess of Edla, the only American woman who ever married a King, is reported to be dying in the chateau of Cintra, near Lisbon.

In 1862 she marriedmorganatically King Ferdinand, of Portugal, husband of the late Queen Maria da Gloria, of that country.

The Countess was originally Elise Hensler, and was born in Boston in 1836. After singing at the Park Street Church in Boston, she was sent to Europe to be educated for the operatic stage.

Her European debut was made at the Royal Opera House in Lisbon. King Ferdinand saw her and immediately fell in love with her. He asked her to marry him, and she consented.

King Ferdinand's son, King Luiz, was then the actual ruler of Portugal. The latter's wife, Queen Maria Pia, attended her father-in-law's wedding, and kissed the American bride. King Ferdinand obtained for his wife the title of Countess of Edla.

The King was devoted to his wife, and they lived an idyllic existence until his death in 1885.



AS THE BRIDE OF KING FERDINAND OF PORTUGAL



ELISE HENSLER DANCING IN OPERA WHEN THE KING FIRST FELL IN LOVE WITH HER



IN WIDOW'S MOURNING FOR THE KING

### He Made Her His Wife, All the Royal Family Adored Her and Now She Lies Sick Unto Death in the Great Palace at Cintra, Which He Gave Her When He Died.

The Countess at her Portuguese home said that it was a beautiful sight to behold the big, handsome King among his roses and the slim lady with him in the sunshine, clothed in long, flowing white robes, which the King loved to see his wife wear.

The two lovers always walked on the garden terraces at sunset, and no new-found lover was ever so tender as the elderly King to his New England wife.

The chateau itself was a perfect museum of rare works of art which the King had collected. There, like a lord and lady of medieval story, the King and his wife held their little court. The Countess sang to her husband's friends, but, of course, her voice was never again heard in public. It was a perpetual delight to the King, who used to play her accompaniments himself.

This love idyl came to an end thirteen years ago, when King Ferdinand died. Ever since that time the Countess has lived in retirement at her palace. She is visited by all the members of the royal family, by whom she is greatly beloved and respected, for they recognize how fine and good her influence has always been. She is treated by them exactly as if she had been born to the purple instead of in a little cramped brick house in Pleasant street, Boston.

The Countess has two sisters living in Brookline, Mass., and has corresponded with them regularly. They are quiet, unassuming women, and but very few know that they are sisters to the wife of a king.

### Holiday Books of Sense and Sentiment.

**F**TENNYSON NEELY publishes for the holiday season a collection of handsomely bound books, which are as well as practical and progressive spirit of the times.

In "New York; a Novel," Edgar Pavcett has made a story of the nether side of metropolitan life. It does not begin with a luxurious flourish on Fifth avenue, but makes the first appeal to the reader's interest in depicting the sombre hues of life in Abingdon square. The characters keep much in the shadow of the lower East and West Sides, and even move in and out of the Tombs. It is a narrative of New York life, not as outsiders imagine it to be, but as those who have lived in the big city know it to be in reality.

"Social Quicksand," by Mrs. Laban Edward Smith, has its first incidents in the wild grandeur of the Rocky Mountains. The human interest is excited by the fierce struggle for existence of the roving pioneers. There are no castes or cliques in that simple society. Life is almost as primitive as that of the native Indians, whom the vanguard of civilization presses back into the canyon fastnesses. But out of this crudeness of mining camp and plain city environment are evolved types of aspiring social life in the golden days of boom and prosperity that follow, such a growth of the nomad girl of the prairie schooner to the city palace would seem almost incredible did not the newspapers every now and then bring up just such phases of life in the chronicles of social scandal and strife.

"A Romance of the West Indies," by that adept French story teller, Eugene Sue, is one of those delightful books of adventure that have a bewitching influence over every reader. It goes far enough into the past, some two centuries, to get into the atmosphere of pirates, cavalier heroes and dazzling maids to be won by daring deeds. A vein of surprise and mystery runs through the book, from the time that the outlaw cavalier drops from the sky, apparently on the Maritque-bound trading ship, to where this same adventurer penetrates to the castle of Blue Beard and solves some of the secrets of that charmed but bloody castle. Marian Longfellow, the translator, has rendered the French into very graceful English.

Other attractive holiday books which Mr. Neely now issues from the press are: "Two Washington Belles," by Lester M. Del Garcia; "Wife or Maid," by M. Douglas Flattery; "Little Ethel; or, a Sprig of Sumac," by Philip H. Smith; The Woman Progress; or, As It Should Be; a Story of Today," by Charles E. Leibold; "Driftwood; Sketches in Poetry and Prose," by Minnie Wallace Ketchum; "The Mind Reader," by L. M. Phillips, M. D.; "Manila and the Philippines," by Margherita Arina Hamo; "The Love of the Princess Alice," by Frank

did not, in her opinion, achieve the standard she laid down for her sons-in-law. I was told on one occasion, when the Czar was in Copenhagen, by a high functionary at the Danish Court, that the late Emperor was probably the only man in Europe who looked forward to his mother-in-law's annual scoldings as one of the keenest pleasures of his life. His late Majesty was rebuked by nobody else. The contrast was novel; and to an autocrat luxurious, Mr. Stockton's new novel, "The Associate Hermits," which has just been published, is a story of vacation-life in the Adirondacks. It is told much in the manner of "Rudder Grange," and shows that the author's inimitable humor has but grown more amusing with time. The story is full of situations characterized by the unmistakable Stockton touch, by which, however, the development of the author's narrative is not impeded. Rather it is emphasized by this succession of happy conceptions.

A stringy story of treasure-trove, told with all of Mr. Watson's familiar skill, is "The Adventurers." There are schemes and plots and narrow escapes; there are fights and riots and battles; there are exciting chases through London, and many wonderful happenings in the Welsh forests. Although the scene is laid in modern Wales in the present century, the events are such as one might expect to read of in connection with sixteenth-century baronial wars.

The articles on "Social Life in the British Army," originally published serially and now issued in book form, constitute an intimate account of the duties, military and social, of officers in the crack regiments of the British service. The articles have the great merit of being written by one who knows whereof he speaks, and are calculated to remove many misconceptions of a British officer's manner of life.

Mr. B. Catton Woodville, who illustrates the papers, has long been known as an expert in military draughtsmanship, and his striking pictures do much to emphasize the originality and interest of the text.

### A Girl of the "400" in the Klondike.

**Continued from Page Fifteen.**

Joseph, our man of all work, deserted us after frightening us nearly to death with threats of "getting even" for being bossed by "women folk" all Summer.

We had to do our own cooking and washing, and it was cold in the tent.

So we came home.

We sold our tent for \$1,000.

It cost \$180 and we paid \$90 for freight. So we made something on that.

We made some enduring friendships and we learned things that are worth a lifetime's privations to learn.

I'd like to go back there again.

Perhaps I shall.

We had a log cabin built before we came away, so we will find a home waiting for us if we do go back.

If a woman has good health, good courage and good spirits she will get on very well in the Klondike.

But no woman should think of going unless she has plenty of money to help her through.

The things that seemed strangest to me on my return to the "States," as they call it up there, were the fine clothes and the darkness.

You see we had to sleep in broad daylight all night long.

My principal occupation just now is to get my hands clean.

They're a few shades lighter than they were, but they still leave much to be desired.

On the whole, I am very, very glad I went to the Klondike.

EDITH M. VAN BUREN.

**ONLY** one American woman ever married a King. That was Elise Hensler, who became the wife of King Ferdinand of Portugal forty years ago.

The cable recently announced that she was dying in the splendid royal chateau of Cintra, near Lisbon. To millions of Americans this was the first intimation that one of their countrywomen had ever been the wife of a king.

Infinite talk goes on about the matrimonial affairs of American girls and insignificant little noblemen. Yet this one woman who married a king is generally forgotten. He was incomparably higher in rank than any other European husband of an American wife.

Moreover, his marriage to the lovely Elise Hensler and the preceding and subsequent circumstances constitute a charming idyl, the like of which is hardly known in modern history.

In this instance the hero and heroine did really marry and live happily ever afterwards. Although he was a king, he was good and simple, and had no evil designs on innocent womanhood. Although she was an opera singer and beloved by a king, she was virtuous, and there is nothing in her history calculated to bring the blush of shame to the cheek of modesty.

Elise Hensler was born in Boston in 1836. Immediately after beginning her operatic career she married, in 1862, King Ferdinand of Portugal. His wife, Queen Maria da Gloria, had died in 1853. The present King of Portugal is the grandson of this Queen and King Ferdinand.

Ferdinand was born a Prince of Saxo-Coburg-Gotha. When he married Elise Hensler he induced his brother, the Duke of Saxo-Coburg-Gotha, to confer upon her the title of Countess of Edla, by which she has ever since been known.

Elise Hensler was born of poor but respectable parents, and lived in Pleasant street, Boston, near the Park Square Station of to-day. She was pretty and gentle and well mannered, with a natural charm that fascinated and won everybody who knew her. She had also a beautiful, sweet, clear soprano voice, and she was engaged when quite a young girl to sing at the historic Park Street Church, which then had a very wealthy and fashionable congregation.

All the church people became very fond of the beautiful Elise. Her voice was so remarkable in its purity and sweetness that some of the wealthy churchgoers put their heads and their purses together and determined to send her to Europe to perfect her voice under some accomplished master. She studied in Paris and Italy, and returned to her native land to sing in New York. Her debut was a brilliant one. Her future was assured. She never appeared in Boston, her native city, which had loved her so dearly, because an important engagement called her abroad and changed her whole career. She never returned to this country.

Her first appearance on her European tour was at the Royal Opera House, Lisbon. She sang the part of Amina in Bellini's "La Sonnambula."

That very night King Ferdinand saw and loved her. He sought an opportunity to meet her, which he easily obtained. His first feeling strengthened into a passionate devotion, which in turn awakened love in Elise Hensler. He asked her to marry him, and she consented.

The King was free. His wife had been dead for years; and his son, a married

man, occupied the throne. Ferdinand had little liking for the pomp and circumstance of courts. He was a lover of art, literature and country life. Even if his family had objected to his marriage to the American opera singer, he was prepared to defy them and live estranged from them.

Strange to say, the royal family made no objection to the marriage. They even exhibited pleasure at it. This absence of prejudice in a royal household is notable, and would probably be hard to find among American millionaires.

The wedding took place in June 10, 1862. Queen Maria da Pia, daughter-in-law of King Ferdinand, was present, and actually kissed the bride. The latter had just been created Countess of Edla, in order to fit her better for her new position.

King Ferdinand proved a true lover. His love developed into worship, and to the day of his death he was devoted to his wife. The marriage was a singularly happy one, and the life of the pair was a romance to the end. They led an ideal existence, with wealth, luxury and royal honors.

The Queen and the royal family became deeply attached to the American wife and treated her as one of their circle. On her part, she behaved with a modest dignity which many a princess would do well to copy.

The Countess and her husband spent nearly all their time at the chateau of Cintra, which is not only beautiful architecturally, but is surrounded by delightful grounds. The King had very refined and gentle tastes, and cared more for art and his garden than for matters of state and court functions. He was a great botanist, a lover of rare plants and an enthusiastic landscape gardener. He laid out his own superb gardens and tended many of his choicest plants with his own hands. The lovely, sweet-faced Countess was always by his side in the garden, for he was never content to have her away from him a minute. A Boston woman who once visited the