

THE PRINCESS OF WALES AT HOME.

A Day Amid the Royal Surroundings Where She Entertains Her Friends.

THE PRINCESS OF WALES AT HOME. Those words upon a card, when supplemented with the date and the phrase Marlborough House, are eagerly sought and greatly prized when obtained by London society. When the Princess is housed at Sandringham she is not, according to social etiquette, at all "At Home," although she is then more at home in the truest sense of that phrase than when at Marlborough House.

By rights of primogeniture and nomenclature Marlborough House should be the London residence of the master of Blenheim Castle, who is also by strict construction of English law master of his American Duchess, who holds in her veins the Knickerbocker blood of the Vanderbilts and the Kissams.

Any of the ladies of the diplomatic set or of that exclusive one in aristocratic circles who enjoy intimacy with the Princess of Wales, and who call upon her, must enter from the Pall Mall side, after touching the electric bell cap, and also giving to a knocker of the eighteenth century that aristocratic rat-te-tat used in all Mayfair districts. They next find themselves by a magical response waited upon by two royal flunkies of the Thackerayan stamp of Rameses, and are by them ushered through wide portals to the reception room, and thence either into the main 65x25 great drawing room, or into the India room, or perhaps into the boudoir of the Princess; all accordingly as their transmitted cards may have seemed to require. There would be observed separate corridors leading to the business chambers that are set apart for the Prince for his own retinue and his own callers.

The main great drawing room has upon the walls panelled hangings of crimson silk, and is carpeted with a whole piece of Axminster, together with an embarrass de richesse of rugs. A tall and wide dazzling white mantel, surmounted by a plate glass bevelled mirror, is the principal feature of the apartment, and then the eyes dwell upon the tasteful high frescoed ceiling, or perhaps wander away to observe the two grand rosewood pianos, exquisitely carved, and next, in another corner, an Erard harp of stately proportions. The usual complement of sofas, divans, assorted chairs and fauteuils are also observable.

If a caller be through intimacy shown into the private boudoir of the Princess, in which are various doors opening to the bedchambers of herself or the Prince and to their respective dressing and wardrobe rooms, she will step upon the velvet pile carpet of another and cozy looking room of square proportions, measuring twenty-five feet, furnished in Marqueterie, and with every possible pretext for rest, repose and abandon. On all sides are flowers of the season and globes of gold fish. There is an aviary for an assortment of singing birds. Perhaps, near to the wood fire that blazes in the ample chimney place, may be seen one or two of the rare Persian cats that are favorites of the Princess; or one of her pet dogs that naturally, in the Marlborough House, might be of the Blenheim breed. These dumb favorites have their especial attendant.

Perhaps the arrangement of the flowers brought here from the nearby conservatory will be the most striking feature of the boudoir. An intense floral worship by the Princess has made her

popular with the florists. Society copies all her floral fads.

When Prince or Princess give a large banquet it is held in the dining room, which adjoins the drawing room, but if there is a dinner to only a few, then the India room is used. The 5 o'clock teas are given in the boudoir. A retinue of servants saves the ever young face of the Princess from even one wrinkle of care or worry. In constituting the household service come the steward and the housekeeper, the groups of butler, valets and footmen, dressers, wardrobe women and maids, and the chef with his kitchen cabinet. Inasmuch as the Prince is socially already King, and the Princess as socially a Queen-consort, she possesses small leisure for supervision of household duties. Probably she and the Prince live most of their time outside of the walls of either Marlborough House or the Sandringham estate.

No doubt the wardrobe room of the Princess is, as a chorus in the opera of the "Mikado" runs, "a wonderful sight to see." As the arbiter of fashion in dress the Princess has much to say and do in toilette matters. If the caller of intimate habit should find the Princess indisposed in her bedroom off the boudoir, this sleeping apartment would be found carpeted with a three-pile velvet fabric patriotically of British weaving, and of variegated neutral colors. The bedstead and dressing tables are of Hungarian oak.

It is not to be wondered at that while now nearing her half century of life the Princess of Wales presents the appearance of a matron only thirty-five years old, for there is no other woman in the world so free from worry or

cares and who leads so equable a life. Although the death of the Duke of Clarence proved a shock, yet she soon rallied from it. She does not suffer from responsibility, for these are few and not harassing in the slightest. In the drama of royalty she plays the role of "walking lady," and surveys its acts and scenes from a proscenium box.

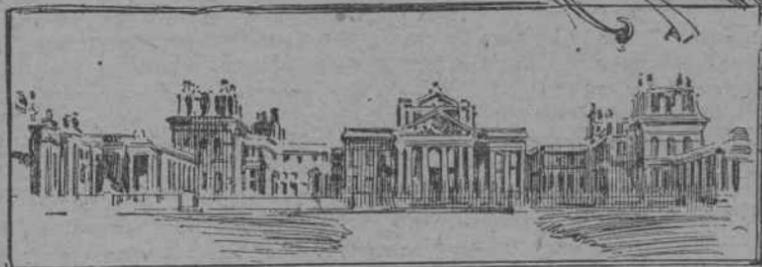
The grounds surrounding Marlborough House are capacious and well wooded, while there is a fine garden. Refreshment marquees and tents as rendezvous for guests are erected at the Marlborough garden parties, and the method of conduct at these becomes the model for those in other parts of London. To say "the Princess of Wales does so and so" precludes in the circles of Mayfair and Eaton Square any argument to the converse.

Walking around the Marlborough garden one cannot fail to see in a corner of it four petite tombstones sacred to the memory of "Tiny," "Muff" and a Japanese dog, "Joss," all of whom died while household pet spaniels; also a stone to commemorate rabbit "Bunny," once the joy of the childish dukes

The Princess of Wales.



The Grand Salon.



Where the Prince and Princess of Wales Live When They Are "At Home."

and princesses in Marlborough House. Then there is also a headboard for "Boxer," the larger dog, who had been a favorite of the Prince.

Baby Prince George enjoys his daily drives. And one only realizes the apparent irony of calling the Princess of Wales a grandmother when her yet juvenile face and figure are studied.

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