

ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 1896.

HOLLANDS YOUNG QUEEN

A VISIT TO THE GIRL SOVEREIGN AT HER SUMMER PALACE.

Devotion of the Dutch to Queen Wilhelmina Whose Betrothal is Announced—Simple Life of the two Queens at Soestdijk her Pleasures, Occupations, and Studies.

There is one sure way of making the phlegmatic, taciturn Hollander unbend and grow communicative, and that is to talk to him about his little Queen, who has just been betrothed to Prince Bernard of Saxe-Weimar. At least, that was my experience during a trip through Holland this summer. The loyalty and devotion of the vast majority of Dutchman to the House of Orange in general and to their young ruler in particular was one of the first impressions I gained on arriving there. I had already admired her picture hanging in a prominent position on board the liner which carried me over to Rotterdam, and had heard various Dutch passengers expatiate on her personal traits and charms, but I was little prepared for the many evidences of affection and attachment to her person seen on every hand in the land of dikes and windmills. You cannot speak to the average Dutchman on the subject of his Queen without evoking expressions of tenderness and admiration, and you cannot find a private house, or, for that matter, a place or public resort, which does not contain her portrait. The Dutch have been ruled from time immemorial by middle-aged individuals of the sterner sex, and they exhibit in their fondness for their present or rather future ruler something of the child's enthusiasm for a new and pleasing toy.

Queen Wilhelmina will attain her sixteenth year on Aug. 31 next. Two years from that date she will formally ascend the throne of Holland and replace the regency of her mother, Queen Emma, the good German Princess whom her father married in the evening of his life. I cannot help drawing a parallel between the prospects opened up by the coming event and the circumstances attending the accession of Queen Victoria to the throne of England fifty-nine years ago. Victoria at the age of eighteen found herself mistress of a court the moral atmosphere of which had been thoroughly vitiated by the dissipation and debauchery of her uncle, the notorious George IV., a condition of things which the colorless personality of her immediate predecessor, William IV., had not tended to improve. Victoria, with her youth, her grace, her innocence, soon purified the air, and whatever may be said of the morals of her eldest son and other members of the royal family, it is certain that her own entourage has ever been above the breath of suspicion. History, I think, will repeat itself. The young Queen of Holland will also find herself amidst surroundings tainted by the demoralizing influence of her father, William III., one of the most reckless debauchees of his day, but, thanks to the careful training she has received from her mother, she will doubtless overcome this and inaugurate a regime worthy of the noble house of Orange.

I had heard so much about Queen Wilhelmina while at The Hague and Amsterdam that I decided to make an endeavor to obtain at least a good look at the young lady, and if possible to learn something of her daily life. It was the end of June and the two queens had already left for Soestdijk, one of many palaces belonging to the house of Orange. Soestdijk itself is a small village situated a few miles from Utrecht, but it is more easily reached from Amsterdam via the town of Baarn. I arrived at the station there about 11 o'clock one fine sunny morning after an hour's journey past a most engaging panorama of alternating flat and hilly land. The proximity of royalty was apparent already at this stage, for a number of women were to be seen at work preparing the special waiting room at the station for the reception of one of the young queen's aunts, who was expected the next day with several children and a retinue of servants. The room adjoined that of the first-class passengers and was handsomely furnished.

'This room is never used,' said the red-capped station master to me, in response to a query, 'excepting by princes of high degree.' Ordinary guests, invited to Soestdijk, counts, barons, and the like, have to wait in the first-class passengers' room.

He said this with the air of a man who had no use for anything below the rank of a duke. Frequent contact with royalty had evidently enlarged his self-esteem along with his sense of proportion. A quarter of an hour's ride along an alleyway of stately chestnut trees brought me in front of the Soestdijk palace. It is a three story building of box-like form, with a one-story wing on each side, the whole forming a distended half circle. Everything about the structure is white, save the green window blinds, and of ornament there is next to none. An ordinary four-foot wooden fence separates the grounds from the high road, along which runs the horse car between Baarn and the village of Soestdijk.

For my own part I did not at once realize that I had reached my destination when my carriage stopped in front of the palace. 'Here you are,' said the coachman, 'this is the palace, and you are in good time. See, their Majesties are sitting on the balcony.'

I looked up and without straining my eyes could spy, under an awning two hundred feet or so away, two women, one middle aged and stout, the other young and slight. The former was engaged in needle work, the latter painting on a large water color pad. What with the general appearance of the building and the evident unpretentiousness of the inmates, I could have imagined myself for a moment in front of a wealthy Southern planter's home, except perhaps for the fact that the planter would be likely to take better precautions for insuring the privacy of his family by shielding them against the curious gaze of passers-by. But privacy in the sense that it is understood by Anglo-Saxons is unknown in Holland, and the royal family are no exceptions to the general rule. The two Queens seem well accustomed to being watched from the roadway, for the balcony is their favorite place during the hot hours of the day.

Although I had attained one of the primary objects of my visit, that of seeing the young Queen, there remained more to be done. Knowing well that court etiquette would render a personal interview with the Queen out of the question without previous introduction through diplomatic channels, I decided to bend my energies on obtaining leave to sketch and photograph within the palace precincts themselves. This proved a harder task than I had expected, for Jonkherr S. M. S. de Ranitz, Queen Emma's private-secretary, was absent for a few days, and Jonkherr L. W. Groenvaldt, the Court Intendant, seemed averse to creating a precedent of the kind. So the matter was referred by him to the Queen's Adjutant, Jonkherr W. F. H. van de Poll, who, not wishing to burden himself with any more responsibilities, turned it over to his colleague, Jonkherr P. Zegers-Veeke, who in turn consulted with Mevrouw Baroness Hardenbroek van S. Heeraarts-berg en Bergembrocht and two other court ladies with similarly unpronounceable names. The result of it all was that after an hour's wait I received the desired permission.

The little girl Queen of Holland, as she is known from magazine or newspaper articles, is a thing of the past. The Wilhelmina I saw at intervals on this particular occasion has definitely shelved her legion of dolls and has relegated her Shetland ponies and miniature turnouts to the stables at Het Loo, another summer palace. She is now a graceful, well-formed girl of medium height, blossoming fast into womanhood, erect of carriage, yet supple as a willow. There is laughter in her voice and laughter in her dark blue eyes, and a mischievous twinkle with which she bears out her reputation for being fond of practical jokes. Indeed, although a great portion of her time is taken up with studies which include nearly every branch of knowledge within the range of man, and that, too, under the supervision of the leading Gradgrinds of the country, her disposition is of the merriest that can be imagined. Beneath it all, however, there is also a strain of sentiment which shows itself on occasion, especially when her patriotism is appealed to. I will cite one instance. Outside of the palace grounds, by the bridge, stands a rude monument erected to the memory of Christopher Pullman, one of the soldiers who defended the road to Utrecht against the advancing Prussian army in 1787. His comrades had either fled or been killed, but Pullman remained at the bridge, refused to surrender, and received his mortal wound with the cry of 'Oranje boven!' (Orange above all!) His remains were gathered together some years later and interred on this spot, his skull and two crossbones being adjusted into the monument slab itself. The young Queen heard this story two years ago and seemed affected by it. On the following anniversary of his death she quietly ordered a handsome wreath, and, without acquainting any one of her purpose, betook herself to the monument and deposited the token at its base. She also gave orders to decorate the grave on each succeeding anniversary. These facts leaked out somehow and gave rise to much enthusiastic comment in the Dutch press.

It is a quiet life that mother and daughter lead at Soestdijk. They rise about 7 in the morning and breakfast in the large five windowed dining room on the second floor. Miss Saxon Winter, the English governess, a close personal friend of both Queens, occupies one end of the table, Queen Emma the other. Among the ladies in waiting and maids of honor often present on these occasions are the Baroness E. G. Van Ittersum, a great favorite of Queen Emma; Baroness Rengers; Baroness Schimmelpenninck van der Oije, and Jonkvrouw, E. H. L. Van de Poll, superintendent of the young Queen's education.

The conversation, thanks to Miss Winter's influence in the household, is carried on for the most part in English, the company only occasionally lapsing into Dutch. Although the Queen mother is a princess of Weldeck-Pyrmont, German is seldom spoken at court, and French but occasionally. Still, the young Queen's favorite teacher is a Frenchman, D. Silverda de Grave, and his visits to the chateau are very frequent throughout the summer. The young Queen's studies, occupy two hours of the morning and two of the afternoon. The balance of the day is devoted to rest and recreation.

In the matter of her pleasures Queen Wilhelmina is not very hard to please. She has two ardent passions—animals and drawing from nature. Her love for the former is shared by her mother, and between the two they own a perfect menagerie and aviary combined. The young Queen will often spend hours in the company of her pigeons, her swans, and a large variety of curious birds imported from the Dutch East Indian possessions. Her favorite dog is a red Irish setter named Swell, who accompanies his mistress in all her outings. Her out-of-door exercise consists mostly of horseback riding, while her mother is satisfied to drive in an open carriage. Every afternoon at half past 3 a victoria with two coachmen in blue livery drives into the palace grounds and takes the shaded roadway around Soestdijk. Exactly an hour later a cavalcade of handsome horses, led by grooms in blue and gold livery, arrives at the front piazza, and after a few minutes' wait the young Queen, with three or four ladies and so many gentlemen, emerges from the front entrance. The party mount their steeds and start off at a slow canter. As they pass the palace gates the crowd of tourists and people from the neighborhood who invariably gather at this time salute her Majesty with effusion. On the day of my visit the Queen wore a light green riding habit and a straw hat. The cavalcade rode two abreast, the Queen and Jonkherr van de Poll in the lead. In spite of her royal prerogatives, Wilhelmina is a bashful girl. The sight of the saluting onlookers brought a blush to her cheeks and her eyes were cast nervously to the ground. But the embarrassment was only momentary, for she soon turned to the crowd with a smile and a bow of grateful appreciation. Outside of the palace grounds the canyons were afforded me to witness her excellent horsemanship. It is of a kind that would attract attention even at a Madison Square Garden horse show, and this is saying much.

Between these various recreations, her studies, and her sketching and painting of which latter accomplishment I saw several examples that proved her to be no tyro, the young Queen's time seems to be pretty well occupied. Although the royal maiden's life is one of sunshine, a dark cloud will now and then obstruct the horizon, it only momentarily. Socialism, not to say anarchism, has been rampant for years in the larger cities of the country. It is less than a decade ago that the rattle of musketry was heard in the streets of Amsterdam and that men, women and children were shot down by troops of the line. Prosperous though the country be, as a whole, like all countries it has its discontented, and this body has been permeated with the teachings of social agitators. Not satisfied with attacking the legislative body and the Ministry, these people have hurled their anathemas at the royal house itself. Things have come to such a pass that the two Queens hesitate to visit Amsterdam for fear of being insulted on the open street, such occurrences having been frequent of late years. Even in aristocratic The Hague they are not safe from occasional abuse of this kind; witness the arrest and imprisonment, six weeks ago, of two young workmen for slinging vulgar epithets at the royal carriage while the two Queens were driving around on a shopping tour. Still, I repeat, the nation as a whole is thoroughly devoted to its youthful ruler, and never in its entire history has the house of Orange had a warmer place in the heart of the great mass of the people than at the present day. The general indignation following on outrages of the kind referred to proves this sufficiently.—V. Gribayedoff.

SOME INDIAN LEGENDS.

Superstition Led the Pima Tribe to Give up Polygamy.

At the time and for centuries after the advent of the Pima Indians into this country they practiced polygamy, and this will show how little superstitious belief will change a custom of centuries. As the story goes, a short time after the restoration of the Sabuaro (Hass en) the whole tribe was stricken with a strange disease. It was malignant in form and many deaths resulted. The great medicine men and magicians from all parts of the country were called together for counsel to see by what means they could propitiate Mo-kik-a-num, the death god. The magicians labored long and earnestly, but still the death god refused to stay his hand.

It seems that fasting has had much to do in the ritual of the aboriginal. I have always noted that when communicating their superstitious beliefs, when they wanted to solicit or petition any one of their gods, they always considered it necessary to fast for a given period. When they found they could not subdue the evil death god by magic the magicians hastened to an open plain and there fasted for three days. They were, however, privileged to eat roots and drink water carried from the river in the tanned stomach of an antelope, and all the time singing their songs to the sun god (Tas-o-Tham). Finally, on the afternoon of the third day, an immense herd of antelope appeared on a low hill not far distant. On their appearance the chief magician arose and said to

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the others: 'Whatever these animals do our people must do likewise; they are spiritual and have been sent by the great sun god.' While the medicine men were looking the antelopes paired off and passed on. As the last pair disappeared the chief magician spoke.

He said: 'Return to your homes and then let each man consult with his neighbor and be content with one woman (ova) for wife. That will appease and gratify our sun god. Continue to prohibit plural wives and the death spirit will abide with us no longer.' The people were very reluctant to break up their polygamy homes, but being driven by fear of death, they consented. It is a known fact that the Indians gave up polygamy long before the Jesuits arrived in this country. But the abolition of the practice has wrongfully been attributed to the influence of the Jesuit Fathers.

Strange as it may appear, witchcraft was neither known nor practiced among the Indians prior to the advent of the Jesuit Fathers. The first martyr to the witchcraft was an old Indian woman who lived alone with a blind daughter about ten miles from San Xavier. She was put to death for stopping the water running down the Santa Cruz. A short distance from this woman's house the water sank. Where the water disappeared some of the Indians said the old woman digging holes in the sand with her hands, that was sufficient evidence of witchcraft against her. She was arraigned, condemned and burned at the stake. Finally the medicine men got too assiduous in the hunt after witches. There were too many human bonfires being made, so the people changed the proceedings and burned several of the medicine men. From that time to the present day, instead of accusing human beings of witchcraft, the present generation of Indians accuse and find witches in animals—dogs, cows and horses—and in many cases they find witches in inanimate things, such as stones, rags and sticks.

SHOES WITHOUT NAILS.

Invention That is Expected to be a Boom to Horses.

Horses need no longer go to bed with their shoes on. A man who believes that a good horse should be treated just as kindly as a good man has invented a horse shoe which is adjusted to the animal's foot without nails.

The shoes are put on and removed at the pleasure of the owner, and the horses upon which they have been tried seem to exhibit a great appreciation of them, doing their work better and in a number of ways indicating that life is more satisfactory without a hoof full of nails. This shoe is drawn over the hoof and buckled on, no nails being driven anywhere into the foot for any purpose. If the inventor, who is an experienced horseman, is correct, the unfortunate animal has been for centuries rewarded for his faithful service to man by the most exquisite torture.

The part of the new shoe which rests upon the ground resembles an ordinary horsehoe, being of the same shape and material. A hinge in front permits it to be spread apart in adjusting to the hoof, in order to allow the frog to perform its natural office of a heel. A plate covers the entire bottom of the foot, so that the animal stands flatly upon a smooth surface, the frog sustaining part of the weight and forming a cushion to lessen the jar to the equine anatomy. Sometimes a small pad of leather and rubber is placed between the shoes and the foot for the same purpose. The 'upper' is of leather, provided with strap and buckle, simply for holding the whole arrangement in place.

With a set of these iron and leather 'brogans' upon his feet, the wearer is protected, as the inventor says, from all the troubles of horseflesh caused by cobblestones and inequalities in the road.

Birthday Newspaper Collections.

On the birth of a child, let a paper of the date be laid aside, as the foundation of that child's collection. On each succeeding birthday let other papers be added, until the child can take the work in charge for himself. In middle or old age the person will look over his collection with interest, to see what occurred on each of his birthdays.—Newspaperdom.

SOME LEAP-YEAR LAWS.

Women Could Propose 600 Years Ago and the Men Had to Accept.

Probably few spinsters who have been trying to gather up enough courage to take advantage of their customary privileges during leap year are aware that in two countries at least, and more than 600 years ago, laws were passed which gave women the right of proposing marriage. These enactments went even further than this. They also stipulated that should the man whose hand they sought should refuse, he should incur a heavy fine.

A searcher among the ancient records of Scotland has recently discovered an act of the Scottish parliament, which was passed in the year 1288, which runs as follows:—

'It is statued and ordaint that during the rein of this maist blisful Megeste ilk for the years knowne as Lepe Yearre, ilk mayden layde of baithe highe and lowe estait shall have liberte to bespeke ye man she likes, albeit gif he refuses to taik hir to be his lawful wife, he shall be mulcted in ye sum of an pundis or less as his estait may be; except and awis gif he can make it appeare that he betrothit to ane ither woman, he then shall be free.'

A year or two later a law almost similar to the Scottish enactment was passed in France, and received the approval of the king. It is also said that before Columbus sailed on his famous voyage to the westward a similar privilege was granted to the maidens of Genoa and Florence.

There is no record extant of any fines imposed under the conditions of this Scotch law, and no trace of statistics regarding the number of spinsters who took advantage of it or of the similar regulations in France, but the custom seems to have taken firm hold upon the popular mind about that time. The next mention of it is dated nearly 400 years later, and it is a curious little treatise called 'Love, Courtship and Matrimony,' which was published in London in 1606. In this quaint work the 'privilege' is thus alluded to:—

'Albeit it now becomes a part of the common law in regard to social relations of life, that, as often as every leap year doth return, the ladies have the sole privilege during the time it continueth of making love, either by words or looks, as to them it seemeth proper and, moreover, no man will be entitled to benefit of clergy who doth in any wise treat her proposal with slight or contumely.'

Up to within a century ago it was one of the unwritten laws of leap year that if a man should decline a proposal, he should sooner the disappointment which his answer should bring about by the presentation of a silk dress to the unsuccessful suitor for his hand.

A curious leap year superstition is still to be met with in some parts of New England, and that is that Leap year the 'beans grow on the wrong side of the pod.'

A SHOWMAN'S STRATAGEM.

He Stopped a Little Game That was Bore to the Audience.

'Your story about calling for a doctor in the circus,' said a retired showman, 'reminds me of the way we broke up a nuisance in a good-sized Pennsylvania town. I was on the road with a farce comedy company, and we put in two weeks at the town in question, there being a big military encampment there and a county fair to boot. We drew good houses all through the engagement, and were booked for an early return. I don't think we had been there more than one night before the doctor nuisance began. There would come a hurried messenger from the box office to the stage manager with a request that he ask if Dr. Bolus, or whatever his name happened to be, was in the house, and if it he was to send him to the box office at once. Of course, the stage manager couldn't very well refuse, and general attention was directed to the medical man, much to his satisfaction. We soon found out that the doctors who were so much in demand were very small medical fry, and there wasn't a doubt that they had themselves called for in order to

secure the consequent notoriety. Well, we stood it for a few nights and then an idea occurred to me. I took a walk up the main street until I came to a certain sign hanging over a stairway. I went to the office indicated, and had a brief conversation with its inmate, ending it by handing him reserved seat tickets.

'That evening, immediately after the first act and before any messenger from the box office had a chance to arrive, I stepped out in front of the curtain and held up my hand. Then in my gravest tones I asked:—

'Is Dr. Chizzold in the house?' 'Immediately a very tall colored man, with busy white head and huge silver mounted spectacles, arose in the audience and said:—

'Heah I is, sah.'

'You are wanted at the box office at once. Doctor, in a case which requires your immediate professional attention.'

'As the aged darky ducked to me and hobbled from the room the audience broke into a wild roar.'

Perhaps you will understand the cause of their merriment when I add that the old man was a corn doctor and probably the best-known eccentric character in town. 'Well, there were no more doctors called for from that stage during our engagement.'

The Firm's Entertaining Friend.

In the employ of a large wholesale mercantile house of this city is a man whose official title is 'entertainer,' and he is down on the pay roll as such. His connection with the firm is not generally known. If it were much of his usefulness would be gone. His salary is large, he lives at one of the big hotels, he knows everybody, has a variety of accomplishments, and is one of the pleasantest men to meet in this city.

He poses as a friend of the several members of the firm, and when a prospective placer of a large order appears he drops into the office, and an introduction follows. The merchant asks if it would be too much trouble to show Mr. So-and-So about, and the entertainer replies that it would be a great pleasure. Then follows a dinner at the club, introductions to genial and prominent men of the town, and after the theatre perhaps the visitor is given a glimpse of behind the scenes. A wine supper follows, and after it is over the visitor thinks Philadelphia is the only city in the world, and he subsequently comes over to place orders with the avowed purpose of spending the evening with his entertaining friend.—Philadelphia Record.

Not Historical.

A remarkable statement once came to light in a boarding school young lady's essay on the 'Crucifix of the Mayflower.'—The Puritans found a lunatic asylum in the wilds of America. Subsequent investigation of this astonishing allegation showed that the essayist had once learned that the 'Puritans found an asylum in the wilds of America,' and that she had added the adjective 'Lunatic' to give greater clearness to her narrative.

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