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TIES OF AFFECTION

CONTRIBUTE MUCH TOWARDS MAKING THE KING'S BIRTHDAY.

Whole Royal Family Unite in Spending Much Thought and Care on Their Presents to the Head of the Household—The King at Home—How He Enjoys This Yearly Family Gathering.

The anniversary of King Edward's birth is always a day of great rejoicing in his own family. The firm ties of affection which bind all the members to each other are proverbial, and any event in the life of one affects them all.

Hence, much care and thought are previously expended on the choice of presents for this particular birthday. Each one of the circle preparing or obtaining something that is either wanted or has been admired. In days gone by, when the King's children and their pocket money was limited, the offerings often consisted of little articles solely prepared by themselves, such as elaborate pen-wipers or worked tobacco pouches. But, although the presents of later years have been of a much more costly kind, it is perfectly safe to assert that quite as much pleasure was felt by His Majesty on the receipt of the former as of the latter.

On the morning of Nov. 9 it is usual for the King and Queen to depart from the frequent custom of breakfasting in their own apartments and to take the first meal of the day in company with all the members of the family who are staying with them. The mail bag of this morning is of a prodigious size; in fact, the carrying capacity of the mounted groom who usually rides to Wolferton for the letters is altogether inadequate. Huge bags of letters, an unlimited number of packages of all sizes, and hundreds of telegrams—which latter come direct over the private wire from the central office—mark the happy event. Literally from all parts of England, the Continent and the British dominions, from emperors, princes, officials, public bodies and private individuals come the time-honored words, "Many happy returns of the day," accompanied by some suitable token from royal relatives.

The family presents adorn the breakfast-table, or are in convenient proximity, in the good old-fashioned way, and His Majesty's grandchildren are not behindhand, but pay an early visit with their little offerings, their small voices, too, swelling the general chorus. The presents take a variety of forms—silver models of favorite horses, handsome inkstands, or riding whips, choice curios, paintings or sketches, or handsomely bound volumes of prose or poetry, for although the King is essentially a practical man, he is a great admirer of certain modern poets, chief of whom stands Sir Edwin Arnold and Mr. Swinburne.

A shooting party is generally organized, so as soon as the King can dispose of his correspondence, all the gentlemen of the party start off for the preserves, the ladies of the family generally arranging to meet them a little later in the morning. This shoot is generally the biggest of the year, and the day being always observed as a general holiday on the estate, every inhabitant of each village gets up with the resolute determination of putting in an appearance at the event. The shooting of the Avenue, then, which is a fixture for the King's Birthday, is exceedingly well attended, the villages being almost entirely deserted. The sight is extremely picturesque, the bright colors worn by the beaters standing out in vivid relief against the green of the pines and the velvety turf, and the red sand of the intervening roads and paths. Big bags are the rule, the villagers participating later in the day in the share of the contents.

The luncheon hour finds the royal family and the numerous guests assembled, but no one lingers over the meal, for all the employees of the estate have a special dinner provided for them in the riding school, and the King, Queen and family make an invariable custom of being present for a short time. The tables literally groan beneath their weight of

food, and the gatherings are delightfully hearty, the King entering into the spirit of the thing with the utmost good nature, listening attentively to the formal speech by the principal employee, or to occasional shyly offered individual congratulations. His Majesty's health is drunk with a three times three, and, if anyone ever doubted the shouting capacities of a group of Englishmen, he would speedily have such doubts set at rest were he to be present at the King's Norfolk birthday dinner.

In the afternoon the women and children are regaled, a festive tea being arranged on their behalf; and, if the King does not find time to be present at this, the Queen and her daughters do, and they may be generally seen in the vicinity of the children's tables, looking after their particular pleasures and requirements. His Majesty has a busy day, but whatever part of his usual routine he is compelled to forego, rest assured that an inspection of the stables and kennels is never omitted, for the King is a genuine animal lover and has a thorough practical knowledge of horses and dogs. These are housed to perfection, and not the slightest detail of mismanagement escapes the King's keen eye in his daily perambulations.

There is a merry meeting in the saloon for afternoon tea, and all who have not joined the family luncheon party now put in an appearance. The hour spent at tea is, therefore, by no means the least enjoyable in the long day. Queen Alexandra herself pours out the tea, in homely English fashion, and everyone thoroughly enjoys the birthday cakes, specially prepared by His Majesty's own chef in honor of the day. The various grandchildren, who have enjoyed the birthday in their own particular fashion, romping and playing to their hearts' content, aided and abetted by which states the Lord Kitchener has their aunties, have soon afterwards to retire from the circle for their respective nurseries in the house, while the adults of the company separate until such time as they shall assemble in the drawing-room, a few minutes previous to the dinner hour. Very beautiful is the scene when all are assembled around the large oval table. The apartment itself is of stately proportions, and the tables are exquisitely decorated with the choicest of flowers, the electric lights flashing on the beautiful plate and the glittering jewels worn by the Queen and the Princesses present. The menu is a special one for the auspicious occasion, the good old English plum pudding occupying the premier place among the sweets.

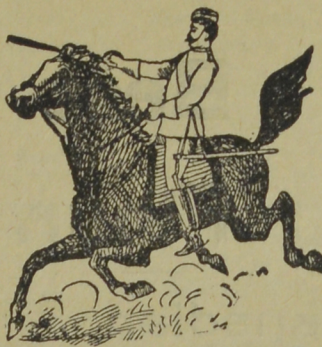
The after-dinner events vary. At one time it was the custom for a large ball to be given. There is a magnificent ballroom at Sandringham—large, well ventilated, with a splendid floor, a musicians gallery at one end, and walls rich in decorations, consisting of Indian arms and trophies, which were brought home by His Majesty when he returned from his eastern visit. It was one of the most picturesque of sights, when the royal procession came in and advanced between the lines of the county people. Very enjoyable were the dances, Their Majesties always taking part in the opening number. Occasionally a variety has been made by substituting a theatrical performance, one of the best London companies going down for the evening.

Probably Had Found a Way.

"I could wish," said the father of the young college student, "that you had chosen some other form of athletics than bowling. That develops one arm at the expense of the other. What do you do to strengthen your left arm?"

Whereupon the young man, who had spent the evening in calling upon a coed, blushed and said nothing.—Chicago Tribune.

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