

London Letter.

The Sirdar is the hero of the day. There were many of your young countrymen and countrywomen in the crowds which welcomed him at Dover and London; they must have felt a thrill of sympathy and kinship with our enthusiasm. I cannot give personal details of the arrival at Dover; but I gather, from various reports, a few interesting items. He was very shy, to begin with, and the very longest conversation that he had was with one of the first prisoners he had taken at Omdurman—a tiny marmoset, which seems to be devoted to him. One of the most remarkable things about his reception was the heroic self suppression of the regiment on duty. The men were simply bursting with excitement; everyone around was cheering to his heart's content; yet there stood these gallant fellows, restrained by discipline from uttering a sound as the victorious general passed between their ranks. The expression on their faces, I am told, a study to which no painter could possibly do justice.

In London the popular welcome was overwhelming. The distinguished men and society beauties on the platform got a surprise which rather alarmed some of them. No sooner did the train appear when a roar of welcome arose that has not been equaled since Jubilee Day. Police and barriers were swept away like chaff before the wind. Of course the Guards—in their private capacity—had come in numbers to greet their hero; and of course—being but human—they sprang forward like the rest, wishing to be first. But, when they saw what a melee was preparing, they tried to stem the rush—in vain. The Sirdar and his friends, despite their strong escort of police, had literally, though reluctantly, to fight their way out; and even then they had to make a detour and escape by a side exit. Sir Herbert (please remember that he is not yet gazetted a peer.) sprang into a hansom and cried, "Drive anywhere!" But the streets were blockaded in all directions. The people hung onto the cab and very nearly tore it to pieces—so I was told by a man, having myself remained safely in the building until the way should be clear. It was some time before the Sirdar, with his escort, could get away. I am pleased to record that he looks very "fit" after his hard work—broad-shouldered and bronzed, with an alertness in his eagle glance which tells of "hard condition." His great height makes him easily distinguished, even in a crowd. It is a typical soldier's face, with the trim brown mustache that does not hide the firm lips. His hair is not yet fretted off by the helmet, but grows in a wave over the left brow. A physiognomist would tell you that the brows show the born leader of men. They overshadow the keen eyes in a way which gives him a somewhat fierce expression. It is difficult to believe, looking at him now, that he was the little boy of six who once sobbed wrathfully for an hour because a well-meaning lady called him "sweetly pretty."

It is not fair of people to insinuate that there is a regular breach between Prince Charles of Denmark and his wife. The facts that the Princess is going to live in England for at least a year, and that her husband is going cruising, led to unfounded charges. The Prince asked leave to accompany his wife, but it was refused, for his Danish relations are very jealous of the Princess' openly shown intention to wean him altogether from his native land if she can. Princess "Harry," the spoiled baby of Sandringham, married under a misapprehension. She was told that she would have to live in Denmark most of the time, and she pretended acquiescence, meaning to strike for her own

way as soon as she was fairly wedded. Never having failed in getting her wishes obeyed, she naturally did not expect much opposition; nor has she, in spite of some nasty rebuffs, given up the hope of succeeding in the long run. She hates Denmark and shows it; on the other hand, she does not get there the petting which was hers in England. Fretting and vexation have spoiled her prettiness; her little witty speeches are not thought so wonderful as they were at home; moreover, Prince Christian's new wife is ten years her junior and very lovely, besides having precedence of the wife of the younger son. And the expectation of a baby proved a disappointment. There are again hopes in that direction, but no one can tell. So my little lady is moody.

I am sorry to hear that the Princess of Wales wishes to remain in seclusion all next season. She has certainly promised that, if the season keeps hopelessly dull so late as May, she will consent to hold a drawing-room on behalf of the Queen, but her feelings would lead her to exclude all gayety.

I suppose you know that the German Emperor made Princess Henry of Prussia go out to China to join her husband. The suggestion was offered in a way that could not be refused. Did you also know that their little son, Prince Waldemar is deaf and dumb? Scarcely anyone outside Court circles has heard of this.

Lord Curzon of Kedleston took formal possession yesterday of the new house 1 Carlton House Terrace, which is his father-in-law's gift. He will, therefore, be Arthur Balfour's nearest neighbor.

The little grandson born to Earl and Countess Howe may, if Viscount Curzon's boy fail to reach man's estate, become the earl some day. His mother is pretty Miss Ellis Jeffreys, the actress, who married "Fred" Curzon two seasons back. She is an officer's daughter and very charming.

Lady Eva Wellesley, sister of Earl Cowley, is engaged to Mr. Randolph Wemyse, whose wife, Lady Lilian (Lord Winchester's sister) divorced him some months ago. Earl Cowley, you remember, was also divorced. Lady Eva Wellesley is very pretty and smart, but

Well, there are some things that one would not care to do! She was once engaged to young Count Gleichen, the Queen's cousin, but the engagement was broken off.

Lady Edith Douglas, youngest daughter of the Marquis of Queensberry, is engaged to a very nice man, Mr. Lane Fox Pitt, son of General Pitt-Rivers. She was only a little girl when her mother divorced her father, of whom she has seen little. You remember that he married again, but the marriage was dissolved the very next year. Everyone hopes that Lady Edith will be happy.

One of the papers states recently that Mr. W. W. Astor had dined twenty six guests off the section of a gigantic redwood trunk which recently came over. That paper is now to be prosecuted for libel. Where, I should like to ask, is the libel? Mr. Astor says that the trunk did come, but was not used as a dinner table. I can't see the importance of this myself, but Sir George Lewis seems to know. We must wait till the case comes on—if it ever does.

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