

The Saturday "News" Special Foreign Service.

AMERICANIZED IS CITY OF DANTE

Transformation Commenced With Vespucci, the Famous Florentine.

CHANGE IS NOW COMPLETE.

Name of Savonarola and Galileo is Now Obscured by That of Our Own Mark Twain.

Special Correspondence.

FLORENCE, June 28.—Florence is famed in song and story as the "Lily of Tuscany," as the most beautiful city in Italy, and as the home of Dante, of Savonarola, of Galileo and the Medici. It has also sometimes been called an English city, because of the presence here of large numbers of our British "cousins," but, as a matter of fact, Florence has a much stronger claim to be called American—a claim not without ancient foundation, as well as modern justification.

The Americanization of Florence may be said to date from about 1494, when there lived here a man from whom our country took its name. Today hundreds of people from the United States through that part of the Lung Arno which bears his appellation. With Amerigo Vespucci, then, the American history of Florence began. Accordingly it may be said to extend over 400 years, thus making Florence anti-date 1494.

AMERICANS GET BUSY.

For some time, it would appear, nothing was done concerning this valuable American possession, its villas and art treasures being left to the English. In the last century, however, our countrymen began to bestir themselves, and they their language and accents. The new famous as Rose Hawthorne Parsons, founder of the "Servants of Relief." In the Villa Montauto, Hawthorne wrote the first sketch of the "Marble Faun." His chief friend, after the Brownings, who lived in the Casa Guido, was Hiram Powers, and family remain today in Florence.

LOWELL THERE ALSO.

Lowell, in his turn, appeared on the scene and also occupied the Casa Guido, the grand palace, where today, "The Arts and Crafts" have a permanent exhibition in charge of Mr. Arthur Murray Cobb, of Boston, the former a designer in artistic leather, the latter a worker in antique jewelry, and formerly Miss Little of the "Living Age" family. And in connection with the Casa Guido, one may mention that on the anniversary of Mrs. Browning's birthday, the Americans in Florence came forward to fulfill a duty the English forgot, and placed below her former window in the palace, a superb wreath—a wreath of violets tied with ribbon—and a bunch of rare orchids.

HIS NAME IS MARK.

In the English cemetery at Florence, is the grave of Theodore Parker, while the Hotel New York was once the home of William Cullen Bryant, Lawrence Hutton knew his Florence almost as well as Howells, both having written books about the city, and Longfellow lived in the Piazza Santa Maria Novella. But the American hero of Florence is none of these gentlemen.

His name is Mark Twain. Apparently, in the eyes of modern Florence, the names of their past vanish before him. Apparently, he claims no time to eat his meals because of his incessant lecturing. He, or his family, were every-thing of shoes the Italians presume to call American-made to deceive the unsophisticated. Wherever his foot stepped, wherever he put on a glove, whether he walked abroad, remained at home, smoked, or slept, he furnished a suggestion for an advertisement.

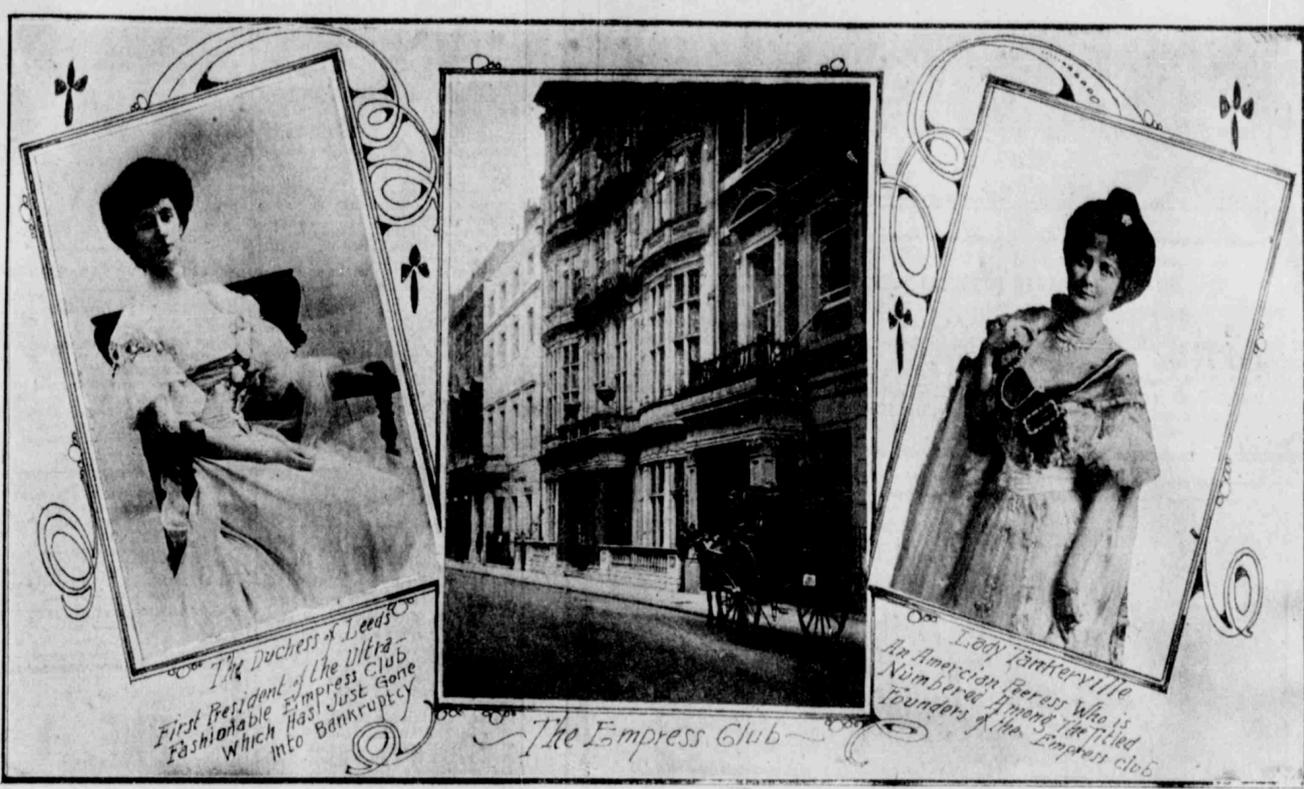
Since the days of Amerigo Vespucci, there has been no more effective Americanization in Florence. "Signor Mark Twain" is the prince of modern Firenze, the only wonder being that there are no "antiques" of him in the windows with Dante and Savonarola.

RAPID AMERICANIZATION.

Since the days of the early explorers, the Americanization of Florence has proceeded rapidly. Those whose business it is to know claim that, during the year, from 4,000 to 5,000 American tourists pass through this popular city. During the season, Americans are everywhere. With Baedekers in hand, they flock into the churches and art galleries, through the via Tornabuoni, and patronize the Lung Arno. On Sunday it is almost impossible to secure a seat in the American church, and the transatlantic visitors buy in such quantities that there is hardly a single antique left in Florence. The American residents, too, do their best to make it a "typical" American city.

MARRIED TITLES.

Among those who have married titles are the Contessa Rucellai, formerly Miss Bronson; the Contessa Elisa Bontenenti, formerly Miss Van Sheck; the Marchesa Ja D'Ayeta, in America Miss Jones; the Marchesa Constantini, in Philadelphia Miss Miller; the Contessa Magdalena Taverna di Campitelli, nee Fry; the Contessa Enrichetta della Gherardesca, formerly Miss Josie Fisher; her sister Contessa d'Aramon; and Contessa Cornelia Riccardo Fabbricetto, formerly Miss Roosevelt Scott, cousin of the president; the Contessa de Montjoye, nee Robinson, Miss Hilton; Contessa Raybani Massiglia; Contessa Vivina Pallavicino, formerly Miss Fanny Woodhall; Contessa Palombina, nee Miss Stone; the Princess Rosalie Ruspoli; and the Marchesa Edith Peruzzi de Medici, who as Miss Edith Story, has a distinguished American connection.



PERSONS AND PLACES REMINISCENT OF WHERE TITLED DAMES AND THEIR ATTENDANT SATELLITES WERE WONT TO HOLD HIGH CARNIVAL.

"Going Pace" Killed Gayest Woman's Club

Sudden Collapse of the Empress Club Revealed An Astonishing State of Affairs in the London Smart Set—Special Brand of Absinthe Produced Results that Enabled Servants to Levy Blackmail.

Special Correspondence.

LONDON, June 28.—After achieving a phenomenal success, the Empress club, which was for years the swiftest woman's club in London, went down with a crash. An official receiver has taken possession of the gorgeous rooms where titled dames and their attendant satellites were wont to hold high revels, and creditors are ruefully figuring on their probable losses.

The story of the rise and fall of the Empress club sheds an illuminating light on certain phases of English society, which Lord Charles Bessford, in his blunt, uncompromising sailor fashion, declares to be "eaten out with the canker of money" and "rotten from top to bottom." The Empress club bowed down at the shrine of the golden calf, and when disaster overtook it was repudiated by its idol.

IN AMERICAN COLONY. Marian Crawford's niece, Mrs. Casson, may also be counted one of the American colony in Florence, though her home, just outside the city at Settignano. A hospitable villa, one that entertained Charles Dudley Warner, is that of Mr. Gregory Smith, son of one of Vermont's governors, and well known for his discoveries in acetylene. Among other Americans, prominent socially, are Dr. and Mrs. C. R. Parke of Scranton, Pa.

AMERICAN ARTISTS. Of course American artists abound in Florence, chief among them are James A. Shearman of Brooklyn, whose water colors have caught the real Italian atmosphere and color, and whose studio should always attract the Americans; Julius Goldsboro, whose modern style pictures have been exhibited recently in Casa Guido; Miss Blanche Warburg, the portrait painter; Henry Newman, J. G. Hagemeyer, Ernest Roth and Meeks, brother-in-law of Howells.

WOMAN'S EXCHANGE. The Contessa Rucellai and Miss Nellie Eyson are prominent directors of the Italian enterprise which would be called in America a "woman's exchange" for Italian workers. This society has branches all over Italy and their exhibition is one of the most complete at the Milan exposition.

WOMEN'S EXCHANGE. Among the American musicians, Florence boasts the violinist, Albert Spalding, who, at 17, made a debut this winter in a successful and fashionable concert directed by Saint Saens.

WOMEN'S EXCHANGE. Among other American residents in Florence are Miss Gertrude Graham of Kansas City; Miss Hastings, Mrs. Hackett and Miss Hackett of Boston, and the Rev. Mr. and Mrs. George Barber Stone, the former assistant rector of St. Mark's English Church; Miss Range of Boston; Mrs. Robinson, Miss Whiteside of Bowling Green, Ky.; Mr. and Mrs. James Shearman, Mrs. Mary Vicaris, Mrs. Elliot of Boston, and others to the extent, it is claimed, of nearly half of the 2,000 English-speaking residents of Florence.

EVA MADDEN.

ON NOTABLE BIRTHDAY.

The club was founded as a sort of commemoration of the sixtieth anniversary of the accession to the throne of the Empress Queen. At least that is what its promoters asserted and thereby justified their assumption of the grand old lady's Indian title. Philanthropy was just at that time being to be the fashion, and another happy idea of the executive was to donate one shilling (25 cents) out of every member's subscription to the Prince of Wales's (now the king's) hospital fund. Few people figured out what a very small percentage of the subscription fee 25 cents represented, and the action was loudly applauded as evidence of praiseworthy loyalty and self-denying devotion to a most deserving charity.

ON NOTABLE BIRTHDAY. Still shrewder was the wisdom displayed in getting together a lot of titled women to fill the ornamental positions in the club. It opened its doors with a list of 20 vice presidents, every one of whom was a peeress, headed by her accomplished grace, the Duchess of Leeds, the original of Sarah Grand's heroine, "Ideals." English society is nothing if not snobbish. Women tumbled over one another in their eagerness to be enrolled among these exalted representatives of blue-blooded feminine aristocracy. The presence of several American women of title furnished equally attractive bait owing to the supposed length of their purses. Among them were Lady Tankerville, who was one of the vice presidents, and Lady Hesketh, Lady Arthur Butler,

these innovations Mrs. Grundy raised her virtuous eyebrows and exclaimed, "What next?" The question was answered later.

It was not the smoking room, nor the billiard room, nor the refreshment bar which wrecked the Empress. In these days of feminine emancipation, club women will stand for all these things and more. Women's clubs in modern Babylon are no more Sunday schools than are men's clubs. But club women have not yet reached the point where they will tolerate association with women whose reputations won't stand investigation—not at least when such association ceases to be sanctified by the sacred presence of duchesses and countesses and dames of high degree.

What played havoc with the empress was the sparing use made of the blackmail. Elated by its success the management grew indifferent to evincing but money. Practically any woman who could furnish a banker's reference as a guarantee of ability to pay the subscription fees, was admitted to membership. In this way second-rate actresses with shady reputations, divorcees and women who had chosen "protection" in preference to the more rigid ties of matrimony, gained entrance to the club. They brought in as their guests men who were notorious rakes. The atmosphere of the club became decidedly rowdyish. It was no longer common sight to see waiters hurrying about as early as 10 a. m., with brandies and sodas, pick-me-ups, cocktails and liqueurs. Among the latter a particularly insidious kind of absinthe was the favorite, and was procurable nowhere in London, being expressly imported for the club from Paris. Rightly or wrongly, there are not a few men in London who blame the Empress for having made their wives diplomats. The "excess people" told appalling tales of the quantity of intoxicants sold there. But the management had an eye only for increased receipts and grew gleeful over the evidence of growing prosperity. The most objectionable people were the freest spenders.

SATAN REBUKING SIN.

The notorious Earl Cowley, who has been co-responder in various divorce cases, was a constant visitor at the Empress. One night, when dining there, he noticed across the room a woman whose presentation at court had been cancelled.

"Ye gods!" he exclaimed to his hostess, "is Mrs. T— a member here?" Such a remark from Earl Cowley was suggestive of Satan reproving sin, but it serves to show the type of persons who were admitted to the club, which at that time stood for the top notch of social eminence in feminine clubdom. Men who had lost sight of their divorced wives for years met them there, repining luxuriously in Louis XVI chairs. It may perhaps be considered to the credit of the club that it was the means of bringing about the reconciliation of some half-dozen divorced couples. No such happy result, however, followed the meeting between Mrs. Brown Potter and her ex-husband, after years of separation. She was supping at the club one evening with a party of friends, and he with another, and it so happened that the two tables faced each other. Mrs. Potter's dramatic training stood her in good stead, and she behaved as though nothing unusual was in progress, but the unfortunate Potter was rendered so painfully nervous that he ordered a bottle of champagne, and with a very red face beat a hasty retreat from the room. He never crossed the portals of the Empress again.

The decline in the club's reputation after the intrusion of the rowdy element, was accelerated by the mysterious fashion in which the belongings of members and their friends disappeared. For the last year or so no one dreamed of leaving anything in the cloak room. Women walked about with their wraps and any other paraphernalia they might have brought with them. When they sat down they deposited them in their laps, but even such precautions did not always avail. Things occasionally vanished right under their owners' noses.

HIGHHANDED THEFT.

Here is an instance. A guest, having undone her lace scarf, pinned to the tablecloth, for the sake of security, the small jeweled brooch with which it was fastened. When she rose from the table at the conclusion of her lunch, she discovered that it was missing.

"My brooch has gone," she said to her hostess, "yet you saw me pin it to the cloth."

The servant who had waited upon them was summoned and questioned, but he protested that he had never seen

MAGNIFICENT PALACE.

In a short while the club outgrew its original premises. The subscription fee was increased from three guineas (\$15.75) to 20 guineas (\$107.50); but even that latter price was considered cheap for the privilege of scraping up an acquaintance with a baroness, a countess or possibly a duchess. Just before the stampede began it was proposed to raise the annual subscription fee to 50 guineas, so numerous were the applicants seeking admission. The management built at enormous expense a magnificent palace in Dover street. The site is historic. It was the scene of a pitched battle in 1554, when Sir William Wyatt marched upon London. But it was not its historic associations which commended the site to the management. It was its association with swiftdom. Dover street being distinctly "tony." The first essential for the success of a woman's club in London is a good position somewhere between Piccadilly Circus and Hyde park corner. Women dearly love a swagger address. To hundreds of them, many of whom have long pedigrees but slender purses, a fashionably located club is an oasis of elegance in the desert of obscurity. Armed with its address on their visiting cards, they can afford to live in cheap lodgings in suburbia, and no one is aware where they roost save the hall porter at the club, who forwards their letters and guards inviolate the secret of their number and street.

The executive of the Empress club was the first to recognize what a convenience such an institution would be to women folk of this class, though, of course, it was the genuine society woman with a generous income to whom it specially catered.

DAZZLED THE WORLD.

In the matter of furnishing and decorations—in all round up-to-dateness—the Empress club house was probably the most luxurious and perfectly appointed establishment of its kind in the world. No expense was spared in its embellishment. Magnificence was aimed at and achieved. And it succeeded by leaps and bounds. It was the first woman's club that dared to provide a smoking room for women; the first, too, that ventured on a billiard room. At



THE PIAZZA AMERIGO VESPUCCI IN THE LUNG ARNO, Which is Thronged Every Year by Travelers From the Land to Which The Florentine Discoverer Gave His Name

HOLLAND PLANS REMBRANDT DAY

Will Have Tercentenary Celebration of Famous Dutch Artist's Birth.

THREE DAYS OF CEREMONY.

Leyden, Where Born, and Amsterdam, Where He Worked and Died, Will Vie With Each Other.

Special Correspondence.

AMSTERDAM, June 28.—Three hundred years ago a miller's son was born at Leyden. He achieved some fame during his life, but he died in poverty and obscurity, and so little notice did his passing attract, that no contemporary chronicler makes any mention of it. It is thus recorded baldly and briefly in the death register of the Wester-Kerk in this city: "Tuesday, October 3, 1669, Rembrandt van Ryn, painter in the Roozegrift, opposite the Doolhof. Leaves two children." If a picture of him were taken on the subject today, it is possible that the name of Rembrandt would come out on top as the greatest artist the world ever saw. Anyhow, no Dutchman will now admit that any other painter can claim equal rank with him, and all Holland is preparing to honor the memory of the man it took so little notice of when alive, by a grand commemoration of the tercentenary of his birth. Just when that occurred, there is no authentic record in existence. Various accounts July 15, 1669, as the true birth date. Some place it a year later, and others a year earlier, but for the purpose of the celebration, the earliest of the three dates has been chosen.

MANY COMMITTEES WORK.

In all the principal towns of Holland, committees have been formed to arrange for some sort of commemoration, but the most notable of them will take place at Leyden, where he was born, and at Amsterdam, where he worked and died. In Amsterdam, the celebration will last three days. On Sunday, July 15, the church bells of the entire city will be rung in unison, and there will be a grand procession past the Rembrandt monument, gymnastic games in the grounds of the Ryks museum, and concerts in the Vondel park and Rembrandt square. In the evening the principal streets will be illuminated and there will be concerts in the theaters.

QUEENLY RETINUE.

On the following day, the queen, the prince consort, and the queen mother, will attend the commemoration ceremonies in the Town hall. After that, the queen will open a special room built in the Ryks museum to house the "Night Watch," which many consider Rembrandt's masterpiece. There will be flower festivals in the parks, and in the evening more concerts. On the 17th, with the usual official accompaniments, the memorial tablet will be unveiled on Rembrandt's grave in the Wester-Kerk, and another in the house in which he died, poor and neglected. In the evening, there will be a torch-light parade. Perhaps the most interesting feature of the Amsterdam celebration will be a procession got up by resident artists, in which all those participating will wear costumes of the period in which Rembrandt lived. They will march past the house in which he lived before a procession of homeless, and will lay a wreath upon his monument.

PICTURES OF MASTERS.

The feature of the Leyden celebration will be his own ideas, whether they be to win attention by the first saw the light in the historic old town. Many of the Rembrandt pictures that will be shown, have never been exhibited before. Conspicuous among them will be the "Androgeda" found only a short time ago by Dr. A. Bredius and the "Saskia," which was discovered a few months ago in Prussia. The exhibition will be held in the Lakeshall and the University building. The queen will unveil a bronze statue of the artist and the memorial tablet will be placed in the house where he was born. That house, by the way, is at present leased by an undertaker, who keeps his hearers there. It is still open to any Rembrandt enthusiast to purchase it and present it to the city. The old mill which stood opposite long ago disappeared.

CONTRAST OF ESTEEM.

The commemoration will emphasize the contrast between the high esteem in which Rembrandt is now held and the scant attention that he attracted when alive. The bibliography of Rembrandt would fill a large library. The books of the artist and the studies of little domestic incidents, or scenes in movement or repose, were obviously suggested by the life of his own household. He went little abroad for material. An error was once made by him by other artists. He studied only six months under Pieter Lastman at Amsterdam. He took up painting as naturally as a duck does to water.

MELANCHOLY INTEREST.

It is only a few months ago that the municipality of Amsterdam purchased as a memorial to the great master, the historic house in the Breestraat. A

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