

Criticism of the British War Department—The Queen's Christmas Sorrow—English Society—Other News by Cable to The Sunday Republic.

THE MAN WHO IS PURSUING DE WET.



GENERAL CHARLES E. KNOX. Who is in Command of the British Forces That Are Trying to Capture the Boer General, De Wet.

REPUBLIC SPECIAL. London, Dec. 29.—England is placing a great deal of dependence upon Major General Charles Edmund Knox just now.

General Knox is in command of the troops whose special assignment it is to capture General De Wet, the Boer officer whose forces have been harassing the life out of the British long after they were reported reasonably "pacified."

HOLIDAY GOSSIP OF BRITISH COURT.

The Royal Family Spent Christmas at Osborne Castle and Sandringham.

WALES IS TO VISIT IRELAND.

Expectation That the Political Results Will Be Gratifying—England Still Talking of the Gallant Dublin Fusiliers.

SPECIAL BY CABLE.

London, Dec. 29.—The royal family spent Christmas quietly. The Queen and her retinue were at Osborne Castle, while the Prince and Princess of Wales and other members of the court were at Sandringham.

But the Christmas month is a gloomy season. This year Princess Beatrice came ago on December 14, the Prince Consort died, twenty-two years ago about the same time, Princess Alice died, the anniversaries of these deaths are solemnly commemorated each year, the Queen being joined by all members of the royal family who are in England for the services at Progress House.

he was honorably mentioned, and received the lowest rank of Lieutenant Colonel. In the present war he has been in command of the Thirtieth Brigade.

Britons realize that the chase will be a hard one. They do not underestimate the shrewdness and ability of De Wet, and they rather overestimate his advantage in knowing the country.

But they expect General Knox to do the work assigned to him, and if he succeeds will be glad to see him in the British Empire.

THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS SPOILED BY DEATH.

SPECIAL BY CABLE. London, Dec. 29.—The Queen's Christmas has been spoiled by the sudden death of Lady Jane Churchill, who has been the Queen's almost constant companion since 1871.

Few people looking at her would imagine that she was in her seventy-fourth year, as she was wonderfully young looking and well preserved. She was the daughter of the third Lord Coningsham, and is the mother of the present Lord Churchill, who married Lady Verena Louther, sister of Lord Lansdale. He has always been a great favorite of the Queen, for he was her godson and royal page, and afterward received a commission in one of the household regiments from her Majesty.

RECALL OF GENERAL COLVILLE HAS CAUSED SEVERE CRITICISM.

Surprise Expressed That the Return of Lord Roberts Was Not Awaited—Mr. Brodrick, New War Secretary, Is Blamed—General Colville Refused to Resign.

BY HERBERT W. PAUL. Copyright, 1900, by the New York Herald Company. London, Saturday, Dec. 29.—The sudden recall of General Sir Henry Colville from his command at Gibraltar is the talk of the town to-day.

In all its history of blundering incompetence, the War Office never acted with less sense and less straightforwardness. General Colville, whose military reputation stood very high before the Transvaal war, was sent home after disaster befall the Imperial Yeomanry at Lindley last May, when 500 men of the Thirtieth Battalion, under Colonel Sprague, surrendered to the enemy.

General Colville, at the head of the Highland Brigade, had been sent to Lindley, where Colonel Sprague expected to meet him. Sir Henry, however, went on to Heilbronn, leaving Colonel Sprague in the way of De Wet. No dispatch dealing in any way with his conduct has yet reached.

GENERAL COLVILLE REFUSED TO RESIGN, AS REQUESTED. It was at first assumed, though without adequate grounds, that he had been sent home in disgrace, but in September he returned to Gibraltar to take up the position he had held before his departure for South Africa.

Then public opinion was unnaturally veered round, and it was believed that he had committed an error of judgment, that error had been condoned.

Now we are told that Sir Evelyn Wood, who as Adjutant General, is in command of the army until Lord Roberts arrives, has requested General Colville to resign; that he has refused to do so, but is coming home immediately.

A refusal was proper and dignified. General Colville is entitled to be heard in his own defense before being ruined and disgraced. Lord Methuen also failed to relieve Colonel Sprague. He is still serving the Queen with credit in South Africa.

BLAME SUPPOSED TO REST ON NEW SECRETARY OF WAR.

Although this extraordinary step has been taken in the name of Sir Evelyn Wood, the sole responsibility rests upon the new Secretary of War, William St. John Brodrick, and it is a heavy one.

His predecessor, Lord Lansdowne, must, if he was fit for the post, have considered the whole question before he permitted General Colville's return to Gibraltar.

Mr. Brodrick may have the technical right to reverse Lord Lansdowne's decisions, but it is obvious that this right should never be exercised to prejudice the individual soldier, be his rank high or low.

What makes the matter more extraordinary is that if the Secretary of War had waited a week he could have consulted Lord Roberts, who is expected to reach London on Wednesday, and who must know more about General Colville's conduct than any one now at the War Office.

When Mr. Brodrick was appointed by the grace of the Queen and the caprice of Lord Salisbury to succeed the Marquis of Lansdowne, he mentioned that he had always followed the army. This qualification is insufficient for a Secretary of War, especially in times like these. He should be an administrator of the highest attainable capacity and should have the confidence of all classes.

IN OTHER CRITICISMS. IN THE WAR DEPARTMENT. In the recent brief session of Parliament Mr. Brodrick, by the recklessness of his language, went far to convince the House of Commons that his appointment was a serious mistake. If the treatment of General Colville will confirm this impression.

The meanness of the news issued from the War Office is also a cause of grave discontent. It seems that a small detachment of yeomanry was captured by the Boers near Priska, the other day, and that the men, at once released, they, of course, disarmed.

Nobody believes that every official telegram to the Secretary of War should be published; but to conceal misfortunes, big or little, is foolish, and only to be justified by the sternest military necessity.

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It receives the approval of journals which would have denounced it as weakness three months ago. If it helps to end the war it will be more than justified.

To those Boers who are now only fighting for their personal safety the offer must be irresistibly attractive. How many of them there are we shall soon see.

IS THIS THE TRUE REASON?

Colville Said to Have Made War a Feasting Time.

London, Dec. 29.—(Copyright, 1900, by W. R. Hearst.)—What is given as the reason for the dismissal of General Sir Henry Colville from the army is being discussed.

General Colville was the commandant of the Yeomanry who were surrounded and captured near Lindley on May 31 last.

He is supposed to be responsible for the disaster, but the facts of the case were not known.

Now it is learned that Colville, while in the field, traveled with six cooks and a wagon load of champagne. On the night of the Lindley disaster he was giving a stewed mutton in the kitchen, and the Boers arrived with a warning of the Boers' approach. Colville kept the men waiting four hours, and then it was too late.

Two prominent officers, Lieutenant Colonel Sprague and Captain Ivor Guest, followed Colville into retirement. Sprague was in command of part of the Yeomanry at Lindley.

The army shake-up is the talk of the day here, and further sensational dismissals are expected.

LONDON'S TORN STREETS ARE VASTLY ANNOYING. SPECIAL BY CABLE. London, Dec. 29.—Londoners continue to grumble at the awful state of the principal thoroughfares.

Indeed, we seem to be getting worse than ever, as a result of the electrician's mechanical skill, the simplest and most effective that has yet been manufactured, and will prove a great public boon.

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London has been much in need of it, for the present telephone system is very trying to the tempers of business men, and the operators have a terribly heavy amount of work to do.

The fault lies with the wires, which are much too few to enable all the subscribers to get through where they want and when they want. It will be quite a treat to ring up the exchange and not get the ringing reply: "Engaged, ring again, please."

People are, therefore, looking forward with little impatience to the new post office "phones," which will simplify matters so much.

On this new system, so far as the caller is concerned, all that one will be required to do will be to take up the telephone receiver and the exchange officials will do the rest.

To dispense with technicalities, it may be stated that the act of taking up the "phone sets in motion a delicate electrical system, in which colored visual signals play a most important part, and the caller is placed in communication with the number he requires.

The signals indicate to the official when the persons using the system have finished their conversation.

It is interesting to note that this simple method is quite an old story in St. Louis. Mrs. Arthur Paget represented America at Chatsworth, where the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire's party was a big one.

Mrs. Paget was brilliant in all the latest military triumphs from Paris. Others included in the party were Prince and Princess Demidoff, Lord and Lady Grey and Lord Revelstoke. The host-looking man of the party was Lord Charles Montagu.

Then there were Lady Edward Cavendish, the sister-in-law of the Duke, and Sir Edgar and Lady Helen Vintcent. The latter, who were her wonderful turquoise one night at dinner, was admitted to be the most beautiful woman present.

Among the guests also were Mr. and Mrs. Macreux, the latter looking very lovely; Mr. Rosset, Mr. Don Carlos, son of the Count of Caserta, meets with warm opposition.

Parliament and the nation are dead against the match, and the question of the young Princess's happiness is made quite secondary to political considerations.

Prince Alfonso XIII remains unmarried, and the young King is only 14 as yet—the Princess of Asturias, eldest sister of the young King, who is only 12, is betrothed to the Count of Caserta, meets with warm opposition.

The proposed bridegroom is objected to, first, because he is not considered of sufficient exalted rank for a Princess of the Asturias, and, secondly, because Spain fears by her Majesty's use and also to maintain the necessary quiet in the Queen's apartments.

ARSENICAL BEER CAUSES DEATH IN ENGLISH CITIES. SPECIAL BY CABLE. London, Dec. 29.—Arsenic in beer is one of the questions that are exciting London just now. There has recently been several deaths among the working population from this cause, and the Government has begun an investigation.

Previous to the beginning of this investigation there was something of a panic in the larger cities, and vast quantities of beer have been broached in the open streets and poured into the sewers. This was done by the brewers themselves whose beer had been proved to contain this poisonous mineral.



A Meeting of the English Parliament—Mr. Balfour Speaks. ENGLISH SOCIETY IN CHRISTMAS WEEK.

SPECIAL BY CABLE. London, Dec. 29.—The Duke and Duchess of Marlborough had a big and very smart Christmas party at Blenheim. Mr. and Mrs. George Cornwallis West were among the party, while Count Albert Mendeloff, Lord and Lady Lurgan, Lord Hyde, Lady Sarah Wilson and one or two others were all included in the gathering at this enormous palace, for, beautiful though Blenheim is, it is almost too large for a private residence.

The kitchens are so far off from the big dining-room that it is a matter of difficulty to keep the dishes hot in transport. Mrs. Arthur Paget represented America at Chatsworth, where the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire's party was a big one.

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The occurrence of an inquest on a French polisher poisoned by arsenical beer has taken place in the London district and has been recorded in the daily papers. Already may be seen displayed in the windows of the public-houses in London announcements stating that their beer has been analyzed and has been found to be perfectly free from this hurtful poison.

Early in the new year the Prince of Wales will go down for more shooting, when a still larger party will be given. Theatricals will be held on two nights.

Mrs. Jack Leslie and her husband have been down to Eastbourne for Christmas with their children. Next week they go over to Ireland.

Miss Von Andre was among the many Americans who went over to Paris. She has been staying at the Hotel Ritz, where there was a wonderful Christmas tree and all sorts of nice presents on Christmas Eve.

John and Lady Lester-Kaye and Miss Zyzanski also spent their Christmas in the great capital.

They are to be seen luncheon or dining at Ritz's almost every day, although they did not stay there.

Mrs. de Batho and her daughter, Miss Langtry, are also staying at Ritz's. The former wore a marvelous crown of black net embroidered with moonlight palmettes, with a train of black velvet at the Christmas Eve supper.

One great excitement of the week has been the engagement of pretty Lady Beatrice Butler and General Pole-Carew. Lady Beatrice is the elder daughter of the Duke and Lady Ormonde and granddaughter of the late Duke of Westminster. She is perfectly beautiful, with classical features, delicious coloring and wonderful eyes. She often described the perfect type of Irish beauty, as her father is an Irishman.

This is quite a love match. Although the General is many years older than Lady Beatrice, they have been betrothed to one another for some years, but Lord and Lady Ormonde would not consent to their daughter marrying a man who is so much her senior.

Now that he has so greatly distinguished himself in South Africa, they have waived their former objections.

The happy couple are simply inundated with congratulations.

YOUNG DUKE OF WESTMINSTER TO BECOME A BRIDEGROOM.



Miss Sheila Cornwallis-West. The Duke of Westminster.

THE DUKE OF WESTMINSTER'S ENGAGEMENT. SPECIAL BY CABLE. London, Dec. 29.—The important subject of conversation in London society just now is the authorized announcement of the engagement of the Duke of Westminster and Miss Sheila Cornwallis-West.

It was announced last June that this young couple were betrothed, but the announcement was denied. Now both families confirm it.

The Duke is but nine months beyond the age of 21. He was born in March, 1878, being the only son of the late Earl Grosvenor, and of St. Hill Mary, daughter of the ninth Earl of Scarborough—a lady who married secondly Mr. George Wyndham, but who is still known as the Countess Grosvenor.

Lord Belmore—as his courtesy title was until he succeeded his grandfather in the dukedom a year ago—was educated at Eton, and, entering the army, went to South Africa and served on the personal staff of Sir Alfred Milner. He paid a brief visit to England at the time of his succession to the immense London and other estates of the head of the Grosvenors, but returned again to the seat of war, remaining there until a few weeks ago.

Miss Sheila Cornwallis-West is the daughter of Mr. William Cornwallis-West of Luttham Castle, North Wales, and the great-granddaughter, on her father's side, of the second Lord de la Warr. On the side of her mother, a daughter of Mr. and Lady Olive Fitz-Patrick, she is a great-granddaughter of the Marquis of Headfort.

QUEEN VICTORIA WILL VISIT NICE NEXT MARCH.

SPECIAL BY CABLE. London, Dec. 29.—The Queen expects to visit Nice about the 1st of March, and already eighty rooms have been engaged for her in the Hotel Excelsior Regina. Mr. Desso, the Queen's courier, has superintended the arrangements, and is thus quoted in advices from Nice:

"It is quite true that the Queen is coming here. She will come at the usual time—the beginning of March—and will occupy the suite of rooms that she occupied in 1898."

"I am at present engaged in diverting the traffic from her Majesty's private road."

The traffic is occasioned by building which is going on near the hotel. A new road will probably be made for this traffic in order to keep the private road exclusive for her Majesty's use and also to maintain the necessary quiet in the Queen's apartments.

CHANGES IN THE BRITISH CABINET ARE EXPECTED. SPECIAL BY CABLE. London, Dec. 29.—Many political gossips would not be surprised were the Cabinet to undergo certain important changes shortly before Parliament reassembles, early in January. It is not altogether improbable that Lord Salisbury may be only in office for a while; that is, until the war in South Africa is ended and he has guided Lord Lansdowne sufficiently at the Foreign Office, Lord Salisbury has reached an age at which it is necessary that he should have more of his most ambitious dreams have been quenched, and the death of Lady Salisbury has made a serious change in the habits of his life.

His mind has many subjects which it likes better to deal with than politics—notably science—and there would be every excuse for his retirement.

Those considerations make many believe that Lord Salisbury might resign the premiership before Parliament reassembles in the new year should circumstances enable him to do so, while they convince others that the session of 1900-1901 will be the last which he will attend in an official capacity.

OBJECT TO SWEETHEART OF A SPANISH PRINCESS.

SPECIAL BY CABLE. London, Dec. 29.—According to advices that reach here through court circles from Madrid, the course of true love is running anything but smooth in the Spanish royal family, for the proposed marriage of the Princess of the Asturias, eldest sister of the young King, who is only 12, is betrothed to the Count of Caserta, meets with warm opposition.

Parliament and the nation are dead against the match, and the question of the young Princess's happiness is made quite secondary to political considerations.

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