

The Saturday "News" Special Foreign Service.

Prince of Wales Lives on Income From Worst Slums



Special Correspondence.
LONDON, Feb. 17.—His royal highness, the Prince of Wales, heir to the British throne and future ruler—in name at least—of the greatest empire the world ever has seen, is owner of the worst slums in London, which is equivalent to saying the worst in the world. Vermin infested, disease ridden and yielding a death rate in excess of the rest of the worst city, the houses of this quarter are unfit for human habitation. Their occupants would not be countenanced for a moment in any American city, and anything approaching them would be the signal for a public outcry and would endanger the life of the government in power. Rents are excessive, and in order to obtain them eight, ten and twelve people are crowded into single rooms. Men, women and children are herded promiscuously together at night, compelling a condition of affairs to which only the pen of a Zola could do justice.
Out of these sinks of human misery and degradation the prince, through the Duchy of Cornwall, receives a yearly income approaching \$350,000. The amount was less in former years, when the district was a fairer place and more suited to human habitation, but as conditions grew worse, buildings older and more dilapidated and sunshine more scarce as the result of the encroachment of immense factories, rents increased and the amount of "blood money" wrung from the inmates of this hell hole grew by leaps and bounds. Today it enables its recipient to live in unlimited luxury, without a care in the world with a hundred servants to do daily attendance upon him and without the suspicion of duties, except to attend to being entertained by social "shiners" who have reached the charmed royal circle, or the greater number who are on the way and have the wherewithal to pave the way with gold.
MILLION IN REVENUE.
His gross revenue from the duchy

amounts to the enormous sum of \$568,000 a year, half of which goes into his private pocket, and though all of this does not come from London slums, it helps materially to swell the exchequer. His Duchy of Cornwall revenue is quite outside the government grant from the civil list of \$200,000 per annum which his royal highness receives simply for being prince, or of the \$150,000 a year which his children receive for having him as their father, or of the \$30,000 a year which the Princess of Wales gets for being his wife. The total annual revenue of the Prince of Wales and his family, including the Duchy of Cornwall gross takings, comes to the neat little sum of \$1,125,000 a year.
The slums of the Prince of Wales are just across Waterloo Bridge—the famous "Bridge of Sighs" immortalized by Hood—and only about ten minutes' walk from the Strand. It is owing to its nearness to the center of London's throbbing activity that this property brings comparatively high rents, though there are peculiar reasons attached to the estate itself which make it even a greater money maker than most other London real estates. Most of the London property belonging to the Duchy of Cornwall is what is known in England as "unprotected." That is, it can be let to anyone, quite regardless of character. Houses are let at exorbitant rents for the reason that no references are required, "no questions asked." Rent is mostly paid in advance, and there is considerable competition for the houses. Though police raids do occasionally figure in the local magistrate's court, they are of a perfunctory nature. It may be recalled that in Stoddard's terrible book, "A Maiden Tribute to Modern Babylon," dealing with the underworld of London and the white slave traffic, this district figured prominently.

RAT INFESTED SHANTIES.
The Duke of Cornwall—or, in other words, the Prince of Wales—owns nearly all the houses in this unsavory neighborhood. Out of fairness to the royal house, however, it must be mentioned that several of the houses of ill repute in the district are held on long leases, over which he is said to be un-

able to exercise control, and, therefore, royal responsibility does not apply in those particular cases. On the other hand, it must not be forgotten that no Prince of Wales ever has raised any strenuous "kick" over the condition of his slum property, or striven seriously to bring about a change for the better.
Travelers acquainted with such cities as Naples and Marseille—where the slums are said to be practically "the limit"—say that certain nooks and corners of the Prince of Wales' London property are as bad, if not worse. For instance, there is one spot called Salutation Court, which is a slimy and simple ranks with the most terrible. It is narrow, dingy, dirty, rat-infested and unsanitary. Most of the houses are two-story shanties, built about 150 years ago. They are totally destitute of any of those "conveniences" which make life worth living. The rooms are lighted by little square plinths of what appears at one time to have been glass, but which has lost all semblance to that article owing to the incrustation of the grime of years.
TWELVE IN ONE ROOM.
Restrictions as to the number of persons allowed in these houses are extremely elastic, and consequently from nine to twelve persons per room is nothing unusual. Through only the very poorest occupy Salutation court, the rents are extremely high. As there are no legal restrictions as to the number of persons who may occupy the rooms, the "proprietor" of a shanty is expected to get the rent somehow, and the somehow usually is a very degraded form of human industry. Several of the rooms in these houses have even double sets of tenants. In those who occupy the rooms in the day time and of those who sleep there at night, and, of course, for these excellent conveniences high rents have to be charged. To give a case in point—one of the small rooms in a salutation court shanty is occupied by two married couples at night, whereas, in the day time the same room is slept in by three railway

porters, who work at Waterloo station, close by. As there is only one small casement window in this room, which cannot be opened owing to the rusting of the hinges, the ventilation is of a somewhat vague description.
DIRE DENS OF FILTH.
Besides Salutation court—which doubtless bears that name from the noted sluttiness of the locality—another choice spot on the Prince of Wales' London estate is Cornwall Place. Here one is struck with the peculiar fact that all the houses face on a little space completely enclosed by big factories and wood yards, stacked high with timber. Gustava Dore would have delighted to draw Cornwall Place as an illustration of Dante's Inferno, blatterly, beer-sodden, vice-enveloped women infest the buildings which face on this court, while hosts of anemic, wretched, shoeless and almost naked children play in the filth and garbage that block the entrance to the narrow passageway leading down into this den of human misery.
All the so-called buildings—or, rather hovels—in Cornwall place, are two-story affairs, built more than a hundred years ago. If possible, they are in a worse stage of decomposition than those of Salutation court. Most of the cottages are fronted by little broken-down wooden fences, surrounding patches of ground that once were two-by-four gardens. Instead of gardens now, however, each fence enclosed a stone-paved space devoted to the offices of the washhouse. On a cold, raw winter day when the writer visited this place, half-clad babies were sitting on the stones of these little inclosed spaces, crying from cold.
Doubtless the royal owner of these dreary slums would plead ignorance of the conditions if directly charged with responsibility, but he is surely not ignorant of the fact that every year an enormous fund is poured into his private purse from the London property belonging to the Duchy of Cornwall, and the condition of the human beings who live on what has been called in irony "the delectable duchy" is worthy of royal considera-

tion—particularly when it comes to the children born and brought up in these infernal surroundings.
By a curious misapplication of charity, a splendid hospital has been raised on this property at the corner of Waterloo road and Stamford street. The Prince of Wales is one of the patrons of this noble institution. One of the local doctors—a county council public health inspector—who recently showed the writer over the duchy property, remarked:
RENT ROLL BLINDNESS.
"It is all very well for the Prince to give money to the Royal Waterloo hospital, but it seems to me his first duty should be directed toward eradicating—root and branch—the terrible evils of the districts which he owns and which keep the hospital full of patients. The children brought into the hospital usually are in a most pitiable condition. The Prince of Wales occasionally visits them, and there is no doubt he sincerely sympathizes with their condition. There is, however, a peculiar blindness which makes it difficult for one to look behind such a enormous rent roll as the Prince enjoys from their misery."
It is a significant fact that for some years rents from the "delectable duchy" brought in only about two-thirds of their present sum, but when King Edward was Duke of Cornwall—before the death of Queen Victoria—he managed the property so well that he brought it up from \$300,000 to \$600,000 a year, and since the coronation rents from the duchy have jumped to \$850,000. This indicates that whatever reforms have been carried out—if any—have not been in the direction of reducing rents.
Local housing authorities frequently have called attention to conditions of overcrowding in the district. For instance, there are 184 houses per acre, whereas sanitary experts claim that 44 houses per acre should be the limit. Within the area of about one and a half square miles there are 268,500 people, and the average "expectation of life" is from eight to sixteen years shorter than in the healthy sections of London.

In Southwark, where the slum property of Duchy of Cornwall is situated, the death rate is more than 20 per cent, whereas in Hampstead and the West End of London generally it averages from 10 to 12 per cent. Infant mortality here, according to the London County Council physicians, is something like 213 per 1,000, while normally infant mortality in a healthy residential section is only 38 per 1,000. These frightful conditions are, of course, due to overcrowding in the Duchy of Cornwall houses, their dilapidated state, and the unsanitary nature of the district.
ORGIES IN "DELECTABLE DUCHY."
The neighborhood is infested with "pubs" or public houses, otherwise saloons. In these gin palaces every day you see hosts of women, most of them carrying infants in their arms, and other children tagging on to their skirts. On Monday morning in Cornwall place it is the general custom for all the women to pawn their husband's "Sunday clothes" until the following Saturday. The money so realized finds its way promptly into the saloon keeper's bottomless till. Several reforming authorities have tried in England to get laws passed restraining the visits of women and children to the saloons, but so far, nothing has been done. On Saturday nights in Cornwall place, Salutation court, Bond street and in other haunts of the "delectable duchy," you may witness orgies of bestial glorification in which the whole neighborhood participates.
Attempts to bring about reforms in the duchy district always have been met with the statement that "nothing can be done until the lease expires." This is not altogether true. In discussing this point a local housing expert who knows the conditions well said:
"The Prince of Wales, with his powerful influence, could exert sufficient moral suasion on the denizens of the district—and, if not, on his own agents who collect the rents—to bring about a radical change, at least with reference to the children who are the victims of these crying evils. Local reforming bodies often have petitioned the duchy authorities to help to alter social conditions, but little sympathy has been met with from this source."
HISTORY OF PRINCIPALITY.
The Duchy of Cornwall is not "ruled" entirely by the Prince of Wales, though he takes most of the profits. A governing board, founded in the time of Edward III, presided over by what is called a Lord Warden of the Stanneries, attends to the details of the estates. The lord warden is assisted by a keeper of the privy seal, an attorney general and various "state" secretaries. They also have their law clerks and land stewards. The Duke of Cornwall (the Prince of Wales) always is head of this interesting little principality, which has been established about 600 years. William the Conqueror gave the duchy to his half-brother. In those early days Cornwall was the principal place in Europe from which tin was obtained. Even earlier than 600 years ago the Phoenicians traded to Cornwall from Mediterranean ports, exchanging cloth for tin. The duchy at a later period of its existence broadened out to include not only all of Cornwall, but also parts of Devon, Dorset, Somerset and Gloucestershire. This is how the London property came to be a portion of the duchy.
The duchy enjoys what has been facetiously called a "tin constitution," being ruled differently from any other part of the United Kingdom. It was in early times divided into "stanneries," each stannery sending six members to a parliament belonging exclusively to the duchy. The stannery parliament had its own speaker and passed its own laws. In 1382 these bodies were done away with and the lord warden was vested with their powers, subversive, however, to the Duke of Cornwall, in this official capacity, convenes a council of his warden and officials, but these meetings are few and far between, and the only interest the prince really takes in the property is directed toward the annual balance sheet.
W. B. NORTHROP.

American Society Women Set Hot Pace in London

Special Correspondence.
LONDON, Feb. 17.—American women are taking time by the forelock as several of them have already announced that they intend to do directly the season opens. As a matter of fact, save for a few political functions which are on the tapis, the only gaieties discussed are those being organized by hostesses from the "other side." The Hon. Mrs. Charles Lawrence, who was Catherine Sumner of New York, so prominent a figure in philanthropy and so intimate a friend of Princess Christian, is to do a grand deal socially this spring. She is quite a grand dame, wears blue hats and wonderful jewels. When first Princess Christian met her, her royal highness remarked to a friend that she was somewhat "afraid of her grand manner." But now they are her fast friends and the other day, Mrs. Lawrence resigned her presidency of the Royal hospital at Putney in favor of the princess, as she said she felt "a royal name would be more helpful for the institution." She has, however, at the request of the committee, consented to remain as the honorary treasurer. The Hon. Mrs. Charles Lawrence has given immense sums to this pet charity of hers.
WAITING FOR MARJORIE.
Mrs. George Gould has been calling for news about interesting houses to be left in London and I hear she is the heir of several rich Americans who

have Stratford House under consideration. Only a millionaire could keep up properly this magnificent London palace, which should meet the requirements of Mrs. Gould in every way. Her American friends here credit her with the intention of giving a ball for her daughter Marjorie in London that will surpass anything we have ever seen. You have no notion of the excitement Marjorie's coming is causing. We love an American girl who is up to fun, who is unconventional and before all things, natural. If report speaks truly, Marjorie Gould is up to all sorts of pranks. Consequently we are just dying to see her. It is well known that Margaretta Drexel, who pranks of her parents, is a well known figure in the immense success she has made her. She is inclined to overwork her parties, a paralytic weakness which merely proves that she is an exceedingly kind hearted woman. We are told that there are crowds of beautiful Yankee debutantes coming over this season, but I venture to predict that Margaretta Drexel will hold her own among the lot. She is undoubtedly not only the prettiest but the most popular American girl that ever appeared on the social horizon of London since Gladys Deacon charmed us all.
GIVES DAINTY PRESENTS.
No one has ever given more beautiful collations than Mrs. Drexel, many of the figures having been designed by her, while the presents have been in many instances real gems, gold and jeweled cigarette cases and the like. She thinks nothing of spending \$5,000 on the dainty trifles with which she presents her friends at these gatherings. Is it any wonder that Anglo-American society is looking forward with keenest excitement to her much talked of balls in the immediate future?
The first is fixed for the end of March or the beginning of April, and it is expected that it will be the most brilliant affair of the earlier part of the season. Mrs. Anthony Drexel has only one fault as a hostess. She is inclined to overcrowd her parties, a paralytic weakness which merely proves that she is an exceedingly kind hearted woman. We are told that there are crowds of beautiful Yankee debutantes coming over this season, but I venture to predict that Margaretta Drexel will hold her own among the lot. She is undoubtedly not only the prettiest but the most popular American girl that ever appeared on the social horizon of London since Gladys Deacon charmed us all.
TURN A ROTHSCHILD DOWN.
Singing in the back row of the chorus of one of our youthful plays here is one of the most beautiful American girls. It is possible to conceive. She has the face of a Madonna, but with more character; her eyes are, as an enthusiastic youth expressed it to me, "the only real violet eyes one has ever seen when her lashes are long enough to sweep the ceiling."

and she is as good as she is beautiful and a thinker at that. In the world, a struggling young artist with ambition but no name. In most London theaters the "masher" is not admitted behind the scenes. At one very important one, however, Alfred de Rothschild came to her aid. He is a great patron of the arts and a genuine lover of music as well as of the beautiful and he likes to have a chat with any person, man or woman, who interests him. Not infrequently he asks half a dozen of the artists to supper. The other night he was giving a festivity of the kind and he requested the beautiful young artist to make one of the gathering, after, he understood, he had been presented to her in the most orthodox fashion by the manager. But with the air of a queen the American looked the best catch in London up and down and frigidly declined. It is probably the first time in his life the great financier found himself refused a request by any woman and it seems the experience was novel and left an impression that will not be soon forgotten. "I do not know of any one who would take the place of the masher," he said. "It is perfectly ridiculous that you have not a bald round your head," was the only comment vouchsafed by the millionaire.
AS TO MRS. VANDERBILT.
No woman is more sought after on the Riviera this winter than Mrs. French Vanderbilt. She has the most extraordinary vogue which it is a little difficult to account for. Many people are certainly in, and dressed faultlessly, but far more strikingly beautiful women surround her and receive no homage whatsoever. Some attribute Mrs. Vanderbilt's powers of attraction to her very magnetic personality. Others say she carries about with her a Chinese charm which has the most extraordinary occult power—an influence so great that it is said to reach her former, man or woman, who interests her. She certainly is, and dressed faultlessly, but far more strikingly beautiful women surround her and receive no homage whatsoever. Some attribute Mrs. Vanderbilt's powers of attraction to her very magnetic personality. 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