

RULERS IN WASHINGTON'S SOCIAL EMPIRE

SIX PRINCIPALITIES IN MRS. ROOSEVELT'S REALM, EACH WITH A SOVEREIGN



MRS. FAIRBANKS' INTERNATIONAL RANK IS THAT OF A CROWN PRINCESS



MRS. ROOSEVELT



BARONESS HENGELMÜLLER IS NOW THE LADY IN THE LAND



MRS. ROOT, NEW RULER OF THE CABINET CIRCLE



MRS. DEWEY MONARCH OF THE NAVY SET

WASHINGTON, D. C., Jan. 14.—(Special Correspondence of The Sunday Oregonian.)—The social empire over which Mrs. Roosevelt reigns supreme among her sex is divided into six principalities, each with a queen of its own, now ruling and holding court in the brilliant capital of the nation.

Socially speaking, there is but one person in the world to whom Mrs. Roosevelt need ever yield first place and he is her distinguished husband. The President must, according to the unwritten law, take precedence of all others in the land, even of his wife. Many Presidents have emphatically protested against the iron-clad rule which forbids their giving first place to their ladies, after the manner of all other well-bred men of the realm. Garfield, after thus protesting in vain, yielded with the remark: "All right, gentlemen, I will do as you say; but I nevertheless fail to see why I can't be President without being pig."

Real Imperial Prerogatives.

Precedents handed down by all of her predecessors give Mrs. Roosevelt many of the social powers of a real Empress. An invitation from her—like one from royalty—obliterates any other which the bidden guest may have for the same date, and only illness or mourning can properly be offered as an excuse for declining her proffered hospitality. A newcomer in official society who should decline Mrs. Roosevelt's invitation on the ground of a "previous engagement" would commit a social blunder irreparable in the eyes of any first lady of the land less tolerant than the present one. By virtue of a precedent established by the well-beloved "Dolly" Madison, popularly known as "Queen Dolly," all Presidents' wives since her brilliant reign have, like old-world monarchs, been exempted from the necessity of returning calls. Mrs. Madison profited by the uncomfortable experience of Mrs. John Adams, who found her time entirely taken up with visiting and who even then had to slight certain households and thus make political enemies for her husband. The only exception to this rule would require Mrs. Roosevelt to pay the first call upon visiting Congressmen, Queens, Princesses, the wife of her husband's immediate predecessor or successor—at the time of a change of administration—or the wife of any foreign President visiting the United States. Regardless of her exemption from calling, Mrs. Roosevelt's social duties are more exacting than those of any of her subordinates. Each morning, from New Year's day until Easter, she must sit at her desk and pore over invitation lists with Miss Hagner, her private secretary. She and her distinguished husband have surpassed all of their predecessors in the frequency and brilliance of their hospitality. Indeed, it is estimated that Mr. Roosevelt while President has spent far more than his salary. When he entered the White House it was estimated that his private fortune amounted to a quarter of a million, and of course he has realized handsome royalties from his books. A poorer President could not vest his wife with nearly so much social splendor.

Second Lady of the Land.

Mrs. Fairbanks, who reigns over the first principality of Mrs. Roosevelt's social empire, is the second lady of the land. All women of officialdom, save only the President's wife, owe her the first call, and, like Mrs. Roosevelt, she is exempted from the necessity of returning calls. There is one exception to this rule, in her case. She must return the visits of all Senators' wives, her husband, the Vice-President, being ex-officio president of the upper house of Congress. The fact that she presides over the Senate establishes Mrs. Fairbanks as the social queen of the entire Congressional set. Mrs. Fairbanks owes her rank as second lady of the land to President McKinley, whose predecessors permitted the wife of the dean of the diplomatic corps to usurp that station. Mr. McKinley ruled that the wife of the Vice-President had the same relative social rank as the Crown Princess of a European court. Lord Pauncefoot, dean of the diplomatic corps, protested in vain to his Foreign Office, and Lady Pauncefoot had to yield her station to Mrs. Hobart. Mrs. Fairbanks' social reign has been noted for its democracy. Girlhood friends whom she knew back in Marysville, O., when she was Miss Cornelia Cole, are just as welcome to her mansion in Sheppard's row

as are the wives of the high cockatores of officialdom. She is proud of the fact that her husband was born in a humble log cabin and saw his first labor as a plowboy. She has been his chum and confidante since the days when they attended the county schools together and were fellow-editors of their college paper at Ohio Wesleyan. She has one son, a Captain in the Army, another the private secretary of his father, a third who has just been graduated at Yale, and a fourth who is a sophomore at that university, also a daughter who is married to Ensign Timmons, United States Navy.

Third in Social Rank.

The third lady is, but not of the land, is the Baroness Hengelmüller von Hengelmüller, wife of the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador, who, upon the retirement of Count Cassini last Summer, became dean of the diplomatic corps—a title conferred at each national capital upon the Ambassador of longest service there. The Baroness' Washington principality is the most brilliant of all the city's official circles. It includes many personages of title who at state functions eschew our conventional evening clothes and don court costumes weighed down with gold lace and brass buttons, swords and bejeweled orders and in many cases knickerbockers. Of course I am speaking of the men.

The Baroness is the ranking woman of the entire diplomatic corps, her husband enjoying each precedence over all of its masculine members and being the channel of communication between that coterie and the Government of the United States in settling all questions of etiquette involving its members, also the spokesman for the corps in joint negotiations between the "powers" and our republican court.

The Baroness is a Greek Catholic, having been born in Russia—at Countess Dunin-Borkowskaya. She is the daughter of Count Dunin-Borkowskaya, at one time minister at Dresden, and from whom she inherits her title. When very young she was placed in the convent of the Sacred Heart, Paris, and at the age of 16 married a territorial magnate of Austrian Poland, but was left a widow when still a girl. She married M. Hengelmüller von Hengelmüller in 1882, shortly before he was accredited in Washington. Both have grown up in the atmosphere of diplomacy and are better trained to reign over the diplomatic corps than any dean and his wife residing here in several decades. The Baroness' fads are birds and dogs. Almost every window of the Embassy in Connecticut avenue is hung with a cage, and the feathered members of the household include canaries, mocking birds, red birds, capricins, indigo and capuchins. The Baroness is considered to be the best dressed woman in officialdom. She and her husband are enthusiastic motorists, the latter adhering to his monie even while ploughing through the chill breezes of Winter. When the doors to the blue parlor were thrown open to the guests at the President's New Year reception, it was the Baroness and her husband who led the line of official guests, the Vice-President and Mrs. Fairbanks being among the receiving party. At the state dinner to the diplomatic corps, the President will escort the Baroness to the state dining-room and give her the honor seat at his right hand, while M. Hengelmüller will escort Mrs. Roosevelt.

Queendoms Disputed and Anomalous

As to which is fourth in rank among these social principalities is still a matter of dispute. While the Supreme Court circle is conceded that rank by many high officials, others reckon its standing as below that of the Cabinet. Presidents have always diplomatically refrained from a final ruling upon the disputed point. But in the little Supreme Court circle, the wife of the Chief Justice takes social precedence and is immediately followed by the better halves of the respective Associate Justices in order of their seniority of service. Unhappily the Chief Justice is now a widower, but the reigning woman of the circle is Mrs. Harlan, wife of Mr. Justice Harlan, who before her marriage in 1856 was Miss Malvina Shanklin, of Evansville, Ind. Justice and Mrs. Har-

lan will celebrate their golden wedding next December.

Mrs. Ethus Root, who reigns over the Cabinet circle, is, by virtue of a precedent established by Mrs. James G. Blaine—when her husband was Secretary of State—given immunity from returning calls except those of Senators' wives. The same immunity is enjoyed by all other matrons of the Cabinet, save that they must pay first calls upon the wives of Ambassadors. Mrs. Root is the leader of the Cabinet circle only because of the fact that the State Department was the first executive department of the Government created. The Secretary of State thereby became premier of the Cabinet. While Mrs. Root yields to Mrs. Roosevelt, Mrs. Fairbanks, Baroness Hengelmüller and the wives of all foreign ambassadors, she outranks the wives of all foreign ministers, charges d'affaires, secretaries and attaches of the diplomatic corps. There is one occasion when ambassadors' wives even yield to her—when they are entertained with her in any diplomatic residence at the capital. This abdication of rank is by courtesy, however, rather than by rule. While ranking below them, generally, Mrs. Root receives first calls, at the beginning of each season, from ambassadors' wives. Thus, it will be seen, her station is somewhat anomalous. Until England sent over here the first ambassador ever attached to our capital, the wife of the Secretary of State preceded the entire diplomatic corps, whose dean was a minister. Mrs. Root will stand at Mrs. Roosevelt's right hand in the receiving line at all state receptions given at the White House.

Lesser Queen of Greater Kingdom.

Mrs. Chaffee, who is ruler of the "Army set" by virtue of being the wife of the chief of staff, must always yield to Mrs. Dewey when they meet individually. This is because an Army officer must be a full General—as no one has been since Grant—to have the relative rank of Admiral. Whereas the commanding officer of our Navy is an Admiral, that of the Army is only Lieutenant-General Chaffee. But the reason of the fact that the Army was established before the Navy, the "Army set" outranks the "Navy set" as a body, as is seen at the White House each New Year day, when the Army officers are admitted to the blue parlor ahead of the Naval officers. Mrs. Chaffee before her marriage was Miss Annie Frances Rockwell, and her wedding with the present head of the Army occurred in 1875, at Junction City, Kan., when General Chaffee, who had not been a West Pointer, but had worked up through the ranks—was a captain of Cavalry. In the 26 years of her married life she has moved 21 times. Indeed, the wife of

an Army officer leads a career far more nomadic than the spouse of a Methodist minister.

Most Clannish of All.

The Army and Navy "sets" are the most clannish principalities in our social empire. It is the ambition of every mother in either circle to marry all her daughter to officers, and of the fathers to send their sons to the Military or Naval Academy. To the dances and other entertainments of Army and Navy matrons, few civilians are invited. At the Army posts the ladies of each "officers' row" form a little community of their own, with its sewing circles, card clubs and regular round of dances. Of course, Washington is the Mecca of all officers of both services, who are always silently praying that they will be detailed there or to one of the nearby posts along the Potomac. Army women at the capital make it a point to visit one another at least once a year, and every Winter the President holds at the White House a special reception for the Army and Navy. While the Naval women are more widely scat-

tered during their sea service—when they follow close behind our warships, from port to port—they dwell in the same social atmosphere as do Army women whenever collected in one community. In spite of its frequent meetings, its perils and its scandals, Army or Navy life imparts to its women a happiness shared by few of their sisters. No matter how small her dowry, how meager her pedigree, the officer's wife is assured

social prestige and a livelihood as long as her husband lives and behaves himself; a pension for herself and children should he die at his post of duty; free medical attendance, free house rent, free fodder for the horse, and a free funeral, with coffin and headstone thrown in, when each member of the family "passes in his chucks."