

INTIMATE GOSSIP ABOUT THE KINGS AND COURTS OF EUROPE

Duc de Broglie Elected President of Oldest Club in Paris—Organized Under Charles X—Important Role of Family in French Military History

Of all French clubs, the oldest is the Union in Paris on the Boulevard de Madeleine, which has just elected the Duc de Broglie as president. In succession to the late Duc de Rohan, who died a few weeks ago.

The Duc is now in his eighty-eighth year, having been founded in 1826 by the Duc de Gramont, and by several other royalist nobles, who during their twenty years of exile in England had learned to appreciate the value of the leading clubs in London.

King Charles X then on the throne, and who had also resided in England during the years which intervened between the outbreak of the revolution and the final downfall of Napoleon.

Associated with the Duc de Gramont in the foundation of the Union, was the great Prince Talleyrand, and the Duc de Mouchy, while its first president was the Duc de Montmorency, who remained at its head until 1855.

It has always been the favorite club of the foreign ambassadors, though the minor fry of the diplomatic corps have experienced difficulty in obtaining admission, while even more ministers plenipotentiary were looked upon as outsiders.

The Duc de Montmorency was followed by the Duc de Rauxan, chief of the Chastellux family, and on his death the Prince de Montmorency, Luxembourg, became president, followed in turn by the Duc de Riviere, the Duc de Noailles and finally the late Duc de Rohan.

The new president, the Duc de Broglie, is a comparatively young man, being barely thirty-eight years of age. He is by taste and profession a sailor, having served in the navy, in which he attained the rank of commander, until he retired on half-pay, on the occasion of his marriage to the daughter of the Baron de Rochefort.

The name de Broglie possesses a special interest on this side of the Atlantic, by reason of the fact that one of its distinguished bearers, Prince Victor de Broglie, was principal lieutenant of General the Marquis at Lafayette. He was guillotined by Robespierre in 1794. His son married the daughter of the celebrated Mme. de Staël, who played so notable a role in the early part of the nineteenth century.

Their son in turn, the fourth duke, was prime minister of France during the presidency of Marshal MacMahon and while a man of extraordinary culture, vast intellect, and wit, owing his seat in the academy, not to his rank, but to the brilliancy of his attainments, was distinguished for his amazing absence of mind, which involved him in all sorts of amusing contretemps.

Popularly credited with having endeavored to commit the government of Marshal MacMahon to a restoration of the monarchy, yet it was this duke's vote that determined the constitution of the present republic. It may be recalled that the latter, enacted in 1875, was passed by a majority of one vote.

That vote was cast, not, as is generally supposed, by Henri Wallon, but by the then Duc de Broglie, the authority for this statement being Ernest Haudet, the historian, whose avowed royalist sympathies relieve him of any suspicion of prejudice against the duke, while another authority is his kinsman, the second Duc Decazes. Whether the Duc de Broglie cast his vote in a fit of absence of mind, or intentionally, has never been made clear.

The ducal house of de Broglie is of Piedmontese origin, traces back its descent in an unbroken line to the twelfth century, and owes its French dukedom to the splendid military services of the celebrated commander and field marshal of France, Francois de Broglie, the date of the pact being August 20, 1742. A little later he received from the emperor of Germany the dignity of a prince of the holy Roman empire, and it is thanks to this that all the junior members of the family bear the title of prince.

Few houses of the French nobility have played a more important role in the military annals of their country, and there are at least a dozen famous generals of that name who during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries achieved distinction on the battlefields of Europe. The present duke has no children, and the next heir to the family honors and estates is therefore his 22-year-old brother, Prince Louis. He is unmarried. Following him there are his three uncles, brothers of the late duke, and their sons.

The oldest of these uncles, and therefore second in the line of succession to the dukedom, is Prince Amedee de Broglie, married to Marie Say, one of the heiresses of the great sugar refiner, Henri Say, and making his home with her at the historic Chateau de Chamont, on the river Loire.

It may be remembered that Princess Amedee's immense fortune, like that of her sister, the Vicomtesse de Tredern, and of the American widow of her brother, the late Henri Say, was swallowed up a few years ago in the ruin of the president of the Say sugar refineries, who, unable to relieve the ruin due to incredibly foolish speculation, and to downright dishonesty, committed suicide.

It is Prince Amedee's son, Prince Robert, who had such an extraordinary career in this country, and whose matrimonial difficulties have engaged the attention of the tribunals of several countries. His first marriage was with Madeline Deslandes, daughter of the well known art collector, Baron Deslandes, a goddaughter of Princess Mathilde Bonaparte, and divorced wife of Comte Napoleon Fleury.

The marriage, which took place in England, in the Church of St. Mary Magdalene, at Brockley, near London, was a very unhappy one, and having been contracted in defiance of the protests of the prince's parents, was without validity in the eyes of French law. She took steps before a year was over to secure its dissolution in England, and resumed her maiden name of Baroness Deslandes.

Having a large fortune in her own right, she became a notable figure in Paris, her pompadour house in the Rue Christophe Colombe, achieving renown as a literary center. She won fame both as an author and as an artist, under the peculiar name of "Gessie," and among her most fervent admirers was the late Sir Edward Purns-Jones, royal academician, who painted an exquisite picture of her as one of the muses, holding in her hand a globe of pure crystal.

A Modern Miracle

The fact is, Briarley, old boy, I'm going to be married. "Where's the groom?" asked Briarley. "No body compels you."

"I have to marry in self defense," proceeded his lordship. "It is sickening to feel that you are being run after by all the girls and all their match-making mamas. But the worst of it is that I've fixed on two girls, and I can't for the life of me decide which to have."

"And who are the favored couple?" "One is Daisy Molyneux. Of course, she is very jolly and awfully fond of me."

"Yes, and the other?" "Sybil Castlemaine, your—er—second cousin, isn't she?" "Do you think Sybil cares for you?"

"I am afraid there is not much doubt of it, old man," said his lordship mournfully. "I used to fancy you were rather fond of her at one time, but of course it is impossible."

"Utterly!" "Well, look here, old chap; I shouldn't ask everybody, but which of the two girls do you advise me to have? They're both nice, loving little girls, and it's an awful bore to have to choose. Which would you ask?"

"Well," said Briarley slowly, "I should advise you to have Daisy Molyneux."

"Thanks, awfully, old chap. I'll propose to Daisy to-night. She is going to be at Lady Vivyan's dance, and so is Sybil, so I can get it settled either way. Will you be there?"

"Yes, I expect so." Lady Vivyan's rooms presented a gay and brilliant scene that evening. Lord Densham arrived early. It was considerably later when Cecil Briarley arrived.

"It's quite a long time since I've had the chance of talking to you, Cecil," said his cousin Sybil, as they sat in a corner. "They are waiting very nicely," he said, drawing her attention to one of the couples floating near them.

"Lord Densham and Daisy Molyneux?" "Yes, Densham's a nice fellow, isn't he?" "Yes, I suppose one would hardly call him shy or modest, would one?"

"When a fellow like that can choose any girl he likes—when he knows they are all like pretty apples asking to be plucked—it is enough to make him conceited."

"And other fellows jealous?" added Sybil mischievously. "And I suppose none of the pretty apples can be strong enough to refuse to fall into his hand?"

"It would be a modern miracle if they did." A little later Briarley was in the smoking room when Lord Densham came up to him.

"I say, old chap, a funny thing has happened. Daisy Molyneux has refused me."

"Well, I'm awfully sorry, Densham; really I am." "It doesn't matter so very much. Miss Castlemaine is here, isn't she?"

"When Lord Densham suggested to Sybil Castlemaine that they should sit the dance out in the conservatory she saw that he meant to propose to her."

"It is rather serious to be standing on the edge of a new year," he said. "Dear Miss Castlemaine, I want to be a better man in the future than in the past, and you, only you, can help me. What is needed to make my happiness complete, to crown all my hopes and perfect my manhood, is a woman's love. Sybil—let me call you Sybil, my love—will you be the woman? Will you marry me?"

"I am very sorry you should have asked me this, Lord Densham," said Sybil gravely. "I am conscious of the vastness of the compliment, and I am not blind to the advantages of your offer, but I do not love you."

"Don't love me?" repeated his lordship in a tone of disappointment, that had a suspicion of incredulity in it. "You don't love me? But surely that is only a matter of time. When you have seen more of me, when you know me better, Sybil?"

"My decision would not alter, Lord Densham. Will you please take me back? I am engaged for the next dance."

As they entered the ballroom they almost ran into Cecil Briarley. He was about to walk past them when Sybil said:

"Oh, Cecil, here you are! You're just in time. They were about to join the dancers when it was announced that the mysterious midnight moment had arrived, and those who cared to do so were to go to the open windows and on to the doorsteps and balconies to listen and wait for the solemn peal that was to mark the annual recommitment. Briarley got a wrap to throw over his cousin's shoulders, and then they went to the farther corner of the long balcony.

"Are you thinking of the new year?" asked Cecil. "No; I was thinking of Tantalus." "I hope you pity him."

"I don't think I do," responded his cousin softly, feeling that that the shadows hid her blushing cheek. "Perhaps his prize was not so far out of his reach as he imagined."

"Sybil, didn't Densham ask you anything?" he whispered. "Yes, Cecil, and—and I performed a modern miracle."

"My darling!" and then there was silence. "Sybil, you know I am not a rich man, and I am not a lord."

"And you are not horribly conceited and selfish, either, dear."

That Hotel Bill Augustus and Angelina were climbing the highest peak of the Alps, and she stood above him some twenty feet.

"What," he gasped, "what do you see?" "Far, far below," she cried, "I see a long white streak, stretching like a paper ribbon back almost to our hotel."

"Ha, ha!" he ejaculated. "It's that hotel bill overtaking us."

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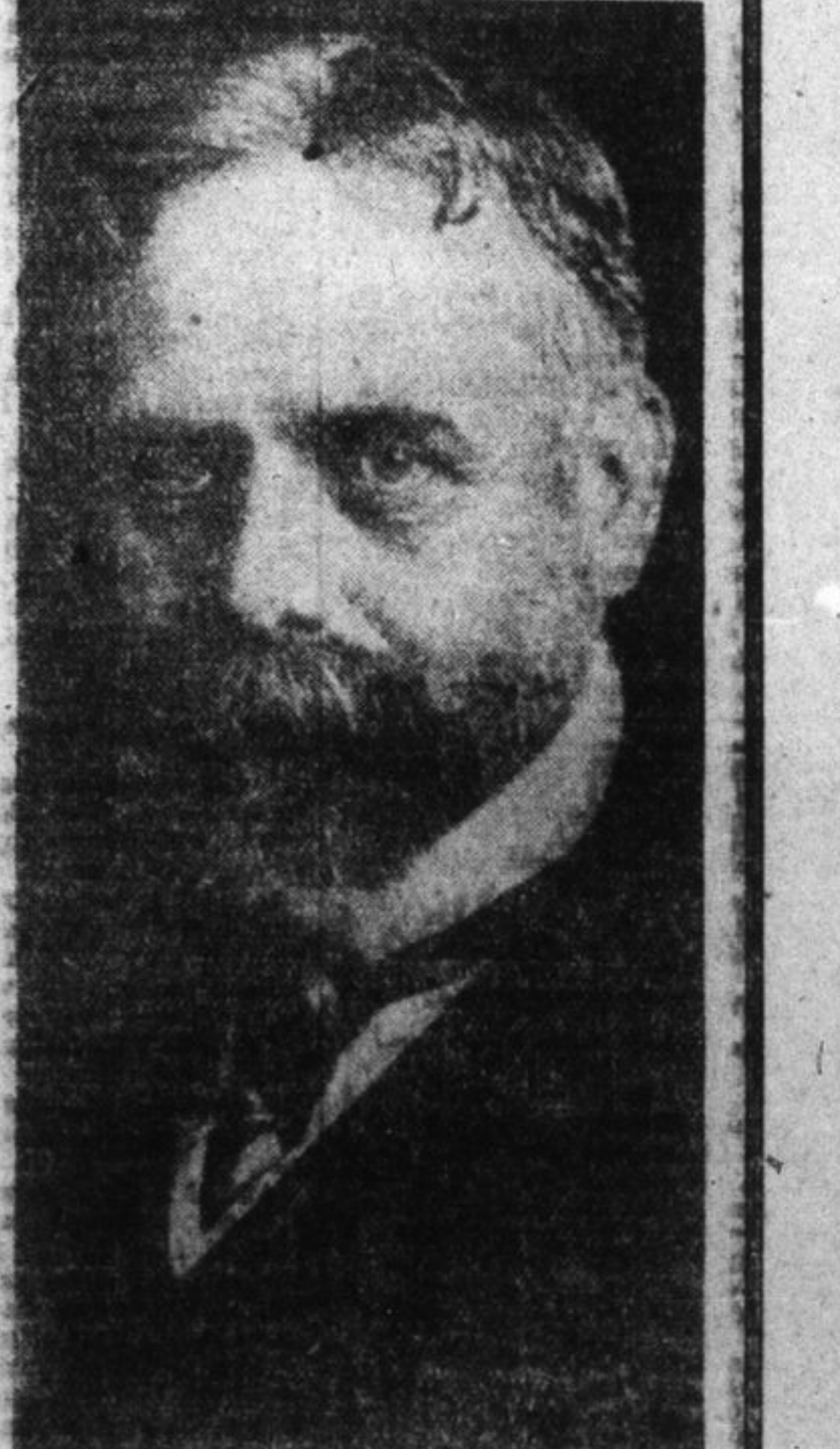
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