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FIRST WOMAN TO BE DIPLOMATIC ENVOY

Appointment by Russia Makes New Step

Washington, D. C.—The recent promotion of Madame Alexandra Kollontai to be the full-fledged 'envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary' from Soviet Russia to Norway at the same time that Professor Timothy A. Smiddy is given a similar position in Washington from heretofore envoyess Ireland, makes diplomatic history," says a bulletin from the Washington, D. C., headquarters of the National Geographic Society.

"Madame Kollontai is the first feminine 'minister plenipotentiary' to enter the diplomatic corps," continues the bulletin, "since that specific position and body were recognized by the congress of Vienna in 1815 and the follow-up congress of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1818; and she is one of the very few women ever to become an envoy of a sovereign state. Catherine of Aragon is the most famous predecessor of Madame Kollontai, and she hardly deserves a similar classification. While she was princess of Wales, her father, Ferdinand the Catholic, named her his ambassador to the court of Henry VII. It was a hollow honor, largely to increase her prestige with the English.

"Woman Minister Real Worker. Madame Kollontai is considered to have won her laurels by real work on behalf of her government while serving for the past two years as charge d'affaires in Norway. She successfully negotiated recognition of the Soviet government by Norway, settled the controversy between the two countries over Spitzbergen, and obtained an official Norwegian guarantee of Soviet credit in purchasing huge supplies of fish for Russia.

"The appointment of Professor Smiddy is somewhat less precedent-smashing. From the sixteenth century until the beginning of the nineteenth the component states of the so-called Holy Roman empire sent envoys to foreign courts. The situation was not entirely parallel with that of the modern British 'empire,' however, for the 'Holy Roman emperor,' was never represented by envoys—on the theory that his dignity was too great. The simultaneous existence now of an ambassador from an over-state and a minister from one of its component parts, sets a true precedent.

"The growth of the diplomatic corps as an institution has been slow. Special envoys undoubtedly were sent from court to court of the earliest historic empires such as those of Egypt and Babylon. Later in Grecian, Roman and Byzantine days the practice was fairly common. But in all such cases, as far as history discloses, the messengers were sent to transact specific business and returned as soon as possible to report the results of their mission.

"In the west the republic of Venice seems to have been the pioneer in the establishment of embassies. In the Twelfth and Thirteenth centuries the terms of Venetian envoys were limited to two or three months. Strict rules hedged them round. Any gifts received from courts visited must be turned over to the republic and written reports had to be filed with the senate. In the Fifteenth century the ambassadorial term was extended to a maximum of two years and in the Sixteenth century, to three years.

First Embassies in Italy.

"The earliest record of the appointment of a resident ambassador—though probably this was not the first ambassador so appointed—was in regard to the sending in 1455 of an envoy from the Duke of Milan to reside at Genoa. One of the first permanent embassies outside Italy was created in 1494 when Milan sent a minister to take up his residence at the court of France. In the same year a Spanish ambassador went to reside in London. This is believed to be the oldest surviving diplomatic post in existence. By the second half of the sixteenth century resident embassies had become the normal means of intercourse between important countries.

"The term, 'ambassador,' was given to the world by Venice where it first appeared in the form 'ambasiator' in a decree of 1268. At first there were no degrees among the envoys of states. The ambassador was considered the vicar of his sovereign and was received with royal honors and had to maintain a sort of little court. This became embarrassing both because of the expense and because it was a handicap in attending to business. The custom grew, therefore, of sending less important individuals as envoys or messengers. These, not hedged about by pomp, proved much more efficient agents. Later again it became customary to accord the rank of the envoy to the importance of the country sending or receiving him, and a gradation in representatives grew up.

VIKINGS' CHARTS SOURCE OF WONDER

Astonish American Naval Officers in Iceland.

Reykjavik, Iceland.—American naval officers who visited Iceland in connection with the globe-encircling flight of the American aviators, were greatly interested in the navigation methods of the old vikings who, more than 1,000 years ago, sailed their little vessels, without compasses or other instruments, across the storm-beaten north Atlantic to Iceland, Greenland and even the shores of North America.

Even today the charts of these waters are largely based on observations and soundings made by whalers and the early explorers, scores of years ago, and the few large vessels that today visit these seas proceed with the utmost caution.

Sailing directions, the "Bible of the Sea," are carefully consulted, and when new soundings are made the results are sent to the different governments for incorporation in the charts.

But when Leif Ericson and the other adventurous old Norsemen of more than ten centuries ago set out on their dangerous voyages there were no charts, and the stars were the only directional guides.

The observations they made were for centuries the only sailing directions, and were chanted, in the form of rags, as the galleys swept over the rough seas. Some of these rags exist today, and old pilots at Reykjavik are familiar with the lore they contain.

One of these, describing the journey from Norway to Greenland, not only takes account of the physical features to be watched for, but advises the navigators to keep a lookout for the birds and whales that mark the approaches to the Icelandic coast.

A naval officer who made a study of this route found it was almost a perfect great-circle, or shortest sailing route, worked out without any scientific aids by navigators who probably could neither read nor write.

Easter Island Weathers

Submarine Disturbances

Leipzig.—Easter Island, in the south Pacific, which recently was reported to have vanished in a submarine convulsion, still waves its palms in the air. Capt. Alfred Kling sends to Illustrierte Zeitung an account of some of its peculiarities.

"In former times," the captain writes, "the tribes and clans on the island lived in constant warfare with each other. The captives were eaten. Many human bones still lie about in the caves of the island. The original Kanakas had a very queer cult, for which they built gigantic statues of lava.

"Some of these monuments carry a mysterious hieroglyphic script. There are about 555 of these giants, the tokens of former civilization.

"The island people own wild chickens and pigs.

"I could never quite find out how marital conditions were on the island. It seemed to me that marriage among members of the same household was prohibited. A violation of this law was punished by putting both offenders to death. Otherwise there was complete prenuptial freedom. Cautious fathers shut their daughters up."

Explorer's Estate to Go to University

New York.—The University of the state of New York, which is virtually the state department of education, is made the ultimate beneficiary of the entire estate of the late Herbert L. Bridgeman, author, explorer and regent of the university, in his will filed for probate in the surrogate's court, Brooklyn.

The value of the estate is described only as "over \$15,000."

During her life the testator's widow, Mrs. Helen E. Bridgeman, 604 Carlton Avenue, Brooklyn, will receive the entire income, after which the principal will be divided in two equal parts. A granddaughter, Miss Katherine Bridgeman, 186 Arlington Avenue, Jersey City, will receive the income from one share, or as much of it as the trustees, the Brooklyn Trust Company and Allen H. Spooner, shall consider she needs. Under similar supervision the income will go to a grandson, Herbert Lawrence Bridgeman, of the same address.

Surplus income of any year will be paid to the university, to which the principal reverts upon the death of the grandchild.

Ingenious Scheme Keeps Parental Line Intact

Respect for one's elders is a praiseworthy custom, which, nevertheless, may be carried too far. J. D. Newson observes in Adventure Magazine. On Raga, in the New Hebrides, it has become quite bad form to let one's parents die. Of course, it is rather difficult to keep them alive if they fall out of a tree and break their necks, or meet a shark while they are swimming about in mid-ocean, and extreme old age is also responsible for many casualties.

Even so, the respected parent must not die; he must, on the contrary, live more vitally than ever, and the practical-minded indigenes have found a perfectly simple solution to this awkward problem. They go to the next village or a neighboring island and buy a child of the desired sex, whom they adopt—as their father, mother or grandparent, as the case may require. The child is given the deceased's name, rank and precedence. He is treated with every mark of respect formerly accorded the real relative—at least when the occasion calls for ceremony.

This makes for astonishing confusion among relatives, and it drew from one visitor, who came from another island, the scornful comment: "Raga! Oh, that is the place where they marry their granddaughters!"

Where Insects Are Food

In Mexico live tribes of Indians who eat a kind of bread made in great part of the eggs of notonectes, which are large water bugs. The honey ants, swelled with sweet matter, are used for a dessert in Central America. The natives of Africa make bread with the termites, while those of Brazil prepare them with a sauce.

Several Chinese peoples find caterpillars and the chrysalises of the silk-worm excellent food. They are fried in butter oil, with the addition of yolk of egg and other ingredients. The Hovas of Madagascar regale themselves with the chrysalises of the bombyx, which are often fried or boiled. Natives of Australia eat moths, which they pursue and catch with the aid of torches. They are first dried and then their wings are removed.

European "Holy Grass"

Sweet-grass, or vanilla grass, is the holy grass of Europe, which is strewn before churches and religious processions. It is the material from which the Indians of the St. Lawrence region weave, when dry, their thin-walled baskets, and which, when made of the genuine grass, retains an odor of new-mown hay indefinitely.

Another sweet grass does not in the least resemble grass, having white and white flowers like tiny stars in grasses. When dried, it is fragrant, however. The name is given, also, to certain other plants, most of which are fragrant, especially in drying. A sweet, vernal grass is found in fields and meadows over nearly the whole of America.

Wonders of Insect World

The champion aeronaut is the king grasshopper, which has the ability to jump 100 times its length, and can sail for 1,000 miles before the wind. The cricket is a powerful singer, its shrill note sometimes being heard a mile away. The males alone are musical, and the females listen to their melodious wooings with ears which are on their forelegs. Being so musical, it would hardly be expected that they would be such fighters among themselves as they are, or cannibals, eating members of their own species when there is not enough other food at hand.—Our Dumb Animals.

Old Harvest Custom

Years ago in the Middle West, when wheat was harvested with sickle and rake, it was the custom, when the last shock was capped and finished, to stack all the rakes around it, thrust the sickle into it, and then the whole company of harvesters formed a circle and at a signal given by the captain of the reapers gave three cheers. They listened for the echo. If it replied three times, it was accounted a good omen.

Resourceful Mr. Beanpole

Mr. Beanpole was somewhat sensitive about past failures, it being his job to look after the plants and goldfish when Mrs. Beanpole went away. So this time he picked out a rear bathroom, put the fish in the tub, turned on a gentle stream and ranged the plants under the eaves to catch the overflow. Surplus water merely trickled down the back stairs and under the kitchen door into the yard.

BANK OF ENGLAND IS TO BE REBUILT

Temporary Quarters Secured in Another Building.

London.—After functioning in the heart of London's "richest square mile" for 230 years, the Bank of England will cease to exist as the "Old Lady of Threadneedle Street" on its present site at the end of this year.

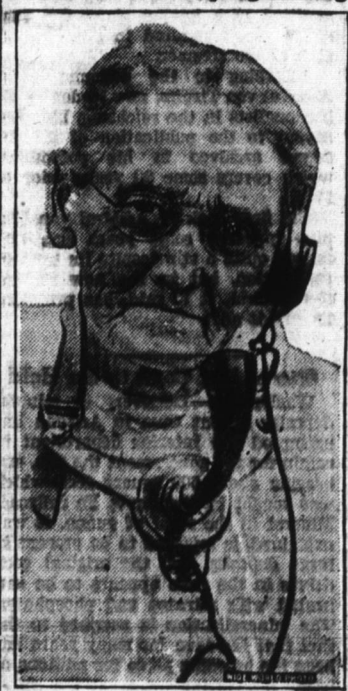
While not exactly undergoing a rejuvenating process, this national financial institution will be entirely rebuilt to meet modern needs.

In the meantime the huge financial operations connected with the nation's discounting of bills, financing the government and dealing with millions of interest payments on war loans and treasury bills will be handled in a comparatively new block of buildings about a quarter of a mile away in Finsburg Circus. Here will be the home of the "old lady" for about two years.

Strong rooms are being constructed in the new premises for the valuable private and government securities, which total around £125,000,000 sterling, and for the reception of £128,000,000 worth of gold bars and coin held as reserve against notes issued. Some of these valuable securities already have been deposited in the new vaults, but the bullion goes later in horse-drawn torries.

During the moving process no strangers are allowed to assist in handling the hundreds of tons of treasures; the whole work being carried out by the bank's special staff.

Interest in Life Her Secret of Keeping Young



Mrs. Lois Dyer of Ashfield, Mass., who at the age of seventy-six is handling several hundred telephone calls every day. She is the oldest telephone operator in New England and her philosophy is worth a lot: "If you want to keep young have an interest in life."

Freakish Trees

An explorer in the forests of northern India has found a tree that gives an electric shock to any one who touches it. The intensity of the shock varies with the time of day, the current being at its strongest at 2 p. m.

Few people realize the extraordinary properties with which nature has endowed some trees. In Nubia, for example, there is a tree, the sofar, that plays tunes, as a startling effect due to the boring of numerous insects at the base of the young shoots. The wind, playing through the tiny apertures, produces a series of flute-like notes.

A Canadian prairie tree, known as the compass tree, is an infallible guide to travelers, the edges of its leaves always pointing north and south.

In Arizona there is a tree which, on being touched, actually ruffles its leaves and tries to scare off the intruder by emitting

Too Unlucky

A visitor in Kentucky came across that rare specimen, an unmarried colored man.

The negro was a quiet, elderly person, not shifty but quite industrious, so the Northern man felt curious and determined to find out why he had remained single.

"Uncle Sam, how does it happen that you are so opposed to matrimony?"

"The old fellow looked up with a grave face, but there was a twinkle in his eyes as he replied: 'Ma, sah? I ain't opposed to matrimony.'"

"Well, why is it you have never married?" his inquirer continued. "Haven't you seen anyone you liked?" "Lawdy! yessah—but you see it's this way; I couldn't risk my judgment."

FOREST CHIEF TELLS OF HAWAIIAN BIRDS

Describes Visit to the Bird Forest.

Honolulu.—One of the attractions of the territory of Hawaii is the bird forest in the Hawaiian National park. A visit to the spot is described by Charles Kraebel, assistant superintendent of forestry of the territory. The forest is known locally as "Kipuka Puulu," which means "An oasis of flowering trees."

The trail to the bird forest leads from the Volcano house, at the edge of the crater of Kilauea, past sulphur banks and steam craters, and along the path of Mauna Loa, through a low growth of Hawaiian heather and scrubby trees until open forests and smooth turf meet the eye. Two ancient peach trees stand at the threshold of the forest. Describing the scene, Mr. Kraebel says:

"Two flashes of red across the green branches are seen. It is the birds, the scarlet lili and the crimson apapane, darting from tree to tree, and pausing among the flowers of the ohia to obtain food from the bright red blossoms. When they have gained the tree tops they are almost instantly lost to view, and the keenest vision is needed to distinguish their brilliant bodies from the equally brilliant ohia flowers. Flushing a bird in red in order to protect it seems to be a paradox of nature when the bird is compelled to seek its own protection among the red flowers of a tall tree.

Endless Twitter.

"An endless twitter of birds swells into louder tones in which is heard the sweet, insistent song of the apapane, the clear 'ta-wet, ta-wet, ta-wet-ah,' of the lili with its remarkable flute-like quality and a whistle of the elepaio, repeating at intervals the syllables of its native name, and always quaintly accenting the 'pa.' Another timid 'ta-wet,' distinguishable through all the other bird songs is the call of the amakihi, the fourth of this quartet of birds most commonly seen in the volcano region, a little greenish-yellow chap, quite inconspicuous in the forest.

"Generations ago, when taxes on feathers were levied by the native chiefs, an accurate knowledge of the birds was a real essential to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness for the Hawaiian."

Mr. Kraebel says the most friendly of the four native birds now seen in the Kipuka Puulu is the elepaio, which "is wren-like in the boldness of its approach in satisfying its curiosity concerning forest visitors, wren-like again in the flint of its fan-shaped tail and the tilt of its saucy head." Mr. Kraebel further described the bird:

"In spite of these forward qualities, which would seem to expose such a bird to more rapid extinction than its fellows, the elepaio has not only resisted contact with civilization, but has adapted itself to changed conditions and has multiplied, as so bright and self-reliant a bird should do, in a modest brown coat, which no one ever cared to use for capes and other royal habiliments of the native chiefs, and so long as there were bugs to eat, the little flycatcher continued to thrive and grow bold, while his neighbors, the black mano and the black o-o, each unfortunately blessed with a few tufts of yellow feathers, have long ago been hunted to extinction to furnish gauds for royalty."

Some Varieties Extinct.

Mr. Kraebel says the extinction of some birds has been due in some cases through the inability to obtain the highly specialized food which they required. He believes that through centuries of oblivion certain birds developed especially constructed beaks suited only to drain nectar from certain flowers, or to crack the seeds of particular trees, and when these trees were unable themselves to resist the march of civilization and finally disappeared, the birds which depended upon them for subsistence starved to death. He says:

"A few species, for no apparent cause, have simply grown less and less in numbers, until today they are no longer found. Domestic cats gone wild have been responsible for the extinction of other species. Thus, in various ways, the total number of indigenous bird species in the Hawaiian islands has dropped from 56 to 36, and of these three dozen species many are so rare that they are seldom seen.

"In spite of this fact the common impression absorbed by the stranger in Hawaii, that there are no more Hawaiian birds, is erroneous. Excepting the shore birds, and the water-loving kind, most of our native birds are today, as they have always been, confined to the densely forested regions. It is for this reason that few people are able to see the birds at all, or to become acquainted with more than the four whose hardihood enable them to remain so abundant

near the volcano. "Let the bird lover be consoled, for nowhere are the native birds more numerous, and nowhere in the territory will the enthusiast find a greater Hawaii than here in the Kipuka Puulu."

Actors in Germany Idle. Berlin.—It is estimated that 900 out of every 1,000 actors and actresses of the Berlin theaters are without jobs this fall. A great many of the playhouses are closed.

The situation in filmdom is also in the doldrums.

Never Taught to Speak, Children Grew Up Dumb

Akbar, one of the first of the great moguls who ruled India, has been named the Asiatic Charlemagne. He was a statesman and an educator, and built a palace for the reception of men who loved learning and sought after wisdom. The great mogul's passion for knowledge is said to have been shown by a whimsical experiment he once made to determine if it was true, as he had heard, that Hebrew was the natural language of all who had never been taught any other tongue.

To test this assertion Akbar caused a dozen nursing children to be shut up in a castle, six leagues from Agra, his capital city. Each child was reared by a dumb nurse; the porter also was a mute and was forbidden, upon pain of death, to open the gates of the castle. When the children were twelve years old Akbar ordered them to be brought before him.

Men learned in Sanskrit, in Arabic, in Persian and in Hebrew were assembled at the royal palace to tell what languages the children spoke. Akbar, seated on his throne and surrounded by these linguists, ordered the children to be brought in. Each child was addressed and, to the surprise of the assembly, every one answered by a sign. Not a child could speak a word. They had all learned from their nurses to express themselves by gestures.

Ancient Plate Prized by Historical Society

The Verendrye plate, a square bit of leaden plate, is said to be the most celebrated bit of matter in South Dakota's history. It reposes in the capitol building at Pierre, in possession of the South Dakota Historical society. It was found buried in the earth near Pierre in 1917.

This remarkable plate was prepared either in France or in Montreal at the request of the older Verendrye, and in anticipation of the expedition of 1741, which had been planned by his eldest son Pierre, into the Mandan country in the far wilderness of America. It is thought that the explorers planted the plate on the banks of the Missouri, opposite what is now Pierre, on the hill where it was found. It bears, translated from French, this inscription:

"In the twenty-sixth year of the reign of Louis XV, the most illustrious Lord, the Lord Marquis of Beauharnois being Vercey, 1751, Pierre Gaultier de Laverendrye placed this." —Detroit News.

Roman Soldier Figures in Crucifixion Legend

In the legendary lore of the church, the soldier who pierced the side of Christ on the cross with the spear has been called Longinus. This man, unfounded tradition said, was one of the soldiers appointed to guard the cross, and was led to become a follower of Christ through the miracles which attended the crucifixion. He was also set with the band who watched the sepulcher and was the only one who refused to be bribed by money to say that the body of Christ had been stolen by the disciples.

For his fidelity to the truth, Pilate resented on his destruction; but for a time Longinus managed to escape. He left the army to devote himself to the work of the gospel, but he did this without getting legal discharge from military life.

He and two of his fellow soldiers retired to Cappadocia, where they began to preach the gospel, but at the instigation of the Jews, Pilate sent after them as deserters, beheaded them and had their heads brought back to Jerusalem.

So runs the story which may have a mistake for its base, longinus being the technical name for a long spear.

Doodad or Thingumbob?

Do other races show the same love for indefinite names and the same resourcefulness in coining them that is shown by Americans?

Following is a list of indefinite names recently collected in the Central West Thingumbob, thingumajig, thingumadoodle, dingus, dingbat, doofunny, doodad, doodiddle, doogood, dooflickus, doojohn, doobickey, doobobus, doodiddy, doobuckey, gadget, fumadiddle, dit-tum, jiggar, fakus, kadgin, thumadoodle, opriculum, ring-unajig, hoopadaddy, dibble.—American Mercury.

FAKE FURNITURE IS NEWEST OF SWINDLES

Seekers After Antiques in England Are Duped.

London.—Of the making of many different kinds of fakes there seems to be no end.

There have been faked pictures ever since artists first began to use paints. There are so many faked Rembrandts in existence that few prospective purchasers will complete a deal for one of the great Dutchman's works without consulting an expert.

Just now an unusually active business in faked furniture is reported. "This is an age of faked furniture," said the proprietor of a West End gallery. "One comes across it everywhere. It is certainly more plentiful than genuine furniture."

"Most of it is sold in the first place for what it is, accurate imitation, but later it comes into the market in the ordinary way to be sold as the real thing. Some of the modern faking of Jacobean furniture is so good that it frequently deceives experts."

"The number of Tudor tables which are on the market is enormous. There is about one for every six houses of Tudor days. Of course, most of them are clever fakes."

A favorite device of the fakers just now is to plant their reproductions, carefully matured and dust-covered, in rural English homes, where they are eagerly snapped up by unsuspecting purchasers who go through the countryside looking for antiques.

Head or Feet—Eileen Stands on Either End



Meet Eileen, who looks at the world from an unusual angle. The year-old aerobit was never taught the trick; just does it because she enjoys it and she stands on her feet with equal ease, if not with equal pleasure. But the nuns at St. Ann's Maternity hospital, in Cleveland, where Eileen (as yet she has no surname) made her bow, are worried, for all the other babies in the ward are trying to learn the trick and, as one doctor said: "Imagine a whole ward full of babies standing on their heads." Eileen has been performing this stunt since she was eight months old.

Japanese "Hello" Girls

Telephone operators in Japan are called "moshi moshi" girls, the term being the Japanese equivalent for hello. These operators are required to wear a uniform costume consisting of a sort of shirt called a "bakama," which is worn over a working kimono of coarse white cloth. The sleeves of the kimono are not as full as those of an ordinary kimono and are tied with a cord just below the elbow to prevent them from interfering with the movements of the operator's hands. The bakama has a sash tied in front. This attire is completed by a pair of white cloth-foot covers and straw sandals. They wear no stockings, which is a custom peculiar to all Japanese women, except those who adopt foreign styles.

Modern Life

Perhaps modern life too much absorbs and fatigues the spirit, insisting that every man, even he of humble circumstances, shall learn and do too many things; so that he has neither the leisure nor the will to test ideals, and, sounding them, to stir his imagination till it transforms them into something more precious and important than the gulf in which they first appeared. Modern men are proud of their activity, but the too active life spurs the contemplative, atrophies the imagination, habituates the spirit to feeding; only concrete things.—Guglielmo Ferrero.