



FOR many ages woman had taken no part in the profession of arms. The *vivandière* of modern times was her only representative in the present age, and she was but sparsely distributed amongst the masses of men whose profession was that of warfare. Present events, however, in England seem to have created a new interest in the science of fighting, and women are beginning to take up rifle practice with great seriousness. Though it does not seem likely that they will ever wish to take part in actual warfare, it is not unnatural that they should be curious about some of the details of it. Abroad the lady colonel is a well-known institution; but it must not be imagined that she is anything more than ornamental. She is not required to know anything of war, and her officers and men are quite satisfied if she can recognise her regiment amongst a mass of others and knows something of the past history of those under her. For the rest, the colonel in command manages everything, and sees that the regiment is in a good state of discipline and up to date in every respect.

During the latter half of the century the fashion of nominating princesses honorary colonels of regiments has rapidly become more common, and at the present day there are actually no less than twenty-eight princesses who hold this position: several of them are the chiefs of more than one regiment. To have a Royal lady for a colonel is considered an honour to the regiment, but the appointment also confers honour on the princess to whom the post is given. She is supposed to take a warm

interest in her regiment; and the officers now and again see her as a guest at mess, and she receives the ladies of the regiment.

In Russia the Grand-Duchesses of the Imperial House are given regiments; but so



THE DUCHESS OF CONNAUGHT
(As Colonel of the 8th Brandenburgs).

far no foreign princess has been honoured by being appointed the head of a regiment, such a course not being in accordance with the Russian traditions.

In Germany, and more especially in Prussia, this is not the case, and the German Emperor, when he wishes to pay a foreign princess the highest possible compliment, confers on her one of his favourite regiments. In Prussia alone there are no less than thirteen lady colonels of the twenty-eight extant in Europe.

The actual origin of this custom is difficult to trace, and it did not appear in Germany until the middle of the nineteenth century, when the widow of the Tzar Nicholas I., *née* Princess Charlotte of Prussia, was appointed Honorary Colonel of the 6th Cuirassier regiment (Kaiser Nicholas I. von Russland) in the year 1856. Her Majesty was the first Prussian princess who received this honour.

On March 5, in the year 1806, the Cuirassier regiment *Königin* (Pommersches), No. 2, received this name in honour of the noble Queen Louise

of Prussia at the especial wish of the then colonel of the regiment, Count von Kalckreuth. The Queen, however, although the regiment was named after her, did not hold the post of an honorary colonel.

From the year 1856 the institution of having lady colonels gained ground in Germany, and more especially in Prussia. In the year 1866 we find that Queen Augusta of Prussia was Colonel of the 4th Grenadier Guards, the Crown Princess

(the Empress Frederick) Colonel of the 2nd Guard-Hussars, and the Queen Dowager Elizabeth Colonel of the 3rd Grenadier Guards,—all appointments made by King Wilhelm I. shortly after his accession. In 1875 several new lady colonels were appointed, in the persons of the sister-in-law of King Wilhelm, namely the Princess Carl of Prussia, his niece, the Princess Friedrich-Carl of Prussia, and his sister, the Grand-Duchess Alexandrine of Mecklenburg-

Schwerin, whilst in Russia there was a large number of princesses who had by this time received regiments from the Tzar.

It is, however, during the reign of the present German Emperor that this custom has become so very common, and he it was who began to appoint foreign princesses colonels of Prussian regiments. One of the first acts of His Majesty was to nominate his grandmother, Queen Victoria, Colonel of the 1st Prussian Dragoon Guards, which regiment since that time has borne the name of "*Königin von Grossbritannien und Irland.*" Since then a great number



THE GERMAN EMPRESS
(As Colonel of the Cuirassiers).

of the sovereign ladies of other countries have been honoured in a similar manner, and it must be said that the appointment is always received with pleasure, both by the regiments and by the princess who obtains the post.

The youthful Queen of the Netherlands was greatly delighted when Kaiser Wilhelm gave her a regiment—the 15th Hussars—and Her Majesty has already received a deputation of her officers at the Hague, and

entertained them in right Royal fashion. Her mother, Queen Emma, is also colonel of a Prussian regiment—the 15th Infantry—which bears the name of a former colonel, Prince Friedrich of the Netherlands, for the Emperor is careful to make the princesses colonels of those regiments which are connected by tradition or by name with their own countries. The Duchess of Connaught, for instance, is colonel of a regiment which bears her father's name, the late Prince Friedrich-Carl of Prussia—the 8th Brandenburg, No. 64; whilst her mother, the widowed Princess Friedrich-Carl, is at the head of the 2nd Brandenburg Dragoons, No. 12, which bears the name of Von Arnim. The Empress Frederick, who was appointed by her father-in-law, the late Kaiser Wilhelm I., Colonel of the 2nd Guard Hussars, has recently been made Honorary Colonel of the 80th Infantry regiment, "Von Gersdorff," stationed at Wiesbaden and Homburg. Her Majesty takes an especial interest in the 80th, and in the month of September 1899 gave a

luncheon to the officers and their wives at the Kurhaus at Wiesbaden, which was greatly appreciated by all who were present. It was the first time that the Empress had entertained all the wives of her officers, and the invitation was most popular with them.

As a rule the Royal lady colonel visits her officers at their mess, and will take some refreshment there after having held an inspection of the regiment. All the princesses who are young wear the uniform of their regiments when they appear on the field.

The German Empress, who is Colonel of the Schleswig-Holstein Fusilier regiment, No. 86, always appears on parade wearing the uniform of her cuirassier regiment, which is highly becoming to Her Majesty, who is very fond of being present at a review, and who can lead her regiment past the saluting-point in excellent style. She is a graceful horsewoman, and, as her horses are perfectly trained, her duties on the field have always been excellently well performed. The presence of a princess in uniform excites great



THE GERMAN EMPRESS AND THE GRAND-DUCHESS OF HESSE DRIVING TO THE PARADE IN THE UNIFORMS OF THEIR REGIMENTS, IN SEPTEMBER 1898.

enthusiasm amongst the men. The Queen of the Netherlands is also very fond of appearing on the field to see her regiments exercised, when Her Majesty is always mounted, Queen Emma generally being near in her carriage. Queen Wilhelmine takes an ardent interest in her soldiers and in their well-being.

Two years ago Kaiser Wilhelm appointed the Queen of Italy, who was at the time on a visit to Homburg, Colonel of the Hessian Rifle battalion, No. 11. Her Majesty was much pleased at the honour, and had the officers presented to her. She also went to a review held in the neighbourhood, at which her Rifles were present, when she

was accompanied by the Empress Frederick. The two ladies drove to the field, whilst the German Empress and the Grand-Duchess of Hesse, who were both present, were mounted and in uniform.

The Grand-Duchess of Hesse looks particularly well in uniform, her slight, graceful figure being especially adapted to show off the severe military style of dress. Her Royal Highness delights in her regiment, and constantly visits it when it is on field duty. She also shows great kindness to the men and officers, and is ambitious that they should shine in the manœuvre time. She looks very smart when she rides at the head of her regiment, and is greatly admired by every one. It was the Grand-Duke of Hesse who, at her special request, appointed her chief of the 3rd Grand-Ducal Hessian Leib regiment, No. 117. It had always been her ambition to be colonel of a regiment.

Her elder sister, the Crown Princess of Roumania, wears, when she is present at a review, a Roumanian uniform, which is also very becoming to her.

The Empress Alexandra Feodorovna of Russia is the colonel of two regiments, for, like all Russian princesses, she is the head of a regiment in her own empire—namely, the Life Guard Lancers; and after her accession the German Emperor made her Colonel of the 2nd Prussian Dragoon Guards, which regiment since that time has borne the name of the "Empress Alexandra von Russland."

In Prussia there are many historical regiments which bear the name of their former colonels. For instance, the 1st Grenadier Guards had for its first Imperial colonel the Tzar Alexander I., and since that time each Tzar in succession has held the post of honorary colonel of this Prussian regiment. On this account the Duchess of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, as the daughter of a Tzar, was placed *à la suite* of it. Her Imperial Highness does not possess a German regiment of her own, but she is Honorary Colonel of the Russian Dragoons, No. 41.

The Grand-Duchess of Baden, the only sister of the late Emperor Frederick, whose husband has always been so much interested in military matters, was naturally given a regiment. She was made the chief of the



THE GRAND-DUCHESS OF HESSE

(As Colonel of a Hessian Regiment: Undress Uniform).

Königin Auguste regiment, which had so long borne the name of her mother, the late Empress Auguste, who took so much interest in it during her frequent visits to Coblenz, where the regiment was at the time stationed.

The Queen of Saxony also holds the post of colonel of one of her husband's regiments, which bears the name of the 2nd Royal Saxon Queen's Hussars, and which is one of the smartest regiments in the kingdom.

Queen Charlotte of Württemberg is Colonel of the Württemberg Lancer regiment, which bears the name of "König Wilhelm I." Her Majesty takes an active interest in her soldiers and is very popular with them.

There is a second princess of Württemberg who is also a military lady—namely, the Duchess Vera of Württemberg, the younger sister of the Queen of Greece, and who, as a Russian grand-duchess by birth, is colonel of a Russian regiment, the 22nd Nischni-Novgorod Infantry, and is also the Colonel of the Württemberg Lancer regiment "König Carl."

Of late years Kaiser Wilhelm has made three of his four sisters colonels of regiments to which he wished to show especial favour; and naturally he began with his eldest sister, the Hereditary Princess of Saxe-Meiningen. As she lives at present in Breslau, His Majesty appointed her colonel of the 2nd Silesian Grenadier regiment, No. 11, which bears the name of its former colonel, "Crown Prince Friedrich-Wilhelm." The Hereditary Princess Charlotte was extremely delighted with her post, and, since she obtained her regiment, has been most active in showing her interest in it, has been present at numerous reviews, has inspected it herself, and has on several occasions lunched with her officers and invited them and their wives to dine with her. She is deeply interested in military matters, and had always hoped that her brother would give her a regiment. It is said that she actually shed tears of joy when the news was told her that her hopes had been fulfilled.

The next sister to receive a regiment was the Princess Victoria of Schaumburg-Lippe, who, like all members of the House of Hohenzollern, has a liking for military matters. The Emperor made her Colonel



THE GRAND-DUCHESS OF HESSE
(As Colonel of a Hessian Regiment: Full-dress Uniform).

of the 5th Westphalian Infantry regiment, No. 53, as coming from the district near which Her Royal Highness lives. Kaiser Wilhelm wishes his lady colonels to show a lively interest in their regiments, to have an occasional day with them officially (when the lady colonel appears in uniform), and in this manner to bring the soldiers and officers more in touch with the reigning house. The Princess Victoria was extremely pleased about her appointment, and since she obtained her regiment has shown herself very active in the interest she takes in her new position. Like all the daughters of the Empress Frederick, she is a finished horsewoman, and it is a real delight to her

to be present at a review and to take active part in it.

The Crown Princess Sophie of Greece, the third sister of Kaiser Wilhelm, has also been appointed colonel of a Prussian regiment by her brother, which she visited when last in Berlin, accompanied by the Emperor, and had tea one afternoon with the officers. Her Royal Highness is Colonel of the Königin Elizabeth Grenadier Guards, No. 3, the regiment formerly commanded by the late Queen Elizabeth of Prussia, the widow of Friedrich-Wilhelm IV., and which received its name from her. The Crown Princess Sophie was, before her marriage, the favourite sister of Kaiser Wilhelm, and it was a great satisfaction to her, after the misunderstanding which had existed between them for several years, that he should give her a regiment, and one which had always been so much honoured in Prussia.

The late Princess Albrecht of Prussia held the post of Colonel of the 1st Hanoverian Infantry regiment, and much pleasure it afforded

her. She received this particular regiment on account of the fact of her husband being Prince-Regent of Brunswick.

The Queen of Greece holds a unique position, for, on account of her great love for the sea, the Emperor Alexander III. of

Russia made her an admiral of the Russian fleet instead of giving her the customary regiment. Her Majesty is the only lady admiral in the world.

The Dowager Empress of Russia, who has always had an active nature and has taken

a prominent part in the Russian Court life, is the colonel of numerous regiments, all of which are extremely proud of the honour of having Her Majesty for a colonel. She is the head of the Chevalier Guard regiment, the 2nd Life Guard Cuirassiers, the 4th Life Guard Dragoons, the 32nd Dragoons, and the 46th Dragoon regiment. Naturally Her Majesty possesses the uniforms of all those regiments and has their welfare at heart. Regiments which have princes and princesses for their colonels almost always receive favours of some kind, and the mess-room is certain to be decorated with at least the portraits of the Royal colonel, as well as often having a good display of handsome plate, received from time to time as a mark of approbation from the Royal



THE CROWN PRINCESS OF ROUMANIA
(As Colonel of a Roumanian Regiment).

personage who is their head.

The widowed Grand-Duchess of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, who is the only daughter of the Grand-Duke Michael-Nicholejewitch of Russia by his marriage with the late Princess Cicelie of Baden (a sister of the present



THE HEREDITARY PRINCESS OF SAXE-MEININGEN
(As Colonel of the 2nd Silesian Grenadier Regiment).

Grand-Duke of Baden and of the Duchess Dowager of Coburg), holds the post of colonel of a Cossack regiment—"Choper of Kuban"; but as she has her home in Germany, her position as colonel is a merely nominal one, which is not the case with the German princesses who are colonels of German regiments.

Amongst the Russian Grand-Duchesses who are in possession of regiments are the Grand-Duchess Vladimir, *née* Duchess of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, who is Colonel of the Njeschinschen Infantry regiment, No. 137; the Grand-Duchess Serge of Russia, *née* Princess of Hesse and bei Rhein, who is the head of the 51st Tschernigowschen Dragoons; the Grand-Duchess Alexandra-Josephowna, *née* Princess of Saxe-Altenburg, who is Colonel of the 16th Dragoon regiment; the Grand-

Duchess Alexandra-Petrowna, *née* Princess of Oldenburg, who is Colonel of the 11th Dragoons; and the Grand-Duchess Xenia, the eldest daughter of the late Tzar, who is chief of the Ukraineschen Dragoon regiment which bears her name—"the Grand-Duchess Xenia Alexandrowna." Her Imperial Highness, who takes all the duties of life seriously, has a most charming character, and likes to hear news of her men, and is not satisfied merely to hold the position of colonel.

The custom of having lady colonels is undoubtedly a very popular one, both with the princesses themselves and also with the regiments which are so honoured. The younger princesses are always especially pleased, as for the most part it is a great excitement to them to don a uniform, which as a rule is very becoming; and they also have an opportunity of appearing mounted on the manoeuvre-field, and of being present in an official capacity at reviews, when to lead the regiment past the saluting-point and to have the Emperor lead a regiment past them excites the liveliest pleasure.

Of all the lady colonels in Germany, the Grand-Duchess of Hesse and the Hereditary Princess of Saxe-Meiningen are the two who take the most ardent delight in their position, though the Princess Adolph of Schaumburg-Lippe runs them very close in this matter. All three Princesses are particularly fond of appearing in uniform, and all are good horsewomen, and therefore enjoy a field day. It certainly adds very considerably to the spectacle to see ladies in uniform mounted on the parade field; and it will be remembered that in early days, when our own Queen was young, she reviewed her troops mounted in military attire.

When the army manoeuvres are taking place in the neighbourhood of Cronberg the Empress Frederick often rides over to view the soldiers at work, and Her Majesty will often appear very early in the morning and will spend several hours in following the movements of the troops. On these occasions the Empress is not present officially, but her presence always gives pleasure to the soldiers.