

THE LATEST ROYAL WEDDING.

INTERESTING CEREMONIES.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

BEFORE morning broke over the little town of Sigmaringen sleepers were awakened by the ringing of the church bells, followed shortly afterwards by the thunder of cannon. The sound was echoed and re-echoed from the walls of the castle and the encircling hills. The gray dawn had not yet fully mastered the darkness of the night, but many people were already in the streets. It was scarcely an ideal bridal morn. A fine rain was falling, and when the day fully broke it was seen that the crisp frost had disappeared, but the temperature was still below freezing point, and the rain froze as it fell upon the streets, which were soon covered with ice, making walking difficult, not to say dangerous, to those unaccustomed to the steep thoroughfares of the town.

Within half an hour of the firing the streets were thronged with townspeople and visitors. Most of these made their way to the old castle wall and gate to watch the arrival of the deputations from Hohenzollern and Sigmaringen, who had been charged to convey the congratulations of the subjects of Prince Charles. The deputations were received in the fine Gothic hall of the museum by the bride and bridegroom. All the members were clad in their local gala cos-

As soon as the civil ceremony had been completed the guests assembled in the Ritter-hall in the castle, whence they proceeded down the red carpeted stairway, hung with pictures of sacred subjects, to the gallery, which led over the roadway from the castle to the church.

By half-past two all the guests and others privileged to witness

THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY.

except the various royal personages, had taken their places. At a quarter to four there was a stir at the entrance of the doors, and simultaneously the bells of the church clashed forth a marriage peal, the organ commenced to play, and the cannon outside boomed a tremendous salute to announce the coming of the bride and bridegroom. A few minutes later the head of the bridal procession entered the church. Among the first to enter were Major-General Sir John Cowell, Master of Queen Victoria's Household, and Sir Edward Malet, her Majesty's Ambassador in Berlin. Immediately afterwards followed

A DAZZLING GROUP OF EXQUISITELY-DRESSED LADIES of the Roumanian and Hohenzollern Courts. Most of them wore white or light-toned frocks, which they threw open as they entered the warm church. The ladies were followed by an even more brilliant crowd of officers, wearing a variety of uniforms, and several members of the Diplomatic

was made in London, and was of rich white *jeu de soie*, a thick-ribbed kind of silk, embroidered in pearl, crystal, and silver. It was Empire in style, the plain skirt edged by sea-oon-patterned embroidery, dotted with fine pearls and silver. The train was outlined by orange blossoms and white cord, small bouquets of the bridal flower having been cunningly introduced here and there amidst the embroidery. The bodice had an Empire corselet with lines of pearl, crystal and silver running round it in double rows, cut low, the *decolletage* being edged with full white velvet, which likewise formed the puffed sleeves. A band of white ribbon tied round the waist in a bow, and long ends served to hold the bouquet, long veil, with diamonds sparkling from her head and neck, the soft ruby plush forming an exquisite foil.

The bride and bridegroom took their places before a *prie-dieu*, Prince Ferdinand wearing his Jäger uniform, with the German Emperor on one side and the King of Roumania on the other, each clad in full uniform and glittering with orders and medals.

A BLARE OF TRUMPETS

from the gallery was followed by the opening strains of the marriage service, the choir singing the 'Benedicite Vobis' by Stehle in a splendid manner. Then the Abbot, in full canonicals, stepped before the altar, supported by the two Benedictine monks, and commenced an address in a clear voice to the bridal pair.

THE ABBOT INVOKED UPON THE BRIDAL PAIR ALL THE BLESSINGS OF PEACE AND HAPPINESS.

The echo of his last words had scarcely ceased when a choir of eight voices commenced the 'Bene Jesu' by Witt, which was sung with grand effect. Then one of the priests, proceeding to the altar, invited the young couple to prayer. As the Prince and Princess knelt at the altar the priest said a short prayer, and then, in a very distinct voice, put this question to the bride, 'Do you, of your free will, take this man to be your wedded husband?' to which she replied in clear tones, 'I do.' A similar question put to the bridegroom was similarly answered, and then the rings were placed on the fingers of each as a visible sign of the bond of matrimony.

It was noticed that after the placing of the rings



THE BRIDE—PRINCESS MARIE OF EDINBURGH.

THE BRIDEGROOM—PRINCE FERDINAND OF ROUMANIA.

tume, and there were some attempts at allegorical display. Some curious flags have been shown in Sigmaringen as English, and the local idea of the British national colours is evidently rudimentary, as

A LITTLE MAIDEN REPRESENTING BRITANNIA

was gorgeously clad in blue, red, and yellow, which was supposed to be a typical British tricolour.

At half-past twelve the bride and bridegroom drove down from the castle to the Prince of Hohenzollern's palace, and were cordially cheered by the people, although to English ears the salutations of the crowd sounded somewhat sedate. Shortly afterwards the German Emperor and the Duchess of Edinburgh drove to the Palace, where, at one o'clock, a *dinner en famille* was served. The other guests breakfasted in the new hall at the castle, and while that meal was proceeding a few privileged persons were permitted to inspect such of

THE WEDDING PRESENTS

as had already arrived. These were laid out in the Red Room, a charming apartment, hung with fine landscapes and one large sea piece, beneath which is a striking bust of the old Kaiser Wilhelm. Alongside of this is a cabinet filled with the silver wedding presents of the Prince and Princess of Hohenzollern.

In this room, at two o'clock, the civil marriage took place before Herr von Wedell, minister of the household of the King of Prussia. This was entirely a family affair, and the ordinary guests were not called upon to be present.

Body, including the Roumanian Minister to Germany. The ladies ranged themselves on the right of the church and the officers and diplomats on the left, and then the hum of conversation was again heard, but almost drowned at times by the joyous ringing of the bells.

Time wore on till it was considerably past four o'clock, the time appointed for the marriage ceremony to commence. Suddenly there was

PROFOUND SILENCE,

and all heads were turned towards the great door, through which entered the Abbot Walter Placidus and two soberly-clad Benedictine fathers. Then came three priests in the ordinary ecclesiastical attire of the Catholic Church, and quickly following them the German Emperor entered the church, escorting the Duchess of Edinburgh, who wore a superb coronet of diamonds. Next came the King of Roumania, with the aged Princess Josephine; and in quick succession and in order of precedence the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, the Grand Duke Alexis of Russia, Prince Alfred of Edinburgh, the Countess of Flanders and her son, Prince Albert of Belgium; the Hereditary Prince and Princess of Saxe-Meiningen, the bridegroom, escorting his mother; several of the Princes of the House of Hohenzollern, and finally the Duke of Edinburgh with his daughter

THE FAIR YOUNG BRIDE,

looking very earnest and somewhat pale, clinging to her father's arm. The Princess's train was borne by one lady only. She looked an ideal bride in her superb dress. If

THE YOUNG PRINCE HELD HIS BRIDE'S HAND

in his until the ceremony had concluded. They were now man and wife, and the priest delivered a short address dwelling upon the fact, and upon the solemn duties and responsibilities attaching to it. This exhortation was followed by the sweet strains of the 'Lauds tibi, Domine,' sung in a perfect manner by the small choir. The benediction, pronounced by the Abbot, concluded the marriage ceremony. The now radiant bride, holding to her husband's arm, led the way out of the church, smilingly acknowledging the congratulations of her royal relatives and guests, who formed a lane down which the young couple passed to the door. It was an impressive and brilliant spectacle, upon which the eye would willingly have rested at length. But the church speedily emptied, for there was yet another ceremony to be performed, that of the Protestant marriage, in the great dining room at the castle, towards which all the royal personages now hurried. The dining-room had been converted during the afternoon into a chapel, a communion table, brought specially from England by the Rev. Mr Lowe, being placed across the end of the apartment and arranged as it would have been in an English church.

ALL THE PEOPLE OF SIGMARINGEN TOWN

and country side had apparently assembled along the route from the church to the castle, although they must have known perfectly well that they would not be able to see much, as the bridal procession and the royal visitors passed, as they had come along the covered way through the