

London Agog for November's Big Royal Wedding

Dinners, Presents, Scarlet Lilies and Big Receptions

... and there was great rejoicing throughout the land when the prince and princess were wedded and set off on their honeymoon in a great golden coach drawn by six milk-white steeds.

EVERYONE remembers the familiar ending to the fairy story—and soon another story is to have a similar ending, or should we say beginning? To-day preparations are being made for the marriage of Princess Marina to Prince George, but instead of a golden coach for the honeymoon, something a bit swifter will be used—a car, or maybe a plane. And with the linking together of all the countries in the world with broadcasting, the news of this magnificent Royal wedding is creating interest a thousand times greater than that of any fairy tale prince or princess. Perhaps New Zealanders can claim to have greater interest in this wedding than any other countries, excepting England and Greece, of course, because at the time of the wedding festivities New Zealanders will be making preparations to welcome the Prince's brother, the Duke of Gloucester.

The suite at Claridge's which Princess Marina and her parents will occupy while in London before the wedding is already known as "Princess Marina's suite" to the staff. It is on the second floor in the new wing of the building, and has been chosen in order to provide the Princess with absolute quiet and privacy. The most prominent decoration in Princess Marina's bedroom is a huge bowl of English roses. Pale peach has been selected as the main colour scheme for walls and ceiling, with wall decorations in silver, and black and silver curtains. Bed and other furniture are in light oak. The room, like all others in the suite, is panel-heated. In the large sitting-room of pale blue and cream the furniture is chiefly of cedar wood and pine.

It is anticipated that Princess Marina and Prince and Princess Nicholas will take their meals in the restaurant. Special arrangements have been made, however, in case they prefer the privacy of their sitting-room.

With a Royal wedding as its climax, the Little Season that London enjoys each autumn, sandwiched in between the pleasant round of country-house visits and the last exciting stages of the Christmas shopping, will be brilliant. Wherever one goes in London, at present, people are talking not only of the wedding and its attendant festivities, but also of the private entertaining that hostesses have in view. Dances, dinners, galas, and fetes mean more work for dressmakers, florists, decorators, caterers, and traders generally. Altogether happy times are in prospect.

Red, the chosen colour of Royalty, is to be the favourite colour for flower decoration in Mayfair during a Little Season which will always be remembered for its Royal wedding. Vivid scarlet anthurium lilies, which originated in tropical forests, and which have a fierce barbaric beauty, are being sent out daily to hostesses by a woman florist in Burlington-gardens. So strikingly artificial is their appearance of flat, varnished, scarlet blooms, like plates, with straight white stamens and a long stiff stalk, that imitations of them look less artificial than the real blooms which remain in flower for three weeks.

The Princess Royal and the Earl of Harewood returned to London a week or two ago. Their first dinner party was for Prince George and Princess Marina. The Princess Royal confines the number of her guests to twenty-four. They sit at one long table, and there is music afterwards in the drawing-room.

Antiques of silverware, china, jade and furniture are likely to be included among the many wedding presents to be given to Prince George and his bride by those privileged to do so. Lady Desborough paid a lengthy visit to Grosvenor House, where a special exhibition of antiques is now on view, to inspect a needlework cabinet of 1662 which still possesses its own olive wood crest. She was delighted with the two



Prince George and Princess Marina snapped on their arrival in Paris recently. The Princess is now busily arranging her wedding clothes and trousseau.

seventeenth century glass perfume bottles of the greenish shade so popular for modern table glass, each with its pewter stopper, and the many secret drawers. A mantelpiece from the house of the late Princess Royal, jade from Anne, Lady Cowdray's famous collection, and a wonderful silver tray of 1705, which belongs to Lady Charles Montague, may all be ear-marked as presents. Princess Royal, jade from Annie, Lady Cowdray's famous collection, and a wonderful silver tray of 1705, which belongs to Lady Charles Montagu, may all be ear-marked as presents.

The reception that will follow the wedding of Prince George and Princess Marina will be on a considerable scale, and the State Apartments at Buckingham Palace will be required for the hundreds of guests. The precedents set by the similar receptions after the weddings of the Princess Royal and the Duke and Duchess of York, will be followed, though as bride and bridegroom are both of Royal blood, rather more formality will be observed. By desire of Princess Marina, the Greek colony in London will be well represented at this reception, the invitations for which will be issued shortly.

The impression is that Prince George and Princess Marina will have a fairly long honeymoon. Six weeks is the time mentioned, and this would mean that it will extend over the Christmas season. Rumour is particularly busy house-hunting for the Royal couple, and there is a good deal of discussion as to the future of Marlborough House, so long in doubt. The Prince of Wales has never taken possession of the suite which was decorated and refitted for his occupation several years ago. It is understood that the Prince is ready to surrender York House, St. James's, to his brother and his bride should they desire the place, and in this event the idea is that he would at length take over the flat in a wing of Marlborough House.