

BARONESS PIERRE DE COUBERTIN

Lack of space in the last Bulletin prevented us from publishing a more detailed account of the life of the Baroness de Coubertin who has just been celebrating her birthday when she entered into her hundredth year. It is with much pleasure that we refer to the matter at length in the present issue of the Bulletin.

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Baroness de Coubertin was born in a family of Alsatian origin. Her father, Gustave Rothan, a diplomat and French historian, was born in Strasbourg in 1822 and died in Palanza in 1890. He occupied numerous French consular posts in the course of his diplomatic career and lived namely in Frankfurt-on-Main, Stuttgart and Hamburg. Later on, he was appointed Secretary of the French Embassy, he held these functions in Berlin and Constantinople till such a time when he rose to the rank of Plenipotentiary Minister. He became accredited Minister to the King of Italy in Florence. Mr. Rothan, on his retirement from the diplomatic career in 1871, devoted his time to writing several books on the diplomatic history of France from 1866 to 1870.

Baroness de Coubertin's mother belonged to a Upper-Rhine family. She paid several visits to Switzerland and died at Vevey in 1920.

Mr. and Mrs. Rothan's daughter, Baroness de Coubertin was born on the 21st of December 1861 in Frankfurt-on-Main where the family resided at that time. She was an only daughter and spent the early part of

her childhood in Germany, later on she lived in the Vosges district at Lutterbach at her grand parents' home. After the war, in 1870, when Alsace was annexed to Germany, her grand parents moved and took up residence in Paris. It was there that the Baroness was educated and underwent extensive studies in literature, history and foreign languages. In order to improve her English, she went to a finishing school in Brighton in England. She met her future husband in 1892 and married him in Paris. The wedding ceremony took place in the Reformed Protestant Church in Paris on the 12th of March 1895. Two children were born of this marriage, a son was born in 1896 and died in 1940 and a daughter was born in 1902 who lives with her mother at the present time.

The faithful companion of her husband Baron Pierre de Coubertin, Renovator of the Olympic Games of the modern era, the Baroness travelled extensively throughout the world and had the opportunity of visiting all the continents with her husband.

This family paid frequent visits to Switzerland, they stayed often in Geneva, Lausanne and Vevey. From 1919 onwards, Baron and Baroness de Coubertin decided to settle in Switzerland permanently. Baron Pierre de Coubertin died in Geneva in 1937.

In 1944, his widow took up residence at Planchamp, above Clarens, in the region belonging to the Municipality of Montreux. She lives there at the present time in a villa called: *Bel Horizon* in the company of her daughter.