

24. Prince **André Poniatowski** was born in Paris, January 24, 1864, a descendant of Polish royalty. A banker by profession, he came to the United States in 1892 to learn about American financial conditions. Through William Crocker and his wife he met Elizabeth Sperry—Crocker's sister-in-law—and they married in Paris in 1894. He was interested in low-cost transportation and the use of electric power. In 1897, he invested in the building of the Sierra Railway from Oakdale to Jamestown, California, a short-line that ran fifty-six miles into Tuolumne County with the end of track at Tuolumne City. Later, a branch was built between Jamestown and Angels Camp in Calaveras County. After this project, Poniatowski joined with Crocker in developing the Standard Electric Company of California and in building the Blue Lakes dams and the Electra powerhouse.

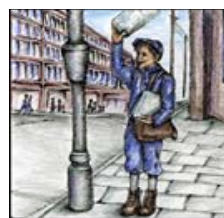
from the consumers. Singly, the water power plant could not guarantee continuous service. Thus, for instance, the Electra Power Plant built by Prince **Andre Poniatowski** and his San Francisco associates in Bret Harte's country was put out of commission in 1904 by the bursting of the pressure pipe above the power-house. Hundreds of mines and industrial plants depended upon Electra's 10,000-kilowatt generators for their power. Fortunately the works just prior to the break had been sold to the corporation which subsequently became the Pacific Gas and Electric Company. Without a moment's hesitation the Electra lines were connected with the Colgate wires in Oakland and the mines in

William Crocker, too, had extensive ambitions as well as the means and contacts to realize them. In league with his brother-in-law, Prince **André Poniatowski**, and with the backing of South African mining capital channeled through London financiers, Crocker formed a syndicate that gathered in some twenty mines in the central Sierra gold belt. To run the mines efficiently, the syndicate incorporated the Standard Electric Company in 1897 and built the Electra Power Plant. Poniatowski later remembered, "We had indeed found on the Mokelumne River the ideal site for obtaining the maximum of waterfall upon the turbines.



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San Francisco Call, Volume 75, Number 87, 25 February 1894 — A PRINCE'S FETE. [ARTICLE]

A PRINCE'S FETE.

A Reception Tendered to Poniatowski.

Many Society People Meet Him at
the Home of Chevalier
de Kontski.

One of the most brilliant receptions of
this season was that tendered in honor of
Prince A. Poniatowski by Mme. and

Chevalier de Kontski at their residence,
1527 Geary street, from 3 until 6 o'clock
yesterday afternoon.

Invitations had been issued among San
Francisco society to be present on this
auspicious occasion to greet the Prince
and welcome him to the shores of the
Pacific. The response was general,
and as the hours of the day wore on the
throng so increased that the spacious
apartments were filled to their utmost
capacity with a representation of the
city's elite.

The interior of the mansion was most
elaborately decorated in honor of the oc-
casion, the principal feature being a
number of choice pot plants and palms,
which were placed about promiscuously
with much taste. Vases of delicate cut
flowers ornamented the various bric-a-brac
stands and tables, while every available
space or receptacle was graced with some
charming object of beauty, which made
the handsomely furnished parlors a com-
plete bower of beauty.

Shortly before 4 o'clock the prince made
his appearance and was introduced to

those present by Chevalier de Kontski, after which the honored guest mingled among his newly-made acquaintances and assisted in making the afternoon a most pleasant one, to say the least.

A bounteous repast was served at the close of the day, which was partaken of by all with a decided relish.

Chevalier de Kontski discoursed a number of selections upon the piano during the course of the reception in his usual charming style, and upon one occasion he sang an original barcarolle which was received with much favor for its tuneful, lively melody and artistic execution. A number of others assisted in entertaining the guests in various ways, among them being Mrs. Frances Edgerton in a poetical rendition of "A Story of the Rose."

Among those present were the following: Dr. W. Pawlicki, Captain Bielawski, Colonel and Mrs. Fry, Mr. and Mrs. Holladay, Mrs. Hearst, Mrs. E. Martin, Mrs. P. Donahue, Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Tevis, Colonel L. P. Hammond, Mr. and Mrs. Jewett, Mr. and Mrs. Payen, Mr. and Mrs. M. H. de Young, Mrs. W. Pawlicki, Dr. and Mrs. Cushing, Dr. and Mrs. J. F. Sullivan, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Sullivan, the Russian Consul-General, Mrs. John Corning, Sir Henri Hayman and many others.

Mme. de Kontski was assisted in receiving the distinguished guests by Mrs. H. Jewett and Mrs. W. Pawlicki.