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**RECOLLECTIONS OF THREE KAISERS**

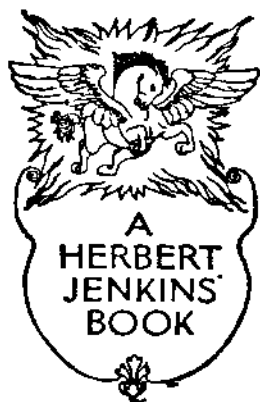


THE EMPRESS FREDERICK, 1890.

RECOLLECTIONS  
OF  
THREE KAISERS

By  
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## FOREWORD

THE German Court official whose diary, written in English, at long intervals from early boyhood to a ripe old age, forms the nucleus of this book, passed away in 1914, a few months before the outbreak of the war. It was well so, for he entertained a great love for England and the English, and it would have caused him poignant distress to see the country he had always regarded with such a singular affection at war with his own. Looking farther ahead, however, Germany's awakening would assuredly have been welcomed by him as the fulfilment of his ardent desires. He was in advance of his time, and deplored what he has himself termed the apparent inability of his countrymen to think for themselves which, he added, caused them to be dominated by any master-mind that came along. As will readily be perceived, the original wording



has been retained whenever possible; only when clarity demands has the English been amended or the subject-matter supplemented.

The old court servant will remain long in the memory of those who knew him for what he was: a man of great singleness of heart, of lovable character, and with a breadth of vision not often found among men in his walk of life

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## RECOLLECTIONS OF THREE KAISERS



# RECOLLECTIONS OF THREE KAISERS

## CHAPTER I

**I**T is at the earnest request of my children, and more especially of the grandchildren, and not with any thought of gaining notoriety for myself, that I begin, with not a few heart-beatings, to tell my simple recollections. These are drawn principally from an old diary that was my close companion—and often my only one—for several decades.

In the quiet hours of my life's evening how often have I been made by the youngsters to get out that old, worn volume, and, in the light of the green-shaded lamp in the *gemütlich* little sitting-room, have read to them out of it until an hour when they should have been in their

beds. And the children, little, alas, no longer, say to me: "Make a book out of your diary, grandfather. Just as it has interested us, so it will interest others. We will help you, if need be, to polish up its English."

And so, after a good deal of deliberation, I have yielded and, as the children wish, I will begin "right at the beginning."

The dear old Father Rhine was almost literally my cradle, for in a tiny hamlet on his green banks I was born, and when I was but a few years old I could swim like a fish in his green waters. Except the château high up above the vine-clad hills, there were very few houses of any kind in Lüddenheim, and I had to trudge five miles to school every morning, summer and winter, but I was a strong little chap and was quite accustomed to getting up with the lark. Very often, too, the peasants of the neighbouring villages would give me a lift in their carts, drawn by patient, gentle-eyed oxen.

There was a good deal of French spoken in those days in the Rhine country, but it was English that interested me most. My father had been much in England in his youth, and from him I imbibed my admiration of that nation, and learnt the first

rudiments of the language. As I grew older I read all the books of adventure that I could get, and these dealt mostly with English sea-faring life. My respect for the great nation across the Channel—in my childish mind I called it the ocean—was unbounded. The *Herrschaften* at the château were very kind to me, and lent me many English books, and in order that my thoughts might be read by nobody I wrote in the English language the diary I had kept from a small boy, and very funny English it was.

I was an only and therefore a very lonely child, and as far as I can remember my diary was my chief confidant. It was inexpressibly dear to me; I grew to look upon it as a person with whom I could converse. To hide it from all profane eyes, I kept it in a dark corner of the hay-loft, together with my savings-box, containing several hundred pfennigs. Each pfennig had a history: it was the fee paid by the village priest to the boy who officiated for him as acolyte. Money being scarce, even a pfennig was to be reckoned with, and the good priest was overwhelmed with offers for the serving at mass. The *Herr Pfarrer* was, I think, fond of me and so my little money-box



grew heavier and heavier. With those pfennigs when they should have multiplied to marks and talers I intended to see the world later on. I would go to England first and afterwards to that greater land across the Atlantic where English was spoken also. There was no limit to my ambition. Alas for my childish dreams! One day I found the box had vanished, but the thief had left my diary behind, and that fact helped to sustain me in my sorrow.

Other and more substantial savings disappeared also some years afterwards. My father met with reverses, and instead of being able to have me educated and sent to the university, he was forced to take me from school and apprentice me to a trade. He died when I was barely seventeen and I went to a distant relative at Berlin. There I served my time in a cavalry regiment, the Hussars, whose august chief was Queen Victoria of England. I was a good rider, and had the honour of teaching riding to many an embryo officer. My colonel gave me a recommendation to enter the service of the Princess of Liegnitz, which seemed to me as good a situation as any other, so I took the opportunity and never regretted it.

That charming and amiable lady, a daughter of the Austrian Count Harrach, became the morganatic wife of King Friedrich Wilhelm III of Prussia, after he had buried his good Queen Luise and remained a widower fourteen years. It was a singularly happy marriage. The Prussian people respected the Princess Liegnitz—which was the title bestowed upon her by His Majesty—and her step-children adored her. The eldest son of the King, later Friedrich Wilhelm IV, was once asked by the Princess in my presence what his favourite flower was. The boy threw his arms around her neck, crying “Stiefmütterchen, of course!” The word means in German “pansy,” and also means “little step-mother.” After that incident the Princess conceived a great love for the pansy, and I helped to plant many of the pretty, velvety flowers, of every possible hue, in the palace garden.

Friedrich Wilhelm died in 1840, and before many years had passed the growing discontent of the people came to a head. Revolution was in the very air long before it broke out; secret understandings were organised many months before public mass-meetings were held. “Give us a constitution!” was the people’s cry.

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When the fateful month of March, 1848, dawned there was no disguising the terror of the situation. I was little more than a stripling, and my heart beat high with intense excitement, which because of my youth was pleasurable rather than the reverse. True as I was to my gracious mistress, I was yet with the *Volk* at heart. I remember wishing that I might have a chance to distinguish myself, in what way I did not much care, as long as it came. An opportunity did come, and sooner and in a different manner than I could have believed possible.

We were all ordered to remain indoors unless strict emergency occurred. The Princess herself did not leave the palace at all. We had, moreover, injunctions to keep away from the windows, an order very difficult for the younger servants to obey with that surging crowd underneath. One foolish woman's curiosity got the better of her; she put out her head to see what the excited multitude looked like and a bullet struck her, killing her on the spot; but we contrived to keep the sad news from our mistress.

On the 18th, as all the world knows, the excitement of the masses rose to boiling

point, and the King was forced to promise the Constitution.

He left his sick wife's side and came out, white and trembling in every limb, upon the balcony of the Schloss, the royal Castle. He turned his gaze to the seething populace beneath. He tried to speak, but the words failed him. "Take your hat off!" yelled the crowd and Friedrich Wilhelm obeyed.

When the people's demands had been complied with, and thousands upon thousands were shouting themselves hoarse with delight, the troops unfortunately advanced to clear the space round the Castle. It was a fatal mistake. Who fired them was never known, but two shots rang out, as at a given signal, and the demons of the Revolution were loosed.

Barricades were formed in the twinkling of an eye, carts, ladders, anything handy being pressed into the service. Boiling lead was poured from windows and roofs upon the soldiers, men and women were shot down and trampled on. All day the battle raged, and when night descended upon comparative quiet the streets ran blood like the shambles.

Nobody within our walls, from the Princess to

the smallest scullery maid, went to bed during that night of terror, for none could say what would happen next. Our palace was not much more than a stone's throw from the Schloss and the noise was deafening. We were prepared, to a man, to sell our lives dearly in defence of our beloved mistress.

In the morning the Princess sent for me. Warning me to be extremely cautious and circumspect, she ordered me to go to the Schloss to find out what was happening, and how the King and Queen had borne the night. Why she chose me for this errand I did not know, but my heart bounded at the trust reposed in me. I slipped off my livery and put on working clothes, the better to fulfil my task and pass unnoticed.

Outside I mingled with the crowd, which looked as though it might be capable of any escapade at a moment's notice. It became denser and very ugly as I neared the Schloss, and I could hardly elbow my way along. How glad I was that I had changed my clothes I remember to this day. There would not have been much consideration shown to my silver buttons with the crown.

To and fro I swayed with the excited masses, picking up bits of information on the way, until I reached a quiet side entrance of the Castle. The people, it seemed, had demanded the removal of the "Prince of Prussia," who was considered, whether rightly or wrongly I cannot say, to be the greatest opponent to the Constitution. Some said the King had agreed to send him away, others declared he was in the Schloss at that very moment influencing the King. Anyhow the mob was assuming a threatening attitude. The Prince of Prussia was the King's brother, heir to the throne, and afterwards Kaiser Wilhelm I. It seemed indeed that all the fury of the populace was now concentrated upon him, and shouts of "Away with the Prince of Prussia" were caught up and echoed by thousands of voices.

Just as I had reached the side entrance and was wondering if I might slip in without attracting notice, I caught sight of a tall man anxiously scanning the street and behind him—in the shadow of the wall—another whom I recognised instantly. It was he whose name was on every lip—the Prince of Prussia!

Instinctively I knew what was awaited so eagerly. It was a conveyance to take H.R.H. on the first

stage of his exile. A royal carriage would, of course, have excited too much attention just then. But nothing came and the man in the shadow chafed at the delay.

Then my opportunity came. Slowly through the crowded streets a private carriage wended its way. It was empty, and I chanced to know the driver. Quick as thought I stopped it. A whisper to the man sufficed. The Prince and his attendant got in, rapidly comprehending. I shut the door and sprang on the box, and away we went as quickly as the horses could take us through back streets to the residence of Herr von Schleinitz, Minister of the Royal Household, a couple of miles distant. It had all happened in far less time than it takes to tell, and the Prince was safe, that was the chief thing. I got back to the palace very late, but I had good news for my mistress when I did arrive. The same night the Prince of Prussia got away in disguise to Hamburg and left for England, where he remained till matters at home were quieter.

It has been stated that the Prince rode on the following day through the town carrying a white handkerchief as a sign of peace, but this was not the case. If any one rode in that manner through

the Berlin streets it could only have been a representative of the Prince. To have done so himself would probably have been fatal, for the bitterness of the people was by no means lessened. They drove, groaning and booing, an empty hearse with many black streamers through the principal streets, and they carried the corpse of a citizen who had been killed in the strife to the space below the Castle balcony, not resting until the King had come out at their command to look upon what the people said had been his work. The Prince of Prussia was no coward, as later events in his life proved, but he was not the hero of that white handkerchief story.

Thought carries me rapidly over a long vista of years. To 1875. A splendid fête was being given by the Crown Prince and Princess—later Emperor and Empress Frederick—at their palace in Unter den Linden. It was a masked ball, and being one of the first festivities of the kind since the ending of the war was an unusually brilliant affair. It was my duty to see that each guest presented the card of invitation, and my injunctions were to admit nobody without one.



Carriage after carriage had rolled up under the gay awning and the guests were all assembled when a humble droschky drove up. The driver was anything but smart, and the man who jumped from the box and opened the door was in a plain livery unknown to me. The occupant of the fly wore a black domino and mask.

I asked for the card of admission. The guest searched his pockets in vain. He turned to his attendant.

"Jaeger, have you got my card?" he said.

The man replied in the negative. I waited doggedly. My orders had been precise.

After another pause the man in the black domino said:

"You must let me in, I am the Emperor."

Now thoroughly suspicious I replied:

"Anyone can say that!"

A hand came out of the domino and the mask was removed. Two kindly blue eyes looked into mine and a soft voice said pleasantly:

"Why, you must remember me from the 19th of March, 1848!"

I bowed low.

"Forgive me, *Majestät*!"

The Emperor replaced the mask, saying in his own genial manner:

“Mind you don’t betray me!” and passed into the ball room unrecognised, as he had desired.

## CHAPTER II

**N**EVER surely was monarch more genuinely beloved by his people than the first Emperor. Like old wine he mellowed with the years. His gentle, kindly, unassuming bearing towards all with whom he came in contact won every heart and "Der alte Kaiser," as he was always called, was a term of real affection. Those who knew him best loved him best. From his father he inherited his fine sense of honour and duty—his *straightness*; from his mother his kindly consideration, his gentle manner and his blue eyes. All his life he was very thrifty, had he not been so his grandson, the present Emperor, would not have had the great means he has at his disposal, for Germany, after being so long devastated by war, was a poor country.

The early years of the first Wilhelm were dominated by a passionate love for two women:

his sainted mother, Queen Luise, and Princess Elise Radziwill, whom cruel fate prevented his marrying. One of the most touching pages in Prussian history is the short and gentle life of Luise, Princess of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, who became the wife of Friedrich Wilhelm III. As a bright and happy girl she came to the rigid Prussian court, where her spirit sank under the crushing load of cold, unbending etiquette then prevailing. She blossomed out into a devoted wife to the Crown Prince, who was a man of high principles and unimpeachable character. When war swept the country she was compelled to flee with her children, and once while resting in a meadow the children gathered cornflowers and made their fair young mother a chain of them to replace the jewels she had sold to help the country. This happy incident was never forgotten by the Emperor, whose favourite flower the cornflower remained to his dying day. The story of the Queen's interview with Napoleon is well known; it is that which most endeared her to the Prussian people for all time. She went alone to Tilsit to intercede on behalf of her husband's people, but he told her women should never meddle in politics, and her errand was therefore in vain. It is said that

the beauty and helplessness of the young Queen so impressed the great Napoleon that he gave her a white rose which he said she resembled. The privations she suffered led to her death at an early age, and her husband and children were left sorrowing.

After fourteen years the King married again; it was the happy union already referred to, lasting sixteen years. Princess Liegnitz, as I have said, was the best and wisest of step-mothers, and was loved and respected by all the children, but Wilhelm, who was thirteen when his own adored mother died, never replaced her in his heart.

The second great love of the first Emperor's life—for Princess Elise Radziwill was of a different kind—it was the passionate adoration of a young man for his ideal woman. When but a boy in years he had already given evidence of the stuff he was made of, displaying at Bar sur Aube such conspicuous bravery that he received the Iron Cross—a decoration at that time rare. His education was, of course, largely on military lines; the youthful Prince was self-reliant, of independent character; he could obey and he could command with equal thoroughness, but beneath his "Prussianism" was a wealth of sentiment all unsuspected,

coupled with strong religious feeling hidden from the world.

The Radziwills are a very ancient Lithuanian nobility; the family is, indeed, much older than the Hohenzollerns. The princes of that House have always filled important positions at the Polish and Prussian courts; many of them have attained honours in the army and in the Government. Though often considered Polish, the Radziwills have been Prussians for a number of generations, and a close friendship has always existed between them and the reigning House. It is a very strict Roman Catholic family, and several members of it have taken priestly orders. This fact was one of the barriers, though not the greatest, to the union of the beautiful Elise Radziwill and the Prince of Prussia.

The Prince's letters written to a friend and to his favourite sister Charlotte during the romantic period of his life were published<sup>1</sup> many years after his death. These letters not only show the fervour of his passion, but throw a light upon the depth of serious feeling that underlined his character, and was known to few during his existence. He was fully aware of the obstacles, political and

<sup>1</sup> Deutsche Rundschau, May, 1911. Ed.

otherwise, that blocked his path to happiness. Had he lived a century later things might have been different, but the Prussian monarchistic code was then rigid and irrevocable.

In a letter written in 1820 when Prince Wilhelm was twenty-three, he says:

“And so I have at last come to the decision to give up all thought of Elise! It is a decision that was easier for me to make when at a distance from her, but the feelings that gripped me when I saw her again in Fürstenstein I cannot describe. What admirable qualities! What childlike innocence and purity! She is well fitted for great rank——The day in beautiful Fürstenstein<sup>1</sup> was for me a mixture of overwhelming joy and anguish. No one knew what was passing in my heart, mother and daughter treated me with the same friendly affection and ease that they had always shown me. But how could I be at ease, having to deceive these loved ones!”

The young Prince had a good friend in his father, and just a possibility seemed to exist that a way out of the difficulty might be found, that the Princess's equality of birth might be proved and assured. Alternate hope and despair con-

<sup>1</sup> The magnificent seat of Prince Pless. Ed.

sumed the young lover for a long period, during which he did not see the object of his affection. Then from his window in Unter den Linden he saw, one January afternoon, the Radziwills returning home to Berlin from their country residence. With a beating heart, trembling with emotion, he hastened to the Radziwill Palace which was not far from his own home. A letter written the same evening thus describes the meeting:

“I have seen her again! What were my feelings!!! If in the first moment joy banished every other thought, yet the next moment conjured up like a spectre all the sorrow. With a great effort I wrenched myself free and a glance at her, so sweet, so loving and so glad, gave me strength again. But the short time with her was more than enough to show me the greatness of the happiness that I am in danger of losing for ever.”

In February, 1825, Prince Wilhelm paid a short visit to the Radziwills at Posen, and these few days were the culminating point of his love. “It seemed to me,” he wrote, “just like a romance that these wonderful hours of companionship should fall to my lot, and that I should be cared for by loving hands! No pen can describe what I felt during those three days in Posen! This



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confidential talk with a being that one has loved so long in silence, but so dearly and with one's whole soul; from whom one had been separated with grief and pain for three long years, during which one could only further one's knowledge of each other by letter—and then, all at once, to be together and to see trust and confidence increase with every hour as one learnt to know each other anew; all this must be experienced to be rightly grasped and properly comprehended!" Later on the writer adds: "How I long for Elise words cannot express; without her everything is now utterly indifferent to me. When I am obliged to go out it is repugnant to me because it disturbs my dreams which belong only to her, and it is as though a conversation with her were being interrupted."

He little thought then that his dreams would never be realised. In June, 1826, the powers to be had decreed that an alliance between the Prince of Prussia and Elise Radziwill was impossible, and King Friedrich Wilhelm himself informed his son of this decree in a letter couched in terms of loving sympathy, but from which decision, however, there was no appeal. Wilhelm's drama of love and renunciation was ended; his

love had filled the third decade of his life to the exclusion of all other, and even when nearly ninety years of age the recollection of it unmanned him.

On the evening of the day that his fate was decided Prince Wilhelm wrote to his sister Charlotte, who had been his confidante throughout, a letter from which the following lines are taken:

“ The long-dreaded has taken place; the poignant anguish has come. What I thought was not possible before autumn has now happened, with all its intense pain and bitterness. Not a mere intimation of a possible decree, but accompanied by a letter such as was perhaps never written by a father to his child, so gracious, so loving and tender—but final! Struck to the heart I stood there, not trusting my eyes, my senses, that I had reached this terrible end. Thus my fate and poor Elise’s fate is sealed. Empty and joyless the future appears to me for the second time. Oh, never, never could I have thought it possible that God, after He had already once severely tried me, would a second time bring about such a dreadful conclusion.—But no complaints against the will of the Most High! Nothing remains to us but submission to that will, and to seek in hearts receptive to the divine truths and

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consolations the strength, support, endurance and comfort which alone can come from above. God will not fail to help us bear this heavy trial, for He sent it. His fatherly love tries us, but it upholds us too. All things work together for the best for them that love God.—Pray for calmness, strength and consolation for Elise and for me.”

During the three years that followed, Prince Wilhelm strove to forget his sorrow in work and the fulfilment of his duties. He did not become bitter, but those who knew him well said he had grown more serious and was of fewer words. Elise he never saw again alone, and he avoided a meeting whenever it was possible. He had become a general in the Prussian Gardes-du-Corps, and his circumspection as well as his consideration for those under him were proverbial.

A marriage with the Princess Augusta of Saxe-Weimar was arranged for the Prince of Prussia, he himself being little interested. The wedding took place with customary ceremony exactly three years after the decree forbidding his union with Princess Elise had been made known. Augusta of Saxe-Weimar was a handsome woman, well aware of the lofty rank that had fallen to her lot.

She was very highly educated, had artistic and literary tendencies and frequently assisted budding talent to develop if the owner needed influence. Personally she was cold and of a taciturn nature and her health, never robust, grew worse as she grew older, until she became a confirmed invalid. It was not what may be turned a happy marriage. Two children were born to them, Friedrich—later Kaiser Friedrich—in 1831, and, several years afterwards, a daughter who was named Luise after Prince Wilhelm's beloved mother. Little Luise was the very apple of his eye, and she worshipped her father. In later years, when she was the Grand Duchess of Baden, a visit from her was a great and joyous event. He kept the rooms that had been hers when a girl in precisely the same condition as they had been at that time, and she always occupied them during her visits to Berlin.

The first Kaiser was a man of great powers of discrimination and far-sightedness. Many of the achievements ascribed to Bismarck were due to his master-mind entirely and exclusively, but with his usual modesty he stood aside in the shadow and let the sun's full glare fall upon his Chancellor, who received all the credit as his right. When Prince Wilhelm returned from England after the

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stormy days of March, '48, and helped to quell the revolution in the Palatinate and in Baden, the German nation began to place their hopes in the Heir Presumptive. The patriots saw in him the reactionary they wished to think him, but which, in reality, he never was. He had the interests of the people always at heart, though circumstances prevented the carrying out of many of his plans. The Prince loved the Rhine, and was wont to say some of the happiest years of his life were spent in the Rhinelands of which he was made Commander. Coblenz, that beautiful little spot on the banks of the river, was his favourite residence.

It is not my *métier* to discuss politics, but I well remember many instances in which Kaiser Wilhelm I plainly showed his intense desire to maintain friendship with Russia; he considered this one of the foundation stones for peace and for the promotion of trade. It is said that on his death-bed he charged his grandson to cherish this friendship, and to permit no circumstances whatever to lessen it. Another matter in which the Emperor felt very strongly was the alliance with Austria to which he was greatly opposed. Bismarck, however, determined to bring it about, and his

persistence carried the day, the Emperor ultimately yielding against his better judgment. The Iron Chancellor's brilliant intellect was by no means infallible either in this case or many others, and his policy "über Leichen" (but feebly translated "through thick and thin") brought not infrequently sorrow and disaster in its train.

### CHAPTER III

**T**HE Prince of Prussia, like the Prince of Wales, afterwards Edward VII, came late to the throne. His elder brother, King Friedrich Wilhelm IV, was taken ill with softening of the brain in 1857, and he took over the regency temporarily at the age of sixty, and, finally, as the disease proved incurable, permanently in 1858. There is no reason at all for saying there is insanity in the Hohenzollern family, as many gossips would have it. Friedrich Wilhelm IV was not a shining light, but he was of quite average intelligence, and, though weak, had many good qualities. The last years of his life were passed in a house in the Sanssouci Park, at Potsdam, where he had every care. His wife, Princess Elisabeth of Bavaria, who outlived him ten years, had never borne him children. The King died in 1861 and his brother was crowned at Königsberg as King of Prussia in

the following October, after having won the nation's confidence during a regency of four years.

Many anecdotes are told of the first Emperor's simplicity of living and of his economical habits, some of which I can vouch for. He was the despair of his devoted valet, Engel, who could seldom persuade his royal master to be measured for new clothes. The man would say: "Majesty, we must really order a new cap; this is too shabby for anything," and the Kaiser would answer with a coaxing smile: "Oh no, Engel, we can make it do a little longer." Whenever he had to dress for a gala dinner he always insisted upon changing his best trousers for an older pair before he went on to the opera, and if a bottle of champagne chanced to be opened for luncheon and not much of it was drunk he had it corked up again for dinner, always supposing there were no distinguished guests. He was extremely abstemious and cared little for the pleasures of the table, but he was by no means parsimonious, and was very generous to his servants.

In the old days of which I am writing bathrooms in Germany were so rare as to be almost non-existent, except in the modern mansions of



the merchant princes, who were better off than royalty then. There was no bath in the royal palace in Unter den Linden excepting one in the basement for the servants. When His Majesty desired to take a bath a large enamelled one—kept for his exclusive use—was brought in from the Hotel de Rome next door and deposited in the dressing-room. The Empress Augusta decided to give her husband a pleasant surprise on his birthday, and had a beautiful bathroom made out of one of the spare rooms in the palace, with tiled walls and floor and fitted with every comfort. Kaiser Wilhelm thanked her politely, but was not enthusiastic; he did not care for innovations of this kind. When his bath was made ready for him he eyed with much distrust the white tiled floor and, sure enough, when he got out of the bath he slipped and fell, striking his head, though not seriously, against a chair.

“We won’t do this again, Engel,” he said to his troubled valet, and the experiment was never repeated. The old method was resorted to and the Kaiser was content.

His Majesty, when time allowed, enjoyed nothing more than a day’s shooting. He had accepted an invitation from Count Stolberg-Wernigerode to

shoot roebuck in the latter's well-stocked forests among the Harz mountains. The Kaiser was a fair shot, and made a good bag. The dead game was collected, laid out separately according to custom and counted. When the Kaiser heard that he had shot twenty-eight bucks he seemed surprised at the result. "There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of," he exclaimed. "Isn't it astonishing that I have shot twenty-eight buck with only twenty cartridges!"

This was a favourite anecdote of His Majesty's, and another favourite was the following which created many a laugh when he related it: It was at one time intended by the Kaiser, before he came to the throne, to extend the beautiful little palace of Babelsberg, on the banks of the Havel, near Potsdam. Architects were consulted, but the alterations were never made. In later years the Kaiser was asked by Prince Pückler why the plan was never carried out and gave the answer that it had been impossible, he had not had the means. Prince Pückler looked astonished and asked: "Don't you ever borrow money, *Majestät*?" whereupon the Kaiser laughingly shook his head. Then Prince Pückler, who was a privileged friend, burst out:

“Good heavens! then Your Majesty doesn’t know one of the greatest joys in life—the happy moment when one can pay his debts!” Kaiser Wilhelm I actually never made debts, and he spent little money on himself. He would have liked to travel to far lands, but his economical methods and his strenuous life combined were the reasons that he never went far afield. In spite of the growing unrest, he went to Paris to see the World Exposition in 1867; it was quite an event, and he was often heard to say how much he had enjoyed it.

During his long life three attempts at assassinating Kaiser Wilhelm were made. The first, by Beckers, in Baden-Baden, was only a few months before he was crowned King of Prussia. Another attempt was made by Hoedel in 1878, but this also was without any serious consequences. The attempted assassination, however, by Karl Nobiling, one month later, very nearly proved fatal. Nobiling’s motive for the dastardly act was never really known; he had studied agriculture at Halle and had a good reputation, but the principle of Communism, then beginning to spread though not as yet known by that name, had caught him, it was believed, in its poisonous meshes. He rented a

front room in Unter den Linden from whose window he could watch for the Kaiser to pass on his way to and from the palace. The "Linden," as the long, broad thoroughfare is commonly called, leads direct from the Schloss to Brandenburg Gate, and through that to the Tiergarten and there is no other street of any importance that can be used, so that a royal carriage was an easy mark.

Well do I recall that beautiful June morning, for business had taken me almost to the spot where the attack occurred. In an open carriage the old Emperor drove slowly by, a better target for criminal hand being hardly possible. A number of shots were fired in quick succession, one just missing the brain, another piercing the shoulder. Bleeding terribly, the Kaiser fell forward, supported by his aide, while the coachman drove like lightning to the palace. The excitement was indescribable; Nobiling's room was stormed, and he saved himself from being lynched by shooting himself, dying some months later from the wound inflicted. The Kaiser's injuries were so serious that the Crown Prince, later the Emperor Frederick, took over the Government until his father was pronounced well again, which was in about six months' time.

An amusing incident in connection with this tragic event was that the Shah of Persia, who was on a visit to Berlin at the time, was so dreadfully frightened when he heard of the attempted assassination that he fled helter-skelter. His servants had orders to pack only what was absolutely necessary, and upsetting all previously-made arrangements, and saying farewell to nobody, His Highness hurried out of the country as quickly as the special train could take him.

In 1851 the Prince of Prussia, with his wife and children, paid a visit to the Royal Family in London, the main object being to see the International Industrial Exhibition, the first of its kind and an event of importance. It was at Buckingham Palace that Prince Friedrich Wilhelm first saw his future wife, the pretty Princess Royal, who was then only ten years of age. In spite of her youth, it seems that upon the young Prince she made an indelible impression, and he told her in later years that he made up his mind then that she should be his wife.

Five years after his coronation the old Kaiser unveiled with much ceremony one of the finest monuments in Europe. It was the huge bronze statue of Arminius, Prince of the German Cherusci,

the liberator of the Germans from the Roman yoke many centuries ago. It is the work of the sculptor, von Bandel, whom it took nearly forty years of steady labour to accomplish. The site of the statue was chosen by the Emperor, on the highest point in the Teutoburgian Forest, and it is the outstanding feature on the otherwise dull journey from the Dutch frontier to Berlin. Comparatively few people know who the great bronze giant under the colossal copper-arched canopy is, and I have several times heard passengers on the train say: "We are coming to that grand statue of Bismarck; we mustn't miss it."

## CHAPTER IV

THE news of the proposed marriage of the Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm to the Princess Royal of England was received with general approval. England was a powerful country, relations with which could only be advantageous to Germany, so it was argued by the public, and the fact that it was a genuine love match pleased the Germans—with perhaps the solitary exception of Prince Bismarck—greatly. Everybody was prepared to receive with open hearts the young bride who would, later on, be Queen of Prussia. That she would one day become an Empress was, of course, not dreamt of then.

On the 21st of June, 1858, the Prince left Berlin for London to be married. Before starting on his journey he received Holy Communion from the hand of the Court Chaplain. It was a

simple and impressive little service in the palace chapel and at the close his parents gave him their blessing. Little did any one then think that in exactly thirty years that handsome specimen of vigorous young manhood would succumb to a sinister and terrible disease.

The journey of the newly-married pair to the bride's adopted home has been often enough described. It was a *via triumphalis* all through Germany, marred only by two things—the excessive cold and the episode in Hanover. For those who do not know or remember the latter I will relate it here. An object of dispute between Queen Victoria and the King of Hanover that had long occupied the legal courts was a magnificent dinner service of pure gold, claimed with much determination by both the contending parties as their right. The English law courts finally decided in favour of the Hanoverian claimant. The bridal pair paid a visit of courtesy to the King of Hanover on their way to Berlin and a gala banquet was arranged in their honour. Unfortunately, whether by forgetfulness or through want of tact, this famous gold service was used. The Princess Royal recognised it at once, and it required all her pride to conceal her



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mortification and remain what was natural to her, sweet-tempered and friendly to all.

At Magdeburg the long journey, with its endless deputations of welcome, was broken, as it had been at Cologne, by a night's rest, and was then continued, on February 6th, to Potsdam where, in duty bound, the loyal little town had prepared a brilliant reception, with speeches, and music, triumphal arches and illuminations. Before the arrival at Potsdam the royal train halted and "Papa Wrangel," as the famous veteran Field-marshal was popularly termed, got in to welcome the bride. Here something so funny happened that she loved to remember and relate it to her friends even after she was an Empress. The old soldier, having delivered his words of greeting, was requested to take a seat, which he did next to the young Princess, neither he nor any one else noticing that on the seat was a big layer-cake, filled with thick cream, that had been presented to the bride at a previous station and had been put down there by herself. Catastrophal was the result. The Field-Marshal's gala uniform was splashed all over and the girl-princess, trying vainly to stifle her laughter, did her utmost with pocket-handkerchiefs, aided by her lady-in-waiting, to repair the damage.



KAISER WILLIAM I IN HIS 90TH YEAR.



The following day was Sunday and the bride remained in Potsdam to take the rest she so greatly needed, for Monday, February 8, was the date of the culminating event—the entry into Berlin. It was still winter in our northern capital, and the sixteen miles from Potsdam to Bellevue Palace were travelled by road. At the little palace in the Tiergarten there was a short interval, during which King Friedrich Wilhelm IV greeted his new niece with welcoming words. Then the gala coach, drawn by eight horses, with postillions and outriders started for Brandenburg Gate at the entrance to Unter den Linden and on to the Schloss, a mile farther. Bells pealed, cannons thundered, English and German flags waved in the wind and all Berlin was agog. But the state coach was nearly all of glass, and the bitter east wind pierced every nook and cranny. The lovely young bride wore a coronet of diamonds and over her silken gown an ermine cape that was but little protection. She shivered from head to foot, and I was told that after the first greetings at the Schloss were over she broke down and cried. But her proud self-control and her training stood her in good stead all along the route, and the enthusiastic crowds shouted themselves hoarse when

she smiled her pretty smile. At Brandenburg Gate Field-Marshal Count Wrangel, who had gone on ahead, welcomed the bride in the name of the garrison; the mayor did the same on behalf of the city and finally, the coach moved slowly onwards to the Schloss where Prince Wilhelm, brother of the King, and later the first Kaiser, and his wife awaited their new daughter and their happy son. There was little rest for the bridal pair; they had to show themselves repeatedly on the balcony, partake of a State banquet, and drive through the town to see the illuminations before they could seek their well-earned repose. The festivities lasted a fortnight, finishing up with a torchlight procession of the Berlin university students.

For the first few months the bridal couple lived at the Schloss, finally taking up their permanent winter residence at the Crown Prince's Palace—a name that building still bears—in Unter den Linden. The charming little Babelsberg Palace, with its sweeping lawns that reach to the edge of the broad Havel at Potsdam, had always been the summer residence of Prince Friedrich Wilhelm, as it was of his father before him, and in the largest tower was his study as a schoolboy. So that it

was full of reminiscences, and the future Emperor Frederick and his young wife spent many happy weeks at Babelsberg. It was there, too, that Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort stayed when they visited their beloved daughter in the summer after the wedding. They spent a fortnight there, and they could hardly tear themselves away; only the assurance that their child was very happy made the parting bearable.

The Princess Royal had always idolised her father, whose favourite child, it is said, she was, and the two had closely and exhaustively discussed during the lengthy time of the Princess's betrothal the attitude that she would take as German Crown Princess. These discussions, it is also said, were injudicious and sometimes detrimental to harmony later on. Prussia was not England, and the Prince Consort was not familiar with Prussian conditions as they were then. The Princess Royal was astonishingly well read in four languages, and her intellect was unusually developed. Her education, in fact, had been, for Prussian ideas, on a quite unnecessary scale for a woman, and especially for a woman who was destined for the dignity of wife to the King. The German ideal of woman was in those days and for many years later not a

lofty one. The wife of even the third Emperor possessed qualifications considered by her husband and the politicians to be quite sufficient for a woman; they are embodied in the "three K's": Kirche, Kinder and Küche (church, children and kitchen).

Bismarck is credited with saying on hearing of the Crown Prince's choice: "I do not like the 'English' in it, but I am told the Princess is a lady of heart and intellect, and the marriage may turn out satisfactorily if she can leave the Englishwoman at home and become a Prussian." This the Princess never did, nor would, I am convinced, any other Englishwoman. But she did her utmost to be just towards her new country, for was it not that of both her dearly-loved husband and adored father? She was so young, so fair, and with all her cleverness so modest and so obviously eager to please that the Princess gained many hearts. A certain shyness of manner that she never quite lost and which, I believe, is characteristic of the best-class English, only added to her charm.

There was great joy when the young couple knew that a child was coming, and a boy was desired by both of them. The Princess led a healthy and sensible life, and there was every

prospect that all would go well. The confinement was, however, fraught with complications, and instruments had to be used, whereby the infant nearly lost its life. When the united efforts of doctor and nurse had restored animation it was found that the little left arm was almost paralysed. It was a terrible blow to the parents, and to the young mother especially, when she knew her pretty baby was so maimed, and all that could be done was, of course, done, but the limb always remained shorter than its fellow, and never had any normal strength. Surgery was rather primitive in Germany at that time, and the Princess longed to take her son to England and have surgical aid there. In spite of all the care and anxiety, or perhaps just because of it, her love for her maimed little son was great, and as he grew older she became very proud of him.

It is easily perceivable what a stumbling-block this misfortune proved later to the activities of a high-spirited boy and, at a still later period, to the dignity of an emperor. Riding horses had to be specially trained so that the reins could be loosely hung over the left hand, the animal being guided by the right hand and the knee. Yet the crippled prince turned out an excellent horseman.



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Being unable to hold a fork with the left hand an ingenious contrivance was made, knife and fork combined, which the Kaiser holds in his right and uses with so much skill that he has often finished dinner before his guests. When dining out his adjutant takes the little table instrument along with him, and sees that it is inconspicuously placed at His Majesty's right hand.

That the young Princess-Mother wanted everything English for her baby was, of course, natural, besides she had seen with her own discerning eyes how thoroughly unpractical and even unhygienic the clothing of German infants was. The poor mites could never kick about their little limbs, for they were made to wear long, heavy dresses trailing far below their feet, and it was no wonder that so many of them grew up bandy-legged. So the layette for the expected baby was sent from England betimes, a gift from Queen Victoria, consisting of dainty, yet simple and suitable little garments. The Princess Royal, who had many friends in Berlin during the first years of her married life, showed to all who were interested in infant welfare and social work these practical garments and gave them patterns, in order that they might help to bring about a more healthy

mode of dressing the tiny children, for, notwithstanding her youth and her love of art and learning, she was thoroughly domesticated, and had many sound ideas on these lines that were more than foreign to the Prussian spirit. When it became known that the future Queen of Prussia nursed her babies herself there were exclamations of horror among the noble ladies of the Court. Such a thing was unknown and most improper; were there not plenty of wet-nurses to be selected from? But the English Princess pursued her way with equanimity and devoted herself to her children as far as her duties permitted, and she had her husband's loving support in everything.

## CHAPTER V

IT would be indeed difficult, if not impossible, to find anywhere a happier married couple than the Crown Prince and Princess of Prussia—afterwards Kaiser and Kaiserin Friedrich. While undoubtedly the latter was more intellectual, more systematically trained on a broader basis and more artistically gifted than her husband, he was so devoted to her and so intrinsically good and true, and possessed of so much intelligence that their opinions seldom clashed. They were literally of one mind in all the things that mattered, and their deep love for each other was cemented by the love for their children. When Babelsberg Palace became too small for them, the Prince and Princess moved to the New Palace at Potsdam, that magnificent building erected on a swamp by Frederick the Great at enormous cost, to show his people he was not the bankrupt they believed him to be.

The Princess worked wonders in the rearranging of the interior and the gardens, both of which were in a somewhat neglected condition, and this afforded plenty of scope for her active sense of order and usefulness. The little village of Bornstedt, with the royal home farm, received attention too, and "Our Fritz," as the people lovingly called him, and his young wife, were known to every inhabitant. Frequent visits were paid to the village school, and as often as not the Crown Prince would assist the schoolmaster in his duties, enjoying it immensely. The youngsters were not a bit in awe of him; they said he explained the difficult things better than the master. One day the Crown Prince asked them, pointing to a medal he wore on his watch chain,

"What kingdom does this belong to?" A smart lad answered, "The mineral kingdom."

"And this?" said the Prince, pointing to a flower in his button-hole.

Several answered at once: "To the vegetable kingdom."

"Right," said the Crown Prince. "And what kingdom do I belong to?" There was a long pause, then a little girl put up her hand and said:

"To the kingdom of heaven, sir."

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The Crown Princess, who had been an interested listener to the catechism, sprang up and gave the child a kiss, deeply moved, saying:

“That was the right answer, dear.”

After the death of Friedrich Wilhelm IV and the accession of Wilhelm I, the Crown Prince and Princess went together on a lengthy tour through Switzerland, France, Italy to Tunis. The Princess made many sketches during her travels, and her husband was extremely proud of her talent. They were happy weeks that both loved to recall in later years for they were the last long holiday together, the Crown Prince's military duties taking up the greater part of his time. His wife meanwhile developed or rather continued her activities, for she was active in one way or another all her life. She was of practical assistance in the founding or promoting of many social welfare and educational institutions; she was interested in everything. Her heart was given to her painting about this time, in which she made great progress under the tuition of the famous German masters von Angeli and Knitte. In the Palace in Unter den Linden was H.R.H.'s studio, a room she had arranged entirely herself, which expressed not

only an atmosphere of art and culture, but of the English cosiness—a word for which we Germans have no equivalent because we have not the quality itself. This room had English windows; they are still to be seen from the street, and are probably the only ones of the kind in Berlin. All German windows open to the inside like doors.

Privileged persons drank tea sometimes in the studio, the Crown Princess serving it herself, aided by one of her daughters as these grew up. The visitors included artists, musicians, writers, both German and foreign, with whom the Princess loved to converse, and from whom she was always willing, even eager, to learn. Anton von Werner, Reinhold Begas, Paul Meyerheim were frequent guests. Also the writer Gustav Freytag had the entrée to the studio. He enjoyed the friendship especially of the Crown Prince, with whom he had passed through the campaign of 1870. It is incredible and a matter of deep regret that Gustav Freytag, in a book recently published, abused the hospitality and friendship shown him by malicious and unwarranted criticism of the Empress Frederick.

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A series of wars darkened the horizon, out of the last of which Germany emerged an empire. Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm was always one with his father and the Chancellor in this idea, seeing in its realisation the increase of his country's prosperity and the raising of her position in the eyes of the world. But the means by which the great scheme was realised was abhorrent to him. He detested war, and unconsciously for that very reason perhaps he was adored by the men under his command. For "Our Fritz" they went through the fire willingly; he felt with them in everything, he was more their comrade than their superior officer, and he never spared himself. He indulged in no luxuries when in camp, with the sole exception of his pipe and tobacco when there was time. He even grudged himself the necessaries of life when he knew his men had little.

On the eve of the Battle of Wörth the Crown Prince said to his friend Freytag, and the words were characteristic of his nature:

"I hate this carnage, I have never striven for military honours, but have left such fame without envy to others. And yet it is my fate to be led from one war to another, from one battlefield to another, and to wade through human blood be-

fore I ascend the throne of my fathers. Truly, it is a hard lot!" He was, indeed, too tender-hearted for a soldier's life, yet he showed in danger great intrepidity, and always preserved a cool head and exercised discretion in a crisis.

When the war was over and Bismarck's long-cherished ambition was gained things quieted down. The people soon got accustomed to the fact that they had a Kaiser and were not a little proud of it. As for the Monarch himself he remained the same, unassuming as ever, and with a kindly smile for all. The Crown Prince and Princess devoted as much time as possible to their growing family, and their palace was a very happy home. The gap made by the death of little Sigismund, who was a delicate child and only lived two years, was still keenly felt, but Waldemar, a healthy, bonny boy, was his parents' idol, and helped to keep the home lively. Both the Crown Prince and his wife agreed that it would be wiser to send the two elder boys, Wilhelm and Heinrich, to a regular school where their education would be on broader and non-military lines, instead of letting them have private tutors, so they were sent to Cassel where they remained four years, attending the grammar-school there.



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In 1873 my dear mistress, the Princess Liegnitz, died. She had had her own Court since the death of her husband, King Friedrich Wilhelm III, but lived a secluded life, passing her time between Potsdam at the Villa Liegnitz, a name still borne by that pretty little house near the entrance to Sanssouci, and the château at Homburg where she passed away. She was loved and esteemed by all who knew her, and I had the honour of helping to bear her to the grave. I was then offered a post in the household of the Crown Prince, afterwards Kaiser Friedrich, which I accepted, and where I remained as a sort of general factotum until a few years before the Empress Frederick died.

When not co-operating with other active workers in the establishing of educational institutes—a pet hobby of the Crown Princess which her husband shared, and whenever they could be spared from their social duties in which they had to represent the ageing Kaiser and his consort, the Prince and Princess were just a happy married couple like any of their future subjects. It was always the custom ten days before Christmas to set up a street fair in the great square before the Schloss called the Lustgarten. Hundreds of

wooden booths formed narrow little thoroughfares and exhibited every description of cheap toys, ornaments for the Christmas tree, cakes and other seasonable and fascinating things. The *Weihnachtsmarkt* was the children's paradise, but all Berlin thronged it, young and old, rich and poor. The Crown Prince and his wife, arm in arm, with one or two of their children and all unattended, used to wend their way between the booths, regardless of the crush, just like any ordinary citizens, and the children loved spending their pennies just like ordinary little Berliners. The popular fair has now long disappeared, being too noisy and savouring too much of the *Volk* to please the young Kaiser, who later occupied the Schloss.

The Crown Prince's Palace had quite a large garden and was a boon for the younger children, and the Crown Princess herself took a lively interest in its arrangement. I saw to the planting of the ivy that still entwines the old trees and had a fine new lawn made. Until the grass had properly grown the young folks were forbidden to tread on it, but Princesses Sophie and Margaret disobeyed, and the sentry in charge shouted to them in no gentle voice to come off. Frightened

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at the tone the little girls did as they were told, but seeing their father ran up to him and told him of their grievance. They obtained no sympathy. "The man was doing his duty; he was there to maintain order, and you have to obey him," said the Crown Prince.

One day carrying a cumbersome chair into the garden I met the Crown Princess in the doorway. She stood aside to let me pass and held the door open for me with a smile of encouragement. This incident is unforgettable for me. I was a servant and she was the Princess Royal of England, before long to become an Empress; but I was an old man carrying something heavy and she was an English gentlewoman with a kind heart.

I remember one morning when the Crown Princess came into my room and said:

"Just think, —, my children have got the measles. What shall I do?"

"No need to worry, Imperial Highness," I said. "Keep them warm and let the room be darkened." She went out cheerfully and I heard afterwards that when the Court physician prescribed less simple procedure the Princess said:

"No, doctor, — says keep them warm in a darkened room and I am going to do it."

There is a little door in the wall of the Palace garden immediately facing a side entrance to the Royal Opera and the Crown Prince infinitely preferred using this way instead of the great front doors. Whenever there was no need for ceremony and he wanted to hear some good music he would slip through the garden door unattended and go up to his box unobserved, where he would remain, concealed by a curtain, just as long as he felt inclined or had time for. Then, equally unnoticed, he would cross the quiet street and arrive at home as he had left it. He was always very pleased when this little manœuvre succeeded. Both the Prince and his wife were very fond of the theatre, but while she loved the German classics and her own Shakespeare above everything, he enjoyed best of all a good comedy, for he loved a hearty laugh.

An amusing incident, although intended as a serious lesson, comes to my memory in this connection. The Crown Prince had heard an opera—I forget the name, in which a Scots Highlander had to appear on the stage. The costume was unintentionally grotesque, such a caricature of the real Highland dress that to any one familiar with the proper thing and especially to Crown Prince

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Friedrich Wilhelm, who knew and loved the Highlands, it was very irritating. Next day H.I.H. gave orders that a non-commissioned officer, extra large size, of his own Currassiers, should take a bath, put on clean linen and come to the Palace. Arrived there the man had to don, under the personal supervision of the Crown Prince, H.I.H's own Highland costume which fitted perfectly. He was then instructed to go to the Opera House and to the private office of the *Intendant* (the head stage manager of the Imperial theatres) with a note in the Crown Prince's own handwriting. It was short and to the point: "This is how a Scots Highlander looks!" The Prince had a good laugh with his wife about it, and she was so delighted with her Fritz's joke, or object lesson, that on the very next opportunity she wrote it to Queen Victoria.

Great lady and unusual scholar though she was, the future German Empress was, as I have already said, thoroughly domesticated and found time to superintend every branch of her household. Once I was a witness of an example of her thoroughness. She was passing with her husband down a long drawing-room in the Palace when something caught her eye. Stooping down, she turned back

the corner of the Smyrna carpet, crying, "Fritz, just look here!" The object that had attracted her notice was an accumulation of dust that had been swept up beneath the carpet, and the housemaid whose special work it was experienced a very bad quarter of an hour.

## CHAPTER VI

THE big Court functions at the Schloss were dreary affairs in those days. The old Kaiser allowed the rigid Prussian etiquette to prevail "as it was in the beginning," and the military nobility predominated at Court balls. If there were any commoners present, such as wives of Ministers who were not possessed of the magic prefix "von," these ladies were left out in the cold by the officers who formed the component part of the dancers, and those who had been raised to the nobility were almost equally exposed to this snobbish treatment. A case in point was that of Fräulein Else von Bleichröder, daughter of the famous banker who had received the patent of nobility for his services to the Crown and for his princely generosity towards public and private charities. This very charming young lady remained a "wallflower" at a big Court ball until

Crown Prince Friedrich saw her and told one of his officers to ask her to dance. The young man, perforce, obeyed the order, but in the brutal manner characteristic of the Prussian lieutenant. Going up to Fräulein von Bleichröder, he said: "By the command of His Imperial Highness, the Crown Prince, I ask you to dance with me." The girl—probably the richest heiress in all Germany—was so humiliated that tears of indignation started to her eyes. She left the ball-room without a word, and never again attended a Court function of any kind.

Prussian organisation was always very strictly maintained at the Schloss festivities. There was no swerving from any rule once laid down, which sometimes had a comical effect as, for instance, when King Edward was on a visit to Berlin a good many years ago. A state ball was given in honour of the august guests, and four special chairs were placed on a dais at the end of the White Hall for the King and Queen, the Kaiser and Kaiserin. The King, fatigued by having to talk to so many people, wended his way to the dais and sank into one of the deep, comfortable *fauteuils* with a sigh of relief. Scarcely was he seated than Count August Eulenburg, the M.C.,



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hastened up and informed His Majesty respectfully, but firmly that he had not taken the chair destined for him. Reluctantly and with ill-disguised annoyance King Edward rose and seated himself in the chair designated by the Count, saying: "Well, at least let me have a whisky and soda," which request was immediately complied with.

The pedantic order that prevailed at the Prussian Court was very greatly praised by Prince Bismarck, who compared it favourably with that obtaining at the courts of Petersburg, London and Vienna. At a banquet in the Berlin Schloss, he used to say, it was always easy to find one's seat at table, the attendance and all other arrangements were quiet and in perfect accordance with their surroundings, while at the Tuileries in the time of Napoleon's Court he declared the Chamberlain and the M.C. lost their heads at a big banquet until ultimately the guests placed themselves where they chose. Bismarck had never seen the wholesale robbery of choice and costly dishes as they were being carried from the far-away kitchens of the Schloss, through many winding passages, to the banqueting hall. I could have told him that the order was not so perfect as he believed

at the Berlin Court and that rectitude was entirely absent.

How different was the atmosphere at the Crown Prince's Palace! Nothing rigid or severe or moth-eaten to be found there, thanks to the progressive thought, the liberal broad-mindedness of "Our Fritz" and his cultured wife. Whether commoner or nobleman, anyone with a name in the world of art or literature was a welcome guest, and well-known industrial and financial geniuses, whether Jew or Christian, were often invited to the Palace. The betterment of the conditions of humanity, the refinement of the tastes of the masses were the common aim of the Crown Prince and Princess.

When a ball was given at the Palace it was a genuine festivity. With such a gracious and charming host and hostess, who understood the art of making their guests feel at home as few others did, it could not be otherwise. One of the most brilliant fêtes—probably the most brilliant—given by their Imperial Highnesses was in 1875 and has been already alluded to. It bore the name of a "Fête at the Court of the Medici in Florence," and was arranged by the artist Count Harrach, brother of the Princess von Liegnitz, an intimate friend of both the Crown

Prince and his wife. Many of the costumes were designed by him, and were true in every detail to the traditions of that period. It was due primarily to the Crown Princess's great love of art that this historical fête was given, and she spent hours discussing the details with Count Harrach.

The future Empress's costume was one of the most beautiful of all. It was of rich crimson velvet with a frontlet of the same soft fabric in pale blue, and a broad girdle of precious stones fastened in front and reaching almost to the ground; the full sleeves were of crimson velvet, tied and slashed with blue, and H.I.H. wore a necklace of large pearls while the bodice of the gown was sewn with small ones. In her hair pearl ropes were entwined and some crimson flowers, and suspended from the girdle was a red velvet pompadour on a jewelled chain. Always a handsome woman, the Crown Princess had never looked more beautiful than on this occasion in the dress of a Princess of the Medici, and she was the cynosure of all beholders. The Crown Prince presented a stately figure in the costume of a Venetian nobleman, his velvet, plumed hat jauntily placed on one side. He was full of

good spirits that evening, and the life of the whole fête at which nearly one thousand guests were present.

The old Kaiser put in an appearance, as I have elsewhere said, but only for a short time. He wore a simple domino and to his great gratification was not recognised. He, too, was in capital spirits, and responded to every joke. Only once, when a masked courtier poked him laughingly in the ribs saying, "Well, old man, how do?" little suspecting whom he was addressing, the Kaiser drew himself up to his full height with the words:

"Say what you like, but—hands off!"

His Majesty left the gay throng before dismasking took place, so his too familiar subject was spared the pangs of remorse. Count Harrach had the honour of conducting his Imperial hostess to supper; he looked every inch a grandee of the Medici Court in doublet and hose, the former of rich gold brocade emblazoned with jewels and edged with sable.

There was a long discussion in the family whether Princess Charlotte, the eldest daughter of the Crown Prince, might or might not be allowed to be present. The little girl was fourteen and she implored her parents to let her go,

if only for an hour, dressed as a Princess of Medici, but while her father was inclined to stretch a point the Crown Princess was firm. Little girls belonged in bed at that time, she decided, so Princess Charlotte, albeit with much reluctance, was forced to submit. The nursery maid, however, told a tale of two small girls (Charlotte and Victoria) and one lively boy of seven (Waldemar) who crept out of bed and hung over the banisters till a late hour to see something of the brilliance beneath them.

The Crown Princess, under the supervision of Professor von Angeli, developed more and more her talent for painting. Both she and the Crown Prince sat several times to that eminent portraitist, who came from Vienna specially for the purpose. During the sittings the Princess had many delightful and instructive discussions upon art, and always after a visit from Angeli she became more enthusiastic than ever. Her models were taken from all classes, from her own daughters and friends to the simplest among her future subjects. I, too, had the honour of sitting to H.I.H. and the picture was considered an excellent likeness. It may have been an honour, but it was not a pleasure to me to have to remain still

so long together, and young Prince Waldemar made it more difficult for me. That little scamp used to try by all the means in his power—of course unseen by his mother—to make me move out of position. He would creep behind my chair and pinch my calves or stand behind his mother and pull ridiculous faces to make me smile; but I am glad to say his mischievous efforts were in vain. I remember one day I was tired after a three-hours' sitting and no doubt became restless, for the Crown Princess suddenly said:

"You don't like sitting for your portrait,—, do you?" Taken aback, I blurted out the truth: "Not very much," but instead of being affronted at my plain speaking, she replied with her kind smile:

"Well then, I must make haste and finish it." And she was as good as her word.

The death of her sister, the Grand Duchess Alice of Hesse, in December, 1878, was a great blow to the Crown Princess. It was said the Princess Alice of England was always the Princess Royal's favourite sister, and she was the only one of her family living in Germany. The sisters did not meet often, but they corresponded frequently, and a beautiful photograph of the Grand

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Duchess had a prominent position on the German Crown Princess's desk. The circumstances were, moreover, so particularly sad; the Grand Duchess kissed her child who was dying of diphtheria and thus contracted the dread disease herself. But still more was to follow. Three months later the youngest son of their Imperial Highnesses, Prince Waldemar, a bright, winning and very handsome boy suddenly developed throat trouble of a virulent kind and died within a few days, one month after his eleventh birthday. Perhaps I alone knew what had caused the illness. It was unusually cold weather for March and the madcap boy discovered a fringe of tiny icicles on a stable roof in the Palace yard, and was soon trying to see how many he could swallow in the shortest time possible. Nothing, however, would have been gained had I divulged what I had seen too late to arrest. The parents were inconsolable, and the bereaved mother left Berlin in search of forgetfulness. From Wiesbaden she went to Pegli, near Genoa, leading a secluded life in quiet places, attended by one lady-in-waiting and her English maid. She did not return to Berlin for the celebration of the old Kaiser's golden wedding which took place with much pomp. A year later she went

to Rome, striving to forget her grief in the pursuit of art, and in the Italian capital she was joined by her husband. But Waldemar was never forgotten; he had always adored his mother, and many years later, when her life was so full of sorrow, the Empress Frederick was heard to say that had her best-loved boy lived to manhood things would very likely have been different.



## CHAPTER VII

THE Crown Princess had a strong will and a wide outlook, knowing instinctively the right course to take and what would best promote her adopted country's welfare. But in spite of all this she never dictated either to her husband or her eldest son, both of whom, though intelligent enough in many things, were unquestionably her inferiors in intellect. The Crown Princess, and later when she was an Empress, never forced her views upon anyone. With all her great gifts she was remarkably gentle and tactful, and as well as being a devoted wife she was a most tender and loving mother. It was her eldest son who turned from her, not she from him—even when matters were at their worst. It was after Prince Wilhelm came of age, like all German princes when only eighteen, that he began to feel himself a man and a Prussian

—the synonym for all that was grand and great, and after he had served as a lieutenant in the First Foot Guards in Potsdam he was the typical narrow-minded and arrogant Prussian officer. It was then that the band between him and his mother slackened, through no fault of hers.

Like many young German officers of that period, and also later, he considered the praise of or sympathy with any other country a sign of unpatriotism, and the fact that his mother was an Englishwoman and his father an ardent admirer of England galled him. Added to this, he was destined to become King of Prussia and German Emperor, which was alone sufficient to turn his head. He was the acknowledged idol of the younger military set, and the easy tool of Bismarck from the very beginning, and surrounded by flatterers as he was after he left the wise influence of his parents, it is little wonder he grew up to believe himself equal with the Almighty. All this was a knife in the heart of the mother, but she always kept a brave face to the world.

The betrothal of their eldest son to Princess Augusta Victoria of Schleswig-Holstein was approved of by the young prince's parents and grandparents. The Chancellor also fully approved,

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which was important. He knew he had nothing to fear from the simple Holstein maiden. Besides, she was a healthy girl, and *he himself had* declared that the Hohenzollerns must be nursed into sound condition (*müssen sich festsaugen*). Certainly the physical qualities predominated; the new Hohenzollern Princess was amiable and virtuous; she had been very simply brought up and under the tuition of the ducal chaplain had become very pious and strictly orthodox. With other creeds and with those who professed them the Princess never sympathised, but held as much aloof from them as possible. She had no talents but domestic ones, and was not intelligent compared with her husband's mother and his grandmother, the old Empress Augusta.

With her strong sense of woman's responsibility, with her simple up-bringing and her great piety, it was strange that Princess Wilhelm, later on Kaiserin, never nursed any of her children herself. For each of the children a wet-nurse was engaged, a task which occupied the minds of the Court doctors long before the event. So many things were demanded of the nurse; she had to be married, of healthy and moral stock, and she had to renounce all communication with her

husband and baby except on rare occasions under the eyes of a third person. She was never allowed *to leave the Palace alone, and day and night her movements were under supervision and her diet strictly prepared under the doctor's orders.* It was not an easy post for a woman who loved her own child, who in the meantime was fed with the bottle, and it often took a long time to find one who would accept it notwithstanding the very high payment and the honour.

The Crown Prince and his wife were both very fond of riding, and whenever possible rode out together to the Grunewald, Berlin's near-by forest, if resident in Unter den Linden, or to Bornstedt or Wildpark if living in Potsdam. The Crown Princess was Colonel of the Second Hussar Guards, the so-called "Totenkopf Hussars," from the death's head in the front of the fur cap, and very handsome she looked in the uniform of that famous regiment. Her favourite horse was Patrick, an Irish thoroughbred, chestnut with three white socks, while her husband nearly always rode on short distances his powerful charger that had carried him safely through several battles. This good steed was originally named "Königgrätz," but had been re-christened "Wörth" after the

battle of that name, where his rapid gallop had saved his master from certain death. So Wörth in his old age was the pet of the Imperial family. He had his comfortable stable in the Palace yard and was often visited and fed with sugar and other delectable things by his master and the Crown Princess. Princess Victoria was more in the stables than the drawing-room and for her horsey tastes was nicknamed "the groom" by her brothers. When Wörth died he was buried in a bed of roses in the Palace garden and Princess Victoria laid a wreath of laurels on his grave, as she said, in the name of her father who was not in Berlin at the time. The faithful animal was long missed by all of us.

Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm was the most genial man possible towards his inferiors and loved a joke with them; he would even permit a jocular reply from them which he would not always tolerate from loftier situated persons. One day he passed me on the terrace and called out:

"What's the matter, —? You look so cross."

"Well, Imperial Highness, I am cross," I said, for I knew the Prince's liking for a straightforward answer. "In renovating the Opera House they have taken down the weathercock."

"Why on earth should that upset you?" laughed the Prince, coming up to me.

"That weathercock played an important part in our daily programme," I replied gravely. "We always know by that how the wind is and whether the Kaiser or Her Majesty can go for a drive in an open carriage or not. Now nobody can tell how the wind is."

"Well, that is a good reason," said the Crown Prince, "and I'll see that you get the weathercock back."

Sure enough, within two days it was replaced on the roof and has remained there to this day. Their Majesties were, so to say, next door to us in their Palace in Unter den Linden, for the huge Schloss was far too cold and draughty for the aged couple to live in.

I have said that Crown Prince Friedrich was devoted to his pipe, from which he was seldom separated when in camp or at home when he could let himself go. It was a very special kind of German pipe, with a porcelain lid upon which the Imperial crown was glazed. It was discoloured by age, but its owner set great store by it. One day a maid, during H.I.H.'S temporary absence from Berlin, cleaning his study had the

misfortune to break just this particular pipe although there were several others in the rack that remained intact. She came crying to me and some of us held a council. It would never do to tell the Crown Prince of the accident. The *chausseur* who had been many years with H.I.H. had an idea which was as brilliant as it was audacious, and it was carried out. A new pipe was ordered in all haste, an exact duplicate, from the royal porcelain factory, and we all set to work to smoke it in turn, day and night, praying that our Imperial master might not return until the process of discoloration was accomplished. The stars in their courses fought for us. After literally not a moment's cessation of labour—and it was really hard work as the secret had to remain with a very small number of delinquents—the requisite “patina” was reproduced and the pipe was pronounced a perfect likeness of the old one. The Crown Prince returned the very next day and had a smoke in the garden, never noticing the change. Thus it is that sometimes the lofty ones of the land are subjected all unwittingly to the machinations of the humblest subjects.

Many and various were the institutions for the promotion of social welfare, of education and

art that were called into existence by the united efforts of Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm and his indefatigable consort. Among them were the Arts and Crafts Museum (Kunstgewerbe Museum), and the National Gallery, institutions which had been for many years a cherished aim of the Princess. In the year 1871 H.I.H. was made by the Kaiser head overseer of Berlin museums, a position that was much to his taste. He greatly desired to raise the standard of the royal museums and picture galleries, and whenever opportunity presented itself for acquiring new art treasures it was hailed by him with delight. Here a great help was Wilhelm Bode, manager of the galleries, who later became a world-famous art critic.

The idea of a permanent exhibition of arts and crafts at Berlin, in the style of the South Kensington Museum at London, was the Crown Princess's, who longed to see a similar institution in the German capital, and this was just the kind of plan to ensure her husband's whole-hearted support, but the chief credit of its realisation was due to the future Empress's love of art and comprehensive understanding. The Museum, under the name of the Industrial Museum, was opened in a small way in 1867; it remained for the Crown Prince



and Princess to found the new building which was opened on the latter's birthday in 1881. The fine structure was erected according to the designs of the well-known architect Gropius, but the inner court was copied from that of the South Kensington Museum. For years the Crown Prince and his art-loving consort had been adding to the already valuable contents and, above all, to the tapestries and the almost unique collection of native and foreign porcelain. Queen Victoria caught some of her daughter's enthusiasm and sent a magnificent contribution to the art treasures in the shape of a large consignment of priceless Indian vases, ivories and lacquer articles taken from the South Kensington Museum. These valuable things were forwarded to Berlin in special cases, under the charge of English officials and private detectives at the expense of the British Government.<sup>1</sup> The opening of the *Kunstgewerbe* Museum was a festival, and all who had contributed to its success were guests of their Imperial Highnesses at the Palace the same evening. The Empress Frederick often looked back upon this day as exceptionally enjoyable.

<sup>1</sup> The contents of this Museum were, after the war, transferred to the Schloss. Ed.

Another cherished plan of Crown Prince Frederick was the erecting of a new cathedral on the site of the small inadequate building near the Schloss, that should contain a vault for the remains of the members of the reigning House then reposing beneath the Garrison Church. In this, too, the Crown Princess's artistic talents were brought into play; she made several practical suggestions to the architect, Raschdorff, who later on carried them out to the letter. The Emperor Frederick, not many weeks before his death, sent for the designs and studied them with interest.

In January, 1883, the silver wedding day of the Crown Prince and Princess was celebrated by the whole nation as a holiday. Costly gifts from guilds and corporations all over Germany poured in: fine works of art of every description, including paintings and sculpture from celebrated artists; cabinets of ebony and ivory; from the Prussian State an exquisitely carved dining-room suite of old oak. All these articles were publicly displayed later on in the Industrial Art Museum. What especially delighted the Crown Princess was the sum of 800,000 marks collected throughout Germany and presented to her for her pet

charities. "I can do so much good with it," she wrote in the letter of thanks to her people. And indeed she did do great good with it, giving half a million from it to the children's hospital that bears her name: Kaiserin Friedrich Kinder Krankenhaus.

A wonderful costume fête in the White Hall of the Schloss terminated the happy day, one of the landmarks in a happy life before the shadows of never-ending sorrow fell. The Crown Princess, with her tried artist friends, had arranged the programme weeks before, and many members of the Court society participated. The principal feature was a procession in three parts, representing the three centuries of the Renaissance, which passed before the dais where their Imperial Highnesses sat with the old Kaiser. All the costumes were genuine and accurate in every detail. The first section depicted the bridal procession of Maximilian and Maria of Burgundy; the second a cortège of Queen Elizabeth's court, followed by a German and an English quadrille in the costumes of the seventeenth century, while the third section—the most brilliant of all—was a procession of the great artists of the Renaissance period, each one represented by a Berlin artist of

note. A pause was made before the throne for the presentation of a handsome pewter cup of that period to the silver bridal pair.

Her Imperial Highness sometimes honoured my modest room with her presence. I think she liked to talk with me a little. She knew that I was faithful to her and her husband and did not gossip; also it pleased and amused her to hear me praise English people and things, and I remember that she occasionally said something to me in her own language which always made me very proud. I do know that she was often very lonely when the Crown Prince was away, for she had, even at that time, few really intimate friends. And, above all, she never quite lost her *Heimweh* for England, true as she was in every way to her adopted country. I remember a few days before she paid a short visit to Paris in strict incognito, in May, 1883, to see the art galleries, she said to me: "Oh,—, Paris is so near to England. How I wish I could fly across the Channel!" She gave a deep sigh and I tried in my humble way to cheer her. "That will come, too, before long, Imperial Highness," I replied, and, indeed, a journey "home" was undertaken soon afterwards.

The Crown Princess and her three youngest daughters were close friends; the girls clung all the more to her as they grew old enough to know that their eldest sister, Charlotte, had gone over to the enemies of their beloved mother, and even their brother Heinrich had been caught up by the clique. The three Princesses and their mother were like sisters. And so when "Vicky" fell in love with handsome Prince Alexander of Bulgaria, it promised to be a very happy family event. There were, however, complications with Russia, and to the sorrow of both the Crown Princess and her husband, who were much attached to the Prince, the betrothal was broken off, and the poor girl's happiness was short-lived. The Crown Princess felt this very keenly, but she was powerless to act against her eldest son and Bismarck, who disapproved of the marriage.

In the spring of 1886, when the Imperial family were considering the possibilities of a trip to the Isle of Wight, the Crown Prince was suddenly taken ill with measles, how contracted being a mystery, and he was so seriously ill that the doctors were very anxious. After recovery many duties kept him busy, among others the attendance at the funeral of King Ludwig of Bavaria, and it

was not until the autumn that the Prince was able to get a rest with his family in Italy. This well-earned and much needed holiday at Portofino was one of the Empress Frederick's happiest recollections. It was the last visit to Italy, the country she always loved so dearly, before the final sojourn there in search of healing of the Emperor's fatal malady. Her Imperial Highness's last visit to her mother-country was for Queen Victoria's jubilee in 1887, when traces of the Crown Prince's disease had already begun to be all too apparent.

Early in that year, 1887, the Crown Princess had a very great pleasure. Her gifted compatriot, Sir Arthur Sullivan, had made arrangements to produce his new cantata, *The Golden Legend*, at Berlin. The Opera House, with its orchestra, soloists and chorus, was selected for the purpose and Sir Arthur himself was to conduct. Tremendous interest was naturally felt in the English Colony here, and all tickets for the first performance were soon sold out. The composer worked hard at rehearsals, and was greatly liked by the musicians in the fine orchestra, for, having studied at Leipzig, he spoke German fluently, and his genial manner won many hearts. At the final rehearsal in the

Opera House orchestra and chorus and most of the soloists rendered the beautiful music to the satisfaction of the composer, for their heart was obviously in their work. With the leading soprano, nevertheless, there was a grave hitch. Fräulein — (I will suppress her name for I am ashamed to say she is of my own nationality), one of the stars of first magnitude at the Royal Opera, evidently mistook a cantata for an operatic work of the lightest kind. She sang with a frivolity unprecedented, and was frequently out of tune; her attention wandered, and she appeared not to have given the least attention to the part entrusted to her. The conductor pulled her up several times, but it was a disconcerting affair, and did not portend well for the morrow.

The Crown Princess was present, and at the close stretched out her hand from her box close to the stage to Sir Arthur, visibly manifesting warm sympathy. He, poor man, tried to hope against hope that all would yet go well when the auspicious moment arrived. His hopes were futile. Fräulein — did her best to ruin the whole performance, or so it appeared to the composer's friends. She sang off the key continually, even frequently putting out her fellow singers, with

the exception of the fine tenor, Rotmühl, who carried on bravely and tried to either mitigate or drown her mistakes. The entire evening seemed under an evil star.

Sir Arthur said to someone I knew well: "It is utterly beyond my comprehension. If she had sung flat once or twice it could have been overlooked, but to be absolutely out of tune the whole time!" It was, perhaps, a mistake to have the performance of a cantata in the Opera House, leading the public to expect stage action of some kind, but, in reality, to my thinking, the entire thing was deliberate malice—an anti-English manifestation. At intervals such petty manifestations did creep up, the evil working against the English Empress by a certain clique showing itself in many ways. The Crown Prince and Princess, who had been present on the unfortunate occasion, invited Sir Arthur to their house next day and endeavoured in every manner to make up to him for his bitter disappointment. The critics, I am sorry to say, followed the lead of their unworthy star, and had scant praise for *The Golden Legend*.

With all his work, Sir Arthur Sullivan found time to do one of the little kindnesses for which



I have heard he was known. It was told to me by someone upon whose word I can rely. Three English girls, studying music in Berlin, were naturally wildly eager to hear their celebrated countryman's composition, but they had not much money and could not afford to buy tickets. One, bolder than the others, declared she would write to Sir Arthur, and tell him the circumstances, begging him to find them just a corner in the Opera House. This she did, and received an answer in a day or two in the composer's own writing. He said he had made inquiries and there was not a ticket to be had, but as the best he could do he invited the "Three Little Maids from School," as he called them, to a rehearsal in the winter-garden of the Central Hotel, where he was staying. The three girls went, of course overjoyed, to the rehearsal, and after it was over the one who had written the letter ventured to go up to Sir Arthur and thank him. He was friendliness itself, talked to her about her studies, and gave her some useful advice. But his kindness did not end there. On the day of the great performance the English girl received a note by express messenger saying it had been possible at the last moment to obtain one ticket, which Sir

Arthur enclosed. The girl never forgot the kindness which had made it possible for her to attend the noteworthy performance.

In the same year, 1887, young Austen Chamberlain came out to Berlin to learn the language and study German statecraft. He was extremely popular, and was invited everywhere, although he did not neglect his studies. His likeness to his father was much remarked, and those who knew him well predicted also for him a brilliant career.

## CHAPTER VIII

THE Kaiser was now a very old man, and he felt his age. To one of his most tried friends, Frau von Bülow, who was complimenting him upon his forthcoming ninetieth birthday, he said wistfully:

“Don’t you think one can live too long?”

Yet he kept his feelings hidden, and never relaxed what he believed to be his duties until absolutely compelled. Prince Bismarck, who genuinely loved his Sovereign, visited him regularly every Wednesday to report on national affairs. It may be added that the Chancellor was very rarely seen in the Crown Prince’s Palace.

The old Kaiser’s courtesy towards his people was proverbial. Whenever he took his drives in an open carriage he never failed to respond to the respectful greeting of any pedestrian by putting his hand to his cap, an action that was so fatiguing

because so often repeated that it was seriously considered whether an automatic contrivance raising a dummy hand might not be feasible. A nursemaid out with her charge, a boy of six, met the Kaiser's carriage one morning in a quiet road in the Tiergarten and she quickly told the child to take off his cap. The old Kaiser smiled at the little fellow and saluted in return.

Every day when in Berlin His Majesty had made it his custom for many years to stand at the corner window of his Palace at noon when the guard passed on the way to change at the little guardhouse at the end of the Linden. Crowds always gathered before what is now always called the "Historical Window," and the following true anecdote, though a very familiar one, may bear repeating. A distinguished visitor had called to see the Emperor and was ushered into His Majesty's study. But although the visitor's name was distinctly announced, to his surprise the Emperor stood at the window, looking out, and did not turn round. After a minute or so His Majesty turned and greeted his visitor cordially, saying in the simple, direct manner habitual to him:

"Do, please, pardon my rudeness, but you see the guard was passing, and in the crowd an old

man, evidently from the country, was holding up his little grandchild to see me, and I really couldn't turn away until he had had a good view."

Another time when he was becoming very feeble the Kaiser was requested by his medical attendant to give up this custom, but his reply, given with a smile, was: "Oh no! Baedeker says I am always at the window at noon and the people expect me, so of course I must be there." It was about this time that his doctor begged him to rest more as he must certainly be tired, and received the reply: "I have no time to be tired," words that have since become a proverb.

The Emperor's ninetieth birthday on March 28, 1887, was celebrated, against his own will, with the utmost ceremony. No fewer than eighty-five royal and princely persons came to Berlin for the occasion, and the rejoicings were extended throughout the entire country. The illuminations in the capital were on a scale of great splendour, and most effective of all was the candle illumination, used for the first time. Berlin houses all have double windows to keep out the bitter wind that in winter blows across to us from the Russian Steppes, and some smart fellow in the Municipality conceived the idea of turning the windows to good

account. Between the panes of every window of every house, from the big hotels to the smallest flats in tenement houses, a row of white wax candles was placed. Most of the houses being four storeys high, the effect of this soft, white light everywhere was beautiful and unique. The aged monarch drove along the Linden in the afternoon through a double row of his cheering subjects, all of whom wore a cornflower in their button-hole. I have never witnessed such genuine enthusiasm.

This time, despite its festive character, was in reality a very tragic one. Crown Prince Friedrich, upon whom the principal burden of receiving and entertaining the guests devolved, suffered terribly in consequence, for the disease was making undeniable progress, the hoarseness and the pain in his throat increasing perceptibly. A journey to Ems was undertaken for the cure, but after several weeks, there being no improvement, the Crown Prince and his family returned to Potsdam and a consultation of specialists, at the head of them Sir Morell Mackenzie, took place. This was by the express wish of the German doctors, and not due to the Crown Princess as her enemies said.

Both the sick Prince and his anxious wife had unlimited confidence in the great English throat

specialist, whose sympathetic, reassuring manner with his patients was proverbial, and they resolutely seconded his opposition to an operation. Many very unkind things were thought and said at this sad period of the Crown Princess, whose nationality was again brought up against her. It was often heard later that she had determined to have her husband kept alive until she could become an empress, and that she knew an operation would be fatal. I do not believe that there was one word of truth in this, but I do know that it was Crown Prince Friedrich's greatest wish to succeed his father and this for two reasons: he wanted to carry out many plans which he had formed for what he was firmly convinced was the welfare of his country, and this was only possible if he had monarchical power; and he desired to see his beloved wife an empress.

A slight improvement having taken place in the doomed man's condition, their Imperial Highnesses, with their family, went to England for the celebration of Queen Victoria's jubilee, the fiftieth anniversary of her accession, and afterwards to the Isle of Wight, and after that to Scotland, all with the hope that the change of air would be beneficial. Sir Morell Mackenzie then ordered a

sojourn in the South. Finally, San Remo was decided upon, where the sick Prince remained until summoned home by his father's death.

The March of that fateful year, 1888—three eights, three Kaisers!—came, and on the 9th, a fortnight before what would have been his 91st birthday, the old Emperor breathed his last. It was nine o'clock in the morning when the flag on the Palace was hoisted at half-mast, and a sob ran through the crowd, amounting to thousands, who had waited silently in the bitter cold for hours. The mourning of the people was genuine and deep; tears rolled down many a man's cheek, and he was not ashamed of them. The beloved "old Kaiser" had gone from them, the new one was doomed to a speedy and terrible death, and what would then happen was all uncertain. It was an anxious time for all.

I had been commissioned by the Crown Princess beforehand to take a large basket of beautiful white roses and lilies-of-the-valley to the near-by Palace, and give them into the hands of Anton von Werner to place in the death chamber, so I had access to the room before almost anyone else. Simply as he had lived the first Emperor died. He occupied the narrow iron field-bed that he



had always been accustomed to, and was in a sitting attitude supported by pillows. He looked twenty years younger than in life; a smile of ineffable content was upon his face. By the soft light of an oil-lamp, for the room had only one window and that giving onto the court-yard, Anton von Werner sat at the head of the bed sketching his dead Kaiser. I gave him the flowers, whispering from whom they had come. He placed three roses in the cold hand, fastened some more upon the Kaiser's breast and strewed the lilies and the rest of the roses over the white quilt.

Soon the simply-furnished little room (the furniture was all of the most old-fashioned type) filled with distinguished officers of the Reich, grey-haired men who had served and loved their Sovereign for many years. General von Pape knelt and kissed the dead hand, tears rolling down into his white beard. Prince Wilhelm, now the German Crown Prince, whose ideal his grandfather had always been, entered quietly and stood long in silence at the bedside. Then the officials and servants of the Household were admitted, one by one. As I crept away I met the Chancellor coming with hasty steps, his white face drawn with grief. He had been with the dying Emperor almost all

the night and was now returning. The Empress was far too ill to leave her bed.

The body of the Emperor was conveyed by torchlight from the Palace at midnight on March 11th, to the Cathedral, an unpretending building opposite the Schloss—now long replaced by a handsome edifice. It was a typical Berlin winter night, except that the cold was unusually severe; the thermometer registered 28 degrees *Réaumur*. The stars shone down upon the frozen snow; charcoal fires burnt all along the route to keep the soldiers from freezing. The German poet, Schniewind, in the introduction to a book about the old Cathedral, wrote the following touching verses:

“Doch kamen auch Tage voll Leid und Schmerz,  
Die tief ins Herz uns trafen—  
Das waren die dunklen Tage des März,  
Als der grosse Kaiser entschlafen.

Die Fackeln lohten um Mitternacht,  
Schneeflocken flogen zur Bahre,  
Als die Krieger den toten Kaiser gebracht  
Und niedergesetzt am Altare.

Da hat er gerastet vier Tage lang  
Bis auf die letzte Reise—  
Wie tönten die Glocken so schwer und bang,  
Wie traurig das Schluchzen im Kreise!—”

They are so beautiful in their simplicity, and give such a true picture of the sad event that I have tried to translate them:

“But then came days of sorrow and pain,  
When all the nation wept—  
They were the gloomy days of March,  
When the great Emperor slept.

The torches flared to the midnight sky,  
And snowflakes flew around the bier,  
As the warriors bore their Kaiser dead  
To the sacred building near.

And there till his final journey came  
He rested four days long—  
How mournful and heavy the tolling bells,  
How deep the sobs of the throng!—”

The Emperor lay in state four days before the altar, and in spite of the intense cold the people stood silently for hours, waiting for their turn to pass the coffin. A few days before his death he said to his daughter who never left his side:

“I have had a dream. It was the last ceremony in the Cathedral——”

And the last ceremony in the old Cathedral was actually that of his own funeral. Nearly all the crowned heads of Europe came for the obsequies, and the procession was a mile in length.

Along the historical Linden it wended its way—three united military bands playing that heart-rending Funeral March of Chopin—and on to Charlottenburg, where, in the beautiful Mausoleum, the monarch was laid to rest. Two years afterwards the space next to his in the vault was filled by his widow, the Empress Augusta.

The Emperor Frederick left San Remo immediately upon the news of his father's death, and travelled with all possible haste to Berlin. Notwithstanding his serious condition he made heroic efforts to attend to the strenuous duties that could not well be avoided, and, indeed, his brief reign of a hundred days was a marvel of self-denial, fortitude and patience. His indomitable will enabled him to carry on government until almost the end, and he thought out and instituted some reforms in the army even when his orders could only be given in writing. The Imperial family spent the spring at Charlottenburg Schloss; it was quieter than the Palace in Unter den Linden, and stands in a delightful park, bordered on one side by the Spree. Here it was that Queen Victoria paid a short visit towards the end of April to her sorrowing daughter and the son-in-law she loved so well.

*Towards the end of May the wedding of Prince Heinrich and Princess Irene of Hesse took place in the Charlottenburg Schloss, very quietly indeed. Heinrich, the sailor prince, was less seriously tainted by the Berlin clique than were his elder brother and sister. His sunny nature was less affected by politics, and he really loved his parents. The first to be clasped in his embrace when he returned from a voyage was always his mother. The Prince's wedding would have been under other circumstances a joyous and festive event. The little palace containing no chapel two large drawing-rooms were thrown into one and transformed into the semblance of a chapel, with altar, pictures of sacred subjects and a wealth of flowers. The sick Kaiser superintended everything himself from his Bath-chair and his patient smile was tragic for, of course, he was unable to speak a word. He was present at the ceremony, sitting among his dear ones, but it was a mournful occasion for all knew that the hand of death was near.*

Again the people stood in silent crowds before the Schloss gates, hoping against hope for a favourable bulletin to be posted up. One morning a lady bought up all the contents of a big basket of fresh violets from a street flower-seller and sent



KAISER FRIEDRICH, 1886



them in to the sick man. A footman came out and brought the unknown donor the Empress's thanks.

The Emperor expressed a great desire to move to Friedrichskron, at Potsdam, until then called the New Palace, of which he had so many cherished associations, and on June 1st the move was undertaken. It was fraught with some risk, but every possible care was taken, and being the smoother mode of conveyance and his own wish the dying Emperor travelled by boat. The royal river steamer *Alexandra* was brought up the Spree to the edge of the Palace garden and His Majesty was carried on deck, where, under the awning, he lay on a couch, the Empress sitting at his side and two doctors and nurses in attendance. It was a lovely spring morning; the birds sang, and all nature seemed joyous, and at first the spirits of the sick man were better than they had been for some time. At Spandau the Spree merges into the Havel. The waterway to Potsdam passes the green lawns of the beautiful little Babelsberg Palace, and what must have been the dying Emperor's thoughts as he saw the happy home so near where his early years had been spent and where, later on, he had lived so care-free with his young wife!



Arrived at Potsdam a carriage conveyed the sick man to the Palace, which he never left again alive.

Although I had my permanent home in the Berlin Palace, I was at Friedrichskron at the time of the Emperor's death on that beautiful summer day, the 15th of June. The confusion and suspense during the long hours of waiting for the end were great in the servants' quarters, for the suffering Emperor was adored by all his subordinates, and in hushed voices the terrible events were discussed. The kind smile that rewarded the slightest efforts made for his comfort was recalled with genuine tears, and sympathy was generally felt with the poor Empress. And yet a certain excitement prevailed, anticipation and curiosity as to what would happen afterwards, which I suppose was only natural, but I remember it jarred on me at the time.

The 14th was the eighteenth birthday of Princess Sophie (later Queen of Greece), the favourite child of the Emperor. When she neared his bed he asked mutely for pencil and paper, and gathering his fast-ebbing strength, he wrote: "Bleib fromm und gut, wie Du es bisher gewesen! Dies ist der letzte Wunsch Deines sterbenden Vaters." (Remain

pious and good, as you have always been! This is the last wish of your dying father.)

The next day he died. By his own wish he was wrapped in his grey military cloak, and the Empress herself placed the sword he had worn in all his campaigns within his arm and fastened the star of his most distinguished Order, the "Pour le Mérite," upon his breast. He was buried with far less ceremony than his father in the Friedens-Kirche at Potsdam.

Much has been written about the tragic scenes that transpired in the death chamber. The Empress telegraphed to Queen Victoria: "Fritz is dead and I am in despair!" To her sick mother-in-law, the Empress Augusta, she wrote an hour after the Emperor's death: "She who was proud and happy to be his wife weeps with you, poor mother, for your only son. No mother ever possessed such a son! Be brave and proud in your grief. He sent his love to you only to-day, Victoria."

Politics, as I have said elsewhere, are not my *métier*. I can only dwell more upon the domestic side—the side I knew—of this brilliant personality, the Empress Frederick. This, however, I must say, that she was not to blame for the jarring

ruptures, the discordant conditions that set in before the body of the Emperor was cold, and the brutal manner in which she was treated by the Chancellor—and others—in that terrible hour remains a sin and a shame for all time.

For the last three or four days before the Emperor's death there had been a perpetual coming and going of relatives, doctors, statesmen and military officers, especially those closely attached to the coming Emperor. He himself was obviously in the greatest nervous excitement. There was no doubt he could hardly wait for the moment that would bring him the supreme power, and his chief efforts were concentrated upon preventing anything or anyone leaving the Palace without his express permission.

When the news of the Emperor's death became known, and the flag was lowered to half-mast, I started to leave the Palace and return to Berlin. To my amazement I found the whole building surrounded by soldiers, but I managed to get through to the gate leading to the Wildpark railway station which was the nearest exit. This gate, as I learnt afterwards, was guarded like the others by a detachment of Hussars, and I was met by a curt "*Zurück!*" Feeling rather indig-

nant, for I was used to being at liberty to come and go as I liked, I looked around and recognised the officer in charge who happened to know me. I had been his father's riding-master many years ago and had often talked with the young man himself. So, after a few searching questions, which I was able to answer to his satisfaction, he was convinced of my harmlessness, and allowed me to leave the park. When I arrived at Berlin all the bells were tolling for the second time within three months for the death of the German Emperor.

## CHAPTER IX

**T**HE young Kaiser began his reign, no doubt, with the best intentions. His was a complex nature; from his mother he inherited a love of art and of the beautiful in every form, but he was no reader, and studied only what he liked and as long as he liked. He was always restless and always active in one way or another. His ruling characteristic was ambition; he was ambitious for himself personally and for his country, which he wished to see the greatest Power in the world. His ideal leaders were his own ancestors—Frederick the Great and his grandfather, Wilhelm I, of whom he always spoke as the “Great” Emperor. He seldom or never alluded to his father or his father’s ideals, which were not his own. The army was Wilhelm the Second’s fetish, and though later on he was filled with the desire to own a great navy, it was a military navy, a fleet manned by disciplined

soldiers, that was his aim. Very characteristic were the instructions given by him on his accession to the throne to the head Court Chaplain Kögel. He requested the clergyman, and naturally a request was a command, to speak in his first sermon upon the subject "Von Gottes Gnaden bin ich" (I am by God's grace).

He brooked in early years no authority, and took no advice. One of his first noteworthy actions was to dismiss Bismarck. Their natures were in many things too much alike to assimilate. I have been told that the Chancellor had not expected this turn of affairs, that having still many plans he wished to see carried out it was exceedingly distasteful to him, but I cannot believe that a man of his discernment could be so blind. He parted from his Sovereign with as good grace as the circumstances permitted, and refused with scant gratitude the dukedom that was offered him in acknowledgment of his services. The day he left the Chancellor's Palace in the Wilhelm Strasse, that street and all the others through which his carriage passed on the way to the railway station were densely packed with cheering crowds, for Bismarck was, and probably always will be the average German's hero.

My position in the Imperial household was a humble one, but I had eyes to see and ears to hear things that made my heart often ache and of which I have never spoken. The widowed Empress suffered in silence, but she did suffer horribly from the treatment she received from her eldest son, from Bismarck and his party. It was bad enough during the last years of the Crown Prince Friedrich's life, and the ninety-nine days of his reign were one record of trouble and sorrow, quite apart from his physical sufferings. The plans he and his wife had made for the betterment of conditions in Germany were always opposed and came to nothing. As soon as the nature of his disease became known the flatterers of the coming Emperor desired to place him on the throne, openly saying that a dumb Emperor was no Emperor. This became known to the Emperor and his wife and added to their troubles.

With her husband's accession to the throne the young Empress, too, changed greatly. It was the case of a beggar on horseback, as I once heard an Englishwoman say. "Dona," as the Empress was called in her family, was very proud of her own exalted position, and truth compels me to say she was jealous of the least sign of popularity that her

mother-in-law enjoyed. Perhaps she was aware of her own limitations. She was always very small-minded, and I recall that when she was merely Princess Wilhelm, and had to sit on the left of the Crown Princess, when the two ladies drove together, as they occasionally did, it was most disagreeable to her, and it was the same when at a Court function and her mother-in-law naturally took the precedence. Thus the triumph was all the greater when, as wife of the reigning monarch, she had the first place and the Dowager Empress the second. It was often very petty the way in which the young Kaiserin ousted, with her husband's full consent, her mother-in-law from many posts of honour—such as the patronage of the Red Cross Society and other institutions that were the Empress Frederick's right, at least by courtesy.

After his father's death the Kaiser tried apparently to forget his existence altogether. It was a painful memory that he wished to obliterate, and there was no attempt at mourning beyond the short time decreed by custom, and that was only external. He never spoke of his father in private or in public; it was almost as if he was ashamed of his parents, but in many of his most unfortunate public speeches he was fond of referring



to "Mein in Gottruhender Grossvater" (my grandfather resting in God). He ignored the Empress Frederick almost entirely, meeting her when he did so as though she were an ordinary acquaintance. It was all such a tragedy and so unnatural. Here was a loving mother, so gifted and handsome that any son might have been proud of her and, on the other hand, a headstrong, vain and misled young man who was guilty of cruel inconsideration for the mother who bore him. Always when a fresh instance of this came under my notice I thought: "The mills of God grind slowly, but they grind exceeding small."

The new Kaiser decided upon the Schloss as his Berlin residence, and had many improvements made in the vast, uncomfortable interior, once described by the old Emperor as a "unhomey home," with its 650 rooms and kitchens a quarter of a mile away. It used to be said, and with truth, that the only dish that the Kaiser could not partake of at his own table was a soufflé, which would have fallen flat long before it arrived at the dining-room. Things began to hum at the Schloss; the retinue and the household were increased by numbers innumerable. An idea of the food consumed daily there, exclusive of State

dinners, may be gained from the following items. Of course the fact must be taken into consideration that Germans are as a rule big eaters. This was the amount of meat for one day's consumption when there were no visitors: 100 lb. of beef; 200 lb. of mutton and pork, each; 350 lb. of veal; 10 pickled ox-tongues; 4 calves' heads. Fish, poultry, game and vegetables were in the same proportion, and butter was often used at the rate of 100 lb. a day.

His Majesty's summer residence, and always his favourite one, was Friedrichskron, at Potsdam. As soon as his father, who loved the name, had passed away, he caused it to be changed again to the New Palace, which was another gratuitous slight to his mother. He much enjoyed paying a visit to one of his many residences throughout the country, and comparing them with each other and making improvements. Of these palaces there were over sixty when he came to the throne, and the expense of keeping them up in readiness for one of these visits was enormous. The reason for the existence of so many royal residences was not, however, due to personal aggrandisement. When Germany became an empire a number of small states were taken over, including the Duchy

of Nassau, the Electorate of Hesse-Cassel, the Kingdom of Hanover and many minor principalities in the Rhineland and elsewhere, all of which possessed their own castles and fortresses. Many were very picturesque, but most of them were white elephants. They could not be sold or otherwise disposed of, and so the taxpayers had to assist in the upkeep. One of the most beautiful royal possessions is Wilhelmshöhe Palace, near Cassel, with fairylike gardens and great fountain.

Wilhelm II, like all the Hohenzollerns, was always an early riser, getting up summer and winter at six, breakfast being served an hour later. While his wife did not make the coffee, as Berlin housewives liked to believe, she was always present at this meal in early years. After breakfast the Kaiser commenced work, looking at the excerpts of the daily papers which had been cut out and laid upon his desk. He used to say—I am speaking of his young days—that he couldn't be bothered with newspapers in their entirety, and it will easily be perceived that owing to this, from the very commencement, he was in the hands, all unconsciously, of those about him, and getting a one-sided view of the things he should have known thoroughly in all their aspects. It was not likely

that anything in the Press that was calculated to displease him or perhaps interest him in undesired matters would be laid before His Majesty. Also it was well known to his entourage that he hated long letters, and whenever he received any that contained what was not of personal interest to him he tossed them aside. He would not be bored at any cost. Thus many letters of real importance to the country found their way into the waste-paper basket, for the secretaries lost their patience, too, and often letters, torn across or whole, were read by the servants and remained for ever unanswered. The Kaiser never, in fact, had a broad, unbiassed view of anything, but saw all from his own end of the telescope or from the end he was intended to see. He has never been, as a matter of fact, the hard worker he was represented; his rapid decisions were the result of an impulsive, egotistical character or of insidious suggestions, and were seldom subjected to reflection.

While speaking English and French fluently, the Kaiser always spoke German with his family and Court. In this he was always supported by Augusta Victoria, who was German in every fibre. Their children, of course, had the necessary in-

struction in languages, but as far as possible the Kaiser's wife always gave her preference to German teachers and nurses. One faithful English nurse who had been many years in the royal family was an exception, the Kaiserin herself even declaring that her youngest son, Joachim, owed his life during a serious illness to the devoted care of this Englishwoman. When the Kaiser was little more than a boy he overheard one of his sisters who had just returned from a long visit to her mother's country say: "With us in England that is different" (*bei uns in England ist das anders*) and this so enraged him that he boxed her ears. When he became Kaiser he tried to ban all foreign words from the German language, forgetting that his famous ancestor, Frederick the Great, used as many French expressions as German, and that his grandmother, the Empress Augusta, much preferred that language to her own.

Wilhelm II always showed his best side when with his children, more especially was he devoted to his small daughter, who could twist him round her little finger, and whom he always called his "best boy." As his sons grew older he was very strict with them, but Victoria Luise (Sissy, in the family) never heard a cross word from her father.

He never wanted to have a girl as he considered girls useless, but when she arrived his joy was great, and he proceeded to spoil her. One of the prettiest customs when the royal children were small was the annual "egg hunt" on Easter Sunday. This custom is, of course, general in Germany in all ranks, and the Kaiser and his wife entered into it with as much zest as their subjects. The pretty garden of the Bellevue Palace was always the place selected, there being no garden to speak of at the Berlin Schloss.

Their Majesties arrived about three o'clock, the children and their little friends, about twenty-five in number, following an hour later. Count Moltke, the famous Field-Marshal, was always present on this occasion; it was an institution he loved, for he was passionately fond of children and delighted in their fun. So he helped to hide the eggs among the flowers and bushes, and the Kaiserin always hid some of very special quality for the old soldier himself. When the children arrived each was presented with a basket and the search began, shouts of delight announcing a fresh find. It was a sight not readily forgotten when the Field-Marshal, regardless of his trousers with their broad crimson stripe, knelt down to seek his eggs among

the flower-beds; he, as a rule so chary of speech that he was known as the "Silent Moltke," was for the space of one hour transformed into a merry schoolboy. Laden with their prizes, the children were driven home after tea, and Count Moltke kept a watchful eye upon his own basket of eggs on the seat beside him.

At Easter and Christmas there would be some relaxation of the rigid code that was the keynote of the royal princes' education. They were trained in the hard and fast rules of militarism, given guns and leaden soldiers and miniature fortresses for toys, and it was not strange that they grew up to believe in the glory of war. At ten years of age every Hohenzollern prince was put into the army; he wore a uniform with a real sword—that is, the exact replica in miniature of a lieutenant of the First Foot Guards, an officer of which crack regiment he then was. The Kaiser presented the little fellow to his brother officers with a good deal of ceremony, and the latest acquisition to the regiment had to do a march past H.M., trying hard to keep in step with the tall guardsmen, but being obliged to take a frequent hurried step in order to do so, which was very galling to his pride. I have often witnessed this

ceremony, and thought how much more natural it would be if all concerned had a good laugh at the funny spectacle, instead of preserving rigid solemnity. The Kaiserin always looked on at the show from her windows, and was as grave as her husband and the regiment. When all was over the boy-prince doffed his uniform and returned to easier clothing, entering the army properly at the age of eighteen.

The Empress Frederick, though she never obtruded her English proclivities upon her German subjects to whom she was always just, spoke English with her husband and children when they were alone. She retained her English personal attendants all her life; her maid, her tirewoman, her groom and coachman were her own compatriots, and devoted to their royal mistress. For several years after the death of her husband the Empress Frederick remained in Berlin, that is, she retained her residence, the so-called Crown Prince's Palace, in Unter den Linden, and passed many months of the year there. She lived very quietly at first, but gradually things happened that caused her to forget in some measure her grief. Her daughters became engaged and there were weddings to think about, and so, little by little, Her Majesty took



up many of her old activities again in the world of art and social welfare. Yet here again she met with repeated rebuffs, being rarely permitted to be at the head of any social activity. As a matter of fact she only kept the patronage of the Lette Verein, the children's hospital, and other institutions which owed their founding or their welfare to her personal efforts.

Then an idea that had long been taking root sprang into realisation. The Empress longed for a home in which she could live her life as she chose—a home that should be absolutely English, where she could gather her art treasures about her, and where only those who loved her and whom she loved would be welcome. After unceasing search and innumerable offers of places in many parts of Germany, a site was finally decided upon at Cronberg, among the Taunus Hills, not far from Wiesbaden, Homburg and other delightful places beloved of Her Majesty for their happy memories. Money had to be considered, for the Empress was not nearly so well off as she was generally believed to be, and she had endless claims on her purse. The legacy of a friend of many years' standing, the Duchess de Galliera, enabled her to build the beautiful home, which

she called Friedrichshof, on the site of a villa that was no longer occupied. The Empress was her own architect, in conjunction with the eminent architect von Ihne, who was amazed at her knowledge, and bowed to her wishes in all points, which he could do without in any way doing violence to his own convictions. He went to England, by Her Majesty's wish, to make a study of English country houses and, indeed, Friedrichshof is more like an English residence than a German. The Empress spent much of her time at Homburg while the Castle was in process of building, so as to be near the spot, and the planning and laying-out of the Italian and rose gardens were her work entirely.

Much has been written about the beauties of Friedrichshof, but only those privileged to see the interior could form any picture of the wonderful artistry, the dignity and luxury, yet the homelike comfort everywhere displayed. It was what the Empress had wanted ever since she left her native country—this English home. And probably the happiest years of her life were passed there—far from the crowd; away from politics; away from the envious and the grudging—after the storm, peace. The tragedy of it was that it was

all too short. A span of only seven years was allotted to her to enjoy her well-earned rest and happiness.

On her numerous journeys the Empress Frederick always brought home objects of art—paintings, engravings and specimens of old or characteristic china, of which she was very fond; ancient pottery and pewter and bronze were all favourites of hers. She had so fine a knowledge of these things that she could point out a genuine piece immediately, and if any dealer tried to palm off a “fake” upon her he soon found his mistake. Nothing amused her more than, in strict incognito, to pay a visit to foreign antiquarian shops and markets. The Emperor when on his travels always tried hard to find something to please his wife, to add something very choice to her collection. When in Seville and Granada a few years before his death he himself drove to out-of-the-way places to obtain rare old Spanish and Moorish pottery, and personally received the visits of dealers who had ancient shrines and altar requisites to sell. All these interesting things, many of them unique and therefore priceless, were arranged in the Crown Prince’s Palace at Berlin, and gave the Empress many pleasant hours. In the placing of them she

was assisted by Count Seckendorff, as great a lover of art as Her Majesty and an expert, who was a close friend of both the Emperor and the Empress Frederick.

At Friedrichshof the art treasures could be laid out to full advantage for the first time. One of the most beautiful and spacious rooms in the Castle was specially destined by the royal architect for her incomparable collection, and whoever was fortunate enough to see it was full of admiration, not only for the beauty and intrinsic value of the specimens, but for their perfect arrangement and classification. Here again Count Seckendorff's unerring taste was of assistance to the Empress. The handsome library, with its comprehensive collection of choice volumes and rare editions, was also a source of delight to the Empress, who spent many hours among her books.

Her Majesty frequently received a visit from her children, and the voices of her grandchildren rang joyously through the lovely rooms. Kaiser Wilhelm came sometimes, for his relations with his mother had improved at a distance. He paid her many compliments upon her architectural talent, and greatly admired Friedrichshof. One day a letter came for Her Majesty by special messenger

from her eldest son. She opened it in my presence and her face lighted up with a radiant smile. Looking round and seeing me she said: "Oh, —, I have had such a splendid gift from His Majesty! Just think, he has given me the old Cronberg fortress to restore as I like. Now I must get busy!" Indeed she was overjoyed, and the work gave her pleasure for many months. Not only the fortress, but the ancient Cronberg church were restored by her efforts. In a word, the Empress regained her peace in those quiet, happy years at Friedrichshof; she rode almost daily, and possessed the vigour and good appearance of a much younger woman. On wet days she would wander happily among her treasures. Particularly she was fond of handling her collections of autographs, medals and miniatures. Among the priceless autographs were letters from Mary, Queen of Scots, Queen Elizabeth, Marie Antoinette and the Empress Katharina. Whenever a parcel of new books arrived the Empress was as pleased as a child with a new toy. Her books were her friends, and she was a most prolific and rapid reader. All learned subjects appealed to her, yet she by no means disdained a good novel in any language. Her Majesty did not neglect

her painting, and she passed many happy hours in the fine studio that she had equipped with such care.

But above all, the Empress Frederick loved her roses, the beautiful flowers that made the gardens fairyland. Roses were everywhere, a high hedge of every kind and colour of the clinging variety encircling the whole of the park, while other exquisite specimens formed terraces and walks where one could wander entranced for hours. And often on a warm June evening the Empress would walk slowly through her rose gardens accompanied by Count Seckendorff or one of her ladies, enjoying the perfume and beauty of it all. She was most particular in the selection of her gardeners; they must love flowers as she herself did or she had no use for them. The Castle rooms were always abundantly supplied with flowers, for the large conservatories provided plenty all through the winter.

That the Empress was sometimes lonely was not to be wondered at, and therefore her second marriage, if it really took place, to Count Seckendorff, was to be understood. It is not for me to say whether it was a fact; if it was it was kept a profound secret from the world, and the few

who knew it were faithful to the last. I once asked a celebrated old general, an intimate friend of the Kaiser Friedrich, whether he believed that this marriage had taken place and he replied: "I am convinced of it, and why not? Seckendorff is a very charming gentleman and their tastes harmonise in everything."

The Seckendorffs are of the Frankish nobility, dating back to the twelfth century, and the one in the service of the Empress was a man of unblemished character, of great personal charm, a scholar and an artist. Her Majesty had loved the Emperor with a great love, and had devoted her life to him. There was no slight to the memory of that noble man if she craved for sympathy and affection and found it; so I say with the General: "Why not?"

Looking back now upon events that happened long years ago I can recall occurrences—small things that, perhaps, may have had a bearing upon this subject. I remember in particular one instance which at the time I thought little of. It was an unwritten law in the Palace that all doors of the reception rooms should remain open continually, so that when my duties called me to pass through a drawing-room the door of which

was closed, I had no compunction in turning the handle. I was about to enter when I saw at a table the bowed figure of the Empress and instinct told me she was weeping. By her side stood Count Seckendorff; he was bending over her and gently stroking her hand. I caught the words: "Es muss und wird besser kommen" (it must and will become better). With my heart in my mouth I retreated, closing the door softly behind me and thanking heaven I had not been seen. This was about a year after the Emperor's death, and at a time when Her Majesty had especially much to suffer at the hands of her calumniators. I had never seen that brave sufferer give way before, and it was a terrible disclosure. Maximilian Harden, one of the most erudite and liberal-minded of German publicists, wrote an appreciation of the Empress Frederick soon after her death in his periodical *Die Zukunft*. His concluding words were these: "She now rests in the Friedens-Kirche, at Potsdam, by the side of her first husband." Although that excellent publication is very widely read there was never a voice raised in dissent or protest regarding this statement. This marriage was ignored by the Kaiser and his family, and was termed a



legend by the majority. But the few who knew held their peace, and the one who could have divulged the truth, the Count himself, was silent.

In her will the Empress left a legacy to Count Seckendorff of more than three times the amount that she left to her children, and the principal part of her valuable art collection was also bequeathed to him. Many wondered that she left the Castle of Friedrichshof to her youngest daughter, Princess Friedrich Karl of Hesse, "Maggie," as her mother always called her. The reason was that the Hessens were wealthy and really the only ones in the family—barring the Kaiser who did not come into question for obvious reasons—who were in a position to keep up Her Majesty's beloved home in the same manner as she herself had done, and she knew that her daughter's love for her would brook no changes. The Boer War saddened the Empress greatly in her last years. She followed the result of every battle with keenest interest, and rejoiced with her nation when Ladysmith was relieved. Her son's now famous cable to Ohm Krüger troubled her much, but she never mentioned the war to him. She knew that German sympathy was chiefly on the side of

the Boers and was glad she was far away from Berlin, where she would certainly have been made to feel her English nationality at every turn.

It was a long time before the character of her fatal illness was realised by the Empress. She believed the acute pain she began to suffer nearly two years before her death was due to rheumatism, and she continued her many activities as usual. When the dread disease was recognised by Dr. Renvers, the competent medical authority who for many years was her physician in attendance, it was not revealed to her until absolutely necessary. It was thought probable that the terrible malady had its origin in an injury caused by a fall from her horse in the autumn of 1898, but this could not be proved. Her Majesty, who was very tender-hearted, had made many friends in Cronberg and the surrounding district; whenever a case of need was brought to her notice her hand was open to help, and she did much to improve the conditions of the working classes in her vicinity. The news of Bismarck's death was a shock to her; she remembered his good qualities only, and all else had long been forgiven and forgotten.

The Empress bore her sufferings, and they were very great, with the same heroic fortitude that had characterised her husband. Every day when it was possible that last summer she was wheeled along the paths between her roses and enjoyed their fragrance. When able, she carried a little basket and collected a few choice blossoms—the English damask rose and the La France were her favourites—for her room. When the dread disease came to its climax and she was confined to her bed, the Empress, between the paroxysms of pain, used to lie very quietly with her face to the open window, gazing upon the beautiful Taunus Hills. She was living over again her happy years, she once told her attendant, and had forgotten the unhappy ones.

The Kaiser came often to see his mother. I should like in justice to record something that is not generally known in connection with his visits. The nature of the disease was such that few could bear the atmosphere of the sick-room for more than some fifteen minutes, but the Kaiser sat by the bedside for an hour at a time, holding the suffering woman's hand, and, lowering his strident voice, would tell her gently and cheerfully little bits of harmless news that he thought

would interest her. Surely here was some expiation for past misunderstandings, but had a little of this affection, of tactful consideration, been expended upon his mother during her life in Berlin what misery would have been avoided, and how different all might have been!

On August 5th, 1901, the Empress Frederick was released from her suffering and passed very peacefully away. She had expressed the wish to have a quiet funeral and as far as possible this was obeyed. The lying-in-state, to which she had a strong objection, was curtailed. The body was brought by special train from Cronberg to Potsdam for interment in the royal vault of the Friedens-Kirche (the Church of Peace). I witnessed the funeral procession of the last two Emperors, but neither impressed me like that of the Empress Frederick, although much simpler in character.

Few persons—there were hardly two hundred in all—were admitted to the park, and those only by special invitation. The cortège passed close to us, with no impediment of military or police between. The Kaiserin, with Queen Alexandra, drove in a closed carriage direct from Wildpark Station to the Mausoleum, followed by the other

royal ladies. All these, with the exception of the English Queen, were thickly veiled in German fashion, but Queen Alexandra's beautiful face was plainly visible through her thin veil, and I heard many whispers of admiration among the crowd.

The sound of cannon and the tolling of bells gave evidence that the coffin had arrived at Wildpark Station, and after some minutes the distant strains of a Dead March were heard. First came a squadron of the white-uniformed Gardes-du-Corps, followed immediately by a company of the Life Hussars, the Black or Death's Head Hussars, the deceased Empress's regiment, one of the most imposing in the Prussian army, which being stationed at another town is little known in Berlin. The fine black horses were alone well worth seeing, and after these came a forest of bayonets extending far up the avenue of chestnut trees; they were borne by a company of the First Foot Guards who wore the traditional tall white helmets.

After the clergy, the generals, pages and many of the chief officials of the Empress's household, came the Orders and Insignia carried on crimson velvet pillows by four distinguished marshals.

Count Waldersee—the hero of the Chinese campaign—bore the Empress's crown, and was the observed of all. He looked very frail and ill; he was bent and tired by reason of his burden and his long walk from the station; but the papers later on described him as a vigorous, soldierly personality. General von Mischke, an old and tried friend of both the Emperor and Empress Frederick, carried the foreign Orders.

Beneath the grand old chestnuts planted by Frederick the Great, the mournful procession wended its way. The hearse was drawn by eight horses enveloped to the eyes in black cloth, according to the very doleful German custom. A silver crown embroidered in the corners was the only relief. The coffin was surprisingly simple; it was of oak and covered by a crimson velvet pall with only a few wreaths laid upon it. As the coffin came in sight the Foot Guards, who possess a band of picked musicians, began to play Chopin's Dead March. Every bearer was profoundly impressed by the awesome grandeur of those incomparable strains, and many a tear was wiped away. It had been arranged to have a canopy held above the coffin by distinguished State officials, but it was found that the trees were

too low to permit this with ease, so the plan was abandoned.

The Kaiser, with King Edward on his right and Prince Heinrich on his left, walked immediately behind the hearse with bowed heads. I heard many comments later on the King's corpulence, which had much increased since his last visit to Berlin. The Duke of Connaught, in the uniform of the First Dragoons, as were also the King and the Kaiser, followed with the Kaiser's eldest son; and the remaining Hohenzollern Princes; the suites, the Chancellor and Ministers, distinguished civil and military persons and a detachment of the Life Hussars brought up the rear. The passing of the procession lasted only twenty minutes. The wreaths and other floral tributes, which filled three luggage vans on the journey from Cronberg to Potsdam, were all in good condition, and after being arranged round the Mausoleum the public were admitted to see them. The vault remained closed to all but the immediate relatives, and it is the same with the Mausoleum at Charlottenburg. The King and Queen of England, who left the next day for home, paid a visit to the Friedens-Kirche before leaving, and remained there some time.

Prince Heinrich, whose 29th birthday was on the following day, went alone to the vault and stayed there half-an-hour. It was the first birthday he had passed without some sign of affection from his mother.



## CHAPTER X

IN the possession of the Hohenzollern family is an original "Ecce Homo" by Guido Reni, which has been used as an altar-piece at every christening, marriage or funeral in that family for many decades. It is as much an institution as the bringing of water from the River Jordan for the baptism of an infant of the family. When the Emperor Frederick was dying he expressed the wish to have this picture placed above his bed, where his eyes could rest upon the Man of Sorrows. Another family possession of the Hohenzollerns is of a different description; it is the "White Lady," a ghost which haunts, it is said, the Berlin Schloss and the little Palace at Bayreuth, and appears shortly before the death of a Hohenzollern. The ghost is said to be that of Countess Orlamunde, who murdered her children because they were obstacles to her marriage with an Elector of Prussia

many centuries ago. It is all very vague, but there are persons who swear they have seen the spectre of the murderess passing along the passages of the Schloss round about midnight, and some of the members of the Imperial family, who were superstitious and psychically inclined, were rather nervous regarding the "White Lady."

While on this subject I will relate an absolutely true incident that occurred at the time of the death of Count Moltke, the veteran Field-Marshal, one of the famous trio of Empire-makers—Bismarck, Moltke, Roon. He had lived a little longer than his beloved Sovereign, Kaiser Wilhelm I, and his ninety-first birthday had been celebrated with much festivity in military circles, and soon afterwards the old soldier took to his bed. On the 24th of April, 1891, about eleven o'clock at night, the sentry on duty before the Office of the General Staff saw Count Moltke, who lived in the building, leave by the front door. He was in uniform, wrapped in his military cloak and he was unaccompanied. Greatly surprised, for the Field-Marshal was known to be ill, the man stood at attention *and the salute was responded to*. Two gentlemen, Count Unico von der Groeben and a friend, were passing at the time; they recognised

the Chief of the General Staff and wondered much where the old man could be going at such an hour and alone. They agreed to follow him and did so. Count Moltke walked briskly down the short Herwardt Strasse to the bridge across the Spree which bears his name, the Moltke Brücke. There he stood for about a minute as though lost in thought, observed at a few yards distance by Count Unico and his friend. Suddenly, to the watchers' unbounded amazement, he vanished. They looked at each other in awe and rubbed their eyes. The Count said: "We have seen a vision? It was his spirit?" Later on he related the experience to many people, some of whom believed him and some of whom were sceptical. Next day it was known that the Field-Marshal had died the previous night. The hour of his passing was that when the sentry and Count von der Groeben had seen him. Who shall say what mission the "Silent Moltke" had in his mind at that final moment of his earthly sojourn? Truly there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of!

With characteristic impetuosity the Kaiser plunged into the carrying out of many things at once. He desired to raise Germany's prestige



FIELD-MARSHAL COUNT MOLTKE IN HIS 91ST YEAR.



and to make Berlin the most beautiful and most talked-of city in the world. The Court fêtes were subjected to his personal revision. "It is my wish," said H.M. "that all old-fashioned conditions which do not conduce to the entertainment and enjoyment of my guests shall be superseded by a brilliancy hitherto unknown." Great sums of money were expended upon these desired improvements; whether they attained their end is another question.

The splendour of the Court banquets became proverbial, and put in the shade those of many other capitals. If there had been a good deal of thieving at the Court of the old Kaiser, it was wholesale robbery in Wilhelm the Second's household. Corruption prevailed in the Schloss kitchens, for there was little or no control, and as regards waste it was a case of "Like master, like man." I have said that the way from the kitchens to the dining-hall are interminably long, and it was during this journey that it became customary for whole dishes of delicacies and bottles of choice wine to disappear. Somebody would wait at a given spot, mingle with the footmen carrying the dishes, and an exchange was easily made. I was with my own eyes on one occasion a whole Rhine

salmon and a big dish of game change hands in this manner. Of course so much food had been ordered when there was a big banquet that the stolen delicacies were not missed. In the kitchens it was still worse, whole dishes being set aside regularly for the cooks' and lackeys' families. The supplies in the Schloss storerooms were enormous, and though the keys were kept and the stores handed out, yet there were ways and means of obtaining entrance to the vast rooms and nothing was ever noticed. It was not quite so easy with the wine cellars, although the rarest champagne and liqueurs not infrequently found their way to unintended destinations, and the cellar-masters themselves made an excellent additional income by commissions, perquisites and the like.

The nation, at least the democratic part of it, was now becoming much annoyed at the Kaiser's spending mania. He never thought of expense when his own pleasure or aggrandisement were concerned. His journeys, when he was always attended by a great retinue, cost immense sums. The restoring of a palace in a city to which he only paid one visit of a day and a night cost over a million marks. He had no consideration for

others, and often put foreign royalties to great and undesired expense and inconvenience, as when he invited himself to the silver wedding of the King and Queen of Italy, which was a purely family affair. A palace had to be put in order for him and his large suite and far more money had to be spent than the King could afford.

The Kaiser very much wished Berlin to have a spring season and a Rotten Row like London, and he set vigorously to work to achieve this. The beautiful park was there in the Tiergarten, which though much smaller than Hyde Park was nevertheless well supplied with broad avenues. A warm afternoon in May was chosen for the first attempt, a circuit of the finest roads having been marked out by H.M. for the gay procession—corso, as it was to be called. First came the unusual spectacle to Berlin of a four-in-hand, the fine chestnut team driven by Count Alversleben, a noted sportsman; their silver-plated harness glistened in the sun, smartly dressed women graced the drag, and the crowd that lined the route were delighted at the sight. Soon the Kaiserin's open carriage came along at a walking pace, drawn by six black horses; Her Majesty was accompanied by her fair young



daughter and two ladies of the Court. Many other carriages followed with leading ladies of the nobility and a few men, all eager to support the Sovereign's scheme. Then came the Kaiser on horseback, with two of his sons and a number of officers in gay uniforms; he was obviously in capital spirits, chatting and laughing with his friends and responding with unwonted cordiality to the salutations of the people. It was altogether a very gay procession that passed along the green avenues in the May sunshine, and the linnets and thrushes for which the Tiergarten is famed warbled their joyous songs all unabashed by so much splendour. The corso was repeated a few times and then, to the Kaiser's great annoyance, died a natural death. You cannot make a silken purse from a sow's ear, to use a homely proverb. Berlin is a city of workers and not one of clubs and fashion, and the wealthy among her citizens prefer to participate in the life of other great cities where gaiety is indigenous to the soil.

Another matter in which the Kaiser desired to imitate English customs was sport. He always longed to have a German boat-race like the Oxford and Cambridge, and it was no fault of

his if he did not succeed. It was indeed one of the most healthy traits of the third Emperor and his eldest son, the cultivation of sport for the youth of the country, and more particularly in the case of the university students, whose excessive beer-drinking revels always disgusted English and Americans, as well they might. Of late years sport in Germany has spread enormously, and in most out-door games and sports the Germans can now compete with any other nation, which was certainly not so when the young Kaiser came to the throne.

Every year at Grünau, a pretty district on the River Spree where it is broadest, the rowing regatta was held, their Majesties looking on from the deck of their steamer and afterwards presenting the prizes. The Kaiser's own love of the water was proverbial, and, unlike his consort, he never suffered from sea-sickness. His Norwegian cruise became an annual affair, and the big white steam-yacht *Hohenzollern* was a familiar sight in all Scandinavian harbours. It was considered a great honour to be invited for a trip in the Imperial yacht; the Kaiserin never accompanied her husband, and it was always a man's party.

There was great luxury on board the *Hohenzollern* during those long cruises, the cuisine being, it was said, even better than at the Schloss itself. At every port in which the yacht put in a courier would await it with a special consignment of fresh fruit packed in ice, which he had brought by the quickest route direct from the gardens and hot-houses of Sanssouci. His Majesty would eat no other fruit unless absolutely compelled, declaring Sanssouci fruit to be the finest in the world, and certainly the pears, grapes and peaches of Frederick the Great's famous gardens cannot be surpassed. It was no bed of roses the commander of the *Hohenzollern* enjoyed. A former commander, Count Baudissin, told me himself it frequently happened that on these cruises he was unable to get out of his clothes for three days at a time during rough weather. The responsibility, he said, was too great, and he had repeatedly expressed the wish, as he grew older, to resign the post, but the Kaiser would not hear of it.

A good deal of betting went on in the yacht, not much participated in by the Kaiser who was never a friend of that amusement nor, for the matter of that, of card-playing. The officers of

the suite were always incorrigible gamblers, and His Majesty had no idea what sums were lost and won during these cruises. I have heard of a wager of 20,000 marks being made that the Bergen pilot would put his left foot first upon the ladder.

An incident with tragic results occurred upon one of the Norwegian trips, the real truth of which never became public property, for most of those who knew it felt either bound in honour not to reveal it or had not been in a condition to remember details. There is, however, generally some tongue that wags, and the following version was told to me from a reliable source, although not having been present I am not able absolutely to vouch for it. It was a dirty night with the sea running high, and the watch was in the charge of First-Lieutenant von Hahnke, an experienced seaman. The ship was approaching the coast, and great foresight and skill were requisite. There had been a late and unusually convivial party in the dining saloon, and being a hot August night some of the livelier spirits who had not sought their cabins came up on deck to see the elements disporting themselves and, incidentally, to cool their heated blood.

It was said by someone who should know, that the owner of the yacht, in a playful mood, insisted on taking the wheel. Hahnke refused respectfully, but resolutely, to permit this, being well aware of the serious position. High words ensued, and, it is said, even blows were exchanged, one catching the royal yachtsman in the eye. The commotion was tremendous; His Majesty was persuaded to retire to his stateroom, where medical aid was afforded, and where with a cold-water bandage round his head he finally slept soundly till morning.

When the bright sunshine dancing on the waves heralded the day, revealing the *Hohenzollern* riding quietly at anchor, von Hahnke was nowhere to be seen. Peace once more prevailed, outwardly, at least, and it is likely that the untoward events of the previous night would have been forgotten. Hahnke, however, was not taking any risks, and it is also possible his load of remorse was greater than he could bear. Discipline pierces the joints and marrow of a Prussian lieutenant. Search was made all over the ship and along the coast, but to no purpose. Three days later, as the *Hohenzollern* was about to weigh anchor a fisherman came on board and desired to speak to the captain. He

had found a bicycle on the edge of a steep crag which, on examination, proved to be that of Lieutenant von Hahnke, although of the missing man there was not the least trace.

Now all was clear: the officer had committed an unpardonable crime; he had struck his Sovereign; no extenuating circumstances would be pleaded, and there was but one way of escape from moral and social degradation—that of suicide. He had taken his bicycle in the early morning to the edge of the cliff and thrown himself over the precipitous side into the sea. This was the story, it was told me, that was believed by the majority of those on board the yacht, while the story given to the world and to the sorrowing family of the unfortunate man was that he had taken a bicycle ride before breakfast, as was often his custom, and had fallen over the rocks. One or two staunch allies and intimate friends of Hahnke thought differently, and their version, never proved, was perhaps the true one: Hahnke was no fool; he knew he would be ostracised and compelled to leave the service, but he didn't see exactly any reason to leave the world as well. The faked suicide provided a way out of all difficulties, and the young officer got away overland, and finally

across the Atlantic, where he probably still enjoys life.

As to the Kaiser's black eye, which lasted a long time, it was accounted for by a fall over a hawser. Whether this was generally credited is doubtful, for everybody who knew the discipline prevailing on board the imperial yacht, the spick and span order and the care taken of the Kaiser was fully aware of the unlikelihood of such neglect as could have caused the accident.

His Majesty showered honours upon Lieutenant Hahnke's father, an army officer with a distinguished career behind him. A short time after the loss of his son he was raised to the rank of Field-Marshal, given a permanent seat in the Herrenhaus—Germany's House of Lords, and received at the hands of his Sovereign the distinguished Order of the Black Eagle. I was told that General von Hahnke never knew the real story of his son's disappearance. As an old Prussian officer he would certainly have disapproved of the flight, and his son no doubt knew this. It was characteristic of the Kaiser's mercurial temperament that later on he determined to erect a monument to von Hahnke's memory, one, of course, designed by himself. He set to

work with great enthusiasm upon this fascinating task, making many sketches upon which artists' opinions were invited and accepted—or not. The monument was finally erected at the spot where the unfortunate man was believed to have met with his fatal accident.



## CHAPTER XI

**K**AISER WHILHELM was always very hospitable. He loved nothing more than receiving foreign guests and pointing out to them the beauties of his capital, and he spent money like water in entertaining them with banquets, gala operas and so on. I remember a visit of the Shah which did not terminate so abruptly as that of his predecessor in the reign of the old Kaiser. Oriental guests have never been common, and everything was done to honour His Highness who, despite the unusual heat of June, developed tremendous activity. He was quartered at Bellevue, the pretty little palace in the Tiergarten, which was very useful for visitors of not quite the very highest rank. I never saw any man with so much luggage. Four vans conveyed the luggage for himself and suite, and there was an extra van containing His Highness's own bath, with

accessories. His first act, in duty bound, was to drive to the Mausoleum at Charlottenburg to lay wreaths of costly orchids on the marble tombs of the first Emperor and Empress. This became an established custom for all the Kaiser's visitors, and, indeed, the beautiful recumbent statues by Rauch, the Mausoleum itself with its soft blue lighting and Angel of Peace, are among the finest things Berlin has to show. The Kaiser took his guest roebuck shooting one evening in the Potsdam forests and was surprised at his skill as a marksman, for the Shah made a bigger bag than his host.

Speaking of guests, the visit of the charming young Queen of Holland was a memorable one. Her Majesty was fêted with extra ceremony, for it was an open secret that she would take a German husband. I have heard that she preferred Duke August of Mecklenburg, the "handsome August," as he was called, to his brother Henry, but that the delicate negotiations all fell through, to Her Majesty's chagrin. It was said the former prized his liberty more than the exalted position of a prince consort. He was really very fond of freedom in every way and a noted traveller in far countries. The Queen had an unpleasant adventure during her stay here that never found its

way into the papers. There had been a great banquet at the New Palace, Potsdam, and it was late when her Majesty, attended by a lady-in-waiting and her aide, started, in a carriage driven by one of the Kaiser's own coachmen, for the Potsdam Stadt Schloss where she was passing a few days. It was a dark night and rain was falling. The New Palace, as many people know, was built, in a fit of pique by Frederick the Great, on very swampy ground, and although the grounds and the park of Sanssouci are most beautifully laid out, the soil is not of a dry kind, and off the main avenues the land is marshy still in wet weather. Possibly the coachman had partaken of the hospitality of the cellar-master, or perhaps he was trying to take a short cut, but whatever the cause he turned his fleet horses from the great, broad avenue which was the direct road and dashed a considerable distance into the swamp where they floundered and the carriage stuck in the morass.

Great consternation prevailed; the main avenue was well lighted but among the trees all was dark, the only light available being the carriage lamps. The Queen was furious, for she knew there had been unpardonable negligence. Coachman and footman were frightened out of their wits and

dared not return to the New Palace for another conveyance, besides, it was farther to the New Palace than it was to the town and what was the Queen to do in the meantime? Finally, the footman was sent to fetch the first closed cab he could find in the streets. This took some little time, and then it was stationed in the main avenue. For Her Majesty the carriage rugs were laid upon the worst part of the mud, but her temper as well as her dainty shoes and long train suffered considerably in the transit. So Queen Wilhelmina and her attendants returned to the Stadt Schloss in a humble droschky, while the Kaiser's servants extricated the horses, although the carriage had to be left in the swamp till daylight. Her Majesty, annoyed though she was, did not divulge anything about the mishap which, fortunately, had no grave consequences, and, happily for the coach-man, nothing about it reached the Kaiser's ears.

Count Waldersee, on his return from China after his successful campaign, was treated to all kinds of honours. The Kaiser, after having kissed the old soldier on both cheeks, conferred on him the Black Eagle Order, and gave a State banquet for him. The Field-Marshal was accorded, as a

delicate attention, the same suite of rooms at the Kaiserhof Hotel that Li Hung Chang had occupied on his visit to Berlin, and, as a reminder of his cordially-detested sojourn in the Celestial Empire, Count Waldersee found hanging at the foot of his bed old Li's lifesize portrait.

Early in the twentieth century the eminent Frisian writer Gustav Frennsen, author of the widely-read novel *Jorn Uhl*, published his book *Peter Moor's Journey to South-West*, which is so moving in its simple pathos and so true to life under the then existing conditions in the German colony. A passage always dear to my heart is the following. Two officers of the German navy are standing on the captain's deck as the ship conveying Peter Moor to South Africa is passing the coast of Dover. One officer makes use of these memorable words: "We seamen think otherwise about the English than do the landmen. We meet them in all the harbours of the world, and we know that they are most worthy of respect. Behind those high chalk cliffs dwell the first people of the earth, distinguished, wise in the ways of the world, brave, united and rich. And we? Only one of these qualities do we possess from of old—bravery. Another we are gaining

slowly—wealth. Shall we ever have the others? That is for us the vital question.” The Kaiser, who read the book, took umbrage at these words that a German author had put into the mouth of a German officer, although he had read and enjoyed *Jorn Uhl*, and from that time on Frensen was ignored by him.

His Majesty, as is well known, has always had very strict ideas about discipline and order which no one should dare to oppose. It was a case in point with Gerhart Hauptmann, one of Germany’s finest writers. His plays were frequently produced at the Deutsches Theatre, that classical institute of dramatic art where the Kaiser had a permanent box. Unfortunately for harmonious relations between himself and his Sovereign Herr Hauptmann wrote a play, *Die Weber*, which is now world-famous, faithfully depicting the terrible conditions of the Silesian weavers in the ’40’s. The author’s grandfather had been one of these oppressed weavers, and so he had all the details not from hearsay and books, but from his own father. It is one of the most pathetic plays ever written; naturally of a very revolutionary character, but the revolt of the down-trodden, starving workmen against their wealthy, tyrannical employers was

justified. The Kaiser strongly disapproved of this drama, which he never saw himself, and he considered it a danger to a law-abiding community, seeing it from his own end of the telescope and forgetting, moreover, that conditions had bettered somewhat since that time. He gave up his box at the Deutsches and never entered the theatre again, and Gerhart Hauptmann was a tabooed name at the Court. Perhaps this proved a good advertisement, for everybody went to see the play who might not otherwise have done so. Its intrinsic merits, nevertheless, have caused it to be revived times innumerable at leading theatres, and the author has made a fortune over it.

Ernst von Wildenbruch, one of the most justly popular German dramatists in the earlier years of the Kaiser's reign managed things better. He gained his Sovereign's affection by writing several works extolling the Hohenzollerns and, indeed, he made so many patriotic poems for and about the Kaiser's pet institutions that he might have been termed poet laureate had such a title existed in Germany.

His Majesty has always loved attending a play or an opera at his own theatres, the subsidising of which cost him big sums of money. For

many years after his accession he was the terror of all actors, stage-managers and authors connected with the Royal Schauspielhaus. When a new play was to be produced he delighted in putting in an appearance at rehearsals, openly approving, disapproving or making his own suggestions—which, of course, had to be listened to with the utmost respect—and otherwise disturbing the action. Sometimes he would slip in when a rehearsal was going on and sit in a dark corner of his box. Then his strident voice, offering advice that was really a command, would make everybody jump. Thus none of the artists ever felt at ease at rehearsal, not knowing what might befall them, and the famous Court dancer, Dell 'Era, always crossed herself three times before going on to protect herself from adverse criticism in high places.

One actor, however, was a great exception; he seldom attended a rehearsal, and if he did so he went his way regardless of any one, and the Kaiser, strangely enough, was especially fond of him. This was Adalbert Matkowsky, one of the best German dramatic actors and famous, above all, for his Shakespearean rôles. Being a genius, he was allowed every licence. He never cared a



fig for criticism except for that of his wife, who was an Englishwoman, and had never been on the stage. To her criticism he listened with much attention; with her he read his rôles through at home, and on the opening night of a play in which he acted he insisted upon her being present. On one occasion Mrs. Matkowsky had to curtail her holiday in England in order to give her husband her moral assistance in a new part.

But the Kaiser was always very proud of his theatres and of his artists, which he might well be. When a terrible fire at a Vienna theatre occurred and many lives were lost through inadequate means of escape he at once determined to assure the safety of his own actors. It was the Opera House in Unter den Linden that was most lacking in emergency exits, so the Kaiser, after consulting with a number of expert architects and finding there was no available space in the interior for escape staircases, decided to have numerous flights of iron steps and landings affixed to the outside of the building. The Opera House, never a thing of beauty, did not gain by this innovation, but His Majesty declared that the life of one of his artists was worth more to him than all architectural beauties.



THE LATE KAISER'S FAVOURITE ACTOR, ADALBERT MATROWSKY, AS OTHELLO.



In particular the Kaiser delighted in welcoming foreign stars of magnitude. It was said he preferred their performances to German ones. When Beerbohm Tree came to Berlin with his company His Majesty did not miss a single performance, and it was the same thing with Forbes-Robertson, upon both of which eminent actors he bestowed personal souvenirs. I remember he was very much taken with Miss Viola Tree, whose impersonation of Trilby was so charming, and he insisted on the Kaiserin inviting her to tea at the Palace.

When Fjodor Chaliapin sang for the first time at the Berlin Opera House—I think it was in 1909—the Kaiser was present at the performance of the *Barber of Seville*. He summoned the famous Russian to his box, asked him a number of questions, and expressed his great pleasure at having heard him sing; he had seldom laughed so much in his life, he said. Then His Majesty took from his adjutant an open case containing the Order of the Prussian Red Eagle of the Second Class—a distinguished decoration conferred only upon the very meritorious in art and science—which he wanted to fasten himself upon the breast of the singer. But the pin had been forgotten and the

Kaiserin and her ladies searched their toilettes in vain. No pin was to be found, so the Kaiser laughingly placed the decoration in Chaliapin's hand, and told him he would have to fasten it on at home.

## CHAPTER XII

**A**S Princess Wilhelm, and later on as German Crown Princess, the Kaiserin was always very badly dressed; by badly I mean without either taste or distinction. She looked like any simple, middle-class girl from the provinces; even Berlin women, who have only developed good taste in dress during the last few years, disapproved of their future Empress's appearance. When the young Schleswig-Holstein Princess did become Kaiserin her husband whose eye for beauty and symmetry had been early trained by his mother, decided that a radical change must be made in this as well as in other matters. He began to select the fashions he considered suitable for his wife and an Empress into the bargain; her great simplicity and economy in the matter of dress annoyed him. In truth a very notable change in Her Majesty's toilettes became apparent before

long; the richness of the materials used, the costly furs and jewels the Kaiser insisted on her wearing effected a transformation not always agreeable to the wearer. The Kaiserin did not understand the art of wearing her clothes, an expert in this art once said to me, and I call to mind the difference that must have been obvious to all beholders, between the toilette of Queen Alexandra and that of the German Empress at a certain gala performance at the Opera. While the dress of the former was indescribably lovely, like a dream of moonlight, that of the latter was just a silk gown trimmed with fur, which pronouncement was uttered by the aforementioned expert.

It was very repugnant to the Kaiserin to spend so much money on dress, which might have been put to better purpose, such as the building of churches, but she had to bow to the inexorable dictates of her husband. In some things, however, she remained firm, for instance, shopping in person or being tried on. With great skill a dummy of exactly the proportions of Her Majesty's figure was made and all dresses and costumes were fitted upon it. A large, light room in the Berlin Schloss was turned into a dressmaking establishment, where a dozen experienced dressmakers were

installed under the supervision of the head tire-woman, *Fräulein von Bolieu*, who in her turn consulted a competent lady-in-waiting. This was only for ordinary needs; when a big court function was coming off or the Kaiserin was going on a visit to other courts or countries the number of workers was doubled and trebled. An experienced dressmaker went regularly to Paris, another to London and a third to Vienna, to study the fashions and purchase models which the "home dress-makers" would then copy. All the materials for the Kaiserin's dresses were sent to the *Schloss*, where they were sifted by the Court ladies before being laid before their Royal Mistress, and special pictures, with every detail of colouring, were made of great evening toilettes, so that Her Majesty could judge of the effect. The same held good with all kinds of hats, coats, furs, shoes, etc., which were sent by the Court purveyors to the *Schloss* in vast numbers. The Kaiserin was never known to enter a dressmaking or similar establishment either in Berlin or anywhere in her own country, while the Empress Frederick, when Crown Princess, frequently paid a visit to the shops and made her own choice, and was such a charming customer that the shop-



owners and assistants could not say enough in her praise.

Augusta Victoria did not bring many jewels with her, but her husband selected all he thought she ought to possess and gave them to her. These, together with a legacy of fine diamonds and pearls from the old Empress Augusta to her granddaughter-in-law and the addition of the Crown jewels provided her with a sufficiency of jewels for any occasion. Possibly because the young Princess of Schleswig-Holstein had possessed so few precious baubles herself she was determined things should be otherwise for her daughter. Thus on her first birthday and each subsequent one, as well as at Christmas and New Year, the Kaiserin gave Princess Victoria Luise a pearl of great size and purity, that is, she collected the stones and kept them for a necklace when her young daughter should come of age. The Kaiser was very interested also in the collection, and whoever had a perfect stone to dispose of tried to bring it to their Majesties' notice for this purpose. The string of pearls later became one of the finest in the world.

The wardrobe of the Kaiser was a comprehensive one, and under a large and efficient staff of attend-

ants. Uniforms were naturally innumerable: gala uniforms of his own and every other important nation were kept in readiness for a visit to be paid or for a visitor to be received in; uniforms of every one of His Majesty's regiments; interim uniforms for house wear; naval uniforms for the sea or river. For ordinary repairs several tailors had their quarters in the Schloss, the making of the uniforms being entrusted to the Court firms. The Kaiser's civilian dress was very limited. Whenever he went to London he always ordered a good quantity of clothing; England was the only country where he wore mufti-suits. The one article of dress he never possessed was a dressing-gown. Soon after the Franco-German War Kaiser Wilhelm I received from a German firm a costly silken dressing-gown as a present. It was returned by the Controller of the Household with the words: "The Hohenzollerns wear no dressing-gowns." It was a fact that every Hohenzollern Prince from morning to night wore uniform and no matter how hot the weather the stiff military collar was to him a sign of *noblesse oblige*. The only concession to great heat was the donning of white ducks. It made one sorry to see the little cadets wearing trousers and the same hot uniform

as their elders on a broiling day at an age when they should have been in knicker-bockers with bare legs.

Berlin was all on the *qui vive* for the wedding of the Crown Prince and Duchess Cecilie of Mecklenburg, for the Berliners delight in weddings and funerals, in anything, in fact, that brings movement into their rather grey life. It was a love match, the young people having met repeatedly at Gelbensande, a pretty little place on the Baltic, where the Grand Duchess, Cecilie's mother, had a villa. The young Duchess is very tall, not beautiful, but with a pair of lovely brown eyes and a winning smile. Her taste in dress is excellent, and there is no doubt that she helped to teach the Berlin women how to dress. I was informed by somebody who knew her well that she was very fond of a mixture of blue and pink in her evening dresses, that pink was her favourite colour and sweet-peas her favourite flowers.

The Crown Prince's fiancée had plenty of money in her own right, a fact that was not displeasing to the Kaiser, and which helped to gild over certain traits of the Russian mother-in-law that were not exactly all he could desire. The

young bride had been very spoiled by her brother, and her home, the Mecklenberg-Strelitz Castle, is a huge building. When she went through her new home, the Marble Palace at Potsdam, she said to her husband: "It is all very pretty, but far too small." However, this charming little palace, which lies on the banks of the Heiligen-See—one of the chain of Havel lakes—and whose kitchen has been poetically compared to an ancient Greek temple sunk in the lake, was only intended as a summer residence, the winter one being the commodious house in Unter den Linden formerly occupied by the Emperor Frederick and known as the Crown Prince's Palace.

The wedding, for which royal and imperial guests came from far and near, was on a tropically hot June day, and the only cool place was the Schloss chapel where the ceremony was performed. Dr. Dryander, the popular Chaplain of the imperial family who had baptised and married and buried several generations of Hohenzollerns, officiated and delivered an overlong address to the young couple. At the changing of the rings from the left hand (the betrothal one) to the right the cannons in the Lustgarten thundered their 101 volleys, drowning the voices of the

Cathedral choir. According to the universal custom in Germany the pastor then presented the bridegroom with a bible and the ceremony was over. It was followed by much kissing and embracing in the demonstrative German fashion, and then the brilliant procession returned to the White Hall for the court. The Kaiser, however, on account of the heat, ordered the filing past of the officers to take place *en masse* and not singly as was usual, which curtailed the ceremony agreeably. Dinner was served at small tables in all available rooms, for 1,600 persons were present. The Picture Gallery was reserved for the bridal pair, their Majesties, near relatives and the most distinguished guests. The Kaiser, as Head of the House, was in his element, and as soon as the soup was finished made a long speech which he had had a busy time preparing. The text and chief allusions contained in Dr. Dryander's homily at the altar were the Kaiser's own unaided work also.

A very pretty feature of the wedding was the "torchlight" procession in the White Hall. It was a polonaise, headed by twenty-four pages in their picturesque uniform, each bearing a huge white wax candle which takes a good deal of

careful holding. All the guests followed two-and-two, last of all the Kaiserin with the bridegroom, the Kaiser with the bride. The bridal pair at a Hohenzollern wedding have always been conducted with great ceremony to their apartments at the close of the day, but the Crown Prince and Princess, being modern in their tastes, broke with the custom and left the Schloss at nine o'clock. One of the wedding gifts of the Kaiser was a private train of four coaches very luxuriously equipped, which was to convey the bridal pair to the hunting box Hubertusstock, where the first days of the honeymoon were to be spent. But all unknown to anybody but those it most concerned the train was stopped half way and the journey continued in an open motor car through the warm June night. The quaint Hohenzollern ceremony of the distribution of the bride's "garter" among the guests was, of course, not omitted. This traditional custom was in former times quite literal, the garters being cut into tiny souvenirs after the bride had retired, a new pair being in readiness for the next morning. Now, however, these souvenirs are specially made in great quantities; they consist of pieces of *moirée* ribbon, bearing the crown and date, and each

guest becomes the proud possessor of such a piece of ribbon.

The German Crown Princess was always devoted to animals, and she saw to it that all in her own home were properly attended to. She permitted no bearing-reins to be used with her horses, and never rested until she persuaded her father-in-law to follow her example in this. It took some time before the Kaiser consented, but the young Princess was persistent, and finally gained her end. She was a noted anti-vivisectionist, and one of the first things she did after she settled down in Berlin was to enroll herself as a very active patron of the *Tierschutzverein*—the German S.P.C.A.

The Imperial stables, whose upkeep cost more than a million marks a year, contained on an average 350 horses, the majority of which were in Berlin, although a large number were kept in the stables of the New Palace at Potsdam. The stables of the first Emperor were not a quarter so large, but then he had simpler tastes and represented less than his grandson. For all his carriages, whether for ordinary or gala occasions, the Kaiser used only black horses, though he rode chestnuts and greys. The blacks, extraordinarily fine beasts, were bred in Trakenhen, in East Prussia,

where the Kaiser had a stud-farm. Her Majesty preferred bays for both riding and driving; she was, however, not fond of riding and, like all German women, a very indifferent horsewoman, in which respect she was the exact opposite of the Empress Frederick. The Kaiser was a capital rider and even driver, in spite of his almost useless left hand. He occasionally drove a four-in-hand of beautiful greys, pure Hungarian breed, the gift of the Emperor of Austria. His Majesty drove from Berlin to Potsdam at a spanking pace, to the great concern of the equerry at his side. A less satisfactory acquisition was the troika presented by Tsar Alexander III to the Kaiser. The latter never drove with these fiery steeds, picturesque though they were, for they could not be trusted from the very first. They were constantly taking fright, placing the Russian coachman who came with them in the most unpleasant and dangerous predicaments until, finally, they had to be removed from the Imperial stables. Prince Pless took them over, and I heard they behaved themselves in more seemly fashion in Silesia.

The Kaiser himself never cared much for animals; the only exceptions being his three little brown dachshunds, beautiful specimens of that



very original and self-willed species. This trio of mischief were permitted everywhere, on an armchair in the drawing-room, on the rug near their master's desk in the study that was sacrosanct and in the yacht *Hohenzollern* they always formed part of the company on a cruise. When asked by the King of England what their names were the Kaiser replied: "Well, I suppose they have names, but they are no use at all, for not one of them comes when he is called."

The only kennels the Kaiser owned were those in the little Monbijou Palace garden, near the English Church at Berlin, and the inhabitants of these were somewhat in the nature of a white elephant. Luna, the head of the family, was a magnificent Borzoi, presented by the Tsar to the Kaiser when the latter was on a visit to Russia. She became the mother of five beautiful dogs who shared her home, but spacious as this was and though they were regularly taken out for a walk these animals needed more liberty, and ought to have had the run of one of the Potsdam parks. Once the Kaiserin visited them and occasionally the Kaiser and his children had a look at them, but though well fed and brushed they always looked far from happy, and Luna, no doubt,

longed at times for the endless steppes of her old home where she could stretch her long legs in a wild, free gallop.

The Berliners, who are fond of giving nicknames to people, used to call their Emperors the "Weise Kaiser," the "Leise Kaiser" and the "Reise Kaiser" (the wise, the quiet, and the travelling Kaiser), and they were all well named. The third Emperor's active temperament found an outlet in travel, especially in the first decades of his reign. He rushed from one place to another, never remaining anywhere long. The only time he was in the least quiet was in the *Hohenzollern*, cruising around the coast of Norway. One of the favourite pastimes of his on board was the conducting of the Sunday service, which he never omitted even in the roughest weather. He took no pastor with him on these pleasure trips, so that the duty which is otherwise that of a clergyman devolved upon himself.

Punctually at ten o'clock every guest had to be on deck, and the entire crew—over two hundred in number—also. The Kaiser always retired early on Saturday night to be fresh for his office next morning, but as his guests did not follow his example this was a very distasteful custom to many

of them; on land they did not go to church, and why they should do so on a pleasure trip they did not know. But there was no appeal, and it was taken very much amiss if one of the number was absent. When all was in readiness the Kaiser would come on deck with quick, business-like steps, take up his place at the desk, and deliver a prayer of his own composition which, I was told, was more of a command to the Almighty than a petition. Then a hymn was sung by the picked choir of the crew and the guests, after which the Imperial skipper read from the Bible and after that a sermon. This sermon was sometimes written by one of the Court Chaplains, but more often than not was the unaided work of His Majesty. Anyone with a keen sense of the humorous rather enjoyed these little homilies. Certainly they afforded the writer the greatest pleasure; he wove into them admonitions as to the right path along the political road as well as the moral road, and on occasions he could be very bitter concerning the Socialists. Another hymn and the Benediction concluded the service, which took altogether about three quarters of an hour.

The Kaiser paid twenty-five consecutive annual visits to Norway, and the jubilee was celebrated

with all due ceremony. A colossal statue of the Norwegian national hero, Frithjof, was wrought in bronze by Professor Unger at His Majesty's command, and this was transported to Norway and presented to the nation in commemoration of his many pleasant visits to their shores. The statue was erected on a suitable eminence at Bergen and the Kaiser unveiled it with one of his characteristic bursts of eloquence in the presence of the King and thousands of spectators from all parts of the country. It was a fête-day such as was very dear to His German Majesty's heart.

It was always considered a great piece of good fortune to be promoted from the ordinary naval service to service in the Imperial yacht. The crew certainly had on the whole a very good time. His Majesty insisted on plenty of exercise for his men in the form of races and other sports, and to the winners he often gave prizes. The food, too, was superior to that of the ordinary sailor; it had to be good, in fact, as at any moment the Imperial skipper might take it into his head to pay a visit to the kitchen and try the viands.

Just as the Kaiser, by the strength of his indomitable will and steady practice forced himself

to become proficient in riding, at tennis and other games—rowing being the one sport from which he was debarred—so he became a capital shot. He was passionately fond of shooting, and of every form of hunting. Naturally everything was made as easy as possible for him. Whenever there was a “drive” of game—the most popular type of sport—one of his own special foresters stood at his right and another at his left; the latter, as the quarry approached, fixed a forked stick in front of the Kaiser while the former handed him the loaded rifle. He rested his gun on the forked stick, adjusted his sight and fired; the gun was reloaded from the left, a second passed from the right and this proceeding continued with great rapidity.

One kind of chase much favoured by the Kaiser and his officers was the so-called wild boar hunt which took place periodically in the deep glades of the royal forests in various parts of the country. This, to my thinking, is a most revolting and cruel sport, akin almost to bull-baiting. The “wild” animal, which was usually a sow, had its tusks broken and filed before being sent on its errand so that it could not in its despair turn upon the hounds and injure them. After a short run, fol-

lowed by the pack, and behind them the mounted huntsmen, the wretched beast was overtaken. It made a desperate attempt to escape, and finding that impossible turned upon its persecutors. Owing to the broken tusks the game was an uneven one, but before the hounds had finished worrying their prey they were called off and the supreme moment arrived. The Kaiser dismounted; should he come up later the others waited for him. The senior of the hunt accosted him with a deep bow and presented him with a long, sharp sword called a "*Saufeder*." His Majesty went up to the bleeding, panting, often groaning animal and stabbed it through and through, leaving the instrument sticking in the body. After the *coup de grâce* there would be congratulations and either a repetition of the hunt with another sow or an adjournment for open-air lunch. The "*Saufeder*" was never used twice by the Kaiser, a new one being provided each time. The other became the property of one of the party, who cherished it as an honoured memento of this disgusting and degrading spectacle.

The quarry that fell to His Majesty's gun or sword during one of the early years of his reign

comprised the following : 44 deer of various kinds and 56 young roebucks; 400 hares; 12 sows; 120 pheasants and 200 partridges, which are not counted by the brace in this country; 8 black-cock and one fox. For his hunting expeditions the Kaiser had an automobile kitchen built according to his own design. He was justifiably proud of the arrangement of space, and called it his "*Multum in Parvo*." The equipment was the same in miniature as that of an ordinary kitchen. It contained an ice-box and pantry, an electric stove, and china and glass for twelve persons. In the rear of the car were twelve folding chairs, a folding table for the same number of persons, and everything could be set out in six minutes. The cook who accompanied the travelling kitchen had two assistants and could serve a hearty meal to the "guns" within half an hour.

The Kaiser having shot and eaten grouse in Scotland was most desirous to raise those birds in his own country. The Rominten Moors in East Prussia, very near the Russian frontier, where there was a royal shooting box, seemed an altogether suitable site, air and all other conditions being much the same as those of the Highlands. There, several times, young grouse were imported

and the utmost care was expended on them, but, to the great vexation of His Majesty, the birds never throve; on the contrary they pined away and died. Like the little English primroses, they refused to flourish on alien soil.



### CHAPTER XIII

**I**N the early years of his reign the Kaiser, as has been said before, repudiated on every possible occasion his kinship with the English. Once on a shooting expedition he caught his hand in a bramble, scratching it rather badly. Shaking off the tiny drop of blood he muttered angrily: "Dies verdammte englisches Blut!" (this damned English blood). Though but a small incident, it was very typical. Later on in life he has become outwardly, at least, more tolerant, but the efforts of certain sycophants to prove that he was not of English extraction and had no English blood in his veins met, nevertheless, with his entire approval. One such patriotic historian drew up the following tree as a proof of Kaiser Wilhelm's pure German blood:

Pedigree of Kaiser Wilhelm II.

Georg I, Elector of Hanover, since 1714 King of England, Son of Duke Ernst August of Braunschweig-Lüneburg and the Palatine Princess Sophie; married to Sophie Dorothea of Lüneberg-Celle.

Their Son: Georg II, married to Karoline von Ansbach.

Their Son: Friedrich Ludwig (died before his father), married to Augusta von Sachsen-Gotha.

Their Son: Georg III, married to Charlotte von Mecklenburg-Strelitz.

Their Son: Edward, Duke of Kent, married to Luise Victoria of Sachsen-Koburg.

Their Daughter: Victoria (since 1837 Queen of England) married to Prince Albert of Sachsen-Koburg.

Their Daughter: Victoria, married to Prince Friedrich Wilhelm of Prussia (1888 German Emperor).

Their Son: Wilhelm II (the present Emperor).

Soon after his accession Kaiser Wilhelm's belief in his own supremacy, so plainly demonstrated on many occasions, aroused a strong feeling of protest in Liberal circles. The following incident provoked much open and covert discussion, and was water on the mill of the Social Democrats, to use a German proverb.

A goodly number of years ago His Majesty paid a State visit to the ancient town of Regensburg, in Bavaria, and after the banquet given in his honour inscribed these words in the municipal "Golden Book": "*Suprema lex regis voluntas.*" After some years a well-known South German newspaper suddenly felt it incumbent upon itself to publish what was described as an explanation of the apparently arrogant motto that had provoked so much ill-feeling. It was stated that the Prince-Regent had himself invited the Kaiser to write his name and a few words in the book, but that His Majesty had modestly declined, thinking it too great an honour. The Prince Regent insisting the Kaiser laughingly replied: "I am in your country and must obey your command." So saying he took the golden pen and wrote the words quoted with quite another meaning than the one generally imputed to it. Whether this tardy and rather lame "explanation" was accepted is doubtful, more particularly as nobody could well accuse the Kaiser of modesty.

His excessive impulsiveness has led the present German Emperor into various tight places, and involved his Government in frequent difficulties. Perhaps the notorious Krüger telegram was the

most serious of his political mistakes, though others have run it close. A tremendous stir was made much later on by the Kaiser's interview published in the *Daily Telegraph*, but public opinion, I have heard on good authority, went in this matter slightly astray. An official declaration was published by a Berlin organ of the Government which threw a strange light upon the carelessness of several persons in responsible positions. It appears that the Kaiser received from a private Englishman the MS. of an article comprising a number of the Kaiser's conversations with various English personages and the writer added a request for permission to publish it.

The Kaiser did not wish to be bothered with such a bulky English and not very legible volume, so he sent it straight on by special messenger to his friend and Chancellor, Prince Bülow, asking him to read it and state if it were advisable to publish it. Now the Prince was holiday making at Norderny, the pretty bathing resort on the North Sea, where he had a villa and where he passed many weeks with the Princess each summer. Neither did he want to be "bothered," so he sent the fatal MS. to Herr von Schoen, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, asking him to read it carefully.

But Herr von Schoen was also on holiday, in the Tyrolian mountains, and his two understudies were away as well. So the article fell into the hands of a subordinate who certainly misunderstood its contents and gave it as his opinion that it would be quite all right to publish it, and returned it to the Chancellor who, believing it had passed the Foreign Office safely, gave his signature and the article was published.

When the *Daily Telegraph's* disclosures were made nobody was more astonished at them than the Chancellor himself. It was a chain of carelessnesses unparalleled in the annals of almost any Government, and he saw, too late, what he had done or rather not done. So when the Kaiser returned from his shooting visit to the Prince of Wernigerode he was met with Prince Bülow's confession and offer of resignation. But His Majesty would not hear of the Chancellor's going, and the same evening he drove to Prince Bülow's residence and was closeted with him for a couple of hours. Of course the Chancellor had to resign, but it was much against the Kaiser's wish that his resignation was accepted, and embittered him all the more against the political powers in Germany.

Whenever the Kaiser took a fancy to anyone it was in an exaggerated form, and might just as soon change for the opposite as not. Prince Bülow, a very pleasant man, had the Sovereign's favour a long time; many people used to say the Princess was the real attraction, for Princess Bülow, a very handsome Italian, was a most fascinating conversationalist, witty, and possessed of far more brains than her husband. They were a very happy couple, and the Kaiser was the third in the family. Nearly every day when he went for his early morning ride in the Tiergarten he would put in an appearance at the Chancellor's Palace, which was conveniently near, and say he had come to breakfast. I have been told that His Majesty's frequent visits were sometimes rather inconvenient; on one occasion, particularly, when the Chancellor was ill and ordered to remain quiet the Kaiser would take no refusal. "Tell him I want to see my Bernhard," he said to the worried Princess, and of course he could not be told he was in the way.

The Kaiserin disliked politics; she did not pretend to understand them, and never allowed herself to be drawn into a discussion upon them. In this again how different was she from the Empress

Frederick, whose brilliant intellect encompassed all vital subjects and who knew far more about the political situation of many countries than did her eldest son and his ministers. In one matter, however, the Kaiserin was very decided, and that was in everything appertaining to the orthodox Lutheran faith in which she was brought up, and she neither saw nor acknowledged good in any other. She was as active in building churches—which were never filled—as the Kaiser was in erecting monuments of his ancestors, which is saying a good deal. When money was being collected for the Emperor William Memorial Church which was partly the design of the Kaiser, Jews and Gentiles, Catholics and Protestants responded generously to Her Majesty's request for donations, but later on when a Roman Catholic church was to be built in a very poor district where there were many Poles, and she was approached for a small contribution her answer was definite to impoliteness: "*Ich huldige diese Tendenzen nicht.*" (I do not approve of these tendencies) she said.

Once on his travels the Kaiser met a very charming dignitary of the Roman Church to whom he took one of his sudden fancies, and, hearing that

the cleric intended to pay a visit to Berlin the next winter, His Majesty told him to be sure and come to the Schloss. The following spring the Kaiser met his clerical friend again in Italy, and asked him why he had not kept his promise to call at the Schloss.

"I did so, your Majesty," was the reply, "but I was not permitted to see you though I knew you were at home by the flag."

"That's my wife's doing, I'll wager anything," cried the Kaiser with much indignation.

I am sure "Dona" was told about it.

The North Germans were never, as a rule, religious or devotional. In the reign of the old Kaiser hardly anybody went to church and if the name of God was uttered—otherwise than as an exclamation—the person who uttered it was looked upon as "queer." The Emperor Frederick was not a church-goer and the Empress had her pew at the little English church of St. George, and attended regularly when in Berlin. When Wilhelm II came to the throne he attempted to effect a change, in which he was ardently supported by his wife. But it was up-hill work; he could not command his people to attend divine service; he could only set them an example which



had, at least, to be followed by his officers and the Court society. His Majesty, who could not be called a religious man in any deep sense of the word, knew that a people without religion is unstable. He was convinced that the habit of attending church was a wholesome one, contributing to respectability, and possibly helping to build a wedge against Socialism which was ever on the increase and the Kaiser's bugbear. So he made a point, when in Berlin, of occupying, with his wife and as many of his sons as he could make accompany him, the big curtained-off box in the gallery of the Cathedral, close to the altar, where he could see everything without being seen. The masses of the people were, however, no more addicted to church-going than they ever were.

A leading German daily paper took great objection to some words in a speech made by the Kaiser at Aix la Chapelle. He declared that all persons were irrevocably lost who did not place their life firmly on a religious basis. The paper in question said it was well known that in Germany were many conscientious materialists who were at the same time men of benevolent and moral life, and such words were calculated to give much

offence. The Kaiser was covertly accused of running with both the hare and the hounds, meaning to say that when in a Protestant country he appeared to have evangelical interests at heart and in Catholic countries he apparently supported those principles.

The Kaiser was seconded by his eldest son in his dislike of Socialism. On one occasion the young Crown Prince—who was even less well informed upon such matters than his father—alluded to the Social Democrats as a “*Rotte*,” a very strong epithet meaning rabble. As Social democrats are very far removed from Communists, with whom the Prince no doubt confused them, and as they include many thoughtful and loyal citizens, this remark caused great and wide criticism and censure, that is, as far as the utterances of a royal person might be criticised.

The law of *lèse majesté* was always strictly enforced, and has caused much unhappiness to innocent or ignorant persons. I remember several cases of this kind. Two small boys were overheard by a policeman talking innocently enough about the Kaiser. They were resting from their play on the steps of the shop belonging to the

father of one of the speakers who said: "My daddy says the Kaiser is a *Windbeutel*." No doubt he considered this great praise for a *Windbeutel* is a big cream puff; it also stands, however, for an empty boaster, and it was in this sense that the officious constable acted upon it. The end of it was that the child's father was imprisoned for two years and the family rendered penniless. The other case was almost as gross. An officer's wife, young and vivacious, was giving a tea-party to her intimate friends. She was indiscreet enough to use the unguarded words: "Well, between ourselves, I don't think the Kaiser is very intelligent, some even call him a softy." A servant caught the words and denounced her to the police. The unfortunate lady was sentenced to imprisonment, her husband transferred to a small frontier post where there was no chance of promotion, and their two young sons who were at the cadet school were expelled, and their schoolfellows were told the reason! There was much gratuitous cruelty connected with this barbarous law, and it must not be forgotten that whoever informed the authorities of a case of *lèse majesté* received a reward. It was very dangerous always to make an enemy in this country, for the informer's word

was invariably believed. Did some eyes glance through my old diary it might fare ill with the writer!

The consequences of this autocratic regulation and others did not tend to increase the love of the people for their Sovereign. It led to a custom that would be amusing if it were not pathetic—that of giving him, in all seriousness, a nickname, so that should anything be overheard that might be interpreted as *lèse majesté* the frequently innocent speaker might not suffer. His Majesty was always spoken of as “Lehmann” among the working classes, that being one of the most common of German names. It is a fact that if the people had been permitted more liberty of speech the Monarch would have been more beloved and the law of *lèse majesté* would have become obsolete. The well-known anecdote of Frederick the Great was often cited in connection with this law. When riding through the town the King noticed a number of people looking at a poster high up over a grocer’s shop. Asking what they were gazing at he was told by his adjutant with some hesitancy that the poster represented a caricature of His Majesty grinding a coffee mill, the point being directed at the iniquity of the coffee tax. Far

from taking this amiss the King laughed and said: "Tell the grocer to hang the picture lower so that the people won't have to crane their necks so much."

## CHAPTER XIV

POTSDAM, the old-world little town some thirty miles out of Berlin, was the summer residence of all the Imperial family, there being innumerable palaces, great and small, from the huge New Palace, in Sanssouci Park, downwards. A dull little place is Potsdam without its palaces and parks, but very quiet and restful after the noise of Berlin. The town, which is really an island, is surrounded by a long unbroken chain of large and very beautiful lakes, through which one may sail for many miles. Few foreigners have any idea of this lovely forest and water district so easy of access from Berlin. Though, of course, it cannot be compared with the Rhine, that grandfather of all rivers, the Havel, which runs through all the lakes certainly has no lack of charm. On the Wannsee Lake, the largest in the chain, used often to be seen a picturesque

little vessel with many sails flapping in the wind. She always created much interest, for there was not another one like her. This was the frigate *Royal Louise*, an exact reproduction in smaller dimensions, of a British sailing-ship of war, and was the gift of King William IV of England to King Friedrich Wilhelm III of Prussia in 1832. She was built entirely of mahogany, and had two spacious cabins—one for ladies—both of which were re-equipped and decorated under Wilhelm the Second's own supervision early in his reign. His Majesty was always very fond of the *Royal Louise*, and frequently went on long trips through the lakes in her with his wife and his children when they were little. Notwithstanding her great age the frigate was in good condition and presented a beautiful sight when under full sail. The Kaiser always deeply regretted his inability to row, but he often took the helm of the *Royal Louise*, and being a good helmsman did the same often at Kiel on board his racing yacht.

Bismarck had always been very anxious to obtain colonial territory for Germany, seeing the need for expansion of that rapidly increasing population. The Kaiser eagerly entered into colonisation projects, and really endeavoured to

make paying concerns out of such colonies as Germany possessed. But although avowedly desirous that Germans of every rank and standing should not only be on cordial, but even intimate terms with each other in the East African colonies, and that the cliquishness so general in Prussia should be there avoided, it cannot be denied that the "button régime" prevailed in German East Africa. There was no fraternity between business men and the officers, the latter arrogantly ruling everything there as elsewhere. There was, in fact, no loosening of the Prussian yoke and harmonious conditions did not prevail. I knew many good men and true who went out to the German colonies to work in some capacity that had been offered them, but who were wretched under the disciplinary tone of upstart authorities. It is sufficient proof of what I say that the German emigrants preferred British, Dutch or even French and Belgian colonies to those of their own country, and those who made the mistake of choosing the last-mentioned rectified it as soon as possible. Of course such glaring cases of bestial cruelty as were perpetrated by Carl Peters and, especially by Prince Arenberg, were rare, but still they did take place. I myself heard a Prussian officer,



home on leave from the colonies, say: "It is deadly dull here. You can't let yourself go. When you are bored out there you can go and shoot the niggers or look on while you have 'em thrashed." That was actually the spirit of the average German colonial officer, and I can vouch for it.

Being so attached to his colonial possessions, it seemed strange that the Kaiser ceded Zanzibar to England in exchange for the Island of Heligoland, especially as the former was one of the most flourishing of the foreign possessions and likely to become more valuable as time wore on. Public feeling was much exercised about this exchange, merchants deplored it and only the Kaiser's intimates approved of it. His Majesty had not been long on the throne at the time, and Bismarck was not at hand to advise, nor probably would his advice have been taken in any case. It was generally believed the Kaiser wanted the island for a useful fortification in case of a war with England. Others said John Bull had made an excellent bargain, knowing well that Heligoland was losing some of its land every year and would be finally submerged. Whatever the motive, however, the Kaiser loved his new acquisition as a child loves a new play-

thing. He paid many visits to the island, and consulted the best marine engineers as to the most expedient methods of fortifying Heligoland and preventing erosion. Enormous sums were spent upon granite blocks being conveyed to the island; the work provided employment for many hundred hands, which was the best thing about it. When all was completed His Majesty's delight was unbounded. He had prevented the inroad of the sea at all costs, he fondly believed. Heligoland, therefore, became German once more, and had German schools and other institutions, but the old fisher folk there are very conservative, and said quite openly that they would rather be under English protectorate. The Kaiser frequently paid a visit to the island, and encouraged his subjects to make it a summer resort. Moreover, he gave orders that in future all lobsters needed for table at the Schloss should be imported direct from Heligoland.

The Kaiser had his own ideas, and they were very pronounced, about art. He greatly disliked the modern Schools of Impressionism, Expressionism and Futuristic art, so-called. He had not the least sympathy with any present-day artists, who would have fared less hardly had they had imperial

patronage. He really cared only for the Old Masters, and the artists of the past century. It was due to his initiative that a perfectly unique exhibition of English masterpieces was organised at the Academy of Arts in Unter den Linden. Galleries, both public and private, lent their treasures at the request of the Kaiser, and people came from far and wide to revel in the beauties of Reynolds and Raeburn, Lawrence and Gainsborough and other giants of British art, with whom in the matter of portraits no German can compare. Even the "Blue Boy" was lent for the exhibition, and was guarded day and night by private detectives. His Majesty went many times, always early in the morning before the doors were opened to the public, and he was sometimes accompanied by his wife, who understood absolutely nothing of art.

Whenever an official present was to be made to the Kaiser he liked to be consulted beforehand as to its character, workmanship and appropriateness. When this was not done he was not gracious to the donor, no matter how good the intentions were. This was the case when the Municipality of Berlin thought that the south side of the Schloss looked very empty and decided to present His

Majesty with a fountain to fill the great open space. Professor Begas, one of Berlin's most noted sculptors, was entrusted with the work, which is in bronze and shows Neptune surrounded by four figures representing Germany's four great rivers, the Rhine, the Oder, the Elbe and the Vistula. It is considered by good judges to be a fine piece of workmanship, but the Kaiser took a violent dislike to it, possibly because it was by way of being a surprise. He hardly said "Thank you" to the disappointed city fathers, and never looked at it more than he was obliged.

The new Reichstag building met with much the same fate. The Emperor Frederick greatly approved of the designs, which were the work of the architect Paul Wallot, a skilful and conscientious artist in his own particular branch, and greatly esteemed. The Reichstag took ten years to build, and is universally considered one of the finest parliamentary buildings in the world. But it has one defect; the great dome in the centre is too low; were it higher the effect would assuredly be more imposing. It was said at the time that sufficient funds were not forthcoming, and that the architect had been much put to to make both ends meet, and that he had been indefatigable in

his efforts to make the utmost of his resources. The Kaiser was very reserved in his judgment while in Berlin, but when on a visit to Italy the year that the Reichstag was finished he openly expressed his feelings, calling it the "acme of bad taste"—a pronouncement entirely unjustified. Also when in Budapest, after inspecting the beautiful House of Parliament there, he very warmly congratulated the architect, Steindl. He saluted the building and said:

"Before such a magnificent work as this one must really uncover one's head. It is quite another thing from our wretched hovel in Berlin." These sharp words naturally came back to Berlin, and caused excessive mortification to poor Wallot, whose health broke down under the combined strain of hard work and lack of appreciation.

The National Monument to the first Emperor was a work that was fortunate in gaining his grandson's unqualified approval, no doubt because he participated actively in its design. He insisted also that the site selected for it should be so close to the Schloss that ill-natured people said a proper view of it could only be obtained from the windows of that building, and they are not far wrong. Everybody but His Majesty wanted

the fine monument to have a place at Brandenburg Gate, where it could have been clearly seen, and therefore more appreciated, but those wishes were overruled. Professor Begas was again the sculptor, and he put his heart into his work. The Emperor is represented on horseback—a colossal figure in bronze, the bridle being held by a graceful woman with a palm branch. The sculptor gave to this figure the features of his own daughter, but this was only known to his friends. There are a number of emblematical groups, and behind the whole is a richly wrought colonnade of great length, which makes a fine playplace for the city youngsters when the policeman's back is turned.

It was not everybody that knew His Majesty possessed a pleasing baritone voice. On rare occasions he would permit himself to be persuaded to sing to a small circle of friends. His favourite songs were the delightful ballads of Carl Loewe, "Tom der Reimer," "Douglas" and "Prince Eugen" which, being by no means unmusical, he sang with expression. His wife would accompany him on the piano when it was not too difficult, but the Kaiser preferred his friend, Captain von Chelius, to play his accompaniments, for the latter was an accomplished musician, and

could transpose anything to suit the singer. Captain von Chelius and Count Philip Eulenburg were the two famous musicians in German court society, and their work was known beyond the borders of the country. The former's opera *Haschisch* and the latter's *Rosen Lieder* are compositions that have won the praise of all impartial critics.

The Kaiser never wrote a play as he said he would do, but he had a try at composition. The music drama, *Der Sang an Aegadia* was, to a great extent, his own work, polished up by experts. It is a very colourful and fantastic affair about a legendary count named Palatine. In duty bound the management of the Royal Opera presented the work with all the pomp and brilliance of scenery of which that fine temple of the Muses is capable, which is saying not a little. The vast house with its four tiers was crowded from floor to ceiling for the first performance for it was known that the Imperial composer would be present. Every eye was turned to the smaller box used on other than gala nights, where the Kaiser sat partly hidden by a curtain from view.

When the curtain fell upon the first act there was, of course, tumultuous applause. From my seat among the gods I could see His Majesty

plainly when the lights were turned on. He sat like a rock with no change of expression, only his unusual pallor betrayed his excitement. The people kept on applauding the artist in the Sovereign, hoping, rather too sanguinely, that he would rise and bow like an ordinary mortal. But he sat rigidly still until the plaudits died away and the curtain rose on the second and final act. The *Sang* was a gorgeous presentation of colour and sound; all connected with the production had done their utmost, but from a point of genuine art it was a distinct failure and survived only a few performances. The critics were in a dilemma; to praise the work would have expressed ignorance or sycophancy, to decry it might have been detrimental to their paper. With the skill that is an essential part of successful journalism these gentlemen went to work with great diplomacy: the setting and execution of the *Sang* were accorded unstinted praise as, indeed, they well deserved, and the Imperial composer's talent and obvious enthusiasm for his mystical theme were given due appreciation. I was told the Kaiser read every criticism and was not displeased.

The 19th of March came round again, the anniversary of the great Revolution of 1848,



and as I had nothing of importance to do I thought that I, too, would make a pilgrimage to the little cemetery in the Friedrichshain, a park in the north-east of Berlin, where the earthly remains of the heroes of liberty, the "März-Gefallenen" lie. It was a sight well worth seeing and I shall not readily forget it. The cemetery was visited in the course of the day, beginning at dawn and ending at dusk, by thousands of people—mostly belonging to the working classes. The hundreds of simple graves are arranged along the sides and decorated with wreaths innumerable, in which the red ribbon forms the prominent feature. The crowds of people pass at a snail's pace along the path before the graves; there is no crowding or pushing among these serious men and women who speak to each other, if they speak at all, in a whisper. Vast numbers of police, mounted and on foot, surround the entrance; they are rigid of mien and ever watchful, for this commemoration is only tolerated under protest; to forbid it altogether would be unwise and perhaps impossible.

It would be amusing if it were not rather tragic to see the confiscations made by the lieutenants of police, each armed with a large pair of scissors. Not a wreath is allowed to pass without close

scrutiny of the ribbons attached and snip, snip go the scissors whenever an inscription is considered to savour of "liberty." The pile of the severed red ribbons of the Communists, with some black ones among them that are commonly said to be those of the Anarchists, rise higher and higher, but no word is uttered, no sound is heard, only a gleam in the eyes and a compressing of the lips betray the unspoken thought. The severed ribbons are afterwards—unkindest cut of all—swept up into a heap by scavengers under the eye of both police and donors. Among the wreaths to the memory of those who fought for liberty which were denuded of their inscriptions in my presence were tributes from the dramatic society known as the "Free Stage," from the Radical newspaper *Vorwärts*, and many others of a similar description.

## CHAPTER XV

THE official visit of King Edward and Queen Alexandra to the Kaiser in February, 1909, was the occasion of such festive demonstrations as I have never before witnessed. Having finished my long term of service to the German Royal family, I was pensioned and given quarters for the remainder of my life in one of the palaces. Like a cat, one gets very attached to places and things, and I was glad to be allowed to pass my days peacefully in my old surroundings. Also, as it is said in English, I was a sort of tame cat about the house. Everybody knew me and was kind to me, and I had the *entrée*, so to say, everywhere. So when their English Majesties came to Berlin I was able to see them at close quarters. What a sweet and beautiful lady Queen Alexandra, what a kind and courteous English gentleman King Edward! No Prussian

abruptness, no curt nasal twang in a rasping voice with that great Monarch, and I fear I envied those who could call themselves his subjects. I do not believe I am a very good German.

The decorations of the main route to the Schloss where the royal guests were to stay were beautiful and imposing, for everyone, from the Municipality to private house-owners and shopkeepers, was genuinely desirous to please their Majesties and make them feel how welcome they were. The mile-long thoroughfare of Unter den Linden presented a marvellous display of bunting and flowers, the latter being mostly natural ones, and the Berlin florists did splendid business. The branch premises of Messrs. Waring and Gillows were almost hidden beneath a wealth of violets, heliotrope and mimosa, while the front of the Opera House was entirely covered by flowers of a rich royal blue, a wonderful sight, which greatly attracted the Queen. It was surprising how all the lovely blossoms stood the cold as they did, for a sharp east wind was blowing throughout their Majesties' visit. One incident, happily not serious, marred the harmony of the brilliant reception. Just as the State carriage passed the Brandenburg Gate at the entrance to the Linden the customary salute

from 101 cannons at the other end, in the Lustgarten, startled the horses of the carriage in which the Queen was seated with the Kaiserin; the animals became restive, but were finally quieted until they approached the Schloss when, again startled, they stumbled and fell. Some confusion ensued, and the royal ladies were obviously anxious. Assisted by the guard of honour, they quickly changed into one of the following carriages, and so arrived safely at the Schloss, where Queen Alexandra went at once to her apartments and rested until luncheon.

The State banquet was served in the White Hall, that handsome room with its white marble pillars and gold and white walls and roof. Gold chandeliers with long white candles lighted the tables which were laid for 175 persons, and bore the finest gold and silver plate the Schloss possessed. The decorations of the tables were all in white and royal blue, and fifteen pages in white and scarlet served their Majesties. The whole was a colour scheme that was dazzling in effect. The Kaiser wore the uniform of a colonel of the Royal Dragoons, with the ribbon of the Garter; he escorted Queen Alexandra, who looked lovely in blue, with a diamond tiara and ropes of pearls.

The King was in the uniform of a Prussian general with the ribbon of the Black Eagle; he escorted the Kaiserin, who was dressed in white with her finest diamonds. As usual, before the stately procession entered the hall Count Eulenburg, the Court Marshal, drew attention to their Majesties' approach by striking the floor three times with his wand of office, and did the same after dinner when they left the hall. The King and the Kaiser both read their toasts; that of the latter was couched in very cordial words of his own choosing, and his English Majesty's response, although he was rather hoarse, was very distinctly heard all through the room. The King made some happy references to peace between the countries, which were carried into all parts of the world and caused much gratification.

King Edward captivated all hearts. Having contracted a slight cold, he did not go out much, but donned a comfortable house jacket and warm shoes and passed his time looking round the Schloss, especially the paintings in the Gallery interested him. He had a kind word for everybody he met, but he did not like the cold atmosphere of the great building. Huge fires had been lit in every available corner a week before their

Majesties' visit and kept up day and night, but it remains the most uncomfortable building it has ever been my lot to see, and I have been in many royal palaces.

Why the gala opera was late in beginning was not known to everyone. This was the reason: Their Majesties went to dinner that evening at the Crown Prince's Palace and Queen Alexandra insisted on being shown the nursery, to which the Princess took her. Her Majesty was so delighted with the small boys that she, after gaining their confidence, started to play all sorts of games with them. The eldest boy, Wilhelm, confided to her that he had a cannon that would not go off and asked her to have a try at it. Queen Alexandra and the little prince were soon very busy getting the trouble rectified, and they all had such a merry time that Her Majesty never remembered how late it was. The dinner which had been fixed for an unusually early hour was late in consequence, and the gala opera therefore commenced nearly half-an-hour later than it was announced to do.

For the gala performance at the Opera admission was by special invitation from the Imperial Chamberlain. Many thousands of marks were

spent upon the decorations, for the Kaiser never considered money. He did things in a truly regal style when he wanted an exceptional effect. The colour scheme was his own idea, and everything was submitted to him for his personal approval. The result was really superb, and won great praise from the King and Queen. On entering the house a delicious faint perfume met the visitors; it was the famous lilac manufactured by the firm that always supplied the court, and was spread all over the theatre by means of tiny fountains.

The lower tiers were adorned with festoons of pink carnations, the upper ones with red poppies on a green background. Between the flower panels hung Persian silk rugs of exquisite tints, nearly all of which were the property of the Kaiser. The royal state box, which seats eighty persons, was filled to the last place; the boxes were reserved for the diplomatic corps and for ladies, as was also the grand tier, while the stalls were occupied solely by officers, all in the most brilliant uniforms. The display of jewels has certainly never been so fine, and most of them were genuine. At three strokes of the official wand the audience rose and responded to their Majesties' bow, the



men by a deep bow and the ladies making a court curtsy. Both the King and Queen smiled and nodded to several good acquaintances among the audience. Princess Aribert of Anhalt, the vivacious and very charming daughter of Princess Christian of England, was seated near her royal kinsfolk and pretty Princess Mary of Pless, called "Daisy" by her friends, an old friend of their Majesties, was not far away. The great box was specially decorated with masses of Marshal Niel roses, the Kaiserin's favourite flowers.

King Edward, who had recovered from his cold, wore a German Admiral's uniform, and seemed in capital spirits. The Queen was the most beautiful woman in the house, and the most exquisitely dressed, in glistening silver tissue, with many diamonds and sapphires. The Kaiserin wore pink velvet with a quantity of pearls, and her crown of jewels, and his German Majesty again wore British uniform. At a sign from the Kaiser the lights were discreetly lowered and the drop-scene rose, disclosing a beautiful silk curtain of quaint design and Assyrian in character, that had been specially made for the fantastic-historical ballet, *Sardanapalus*. This colorful work, which the Kaiser assisted in arranging, was His Majesty's own choice, and it was this time

a wise one—not long enough to tire, as was frequently the case. He was very busy explaining the action, with eager words and gestures, to Queen Alexandra, all through the performance, and her Majesty made much use of her opera glass, smiling her approval of the magnificent tableaux.

Their English Majesties, after a very pleasant visit, left Berlin in the afternoon by a special train, only very privileged persons being on the platform of the Lehrter Station. The leave-taking was quite a family affair, with no music or ceremony, and English was the language used by all present. The genial Ambassador and Lady Goschen arrived early, also Count de Salis, the charming Irish Counsellor of Embassy, and beautiful Lady Agnes Durham. In the saloon carriage a dainty little tea table was laid; the lounge chairs and the cosy corner with red silk cushions looked very homelike, and a big basket of lilies-of-the-valley and lilac from the Kaiser gave the final touch. Miss Knollys's experienced glance as she entered the carriage to look round showed that she was satisfied. I remember the little hush that ensued as their Majesties came on the platform. Queen Alexandra, as beautiful as ever, wore a long fur coat and a hat with violets, and the King also had on

a fur coat over the Prussian uniform that he would doff before arriving on his own shores. As the long train, with its two powerful engines, steamed out of the station the Kaiser stood smiling with his hand to his cap until it turned the corner, then he turned to the British Ambassador and commented upon the pleasure the visit of their Majesties had given him and all concerned.

## CHAPTER XVI

THE Kaiser would have made a much better business man than a monarch. He sometimes developed ideas on business lines that were quite surprising. That was the case with his Cadinen pottery. He purchased a large farm at Cadinen in East Prussia for a place of recreation for his younger children, and the Empress spent many happy weeks there several successive summers. One day walking over his fields, H.M. was struck with the colour and quality of the clayey soil. He felt sure something good might be done with it, so he sent to Berlin for some experts on the subject. The upshot of it all was that potteries were erected in the neighbourhood and gave employment to many workers. The quality of the clay was so excellent that many beautiful things were turned out, although the aim of the Kaiser to raise a majolica industry similar to that

in Italy centuries ago did not materialise. Everything was done to make the handsome tiles and ornaments manufactured at Cadinen as popular as possible and a big exhibition was organised at the Wertheim Department Stores that was visited by people from all over the country. On the wall was a more than life-size portrait of the Kaiser in blue pottery—his own idea. The Underground Station “Kaiserhof” had its walls tiled with Cadinen produce and His Majesty paid a special visit to see it.

With regard to the Underground Railway, an undertaking which of course added greatly to Berlin’s importance and whose opening was quite an event, it was generally hoped that the Kaiser would go to see it and take a ride on it. His Majesty’s reply to the respectful request of the Municipality was: “If they like to put a perfectly new carriage at my disposal I may go, but I shall not sit in a ‘Bazillenkutsche,’” literally a “microbe coach.” As a matter of fact he never did accept the invitation.

With his customary perspicacity, the Kaiser perceived the value of aviation, and was keenly interested in it from its earliest days. The first flier, or, I should say would-be flier, to visit

Berlin was M. Zipfel. Great excitement was felt everywhere, and an exhibition of the Frenchman's prowess was to take place on Tempelhof Field<sup>1</sup>—Berlin's great parade ground—before the Court, the Press, the French Embassy and others interested in the new science or sport, as the general public considers it. M. Zipfel arrived direct from Paris, bringing his aeroplane with him by train and the experiment was fixed for the afternoon of the following day. All the morning the aviator spent in getting his weird-looking machine in order and making little hops, the starting place being roped off so that none of the curious crowd could advance near enough to disturb him.

The Kaiser judiciously delayed his arrival until a telephone message to the Schloss should inform him how matters were proceeding, and intended to hasten out by car if they were propitious. The Crown Prince and some of his brothers as well as "Princesschen," their lively young sister, were on the ground, and a great concourse of people lined the field. M. Zipfel was nowhere to be seen; it was rumoured he had retired to a great distance to start his machine and would soon be soaring over the ground. People craned their necks,

<sup>1</sup> The site of the present Aerodrome. Ed.

but nothing became visible. Then a mighty shout arose from hundreds of voices and M. Zipfel, on his bi-plane, suddenly appeared out of the distance and dashed along the ground at a terrific rate, just avoiding damaging the crowd of distinguished and expectant persons. It was by a miracle that the Kaiser's only daughter was not run over by the on-coming plane; Prince Eitel seized her by the arm and dragged her into safety. The airman brought his machine to a standstill, got off it and came to the Princess. He was very hot and apologetic, and explained in French that he had not got used to the ground. The next trial would be more successful, but he did not seem sanguine, nor were the spectators, who all got out of the way of further experiments. It was rather pathetic; attempt after attempt was made to rise, but nothing ensued but a long run and a few feeble hops of a yard or so above the ground. As the crowd dispersed I heard the *Daily Mail* correspondent, who was a noted wit, say to a lady with great solemnity: "Magnificent!" The next day, nothing daunted, the Frenchman renewed his efforts manfully, and actually succeeded in flying round the field, so that his journey to Berlin was not in vain after all.

Shortly after this came Mr. Orville Wright and scored a great success with his machine. This, with the assistance of an imposing structure furnished with a platform, placed in the middle of the field, which was called by the Germans a "Pylone," started without a hitch and presented a really beautiful appearance in the air. Orville Wright would have been fêted everywhere if he had permitted it, but he was very reserved and unassuming. Knowing the value of his invention better than anyone else all his thoughts were concentrated upon its further improvement. As it was, he established a world record of one hour and forty minutes in the air. Then came Latham, Farman, Blériot and the air-acrobat, M. Pegoud, in quick succession, attracting vast crowds of enthusiastic people to the Flying Ground at Johannisthal, and all receiving honours at the hands of the Kaiser.

It remained for Count Zeppelin and his wonderful airship to receive the whole-hearted and enthusiastic support of the Sovereign. When the prospect of success was dimmed by want of funds or by opposition of various kinds, the Kaiser never lost faith in the Zeppelin, and contributed generously towards expenses. Other airships, such as



the Parseval, the Gross and the Schütte-Lanz interested His Majesty also, but not in the same measure as the Zeppelin, which was always his favourite. It was a great day when the mighty ship sailed all the way from Friedrichshafen to Berlin and over the Tempelhof field, where hundreds of thousands of people had been awaiting her arrival the whole day long, picnicking and making merry during the long hours of expectancy as a Berlin crowd knows so well how to do. The Kaiser, the Kaiserin, and all their family, awaited the coming of the airship, possessing their souls in patience in the royal stand. When the sun was sinking a long narrow strip became visible; it was like a huge cigar on the horizon, but everyone knew what it was, and the excitement grew and grew. Then the beautiful ship came nearer and ever nearer until she was over the heads of the cheering crowds. She slackened speed, stood almost motionless before the royal stand and bowed her prow three times. It was a sight never to be forgotten, and no matter what strides aviation may yet make—and they will surely be very great—such enthusiasm as the first Zeppelin aroused can never be surpassed.

The Kaiser had a pretty talent for drawing,

another heritage of his gifted mother. He was always fond of designing, sketching stage-scenery and such things rather out of the common track, though not always with success. It was one day announced that German naval aviators were to wear a badge in future, in form of a silver-gilt medal similar to that already worn by military air pilots. The new decoration, however, contained as much as a small space could possibly hold: a view of the Island of Heligoland and the sea, an eagle, quite ingeniously made to look something like an aeroplane soaring away towards the noontide sun, and various other incidental matters. All this was His Majesty's work, and every naval pilot was to be bound by this badge to active aerial service twice every year.

His Majesty formerly took very violent likes and dislikes, and who had once offended him was seldom received into favour again. An example of this was the case of Rudolf Virchow, the world-famous doctor, scientist, scholar and writer. In his early days Virchow had fallen into disgrace because of his political views, which were socialistic, and he was never reinstated in certain circles. Little enough did he trouble about that; he went on his rugged way regardless of obstacles, working

for the good of humanity. And all the medical and scientific world honoured him as few were honoured. The great Virchow Hospital is one of the many living tributes to his memory. When he died at a ripe age, a long line of carriages followed his coffin to the cemetery, but not one royal equipage was sent as a mark of respect and esteem. The great savant had not much sympathy with royal courts, so he would certainly not have wished any such tribute, but others felt the slight. Admiration should, however, have its limits. Among the eulogies in the Press a cartoon stood out conspicuously in an illustrated paper. *Virchow* was represented soaring to heaven in a frock coat, and an archangel with a big trumpet was crying: "Flags out! A King comes!" This neither tasteful nor logical picture would never have appealed to Professor Virchow, who was a conscientious agnostic. The monument erected to his memory near the great Charité Hospital in Berlin is very powerful; it represents the eminent pathologist strangling a python—the symbol of evil.

German astronomers were extremely interested in the acquisition of some wonderful instruments brought from Peking after the Boxer conflict,

and which, by the way, refute the accuracy of the official statement that no booty of any kind had been brought from China. Be that as it may, rumours of these unique astronomical instruments soon spread abroad, and all Berlin was filled with curiosity and a desire to see them. Where to place them to the best advantage presented a great problem to those concerned, whether in a museum or in the open air. His Majesty's casting vote decreed the site to be the wide terrace before the Palace of Sanssouci at Potsdam. All these treasures had suffered more or less by the bombardment and the transit and had to be most carefully repaired by expert firms. At last the work was completed; the instruments were set up on the prescribed spot, and after the Kaiser and his family had admired them duly all Berlin journeyed out to Potsdam on the same errand.

Words fail me to describe the delicate beauty of these stupendous works of art and the skill expended on them. Consummate patience must have been exercised in their production, and their value must be boundless. No money could purchase them. The age of the instruments, of which there are a large number, is said to be unknown. Several of them are very large, one of the globes,

in particular, being six yards in circumference and weighing four and a half tons. It is this globe that possesses the greatest interest to astronomers. The starry heavens are shown with, it has been stated, perfect accuracy and certainly in wondrous beauty. Upon the deep-toned copper surface the Milky Way is depicted by thousands of tiny silver rings and the stars and planets by golden balls, large and small in their natural order. Round this unique and ancient globe which can be revolved by the touch of a finger, crowds stood daily, awed and fascinated.<sup>1</sup>

It was always the Kaiser's desire in the building of the new cathedral to have a vault beneath the altar for the reception of some of his ancestors' remains still resting below the altar of the old Garrison Church in the heart of the city. For some reason or other the removal had not yet been accomplished although the new edifice had been standing for some time and the vault was in readiness. Perhaps it had been forgotten. One summer night about ten o'clock I was horrified to hear that the Garrison Church was on fire. Some repairs were being carried out on the roof of the old building and it was generally

<sup>1</sup> These instruments were all returned to China after the War. Ed.

believed a workman had dropped the ashes of his pipe before leaving for the night. As, however, the fire had broken out almost simultaneously in several parts and with great violence arson was suspected, though never proved. When I reached the Kaiser Friedrich Strasse it was already cut off from the excited crowds by a chain of police and a little way down it the flames were pouring from the building, the lurid glare turning night into day. The hastily summoned fire brigade were vigorously struggling to gain the better of the foe, and finally their efforts were rewarded.

The worst of it was that the Kaiser was away from Berlin at the time, and great fears were entertained for the vaults. The Crown Prince, who was at once informed of the catastrophe, motored, accompanied by his wife, to the scene as rapidly as possible, and I remember how carefully the Princess had to pick her way over the hot débris in her evening shoes. When ultimately the flames were extinguished it was found that the vaults had been saved. There was an arrangement by which in case of fire an iron space above them could be flooded and the caretaker, the first to see the flames, had had the presence of mind to turn on the special hydrant. A few minutes later he

could not have reached it. It was the man's good fortune, for he received a very large reward from His Majesty.

The flags taken from the Danes, the Austrians and the French, which had hung tattered and war-worn round the church were all destroyed by the flames. This, though considered in the light of a misfortune by many, was to my thinking all to the good, for surely the sooner old feuds are forgotten and their visible reminders obliterated, the better. Smouldering continued all night, and little but the bare walls of the old church remained. As soon as the Kaiser returned from Norway he went to inspect the damage. He was much concerned, and not a little angry at the carelessness or worse that was at the root of the disaster, but decided that restoration of the building must be immediately commenced. Not very long after that the metal coffins containing the bones of the ancient rulers were removed in the night to the Cathedral and deposited in the vaults that had been prepared for them so long before.

## CHAPTER XVII

**T**HE Kaiser's only daughter was now grown up, and she promised to be a very good-looking woman before long. Tall, supple and graceful in her movements, she had a very winning manner. Though greatly indulged, adored by her father and brother, she was never spoilt, and she had had the good, thorough education of the average German girl. She never had the least bit of "side," and many of the chosen friends of her girlhood were commoners. When the game of "diabolo" was general among children of most nations Victoria Luise was an enthusiastic disciple. She would leave her pony cart standing in Sanssouci Park and run off into a quieter avenue with her toy, and was very pleased when she could find any children to join her, no matter how lowly their origin. Her parents did not know of these little escapades, for H.R.H. always managed to



cajole her governess into acquiescence and secrecy. When only ten years old she was a capital rider and good whip. The first vehicle she called her very own was a small phaeton and pair of beautiful cream-coloured ponies, the gift of the Sultan on her tenth birthday, and a few years later Queen Alexandra gave her an English governess cart in which she drove her young friends about the Potsdam roads. The curriculum of her studies comprised cooking, as is the case with all other German girls of good family. Princesschen was fonder of this branch of her education than any other, as she thought it great fun trying and tasting the dishes. Liking cooking, she excelled in it, and on an off day when the Imperial family lunched alone the Kaiser's daughter, at the age of fifteen, selected a simple menu herself and cooked the meal almost unaided. It was intended as a great surprise to everyone, and great was her satisfaction when it turned out a success and she won the approval of her father.

One sport was denied to the Kaiser's lively young daughter, to her great sorrow. She was not allowed to ride a bicycle. Her mother set her face against this sport, which was just coming in in Germany for women, and considered it most

unladylike and especially impossible for a royal princess. While her brothers were permitted, with much protest from their mother, to cycle, Victoria Luise's cajolings were all in vain. One day Princesschen took her revenge. The Empress went to see the exhibition of Duke Adolph of Mecklenburg's African trophies and took her daughter with her. In a neighbouring hall training for a forthcoming bicycle race was going on, the motor pacemaker and the general rush attracting the attention of the young royal visitor. Watching her opportunity, Victoria Luise slipped away from her mother's suite and ran off. Some minutes elapsed before she was missed and then there was an outcry. After some time she was found by her English governess, Miss Topham, standing among a crowd that could not be described as *hoffähig* (having Court credentials), gazing delightedly at the exciting spectacle of some twenty bicyclists racing round the track.

Farm life at Cadinen strongly appealed to Victoria Luise and many were her escapades. One formed the subject of tea-table chat all round the country side for a long time. The Kaiserin was receiving a bevy of ladies from the surrounding estates one afternoon, when in rushed her young

daughter bearing palpable evidence of the stable, and deposited on her mother's lap a pink sucking-pig, crying, "Mother, just see this little darling!"

When only fourteen the youthful Princess had a very important rôle to play at the christening ceremony of her nephew, the Kaiser's first grandson. It was she who, according to an old custom, was entrusted with the precious infant at the door of the long Gallery where the ceremony took place, and who carried him on a white satin pillow, heralded by pages, to the altar where she deposited him with a deep curtsy in the arms of his grandmother, Grand Duchess Anastasia. This was by no means an easy task, for the floor was polished and the heavy silver brocaded train of the christening robe was borne aloft by three maids of honour who got rather in the way, but the young Princess, her cheeks burning with excitement, accomplished this feat with perfect success. The infant was baptised, with water specially brought from the River Jordan; the christening bowl and jug were of exquisitely chased Silesian gold and were a gift of that province. King Edward's gift to his new godson was a gold mug with four griffins engraved upon it; it bore the German and British arms and an inscription in English.

The Kaiser was never an ardent Wagnerian. He enjoyed occasionally a performance of that master's lighter works, such as *Die Meistersinger* and *Der fliegende Hollander*, but he seldom witnessed a performance of the *Ring*, and never visited Bayreuth. When the musical world began to be stirred at the thought of producing *Parsifal* elsewhere than at the Bayreuth "Festspiele," he held himself curiously aloof from expressing an opinion. Frau Cosima Wagner moved heaven and earth for Germany to remain true to Bayreuth traditions and to carry out her husband's wish to have *Parsifal* performed there exclusively. But the times move forward, and copyrights come to an end. When it was decided that Wagner's masterpiece was to be liberated from conservative trammels, and those were to be enabled to hear it who could not go to Bayreuth, there was a rush to acquire the right of production and "*Parsifal* for the people" became the slogan. Managers vied with each other in worthy representations, and Berlin was well to the front, sparing no money or pains. Costumes and scenery were ordered from the first studios in Munich and Vienna, and the best artists obtainable were put in the cast. At Halle the municipality declined to vote the sum

of 20,000 marks needed to make the presentation of *Parsifal* an adequate one, and the manager of the Opera House in that town paid the money out of his own pocket rather than there should be any shortcomings. Everywhere there was great enthusiasm, and a general wish to avoid wounding the susceptibilities of Richard Wagner's widow by unworthy representation.

The Wagners did not take the blow to what they considered their prestige sitting down. Their indignation at the German nation's behaviour was very great, and many unpleasant incidents took place. Thus, when the hundredth anniversary of Richard Wagner's birth was to be celebrated at the Regensburg Theatre with a performance of *Die Meistersinger*, with famous artists in the leading rôles, and a bust of the immortal composer was to be unveiled with much ceremony in the vestibule, Siegfried Wagner was asked to conduct. His reply by telegram was short, but very much to the point and caused great dismay. It ran: "In consideration of the German nation's attitude in the *Parsifal* question what you ask is impossible. Apply to Dr. Richter."

Richard Wagner had, as is well known, great struggles in his earlier years, and had not the art-

loving King of Bavaria supported him who knows what would have happened. In 1873 Wagner had a wordy war with the Royal Opera authorities; a Berlin society that upheld him had gained permission to have a selection of his works performed in the Opera House for his benefit and he was to conduct. Wagner, however, very much disliked having his works performed in snatches, and suggested a performance of *Lohengrin*, but in its entirety. The Society appealed to William I, who was not a lover of music nor did he understand much about it, so he declined the suggestion, giving as his reason that *Lohengrin* uncurtailed would take at least six weeks to prepare, and then there would not be time for a French version of *Hamlet* which had been announced for production. Wagner was furious, more especially as he had whole-hearted support from London and America. He said he hoped Germany would learn from foreign nations and that the day would come when he would be able to give *Lohengrin* unabbreviated "even in Berlin." That day did come, we all know!

About this time Caruso came to Berlin on his first visit, knowing as little about it as Berlin did about him. He had been engaged to sing in light

opera at an ordinary theatre with a scratch company, and the large house was not half full! Ignorant of the country and the language though he was, this seemed all wrong to the great Italian who was to take the world by storm, and he had "words" with his manager who had shown such a lack of knowledge and experience. Caruso only sang twice at the Theater des Westens, then he broke his contract. The musical authorities of Berlin had recognised the star on the firmament and the Royal Opera hastened to secure the incomparable tenor. Prices doubled and trebled, the house was filled from floor to ceiling and Caruso was himself again. The coming of this marvellous singer is still remembered with delight by those who innocently attended his first performance and were lucky enough to hear him for a price that seemed a joke later on. That the Kaiser honoured Caruso goes without saying, and at every performance the royal box was full.

The Berlin season, thanks chiefly to the efforts of the Crown Prince and Princess, soon became a genuine institution, lasting from about November to March. Winter is considered here the most suitable time for revelry; in the early spring every-

one who is anybody at all goes to the Riviera or to the country, so that all the Courts—about six in number—took place in the colder months. The season was supposed to come to an end on Shrove Tuesday, the *Fastnachtsbal* at the Schloss, a mixum-gatherum affair, forming the official termination of gaieties. Of course plenty of private dancing went on through Lent, but it was taboo among the highest nobility, who followed the lead of the Sovereign. One society leader, who snapped her finger at laws and codes, written or unwritten, was charming Princess Aribert of Anhalt, who was one of the few who could afford to do so. The young Princess was a great lady in her own right, being the daughter of Princess Christian of England and a granddaughter of Queen Victoria. She was as pretty as she was charming, and had a most graceful figure. Having been brought up in England, Princess Marie Louise, to give her her proper title, was an adept at all kinds of sport, and the arranging of equestrian fêtes and flower corsos was a speciality of hers. Unfortunately the marriage was a very unhappy one; Prince Aribert had nothing to recommend him but a fine presence and love of sport. It was an open secret that he was a bad husband,



and from the first he and his wife went separate ways. He was away from home often on shooting expeditions and she was only too glad when he was absent, for he had tendencies that no woman could condone. A divorce was not permitted, I believe, by Queen Victoria, who had strong prejudices, but as soon as King Edward came to the throne the long-desired divorce was brought about, and the Princess returned to England.

In the meantime Princess Aribert threw herself into a vortex of amusement, which betrayed, as her closest friends knew, a certain *Galgenhumor*, a word which I think does not exist in English; it means, however, reckless merriment. The Princess was one of the most delightful of hostesses, and invitations to the little Anhalt Palace in the West of Berlin were greatly coveted, much more so than one to the Schloss. There were always some surprises at a ball given at the Anhalt Palace, and I remember one that excelled all that had gone before. The Princess herself had conceived the idea and superintended, so to say, rehearsals. When it was time for the cotillon everybody in the ballroom looked round expectantly, for it was in this particular number of the programme that the salient point always lay. At a flourish of

trumpets from the band the doors flew open and with solemn and stately footsteps in marched a well-grown young elephant, hung about with gala equipment as though for a maharajah's wedding. On his back was a handsome young Indian with big baskets of flowers, and before the beast walked another graceful native boy carrying a basket of Indian souvenirs for the guests—fans, sandalwood boxes, chased cigarette cases, scarfs and shawls of great beauty, carved ivories and other articles of native workmanship. Jumbo behaved himself remarkably well, marching decorously round and round the large room until all his treasures were disposed of, and accepting the ladies' attentions with a dignified cordiality. Finally he salaamed to his audience and carefully picked his way through the gay throng to the door. It was a tremendous success, and Princess Aribert's Jumbo Ball was the talk of the season. She had hired the huge animal from the famous Busch Circus for the occasion, after the palace floors had been thoroughly tested.

Another hospitable house where there was much enjoyment was that of Prince and Princess Henry of Pless in the early days of the Kaiser's reign. Princess Henry or Princess Mary, as she was called

in Germany, was a daughter of the English Cornwallis-West family, which is famous for its beautiful women. Always exquisitely gowned, the handsome Princess was the observed of all observers when she appeared at the Opera, and the Kaiser had a very warm corner in his heart for her, despite her English blood. She never cared much for Berlin, and was never there very long together. It was said she preferred to assemble her friends around her at her husband's magnificent castle of Fürstenhof in Silesia, the seat of the Princes of Pless for many generations. House parties were always given there for shooting and other entertainments on a lavish and hospitable scale, the Kaiser often being a guest. Princess Mary, like all Englishwomen, loved her own country best, and spent as much time there as her duties as the wife of a great German landowner permitted.

One of the gatest of gay fêtes during the Berlin season has always been the Women Artists' Ball, an event that only took place every three years. It was the most original thing of the kind anyone could imagine. I have witnessed many brilliant fêtes at various courts, but anything so delightfully frolicsome, so artistic and rarely beautiful combined it has never been my lot to see. I know I

had no right, properly speaking, to be present at that most exclusive festivity, for the rules prohibiting masculine attendance were as fixed as the laws of the Medes and Persians. Even the musicians and the waiters were women; but once I was there behind the scenes to help, and the peeps I got of the front were unforgettable. The great Philharmonic Hall and all the adjacent rooms were pressed into service, decorated to deceive all present into the belief that they were in Switzerland. The pick of Berlin's intellectual womanhood, artists, writers, actresses, musicians and scholars, young and old, were present—3,000 in all. Looks did not matter, for all were in fancy dress, and with such brains at work originality was the keynote to success, I was told there were quite a number of grandmothers there with their grand-daughters. I will never again believe that women cannot enjoy themselves without men. It would seem that sex is much of a mental conception after all, for the flirtations that went on between the women and those dressed astonishingly like the opposite sex appeared as natural and enjoyable as the genuine thing.

The Kaiser's daughter had cajoled her parents to allow her to go just for a hour "to look on,"

which was an unheard-of relaxing of rules for she was not yet "out." In charge of two ladies of the Court and her governess, all of whom were dressed as noblewomen of the Medieval period, Victoria Luise had the time of her young life. She herself wanted to go as a clown, but this was not permitted. Her dress was that of an Italian peasant girl, and her disguise was complete. Nobody recognised her in the throng, and it never got into the papers. All the costumes were striking in some way, beautiful, artistic, grotesque or just true to ordinary life. Side shows had been arranged by artists' hands; scenes from German legends and Grimm's fairy tales, *tableaux vivants* from the Classics. Some fencers were present, and several duels were fought in corners. A North American Indian, in full war paint, tall and stalwart, stalked scowlingly with crossed arms, through the hall—an uncanny figure. Suddenly he pounced upon an innocent early-Victorian Miss with curls and scalped her with a real tomahawk, uttering the regulation war whoop. Unfortunately, not only the curls but the toupée beneath them came away, leaving the lady—a well-known member of the diplomatic corps—rather bald. The brave had the grace to restore the scalp to his

victim and withdraw. He, or she, was an American girl studying singing here; she had brought the rig-out—a genuine one—from home. A pretty Miss Stars and Stripes was everywhere received with homage. It was a year when America was very popular.

Orders were called to make room for the travelling circus, and a broad thoroughfare was formed all down the hall. Two Berlin scavengers swept it with the big municipal brooms. Then the procession passed slowly along, loudly cheered by all spectators. On a broad-backed white horse sat a beautiful girl in muslin frills, throwing kisses to the crowd; she was an English girl well known in Berlin society. Followed a chaise full of lovely maidens, drawn by four tiny piebald ponies; clowns, acrobats, performing dogs—the last most excited and obviously enjoying themselves immensely—a deafening band, all out of tune, the trumpets operated by young persons in scarlet tights and spangles; a Fat Woman and a Skeleton, and a real baby elephant who manifested a strong desire to run amok. In the rear came the wild beasts' caravan, behind the barred windows of which issued blood-curling roars, and, last of all, the circus proprietor's van with its curtained windows

and the inevitable baby. It was a triumph for the Berlin women artists, and one can well imagine the fun they had rehearsing.

An incident occurred in the course of the evening that had not been rehearsed and was not according to programme. There was suddenly a slight commotion and one of the dancers—a tall, slender figure in the garb of a Neopolitan fisher, was led aside with obvious reluctance, and after an animated discussion he, or she, was noticed going towards the committee room accompanied by several other persons. The dance and the fun went on all over the vast hall, and the few who had observed anything out of the common forgot all about it. What had really happened was that one of the royal princes, young Prince Friedrich Leopold of Glienicke, a second cousin of the Kaiser, had made a bet with his brother officers that he would go to the *Künstlerinnenbal*. He went warily to work, contrived to obtain a card of admission through a lady friend, bronzed his face and disguised himself and his voice, as he thought, completely. One of his partners, nevertheless, suspected him, put her hand to his cheek and chin and felt its roughness, and informed the committee. The royal lieutenant was put

through a stern cross-questioning, was finally forced to confess and apologise, and was conducted to the door. It was probably the first time in his life that the prince had been so summarily turned out of doors into the night.



## CHAPTER XVIII

**I**N quite a number of internal matters the Kaiser caused improvements to be made soon after he began to reign. Some of them may appear small, but they all had a degree of importance. For instance, a lessening of the long school hours was entirely due to him. German children have a hard time anyhow, being obliged at the early age of six to read and write in both Latin and German characters. It is little wonder indeed that the majority of Germans wear spectacles. The Kaiser saw the great need of altering the school systems—the long hours in badly ventilated classrooms, the lack of air and exercise, and he saw how much better his own children learnt and how much more interest they showed in their lessons when they had some play between lessons. He determined to alter the existing conditions for the less fortunate children, and issued an order

that every school hour should be curtailed fifteen minutes so that the children could go out into the air and the rooms be well ventilated in the meantime. He also gave instructions that football and other outdoor games should be instituted and encouraged by the masters. In a few years a great change was visible; the love of healthy sports among German school children grew and flourished, and their pale cheeks got some colour in them.

Although in Germany as a rule few railway accidents occur, several serious ones took place within a short time of each other in the early days of the Kaiser's reign. So he set to work to think out a plan for improvement. The outcome of this was that at each of the important stations of the Prussian railway—seventy in number—an automobile ambulance was to be in readiness day and night. The equipment of the ambulance was as perfect as skill could make it; hot water was laid on; there was an operation table with all necessary instruments and a certificated surgeon was in charge. It was said that any place in Prussia where an accident might occur could be reached by an ambulance from one of the seventy stations in less than twenty minutes. This was

the Kaiser's own idea, and it was carried out by Herr von Thielen, the Minister of the State railways.

An improvement in the Berlin street traffic was also His Majesty's work. The traffic was becoming very congested and rapidly getting the upper hand; the authorities seemed unable to cope with the situation and accidents were constantly occurring on Potsdamer Platz, the busiest centre in the West of the city. One evening the Kaiser, in civilian's dress, attended by one or two aides, and the Chief of Police, went to see it, and took up his station in the shadow of the big clock on Potsdamer Platz. He watched the traffic for nearly half an hour, a car waiting near in case he should be recognised, which he was not. He was determined that energetic measures should be taken, and remembering the excellent regulation of the street traffic in London, he told the Chief of Police to send over a dozen intelligent Berlin police officers to the English capital to learn from their English colleagues. This was done to very good advantage, and from that time on the rough Berlin policemen became a little more respectful in their manner towards the public. Another of

His Majesty's own idea was to have a number of policemen learn English in order to assist foreign visitors. The men wore a badge, "English spoken," on their coat and were quite useful, although their English was naturally not very fluent.

One of the Kaiser's improvements was much criticised. The beautiful Berlin park, the Tiergarten, had been allowed to run rather wild in its wooded parts by the old Emperor, who liked to see dense shrubberies, and the taste of the Berlin people was much the same. But the third Emperor went radically to work, causing all the thick undergrowth to be removed and innumerable trees to be lopped, and a great many trees to be cut down altogether. The general verdict was that the Tiergarten was spoilt, but the Kaiser had seen and admired the long vistas of Hyde Park; he liked light and air, and he knew what he was about. He did the same with the beautiful Sanssouci Park at Potsdam. Again the people grumbled, and it was privately thought that the Kaiser wanted the avenues cleared because he was afraid of sinister attacks. In any case it cannot be denied that the parks have very much gained in beauty.

About this time an addition was made to the Tiergarten that now forms its loveliest feature. A rose garden, by the Kaiserin's initiative, was made in the centre of the park, which, after a few years, became fairy-like in beauty. There roses of every name and colour grow in profusion, and artificial ponds in the middle have their surface nearly hidden by white and pink water lilies. At one end of the garden is a marble colonnade filled and hung with flowers, hydrangeas, climbing and hanging roses and other blossoms of the season. Children are not allowed alone in the "Rosarium," and it has become a delightful spot for quiet study, many tables being provided for the use of students. Birds sing all day long, and in the evening after the gates are closed the nightingales fill the air far around with music. It is considered good fun to feed the sparrows in the Rose Garden; thousands of the little brown birds collect there and are so tame, the very young ones especially, that they eat crumbs out of the hand, and know no fear because nobody would ever think of startling them.

When the Kaiser gave the rein to his artistic imagination the effect was rather funny, not

serious and really artistic as intended. In 1897 when a German torpedo boat was lost during the naval manœuvres, a member of the drowned crew, a chief stoker, was the son of a ship's carpenter living at Memel. On the following Christmas Eve a parcel was handed to the stoker's parents with the stamp of the Imperial crown. It contained a highly coloured print representing a seascape, with a ship and a lighthouse bathed in the rosy light of the setting sun. On the left of the picture Germania was seated at the foot of an unfurled war-flag; she was holding in one hand the Reich's shield, in the other a laurel wreath. At the top, in the centre of the picture was a head of the Saviour. An inscription to the memory of the stoker who died for Kaiser and Reich, and a text from the Bible took up some space at the bottom, but by far the larger part was devoted to the words: "Designed by His Majesty, the Kaiser and König Wilhelm II." It was said in the neighbourhood that a hundred mark note would have been more acceptable to the parents, who were very poor.

It had long been the wish of the German Crown Prince to make a world tour and particularly to pay a visit to India. Finally the Kaiser gave his

consent, and the programme of his eldest son's travels was drawn up. From Ceylon the route was to lead to Bombay, Calcutta, and thence on to Bangkok, where the King of Siam's State visit to Berlin was to be returned in like manner, and acquaintance was to be renewed with the Siamese royal princes who had studied military matters at the Potsdam cadet school. Short visits to Singapore and Java were also planned. The Prince was then to proceed to Hong-Kong and other important towns of China, and the long tour was to terminate at Tokio and the return home to be via Siberia. The Kaiser, who took keen interest in everything, insisted on great state, and about a dozen distinguished officers were specially chosen to attend the traveller.

The Crown Princess accompanied her husband as far as Ceylon, and then returned home. Many said it would have been better had she remained with him all the time. A great many tales were told about his adventures in India, some of them no doubt exaggerated, but some certainly true. I knew someone who went to India very soon after the Crown Prince and he told me the country rang with stories. Finally the Kaiser was in-

formed, it was said, by the older men in the Prince's suite that they would take no further responsibility, and cogent reasons were given. His Majesty cabled instructions commanding immediate return, and the tour was abruptly broken off. Siam was never visited, and all preparations at Bangkok for a brilliant reception and a big programme of entertainment for the German guests were cancelled at much inconvenience to the Siamese authorities. The reason published in the German papers for the unexpected return of the traveller was that the plague had broken out in Siam, but there was no mention of the plague in any other papers.

A favourite pastime of the Kaiser was that of excavation. A quantity of old Roman remains were found at the Saalburg, near Homburg, and here excavating work was carried on at intervals for a long period. His Majesty would stand for hours at a time watching the small army of men digging away, laying portions of ancient buildings bare and bringing them to the surface. Whenever pieces of a statue or a vase that had possibilities of being reunited came to light the Kaiser's joy knew no bounds, and he forgot the clouds of dust their digging up had produced. He would even



sometimes in his excitement lend a hand himself at reconstruction like a child with a picture puzzle. He would talk to the men who sweated in the hot sun and praise their efforts. One, bolder than the rest, once said: "It's very thirsty work, *Majestät*." The Kaiser replied by producing a gold coin: "Well, a drink is good for thirst," and he added that all the men were to share.

The actual remains from the Saalburg never amounted to much, and the obtaining of them cost a lot of money, but the excavations provided His Majesty with a good deal of amusement and gave work to many hands. When he wanted to give a distinguished guest a souvenir of the Saalburg he would present him with a stick made of oak 2,000 years old, mounted in antique silver with a suitable inscription.

I think the prospect of finding ancient remains had something to do with the Kaiser's purchase of Achilleion, the beautiful little château on the Island of Corfu that had been the property of the Emperor Franz Josef. It was the favourite residence of the Empress of Austria in her later years, and it was there that the once beautiful and brilliant woman, when she became an invalid, found

rest, after her none too happy life, until a dastardly hand killed her. The Empress was a great lover of poetry, and especially of Heine's poetry. She had a fine statue of the poet erected in the palace garden, and liked to sit near it while her chaplain or a lady-in-waiting read to her from his works. Her Majesty particularly loved Heine's *Buch der Lieder*, that little volume of tender love poems, exquisite word painting and biting satire, which has never been adequately translated into any language. A few hours after the Kaiser took possession of the Corfu château he had the statue removed. Heine had had the double fault of being a Socialist and a Jew, therefore his genius counted for nothing. One would have thought, if only out of respect to the unhappy Empress's memory, the statue of her favourite poet, even if not permitted to remain in the Imperial gardens, might have been awarded a corner in a public park somewhere in Germany, but no place was found for it, and it lay among lumber for many years, until, finally the French, who are fond of Heine, took pity on it and gave it sanctuary.

In later years the Kaiser lost much of his antipathy to Jews. Generally these gentlemen were

very wealthy, and therefore helpful in many ways. The Kaiser was genuinely attached to Herr Ballin and others I could mention, apart from their usefulness. Unjust prejudice against the Hebrew race was, however, deeply rooted in German so-called "Society." No Jew was permitted to rise to the rank of an officer, no matter how highly cultured or wealthy he might be, but he had to serve his-time in the army all the same.

The fulsome flattery expended by the Kaiser on the Prussian nobility in the early years of his reign went to its head and it became, to a man, more arrogant and vainglorious than ever before. Great offence was taken by the nation—other than the nobles—on the occasion of a public speech by His Majesty in which he alluded to the Prussian nobility as the noblest among his people. This was not intended as a play upon the word—the word "adel" meaning noble of birth, the word "edel" noble of character. In all seriousness he declared the Prussian nobles to be the "edelste der Nation." One of the glowing speeches made by the Kaiser about the same time contained the following words:

“As the ivy twines itself round the gnarled oak, beautifying it and protecting it when storms shake its crown, so the Prussian nobility closes around my throne. May it, and with it the entire nobility of the German nation, become a shining example for that portion of the people who are still hesitating. Forward then to battle for religion, for morality and order against the parties of anarchism!” The people “still hesitating” and the “parties of anarchism” were the bulk of the German people who were waiting for the fulfilment of the Kaiser’s thrice-given word to reform the unjust system of franchise.

Woe betide the man who took any active step towards a betterment of existing political conditions no matter how flagrant they were! When the wellknown pastor, Herr Stöcker, was suspended from office because of his political and too-liberal views, the Kaiser wrote to a friend the following:

“Stöcker ended as I told you years ago he would. Political parsons are an absurdity. Whoever is a Christian is also social; ‘Christlich-sozial’” (referring to the newly-formed Christian Social Party) “is nonsense, and leads to conceit and intolerance. The reverend gentlemen should

see to the salvation of their congregations, cultivate charity but leave politics alone because that is no business of theirs."

It is really astonishing how utterly destitute of tact the Kaiser always was, considering the parents he had. What the Germans call *Herzensbildung* (literally, education of the heart) seemed unknown to him. I remember an instance that occurred at a dinner party at the Schloss which was told to me by somebody who was present. One of the heads of a Ministerial department—Althoff by name—had been invited by his Sovereign and being a man of the old school he tucked his napkin into his collar instead of laying it on his knee. The royal host saw it from a distance and shouted roughly down the table: "I suppose you are going to be shaved!" The embarrassment of the unfortunate guest may be imagined, especially as huge bursts of laughter from the court satellites followed the Kaiser's sally. Herr Althoff told the story to some friends a few days later and one of them related an anecdote he had once heard about King Edward. A man of humble origin who was serving his country particularly well was invited to take tea with the King. The tea being hot,

the visitor poured it into his saucer and the King, without the least hesitation, did the same. On hearing this Herr Althoff remarked: "That is the difference between a gentleman and a boor."

## CHAPTER XIX

**A**S the Kaiser grew older affection for him among the masses of the people certainly did not increase. The younger officers, who saw in him the central point of militarism, were perhaps the only ones, excepting some old families who believed in the supreme right of the Hohenzollerns, who really regarded him with admiration. The elder officers did not agree with him on many points, but were afraid to say so; his statesmen distrusted him and were always wondering what his impetuous nature would lead to next. Fear was the leading characteristic of those who served him in any capacity—fear of his sharp tongue, of his curt, arbitrary manner, and his sudden dislikes. The old Kaiser was genuinely beloved by high and low for his gentle consideration; nobody was afraid of him. I do not think there will be any genuine tears shed

when the time comes for the passing of his grandson.

A State dinner at the Schloss was the most dreary thing imaginable. I have witnessed, if not participated in, several. A very distinguished gentleman whose position obliged him to be present at these banquets said to me once:

“Ach, —, be very and truly grateful that you have not got your court credentials and are not compelled to attend court dinners!”

The Kaiser was a very rapid eater, and as soon as he had finished a course everybody must have finished also, or the guest must not mind seeing his plate go away. At a great banquet with a foreign monarch as guest there was less iron etiquette than at an ordinary dinner party, which seldom lasted three quarters of an hour. Lunch of several courses was always over in much less time. The Kaiser not only led what conversation there was, but all eyes must be kept riveted upon him in case anyone should be addressed. Whenever he emptied his wine-glass, and that was often, the guests had to do the same immediately, for the court etiquette permitted nothing to remain in a glass. It was very difficult to enjoy the food so admirably prepared by the chefs—an Englishman



and a Frenchman—and the guests often rose from the Imperial table hungry. This nervous haste also prevailed in the matter of smoking. The huge and very strong Havana cigars of which His Majesty used to be so fond took him twenty-five minutes to begin and finish while an ordinary smoker needed nearly an hour for a similar cigar. By his doctor's orders the Kaiser in later years smoked lighter cigars and frequently cigarettes.

There was just one annual ball at the Schloss that was never dull, when etiquette relaxed to the verge of riotousness towards the end, even though the Kaiser and his sons were present. This was the democratic Fête of the Orders, established by Frederick the Great and therefore a tradition that had to be observed. The guests, numbering nearly 3,000, were holders of any State decoration, from the distinguished Order of the Red Eagle down to the Badge of Honour conferred on the humblest of His Majesty's subjects when considered worthy of a special honour. Every guest sat where he pleased and it might easily happen that a general of noble blood with a diamond star and a string of other distinguished decorations might sit next to his own groom or

gardener. The great White Hall and every room leading from it were crowded; for the Kaiser's table a special number of guests were always selected entirely irrespective of rank, and the imperial host usually enjoyed himself in his novel environment. The menu-cards, the menu itself and the wines were the same as on other State occasions and portions and potations were very generous.

It is a German custom at a dinner party for the married guests to take some little dainty from the dessert to their children, and this custom prevailed at the Orders Fête, too. It may well be imagined how the youngsters looked forward to a delicacy from the Kaiser's table, and how the fathers enjoyed packing up their bags. The footmen had paper bags at hand—one for each of the guests—as soon as dessert was set upon the table. Funny scenes often happened at this juncture, and the usher always became alert when it commenced, for some semblance of dignity must be maintained. Newly-decorated persons were often shy at helping themselves from the heavily-laden silver and porcelain dishes, but older hands knew no scruples; an onslaught was made on the fruit, fancy biscuits and sweetmeats, which might or might not end in a

general scrimmage. The Kaiser pretended not to notice the uproar, indeed at his table a certain amount of restraint was exercised, but the beverages of the Imperial cellars were fiery, and the majority of the guests were unaccustomed to such draughts. I have often wished that I had the power to wield the pen or that a witty journalist or artist might witness this absolutely unique scene and depict it for the amusement of the outside world. I was present at one of these festivities when the overjoyed possessor of a big bag of good things, filled to the top, hugged it too tightly to his bosom and it burst. The sweet contents were scattered far and wide over the polished floor, and the poor man, an elderly postman, stood, the picture of misery, and now completely sober, feeling he was disgraced for ever in the eyes of his Sovereign. The Crown Prince and his brothers, struggling to hide their mirth, saved the situation with great tact. Quick as lightning they scrambled after the scattered dainties, added fresh ones, and filled a new bag, which they handed to the grateful guest as though the whole thing was a matter of everyday occurrence.

The Kaiser was never particularly addicted to card-playing, but he occasionally played a game

of Skat with some of his officers. The pack, specially designed and made for him, was a thing of beauty, and I am glad to have a disused one in my possession. The cards are of Old-German pattern, and the back shows a symbol of the Triple-Alliance: The Prussian Eagle, Austria's Double-Eagle and the Silver Cross of Savoy on a crimson background, encircled by a garland of oak-leaves, above which is the Imperial crown. The court cards are brilliant in execution and colouring, some of the faces bearing resemblance to certain notabilities such as, for instance, the likeness of the King of Hearts to the Great Elector. The four Queens are quite lovely: the Queen of Hearts is a gentle German Gretchen; the Queen of Spades a handsome lady with a fan; the Queen of Diamonds is in Dutch costume and the Queen of Clubs is a Spanish beauty. Each card is a work of art, designed by well-known painters, and they are, to my thinking, calculated to distract the attention of the holder from his play. His Majesty's friends did not covet a game of cards with him, for it was known that he was a most unwilling loser, not on account of the stakes, which were always low, but because he could not stand defeat of any kind, even at an innocent game of Whist or Skat. Many

have consciously revoked or forgotten to produce a winning card just to keep the Sovereign in a good temper.

When Wilhelm II sprained his wrist badly and had to wear his arm in a sling for a short time the Crown Prince was entrusted by his father with the signing of important State documents. The instructions to this effect had the following wording: "As by medical advice I am compelled for some days to rest My hand I wish to authorise Your Imperial Highness and Liebden<sup>1</sup> for as long as I am prevented, to sign in My place such documents as I will forward for this purpose to Your Imperial Highness and Liebden."

When the attempted assassination of the old Emperor by Nobling took place and Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm had to represent his father for a lengthy period, His Majesty called his ministers to his bedside and said: "Gentlemen, go to my son. You know how I want things done, and in all seriousness I bind you to see that the government is carried on according to my intentions, so that everything continues as it is." Could any two decrees be more dissimilarly expressed?

<sup>1</sup> Footnote by Editor: An untranslatable official title used by German royalties among themselves.

Princess Victoria Luise, the Kaiser's daughter, always had many friends; she never permitted herself to be a lonely princess such as one reads about. Her best chum was Princess Margarete, niece of the Duchess of Connaught and daughter of Prince Friedrich Leopold, who lived at Glienicke, near Potsdam. At the New Palace the two girls were constantly together, and made a pretty pair. Princess Margarete was the first to become engaged, and her cousin was admitted to the secret before anyone else. The engagement was not sanctioned for some time by the Kaiser who, as head of his house, had the power of permitting or forbidding the marriage, and the would-be bridegroom, being only a Reuss, was not of equal birth with a royal princess. Victoria Luise, however, sympathised with the young couple, who were genuinely in love, and put in a good word for them with her father who never could refuse her anything, and so the betrothal and soon afterwards the marriage took place. The bridegroom was His Serene Highness Prince Heinrich XXXIII, of Reuss, and Secretary at the German Embassy at Vienna.

Reuss is a minor German principality dating back to about the twelfth century. Every son

born of the race has been christened Heinrich in honour of the Emperor Heinrich VI, who protected it in the thirteenth century. As the Reuss family has always been a most prolific one and males have generally predominated, the difficulties of the situation may be imagined. In order to make matters still more complicated there is a Younger and an Elder Line. Wilhelm II's niece, Princess Feodora of Saxe-Meiningen, married Prince Heinrich XXX, Younger Line, a grandson of Heinrich LXXIV, Elder Line. Many of the modern Heinrichs have done their utmost to break with this ridiculous tradition, but it holds them in an iron grip. It is not astonishing that quite a number of Reusses have been very eccentric, and that several have been really insane, and have had to be interned in an asylum. A great friend of the Kaiserin was one of this family, Princess Hermine of Reuss.

Another betrothal that took place about this time was attended by even greater obstacles. The Duke of Croy, head of one of Germany's most ancient noble families, fell in love with Miss Nancy Leishman, the American Ambassador's daughter, a bright, pretty girl of eighteen. The bridegroom was some six years older than his Nancy, and left

the Guards for diplomacy; he was very wealthy and had large estates, so that he was not trying to sell his title to a rich American. It appeared doubtful for some time whether Miss Leishman could become a Duchess legally, as the Croy family is a "mediatised" one. The Duke's near relatives were also very high up in the world; his aunt was the Archduchess Friedrich, whose husband was uncle to the King of Spain. Love laughs at obstacles, and the young couple determined to be wed. The Kaiser, of course, could stretch a point in favour of the lovers if he chose even if the ducal family remained obdurate, but it was not believed he would exert his right. Miss Nancy was a true American and not a bit afraid of the Kaiser, and she had also a great charm. The lovers won the day.

The Kaiser, who really loved art and was a good judge of things artistic, was always willing, indeed eager, to acquire a fine painting or piece of sculpture for his museums, and often paid quite a large sum of money out of his private means to this end. He and Dr. von Bode, the chief director of the Berlin galleries and museums, were therefore overjoyed when, after many vicissitudes, the beautiful painting by van der Goes, "The Adoration of the



Magi," which had long been bought and paid for, was finally safely housed in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum at Berlin. The work had an interesting history. Originally an altar-piece at the Monforte Monastery in Spain, unknown to all the outside world, it became, when discovered by the experts, an internationally coveted object, and lively competition ensued for its possession. Eventually the German Government was the successful purchaser for a sum considerably over a million marks. Possession again proved nine points of the law, and just as the special convoy had seen the precious work of art placed in its careful packing upon a cart as the first step in the transport to this country, a group of mounted soldiers appeared and in the name of the Spanish Government forbade the removal. Nothing was to be done but to submit and exercise patience. No headway was made for many months, and even the Kaiser's diplomatic efforts seemed of no avail. Ultimately the tussle between the two Governments came to an end, and Germany became possessed of the fine picture.

Many curious people, as well as all art-lovers in Berlin, flocked to the Kaiser Friedrich Museum to see the picture about which there had been such



WILLIAM II AS CRUSADER.

*From the statue by T. Jahn.*



contention. Temporarily placed behind a railing it was necessary to pass before it in single file, but all had the opportunity of seeing the beautiful work at close quarters. I do not pretend to be a judge of painting, but there is something in this "Adoration" that gripped my heart more than many other sacred subjects have done: the wonderful expression of the faces, the exquisite colouring, the peace brooding over all. No wonder the Spanish nation fought for it, even after the monks had sold it!

Two distinguished visitors came to Berlin about the same time. One was the young Prince of Wales, travelling through Germany in strict incognito as the Duke of Chester; the other was the queen of dancers, Anna Pavlova, on her way from St. Petersburg—where she had received signal honours from the Tsar and his family—to Monte Carlo. His Royal Highness put up at one of Berlin's best hotels with his tutor and attendants. He charmed everyone with whom he came in contact, high and low; he paid many visits and captivated the ladies especially by his boyish smile and unaffected manner, which was considered "so English," and indeed he must have had a totally different up-bringing from the Prussian princes,

for there was no military arrogance about H.R.H. who, to the amazement of the Germans, never wore uniform once during his visit.

The Prince came on to Berlin from the Rhine country for which he was full of praise. He spent over an hour in the beautiful Cologne Cathedral, and later on motored in one of the cars which had been sent from England for his use, all along the Rhine. He travelled in this pleasant manner to Coblenz and Bingen, through the picturesque haunts of my happy childhood of so long ago. The bright, unspoilt heir to the English Throne loved it all. He took the Niederwald with its grand National Monument on the way, and declared nothing could be finer or more impressive, for which pronouncement my heart went out to him.

During the few days the famous Russian dancer spent here she was invited to see her own performance for the first time on the screen. The film represented her in Rubinstein's poetic dance "Die Nacht." Accompanied by a few friends, Mme. Pavlova motored to the studio and waited with a thrill of excited anticipation—as she afterwards said—for the unrolling of the picture. She was as frankly delighted as a child, laughed and clapped

her hands enthusiastically, and after the film came to an end she begged the manager so prettily to "play it all over again" that of course the request was immediately obeyed. Anna Pavlova was the guest of the Russian Embassy during her stay here, and both the English and French Embassies showed the incomparable dancer much attention.

## CHAPTER XX

**T**HEATRICAL novelties in which the Kaiser could take a hand with some amount of justification had been scarce of late years, but the arrival of his fifty-fourth birthday afforded an excellent opportunity which it would not do to miss. Herr Lauff, who has been called the Homer of the Hohenzollerns, successor to Ernst von Wildenbruch in this particular branch, was entrusted by His Majesty with the task of writing a "Festspiel" for the occasion which should furnish brilliant entertainment for the guests at the gala performance in the Opera House. Hitherto such productions had been exclusively hymns of praise descriptive of the prowess of one or more of the Kaiser's ancestors. They were always exceedingly dull, interesting nobody but the monarch and his consort, and many a yawn was hidden behind the white glove of a gorgeously-

uniformed guest, and even a little nap was sometimes indulged in when the lights were turned low.

The latest effort, however, was of a somewhat different type. The title was *Kerkyra, two Pictures of the Past and Present*, and the scene was laid on the Island of Corfu. It was quite a skilful compound of ancient history, fantasy and modern life at Corfu, and it was known to all that His Majesty had stirred the mixture and supplied most of the ingredients. There was an episode in the war of Kerkyra (the ancient name, I believe, for Corfu) against Corinth, somewhere about 400 B.C. The stage represented the Gorgo Temple, part of which had been excavated a short time back by the Kaiser's commands; it was filled to excess by a heterogeneous mass of weirdly-garbed persons, priestesses and warriors and statesmen who all united in song, and gesticulated a great deal without the audience getting their meaning, but some ancient Greek dancing to music of the period, arranged by experts on that subject, was very interesting and aroused general attention.

The second picture depicted the Kaiser's life at Achilleion; there were folk-songs, folk-dances well



executed and staged, and this part of the performance pleased the audience, although they were not permitted to applaud it in the presence of the Sovereign. Most of the rehearsals were attended by the Kaiser, and he remained during the whole of the dress rehearsal which lasted three hours. Signal honours were awarded by His Majesty to Herr Lauff and to Professor Schlar, who was both the composer of the music and conductor.

Not always is the Kaiser absolute. In recent proceedings instituted by him against a number of his former tenants, the case—a long and complicated matter connected with rents and contracts—went against him, and he was compelled to pay the law costs into the bargain. His annoyance at this, to him, unwarranted and incomprehensible turn of affairs, was naturally great, and was attributed, as was everything else that went wrong in the country, to the ever-growing influence of the detested Social Democrats. His Majesty, who read few papers himself, as has already been said, happened to light upon a witty remark of Dr. Frank, member of the Reichstag, during a war of words about the new Army Bill. The Social Democratic member said that the Prussian Government, which was capable of any absurdity, was

sending all the young men through the army school to protect them from the Social Democratic taint, but, as a matter of fact, among the 136,000 new recruits entering the barracks there were 50,000 Social Democrats, and when they left the barracks these would have increased to 80,000. This, of course, was water on the mill of the Kaiser's wrath. Like all other persons in high places in this country and in many other circles, too, he considered Social Democracy synonymous with Anarchism. Little attention is really paid here by the masses of the people to politics, either internal or foreign. For so intelligent a nation as the Germans their apparent inability to think for themselves is amazing, and it leads to their domination by any master mind that comes along at a moment's notice.

The assassination of the King of Greece made the Kaiser's sister a Queen. Princess Sophie was always His Majesty's favourite sister, which was strange, for she was the one most like him in character, and many and frequent were their quarrels when they were young. It was a great blow to the Kaiser when she declared she intended to adopt her husband's religion. He did everything in his power to dissuade her from taking

the step, but Princess Sophie had married for love, and she held to her husband in everything, against her brother of whom she had never been afraid. A long and bitter estrangement ensued, causing the Empress Frederick much sorrow, but finally the old affection conquered and His Majesty yielded, burying the hatchet. The Queen of Greece is the most English of all the Empress Frederick's children; she talks English to her husband and her own children, to whom that language comes more natural than any other. I had the opportunity of hearing the Greece children speak English many times at Friedrichshof and they seemed to me to have no foreign accent at all.

After Princess Victoria Luise, the Kaiser's fair and only daughter, had been betrothed by the gossips to every available prince, both native and foreign, and even to some of the highest nobility, that charming and self-willed young lady suddenly took matters into her own hand and announced, to the astonishment of everybody including even her own family, her intention of wedding Prince Ernst of Cumberland. Victoria Luise and Ernst had long been good comrades, but nobody had the least suspicion that they wished to be more. The youthful Prince was a very nice boy, clean-

mind and simple, yet with no lack of brains. The political side of the alliance was an important one, for a feud of nearly half a century's standing between the Houses of Guelph and Hohenzollern, which the Kaiser had often attempted to bring to an end, now terminated in the most natural manner possible. Both the Emperor and the Duke of Cumberland were delighted at the proposed match, and Prince Max of Baden who was the means, chiefly, of promoting the love affair hugged himself with satisfaction. The Kaiserin welcomed her new son with true affection, and her one regret was that she was not the means of bringing the two together, for Her Majesty was a great match-maker, and helped to make many young folks happy. The engagement time was short and merry. May being the lucky month for weddings in this country it was at once decided that that month should witness the nuptials of the Kaiser's daughter. Prince Ernst transferred into the Ziethen Hussars to be near his fiancée, and his scarlet uniform was soon known all over Potsdam in close juxtaposition with Princesschen, for the happy young people drove and rode and walked together as often as possible with no chaperone to disturb them.

All loyal Berliners and Potsdamers rejoiced in the Princess's engagement to the man of her choice, and many simple persons of the entourage gave her little gifts that pleased her quite as much as many far more costly. The Kaiser's daughter had a heart of gold, and everyone who knew her loved her. She had something of her father's impetuosity in quick decisions and sudden fancies. Her English teacher she adored, and when the former was ill for some weeks and could not give any lessons the young Princess often drove to her house with flowers and fruit and to ask after her, even though she was not permitted to see her. Once she wrote the following little note, handing it in herself with some flowers she had gathered:

"Dear, darling Miss C.,

"You will get better soon, won't you?  
I do so want to see you again.

"Your loving VICTORIA LUISE."

Princesschen was fifteen years old then.

Beautiful weather, real German May weather, reigned throughout the wedding week, and Berlin was in a state of joyous excitement all the time.

Nobody seemed to do any work at all that week. The first event in connection with the royal festivities was the arrival of King George and Queen Mary, who were met in state by the Kaiser and Kaiserin, the Crown Prince and Princess, and the young prospective bride with her fiancé. That the British Embassy was represented to the last man and woman, and that the British colony turned up in full force to welcome their King and Queen goes without saying. I, as an old man to whom much was permitted, was also privileged to see their Majesties at fairly close quarters, and Queen Mary's delightful smile bewitched me as it did others. Her Majesty wore, I remember, a heliotrope gown and a most becoming hat all made of violets, and the King was in the uniform of a Prussian general with the Black Eagle Order.

The Kaiser, of course, wore British uniform, that of the Dragoon Guards. He hastened up to the train as it came steaming in to the strains of "God Save the King," and assisted the Queen to descend, at the same time kissing her hand and presenting her with a bunch of delicate orchids that just matched her dress. On King George's cheeks he imprinted a hearty kiss, and the royal

ladies kissed all round. The fair young bride-to-be naturally, like her fiancé, came in for a good deal of attention, but she looked pale and very tired in her simple white linen frock with some pale blue, Prince Ernst's favourite colour, about it. In her young days Princess Victoria Luise never rouged nor powdered. Both their Majesties smiled repeatedly at the enthusiasm of their loyal subjects, who gave them a rousing cheer as they left the station.

The King and the Kaiser drove together, heading the long line of carriages, then followed the Queen and the Kaiserin. What pleased their English Majesties very much was an ovation of the Zeppelin airship "Hansa," which hovered over the station till they started and then, at a low altitude, accompanied them all the way to the Schloss, the passengers that filled the gondolas and cabin waving their handkerchiefs. Cheering crowds lined Unter den Linden, that broad thoroughfare being gaily decorated with flowers, arches and a plentitude of Union Jacks. Amidst the thunder of the salutes, the carriages rolled over the fine old courtyard of the Schloss, and Queen Mary was shown to her apartments—the finest suite in the building, known as the King's Chambers

—by the Kaiserin, who wanted to be sure she had everything to her taste. King George remained with the Kaiser to inspect the guard and to see the troops march off, complimenting his Imperial cousin on their efficiency and good appearance. Then their English Majesties followed the time-honoured custom of showing themselves on the balcony to the cheering crowds below, and after family luncheon the King and Queen drove to the Crown Prince's Palace for tea.

The Kaiser was entirely in his element, rushing about, changing his uniform, and meeting his many guests at the various stations. The day following the King and Queen's arrival he first of all met his venerable great-aunt, the Dowager Grand Duchess of Baden, who always wore black since her husband's death. Next the Duke and Duchess of Cumberland were met at the station by His Majesty with all due honours, and, finally, he returned to the terminus, this time accompanied by King George, to welcome the Tsar.

For the arrival of the Russian Monarch and during the whole of his short stay here, the most comprehensive and rigorous precautions were



taken. At every ten yards all along the railway route armed soldiers were placed, and the train—the green and gold train that was once the property of the Empress Eugenie—travelled at an extraordinarily slow pace through Germany. The Tsaritzza did not accompany her husband, and naturally there were no ladies present to meet him. The welcome of His Majesty bore a distinctly military character. The visitor wore the uniform of his Prussian regiment, the Alexander Grenadier Guards, with the high aluminium helmet, and he wore that uniform during the whole of his visit. I never remember the police regulations so strict; cordons of police with revolvers in their belts cut off the station from all sides, and a row of empty trains were placed on all other lines so that nobody could possibly obtain a glimpse of the arriving guest.

The three monarchs, after a mutually cordial greeting, motored very quickly to the Schloss, hardly anyone in the distant crowd venturing to raise a cheer. Indeed, there was an atmosphere of fear in the whole city while the Tsar was in Berlin, and all in authority breathed freely when the important guest took his leave, unostentatiously as he came. There is, as has been often said, a

great resemblance between the Tsar and King George, and this was commented upon by all who saw them together. But there is someone else who resembles both very closely, the Kaiserin's brother, Duke Günther of Schleswig Holstein. The day after his arrival the Kaiser and the Tsar rode out together to the Grunewald, Berlin's nearby forest. The entire way was lined with soldiers and members of the secret police force, both German and Russian, for a large number of the latter had come in the Imperial train. People greeted without the least enthusiasm, and as the riders returned to the Schloss along the "Linden" I noticed the Tsar's frequent surreptitious glances from side to side. He looked very white and, as a matter of fact, far from happy or at ease.

Very different in character was the visit of the King and Queen of England, which lasted a week. Everywhere they were greeted with enthusiasm, and their *frank und frei*, fearless and friendly, faces delighted everybody. A visit to the Grunewald Racecourse one afternoon endeared their Majesties to the hearts of the Berliners more than almost anything else could have done, for the Berliners are just beginning to be a sporting

people. It was really a very happy thought of the King and Queen, who followed the races with much interest. Princess Aribert of Anhalt and Princess Mary of Pless sat between their Majesties in the royal stand and the Queen presented a prize to a gentleman jockey, a young lieutenant in the Dragoon Guards. What very much pleased all with whom they spoke was their fluency in German. When His Majesty was welcomed by the head of the Racecourse Committee as "King of the great Motherland of Sport," he replied on the spur of the moment in the language of the country. It was unanimously decided that the Queen's German was the better of the two, being almost without any foreign accent. The huge Stadium, which is built within the course and of which Berlin is justly proud, interested their Majesties greatly and the King asked many questions about it.

While this pleasant incident was taking place, the Tzar was having tea with Prince and Princess Heinrich of Prussia who had put up at the Kaiserhof Hotel. This little visit, short though it was, meant a great upheaval at that well-known house, which was full of guests for the wedding. The managers had an awkward time, for the secret

police allowed no other visitors to approach anywhere near the Imperial presence, and this was taken much amiss by some of them. The Kaiser accompanied his Russian guest there, and to the Arsenal beforehand, which the Tsar had expressed a wish to see. His Majesty, in fact, hardly left the Tsar's side, being convinced that there was less likelihood of any "accident" if he were with him. And surely even the most rabid of Nihilists would not place the Kaiser's life in jeopardy on the day before Princesschen's wedding. The Kaiserin was extremely nervous the whole time the Tsar was here, and would have been glad if he had been unable to accept the invitation to be present.

Queen Mary's birthday falling in the wedding week, she went with the King to spend part of it with her great-aunt, the Grand Duchess of Mecklenburg Strelitz, to whom she was greatly attached. The Grand Duchess's health did not permit her to come to Berlin for the wedding, and, in reality, she enjoyed a visit from the King and Queen in her own quiet home far more than she would have otherwise done. It was not the first time Queen Mary had been to Strelitz to see her aunt; when she was Princess May it was a

pleasure to her to pay a visit there. After becoming Queen the visits were less frequent and they were always incognito, so that only the nearest relations knew of them. Their Majesties lunched with the Grand Duchess, and returned to Berlin after a couple of hours had been happily spent.

On the day before the wedding the King and Queen lunched at the British Embassy. It was a day to be remembered by the British Colony, a deputation of which presented an address to His Majesty, and met with a very cordial reception from both their Majesties. Covers were laid for fifty persons in the handsome ballroom, at the end of which is the famous painting of Queen Victoria by Angeli. Queen Mary was looking charming, I was told, in a summery white dress and a hat of pink and white flowers, just the right kind of dress for a May day. Before the luncheon the King and Queen drove out to Charlottenburg, to the Mausoleum, and laid a wreath of white roses on the old Emperor's tomb, and another on that of the Empress Augusta. The Mausoleum at Potsdam where the remains of the Empress Frederick lie was visited by their Majesties shortly before leaving for home.

The customary "*Polter Abend*"—a night of convivial gaiety that precedes all German weddings—was replaced in this case by a gala banquet the equal of which it would not be easy to find at any Court on any occasion. That as well as the gala opera that followed and, in fact, all the wedding ceremonies put those of the Crown Prince's wedding entirely in the shade, for the Kaiser wanted his only daughter to be honoured as nobody ever was before. From my vantage corner high up in the White Hall I had a glimpse of a kaleidoscopic panorama of extreme splendour. Over 1,000 distinguished guests sat at table in the White Hall and adjoining apartments; the famous gold plate was used, and the decorations were the work of a well-known artist. Princess Victoria Luise, as became the most important person present, sat with her fiancé under a festive canopy of gold and white silk; her dress of white satin showed up in effective contrast to Prince Ernst's scarlet uniform, and the beautiful pearls, her mother's gifts, lent the finishing touch.

The Kaiser never allowed the table decorations to be high enough to hide the opposite guests; he barred all *épergnes*, and preferred trailing

flowers to those in vases, and on special occasions liked to choose the colour scheme himself. At this dinner the flowers were lilac and white roses, the effect of which was beautiful. Four rows of pages in their red and gold uniforms served their Majesties and the royal and Imperial guests. These are boys from fifteen to seventeen years of age, of the highest German aristocracy, specially selected for their handsome faces and good figures. Scores of footmen in silver livery with red silk stockings were dotted about; it was their duty to hand the dishes to the pages who then served the august persons assigned to them.

The procession to table was headed by the Kaiser with Queen Mary; next came the Kaiserin with King George, followed by the Tsar, who escorted the Grand Duchess of Baden, whose beautiful white hair and white dress made a conspicuous picture amongst all the gay colours. She was still a handsome woman, and I could not help thinking how proud her devoted father, the old Emperor, would have been if he could see her. The Duchess of Cumberland and the Kaiser were in gay humour, and their part of the table was unquestionably merry. The Kaiser presented the pages nearest him to the Queen, the King and the

Tsar, who honoured the pretty boys with much attention, and gave them each a signed menu-card as a souvenir. This great dinner was over astonishingly quickly. From the soup, which was declined by the Kaiser and therefore by most of the guests, to the ice it took exactly three quarters of an hour. Toasts were few and brief; the Kaiser toasted the King particularly heartily, and His Majesty replied equally cordially. Prince Ernst listened to his future father-in-law's happy little speech standing, and then, according to custom, drained his glass.

An amusing little incident occurred when dessert was set on the table. Somebody must have remarked upon the beauty of the service, the finest the Royal Porcelain Factory could produce, for immediately some score of the guests, as at a given signal, turned their plates over to see the stamp at the back. The Kaiser explained all about it very animatedly and with obvious satisfaction, for he was exceedingly proud of the Porcelain Works which were founded by his ancestor, Frederick the Great. Soon after His Majesty rose, and in the twinkling of an eye everyone followed his example and the procession left the Hall as it had come. The music was supplied by the



Tsar's regimental band; by the Kaiser's orders it was very discreet and low not to disturb conversation. Russian, British and Austrian melodies filled the programme, and were exquisitely rendered.

## CHAPTER XXI

THE gala opera surpassed in brilliancy anything of the kind I have ever seen, and it had the special merit of being short. This was necessary owing to the banquet beforehand, and to the demands which would be made on bride and bridegroom the following day. Indeed, what with all the excitement and the hard work connected with the receiving of innumerable deputations the young Princess was thoroughly tired out and longed for the day to be over and all the "fuss," as she termed it, at an end. On this occasion the Opera House was decorated from floor to ceiling with carnations, shaded from pale pink to deep crimson, and instead of the theatre being perfumed with lilac it was redolent with the sweet fragrance of the carnations. In the middle of the great State box, seating eighty persons, were the very youthful bridal pair, who

entered first, being announced by the three strokes of the official wand that as a rule only ushers in Majesties. The audience rose and bowed, and the young couple returned the greeting with a smile and a bow. Princesschen was in palest pink, with touches of blue, and looked exceedingly fair and pretty. Queen Mary and the Kaiserin were by a coincidence both in pale blue, their wonderful jewels lending a lustre to their toilettes, and the Duchess of Cumberland was a picture of a handsome old lady with her beautiful white hair and a white silk gown. King George and the Tsar, who both wore Prussian uniform, obviously enjoyed the music greatly. It was a perfect presentation of the first act of *Lohengrin*, specially selected by the bride and the incomparable orchestra had never done itself more justice. The performance was over by 9.30 and everyone retired early to rest.

It had been such gorgeous weather all through the week that when the wedding day dawned dull and grey consternation prevailed, but the optimists knew the sun would come out for Princesschen's wedding, and, sure enough, the mists cleared away and by noon all was sunshine again.

Soon after luncheon the bride began her toilette.

The historical "Princess Crown" was brought to her apartments and fastened to her fair hair by her mother with the assistance of the court coiffeur who received later the Princess's signed photograph as a token of her appreciation of his services. The German girl's wreath on her wedding day is of glossy green myrtle leaves, which is specially becoming when she has fair hair. Princess Victoria Luise's wreath was of myrtle, but there were some orange blossoms intertwined which made it doubly pretty. It was the Kaiserin herself who fixed the beautiful veil; that was an office that she permitted nobody else to fulfil. The civil marriage took place at half-past four in the Elector's Chamber, only the parents and the nearest relatives, including King George and Queen Mary, being present, and the wedding proper was celebrated in the Schloss Chapel at five o'clock.

The procession to the Chapel was a long one, and presented a brilliant spectacle to those who were privileged to witness it. First came the heralds and the court officials, the former in the historical costumes, the latter wearing all their decorations, which were not a few. Then came the bride in her fairylike dress of silver and lace, the long train carried by her former governess, Fräulein

von Saldern, now to be lady-in-waiting, and three friends. Prince Ernst, in his scarlet uniform, walked at her side, and looked very boyish and shy. Another group of distinguished officials followed, and then the Kaiser came, escorting the bridegroom's mother, followed by the Duke of Cumberland with the Kaiserin, who looked very regal in emerald velvet with a lot of silver about it, and a heavy train bordered with fur and carried by pages. All the ladies wore long and very imposing trains.

It was again an English Queen who carried off the palm in the matter of dress, for Her Majesty's toilette in its splendour and beauty, combined with perfect taste, took the spectator's breath away. To describe it would be impossible for a mere man, but the dress was of cloth of gold made in India and the train was of Irish lace lined with the same costly and beautiful material. The Queen wore a crown of diamonds, of which I was told the famous Cullinan diamond formed the principal part. Whatever it was, it suited her delightfully, with her delicate colouring and charming expression. Her Majesty walked with the Tsar, with whom she exchanged cheering little remarks along the route, for it was quite a journey to the Chapel.

King George came next with the Crown Princess, who looked very handsome in her favourite shade of pink. The gorgeous procession altogether comprised over a hundred Royal and Imperial persons.

Dr. Dryander and his sub-deacons met the bridal pair at the door and led them to the altar, the nearest relations forming a semi-circle round them. The plain black Lutheran gowns of the clergy made a strange contrast to the brilliant colours of toilettes and uniforms, and the service itself was as simple as possible by express wish of the young bride. The Cathedral choir sang an anthem and the Head Chaplain, who has known the bride from her birth, addressed a few heartfelt words to her and her husband. He said, what was indeed true, that she had been the sunshine of her father's house all her young life and these words moved the Kaiser deeply. I have never seen His Majesty so near the emotional as at that moment, for all that is best in the Kaiser is concentrated in his love for his only daughter. It is perhaps not known to everybody that an engagement ring in Germany is also the wedding ring, only as an engagement ring it is worn on the third finger of the left hand—in the case of both bride and bridegroom—and

changed at the altar to the corresponding finger of the right. As this little ceremony was being performed the salute from the cannons in the nearby Lustgarten thundered out, announcing to the outside world that Princess Victoria Luise was now Princess Ernst August of Cumberland. After a hymn and the Benediction the tendering of family congratulations with many kisses and embraces took place, and then the procession formed again and returned to the White Hall where the sunshine from the windows rivalled the light of the wax candle chandeliers.

After the wedding dinner, which was of short duration, the pretty custom of the torch dance was again observed, the dancers escorting the bridal pair to their apartments. In the privacy of her own room the Princess had some final words with her mother while the bridal veil was removed, an office that the Kaiserin wished to perform herself. The distribution of the "garter" followed after the bridal couple had left. Everyone assembled in the hall to say good-bye, but the Kaiser and all his sons accompanied the bride and bridegroom to the station, where His Majesty's own train was waiting to convey them to the pretty little hunting lodge, Hubertusstock, for a restful

honeymoon. The leave-taking was an affecting one; the pale young bride, yielding to the traditions in which she had been brought up, made first of all a deep Court curtsy to her father and kissed his hand. But the Kaiser let himself go as any ordinary father would have done and clasped his girl in his arms, kissing her repeatedly, and stood waving to her till the train was out of sight.

A day or two later the King and Queen left Berlin, the Tsar having left early the following morning. Their English Majesties had enjoyed their stay in the capital extremely, and everyone was sorry to see them go. They left late in the afternoon, accompanied to the station by the Kaiser and Kaiserin, the Crown Prince and his wife, and, of course, the Ambassador and all the members of the British Embassy were on the platform. The parting was very cordial between the German and English monarchs and plans were discussed for a return visit to be paid at no long distance. As the train was steaming out of the station a lady connected with the British Embassy came on to the platform quite out of breath. I think it was pretty Lady Agnes Durham, and she had been detained unavoidably, and arrived too late to see the last of her



Sovereign. The Kaiser was most sympathetic; he hastened up to her and I heard him say, "Shall I stop the train for you?" an offer which she laughingly, but gratefully declined. His Majesty then turned and walked the length of the platform with the British Ambassador, and as he passed me he said to Sir Edward, "It has been a very great privilege indeed to have had them."

It was the Kaiserin's desire and that of her daughter to have the wedding gown and the whole of the trousseau made of German materials and by German firms, which, with a few exceptions in the case of Austrian and French houses in Berlin, was carried out to the letter. For three months before the wedding, in fact ever since the betrothal was announced, work in the Schloss "home-dressmaking establishment" went on at high pressure, with innumerable additions to the ordinary staff. In contradistinction to the usual custom, the trousseau was not exhibited to the public, but I, as an inquisitive old factotum, was allowed to peep at the lovely things that were to adorn the bride whom as a tiny child I had dandled on my knee and to whom I had often officiated as "gee-gee." The veil which cost 50,000 marks was made at a lace school under royal patronage in

Silesia, where it took three months for over one hundred skilled workers to make. The Kaiserin wished her daughter to be married in the veil that she and her own mother had worn at the altar, but the young Princess desired to have one of her own—a brand new one, and a compromise was effected in that the same design of rosebuds was used. The morsel of lace and cambric that was to be known as the bridal handkerchief was the work of the same Silesian school, and cost the sum of 800 marks.

Beyond the question of the veil the youthful bride, who was a modern sports girl, was more interested in sports costumes than in any other part of her trousseau. Hats she enjoyed choosing, but the trying on of her dresses she rebelled against as much as was permissible. Her fiancé liking her best in blue she insisted that nearly all her evening frocks should be wholly or partly of that colour. She refused to have many toilettes ordered, saying they would only get old-fashioned, and finally the entire number was reduced to twenty, including dinner and dance dresses. I was told by a lady who knows her well that Princess Victoria Luise is in advance of her times; she would have nothing “fussy and lacey,” but everything of

the simplest character, and that of the finest material. All the house linen was provided by the bridegroom's mother and sisters, who selected it and had it specially woven in Silesia, all necessary lace being made in Alsace.

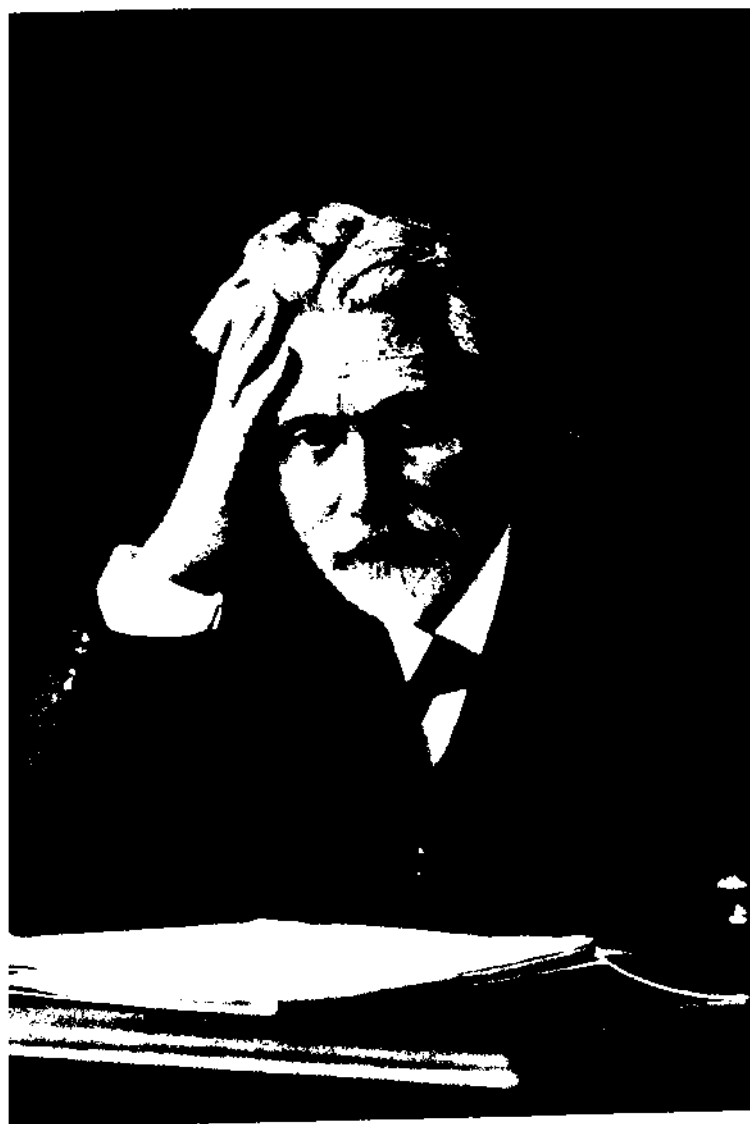
The value of the wedding presents was put down by competent judges at 500,000 marks. They were of every description, and some of them very beautiful; others were practical and useful. All the presents were later on exhibited at the Industrial Museum, and attracted many thousands of curious and interested persons. Their English Majesties gave generously; together they gave a diamond tiara, a motor car of latest type, a sunshade with a diamond handle, while specially from Queen Mary was an exquisite tea-set of finest English porcelain. The last, I was told, particularly delighted the young bride. From her parents and from her parents-in-law the gifts were lavish and very costly, consisting chiefly of jewels of which, with the exception of her famous necklace, Princess Victoria Luise had hitherto possessed very few. Altogether the Kaiser's daughter had a good start in every way upon her matrimonial path and, above all, she had the loving wishes of a nation.

An incident that was said to have gratified King George during his week's visit to Berlin was the acquittal of two Englishmen, Captain French and the solicitor Bertram Stewart, who had been sentenced to a term of incarceration in a fortress on the charge of espionage, whether with or without justification was not then clear. The year of Victoria Luise's wedding was an eventful one in many ways. A peace treaty was signed in London between Turkey and the Balkan States, thanks to the negotiations of Sir Edward Grey, who was generally praised in Germany for his efforts in the cause of peace. Let us now hope there will be no further trouble in that quarter. I never had a great opinion of the Balkans; I was there sometimes as a young man, and it seemed to me that there were smouldering fires which at any moment might break out into open flame.

The Albanian adventure also came to an end about this time. It was a short reign the King and Queen enjoyed. I believe I am right in saying that the reason Prince Wilhelm of Wied allowed himself to be placed on the throne of Albania, if throne it can be termed, was to be found in his wife's ambition. Princess Wilhelm, who in Berlin, was quite an important lady in

society and active in social welfare institutions, was not content; she liked the idea of being a Queen, even though of such an insignificant realm as Albania. The disillusion was a sad one; the sufferings of the princely couple were considerable until, under the protection of an international guard, they escaped to their old home and became Prince and Princess Wilhelm of Wied once more.

The Kaiser suddenly developed an ardent desire to further trade in Germany, to which end he commenced active discussions with some leading merchants and bankers as to ways and means. In a speech made in the old Hansa city of Luebeck His Majesty expressed his intentions, thereby winning the hearts of those engaged in commercial pursuits. "I protect the German merchant; his enemy is also my enemy," were the Kaiser's words, which naturally were received with enthusiasm. Exactly by what means the protection was to be made was not stated, but I heard that several very big enterprises were soon to be brought about. In great enterprises, however, the Germans have never been able to look far ahead, for what reason I cannot imagine unless it is that they have been poor so long that the spending of over large sums of money frightens them even when that is neces-



THE FAMOUS SOCIALIST, AUGUST BEBEL.



sary to produce the desired results. Witness the affair connected with the Kiel Canal, a huge undertaking that was to unite the North Sea with the Baltic. Kaiser Wilhelm I laid the stone a year or two before his death, and his grandson opened the Canal some ten years later. It cost I forget how many millions of marks, but it was an enormous sum. Yet the inability to reckon with the future was again shown, for the Canal proved too narrow. The steamer *Deutschland* stuck and collapsed—broke her back was, I think, the term used. Excavations had to be commenced all over again, which would not have been necessary if more foresight had been used.

Quite recently one of Germany's grand old men, August Bebel, passed peacefully away at his home in Switzerland. His life was one of *Sturm und Drang*, such as falls to the lot of few born leaders of men. He was a compatriot of my own; his birthplace was the Rhineland. Nearly five years of the seventy-three allotted to him he spent in prison on charges of *lèse Majesté* and treason, or inciting to treason, but his courage was never daunted. He suffered for his convictions like many another Prussian martyr, and was a fighter almost to the end in the cause he had made his own.



Even his bitterest enemies never attempted to deny his absolute sincerity. His great book, *Woman and Socialism*, ran through thirty editions and has been translated into many languages. With all his fighting proclivities August Bebel was one of the most gentle and tender-hearted of men, and his death left a great gap in the ranks of the Socialists. His end came quietly, and just as he always wished it to come. He had said good-night to his daughter and retired in customary good spirits early in the evening. She saw him sleeping soundly at five next morning, but found him two hours later in the same position, dead.

The Kaiserin's health seemed to suffer in consequence of her daughter's loss; that she pined much for the companionship of the child so dear to her was known to all, for they had always been inseparable and had many things in common. Her Majesty, however, took a great interest in the betrothal of her godchild, Princess Augusta Victoria of Hohenzollern, to the deposed King of Portugal, and this gave her a welcome distraction; she would, as a matter of fact, have liked to see her godchild married to one of her sons so that she might have called her daughter. But

there were obstacles in the way, not the least of which was that the Princess never took a fancy to any of her so-called cousins. Then, too, the non-reigning branch of the Hohenzollerns are strict Roman Catholics, which would have proved an almost insurmountable difficulty.

The bride of Don Manoel is of the true Hohenzollern type, pretty and fair—a pleasing contrast to the dark-haired Portuguese. The particularly fine castle near the Valley of the Danube, in Sigmaringen, where the Princess was brought up, has always been a show place that could rival any of the royal Hohenzollern houses, for its situation is of the loveliest possible and the imposing interior contains priceless treasures of art, books, arms and other things that have been collected by a long line of Hohenzollerns whose lineage is far more ancient than that of the reigning family. The Prince who owns this magnificent place permits the public free access to the park and the “Museum” and also to the beautiful little chapel, the altar of which was supplied daily by Princess Augusta Victoria with choicest flowers. The young bride will surely be very happy in England, her new home, for though quite an excellent artist and something of a poetess, she is fond of sport and

especially of horses. The Kaiserin, I was told, promised her god-child she would pay her a visit as soon as she was settled down.

I do not believe I shall add anything more to my diary—that true companion of my life from early boyhood. This, however, I will add: I have set down nothing in malice; I have faithfully served three generations of Hohenzollerns, but I have also cherished a deep affection for the land whose privileges are the English language and English conditions.

My pen and my hand are failing me, for I have long passed the scriptural three score years and ten, yet my last years have not been labour and sorrow, but calm and buoyant with a confident hope. The peace that surrounds me seems, as I write, to extend throughout the world. God grant it may continue!

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