

THE PRIVATE LIFE OF THE KAISER

(Continued from Page Fifteen.)

(800), divided up into 14 gold crowns and 3 double crowns, listed. Courtiers and others near William used to rejoice in the solitary manifestation of royal good will that helped to reconnect the bonds between king and people.

"Will it please Your Majesty to go on your usual Santa Claus expedition this evening before the trees are lit?" asked Court Marshal Count Eulenburg at second breakfast on the day preceding Christmas.

"Most certainly," replied the Kaiser, "and, by the way, direct Messner to furnish me with silver coins, instead of gold, this time—14 thaler and 3 or 5 five-mark pieces. You see," he added, addressing himself to the Empress, "I have been thinking about this giving away of gold; some poor devil, when I try to benefit, might suspect me when he offers my Christmas present in payment. That element of distrust and danger I will circumvent by spending only thalers among my needy friends hereafter."

"How thoughtful of you," liped the Empress, deavouring her husband with admiring glances.

When "The Poor Are in Luck."

"Your Majesty thinks of everything," said the Countessess von Brockdorff and von Basewitz. And "of everything, particularly his pocket," whispered his neighbor.

When the Kaiser came to take leave of Her Majesty that evening he drew from his overcoat pocket the shabby little amount he had decided to spend, 57 marks in all.

"The poor are in luck tonight," he said. "Messner selected the brightest thalers in his treasury; they are really very pretty," and the Kaiser laughed as the hapless Princess Lamballe may have laughed as she exclaimed: "If the poor have no bread, let 'em eat cake."

Thus, young Hohenzollerns are not liable to be flogged nowadays for spending a fewoppers unnecessarily, as Crown Prince Frederick (known as Frederick the Great) was when he gave a royal servant 15 cents for bringing his dog from Potsdam to Wusterhausen, a distance of 20 miles (his father beat him "for having no more sense than to pay a man who merely did his damned duty"); but even Wilhelm's parents insisted upon bringing up the heir to the throne without giving him a chance to acquaint himself with the power, the temptation, the misery and the joy that the possession of ready money gives.

As the holes in the Greek philosopher's toga denoted vanity rather than contempt of worldly opinion, so the patches on a youthful Hohenzollern's trousers indicate not Spartan frugality but a false notion of the principles of economics.

The Kaiser's sons were not taught that it was necessary to economize in order to be liberal; they were merely deprived of things they liked—good clothes and cash—in obedience to a heavy delusion that has peopled the thrones of Europe with spend-thrifts or big game hunters for centuries.

I have heard the former Court Marshal von Liebenau say that Wilhelm when at college never had a copper over and above his expenses, all of which were disbursed by him, Liebenau.

Stinginess a Characteristic.

"When we entered active service that old bone-penury—hovered over the lieutenant, captain and colonel; his entire income was made over to me every month, and as it was always spoken for in advance, my young master even aspired in vain for a pocket-piece, a double gold crown (\$5). Wilhelm, having been unable to acquire intimate acquaintance with money, almost showed a childish attitude toward financial questions, and, having all his own wants attended to as a matter of course, failed to understand or appreciate what was due to others.

"Has anybody heard of the projected English tour of the Meiningens?" asked the Kaiser at luncheon one afternoon.

Von Egloffstein had heard the Hereditary Prince say that he and the Princess intended to accept an invitation to Windsor Castle.

"But the cost!" exclaimed the Kaiser;

"it will be at least 10 marks (\$2.50) a head every day they are absent."

The very next day, at second breakfast, the Kaiser's menu card, on which he had sketched "the future south front of the castle with the surrounding territory," was passed around.

"I am glad to announce," he said, "that I have perfected my plans for the improvement of the Schloss. After abolishing the popular amusement of looking into the Kaiser's windows," he referred to the dismantling of the houses opposite the royal residence, the Schloss Freiheit; "after routing the sweet piobers across the way, I have decided to erect another barrier between myself and publicity. As the sketch shows, terraces will be built adjoining the south front of our palace, and they will extend far enough to place within the royal precinct that part of the castle square that lies between the Schloss and the great fountain. These terraces," added the Kaiser, "will at the same time serve to deaden some of the noise from the incessant traffic."

Throws Away Twenty Millions.

"Will the city be willing to sacrifice the square?" asked the Prince of Saxe-Altenburg, who was the guest of honor that day.

"With my permission, certainly," replied the Kaiser.

"But the scheme, if pushed to such length will involve an outlay of twenty millions," warned the Minister of the Royal House, Weyll.

"Maybe, more or less." The Kaiser said it with a frown, but immediately resumed his semi-huntering tone and added lightly: "Perhaps I will authorize Your Excellency to arrange another letter, or to take up a loan that holds out large premiums, as they do in Austria and Serbia."

With that he turned to the Countess Brockdorff, whom he detests and ordinarily treats with the severest indifference, and, by the way of changing the subject, told her a risque story across the table.

That is the Kaiser all over; it worries him to think that any of his relatives should spend 10 marks, and he disposes of ten or twenty millions of public moneys as if they were old bricks or oyster shells; in fact, the Kaiser has no notion whatever of the value of things.

The municipal council could not offer any objection to his plans, "no matter what the cost," for he means to give the terraces over to his sons as a playground. Besides, the terraces would offer a formidable bulwark against the plans of anarchists morning, noon and night.

And as a final trump: "We will promise to prolong the annual stay of the Court in Berlin at least one month or six weeks"—arguments worthy of the royal impostor, who raised the meanness-and-God-piffle to the dignity of a cult.

Give up one-half of a public square—the most imposing in town—as a playground for his half dozen "kids," some half-witted, like Oscar; others with criminal tendencies like Eitel Fritz; again, others more Clown-prince trash. "Bulwark against anarchists!" Well, the ex-Kaiser should gaze upon his castle now! And he would prolong his stay for twenty millions and a public square. He would, indeed, until his bones dropped from the gibbet erected by his loving subjects!

The greatest fools are also the greatest charlatans and liars," laughingly remarked Prince Bismarck to Duke John Albrecht when he related the facts to him.

Robbed a Defeated King

The Guelph Fund represented the sequestrated fortune of King George of Hanover and his heir, the Duke of Cumberland, and its history is interesting. After annexing Hanover in the summer of 1866, Prussia restored their private fortune to the deposed Guelphs by the convention of September 20, 1867, but there was a string, or rather a steel cable, attached to this apparent act of restitution. Pointing out that the poor blind man whom he had vanquished might utilize his money to raise an army against victorious Prussia, Bismarck, with the consent of the Diet, seized the private property of the royal Hanoverians a second time, pleading that its annual interest was needed to ward off the Guelph party's secret intrigues.

So the Guelph Fund became the Republic Fund—a golden trough from which William's friends and the Government's leading men fed for 26 years, the Chan-

cellor laying a list of disbursements before the Kaiser at the end of each year, whereupon the receipts were destroyed.

More Imperial Jockeying

Court gossip fixes upon the Kaiser's unwillingness to give up so large a fortune to which he might have recourse occasionally as the principal cause of his frequent breaches of faith, but I have never succeeded in tracing even a solitary Guelph Fund million on its way to the Kaiser's pockets.

The Prince of Wales (afterwards King Edward), it was whispered, had written a letter to the late King George of Greece, telling him that the Kaiser "gulled" down the whole of the Guelph Fund, but "Uncle Bertie," instead of sending his letter to Athens direct, forwarded it to Copenhagen for approval by his mother-in-law and Queen Louise, caused the conspiracy to leak out. But, in a burst of confidence, her Majesty showed the letter to Princes Valdemar, who had stirred up the imbroglio between Bismarck and Czar Alexander not so many years before.

Those Royal Gosspies

That Marie d'Orleans-Bourbon on her part was unable to constrain her triumph at the hope of seeing Germany's Kaiser humiliated is perhaps not to be wondered at, for Her Royal Highness detested William as heartily as she adored France. So, with true feminine acumen, she sat down and telegraphed the sweet morsel broadcast to all royal Wilhelm-haters, or princes that she considered sympathizers, and all wished the undertaking Godspeed—all except Cousin Ferdinand of Bulgaria. This queer individual, eager to oblige the Kaiser, betrayed the confidence reposed in him, hoping thereby to gain William's gratitude.

Ferdinand had a rude awakening out of that pipe dream, for only a few weeks later William called him names that figured largely in the correspondence of the late Marquis of Queensbury with a certain English poet-dramatist. And to Czar Nicky's face, too!

And you should have heard the Kaiser's estimate of Ferdi's true character a week or so before Bulgaria's caving in. "Dirty traitor," "Jew bully," "Murderer," and "Crowned Shylöck" were some of the milder epithets flying about. And the Kaiserin and her daughter Louise fully agreed that his Balkan Czarship was a "swine."

At best, the Berlin court was a veritable hotbed of ill-natured gossip. In the morning one of the Kaiser's adjutants might have a good story to relate that, without involving a breach of faith, keyed a perplexing situation, while letters from other courts, the tattle of princely visitors, correspondence of high aristocrats or statesmen, a ministerial crisis, a sudden lapse in the routine of royal employment as a visit postponed or a "headache to order," completed the chain of evidence that linked together of its own accord, as it were, and in the end revealed hidden

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spring of action and private views and motives of individuals affording a better analysis of the minds of historic personages than a whole library of ordinary contemporaneous accounts, written by outside spectators, who faithfully copied each other.

Except for the details, here first revealed, the Guelph Fund story is ancient history, but is important as a precedent: Since German statesmen thought it incumbent upon them to sequestrate the private fortune of a case-horse king in order that this ex-monarch might not use the money to stir up trouble against conquering Prussia, it is 100 times more important to confiscate the ex-Kaiser's billions to prevent his breaking the peace after peace has been signed and sealed.

"But William is a broken old man," say his apologists.

We are not sure of that. William being a consummate actor, but even admitting that, personally, he is out of the running, he has six stalwart sons, than whom no greater scamps, intriguers and wasters of human life walk

Germany's soil, or any other. All six will have millions and a whole skin—al six enjoy health, liberty and complete freedom from conscience or scruples of any kind; all six will have millions at their beck and call if the Allies permit!

Will the Peace Conference—by refusing to confiscate the Hohenzollern fortunes—furnish them the funds for future political and military propaganda? Have American, English and French lives been preserved by the armistice only to be put in jeopardy sooner or later at the sweet pleasure of "barglar" William, torturer of Eitel Fritz, "woman-stealer" Oscar and the

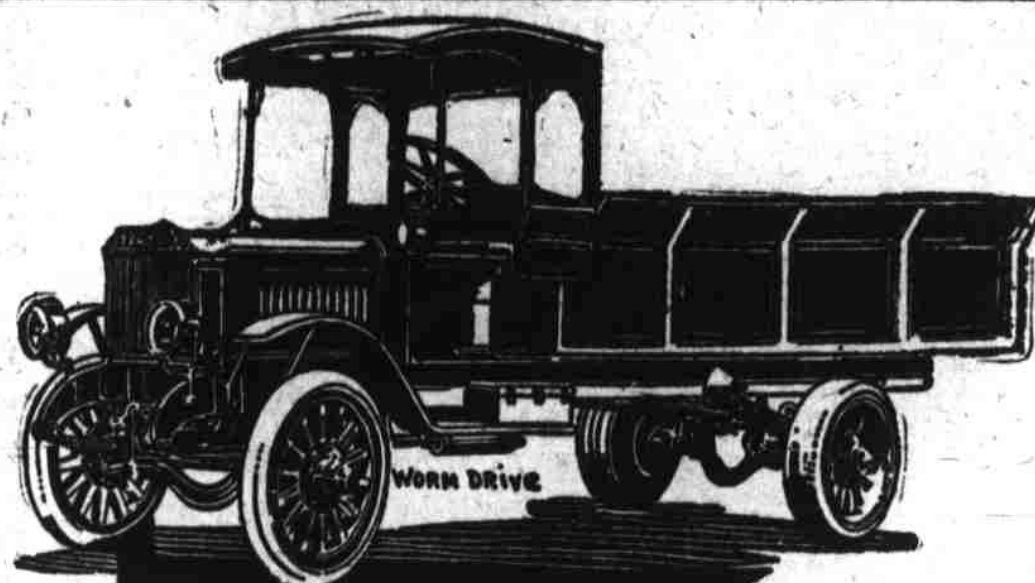
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rest! As the Kaiser did to the conquered King of Hanover, so the Allies should do to the conquered William. He set the precedent. Take the Hohenzollern funds as the Hohenzollerns took the Guelph fund! (Copyright, 1919, by Regal Pub. Corp.) (To be continued next Sunday.)

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