

# The Private Life of the Kaiser

FROM THE PAPERS AND DIARIES OF THE BARONESS VON LARISCH-REDDERN  
 The Kaiser and Kaiserin's Late Major Demo, Chief of the Royal Household at Berlin and Potsdam.

[Continued from Yesterday.]  
 mess always did his very utmost to please the Emperor.

While in the family circle the Kaiser was generally spoken of as "big brother," "big cousin," and so forth, Henry never failed to designate and address him as "Lord of the Sea," or "High Admiral." He consulted him about the merest details concerning his command, and professed to be thoroughly happy only when the Kaiser approved his conduct as a naval officer.

Yet the Naval General Staff steadfastly refused to give Prince Henry a command during the war, reducing him to the rank of an arm-chair admiral. Instead of directing battles, as he had threatened to do in pre-war days, Henry had to be content with repeating the stories of his spy-craft in Britain and of the United States. Nowdays he is occasionally heard from, pleading for "big brother's" babylike innocence.

Quite often I heard Prince Henry say to William: "Do not forget about

that speech of mine for the Marine Club dinner," or, "If you cannot come" (to this or that opening, or naval exercise), "be sure to send me the speech. You can talk it over the telephone and I will have a stenographer at the other end to take it down, word for word."

The Kaiser, too, was heard to say once or twice: "Now I shall have to telephone the speech Prince Henry is expected to deliver to-morrow. To be the intellectual giant of one's family has its drawbacks."

William's Modest Estimate of Himself  
 There lived not a man or woman at Court who did not intuitively feel that Prince Henry's most famous speech was conceived and dictated by the person addressed from the opening words: "Exalted Emperor, Pussant King and Master, illustrious Brother," to the closing phrase: "Our sublime, mighty, beloved Kaiser, King and Lord for all times, for ever and ever—hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!"

William wrote it word for word, as he did a dozen other tirades inflicted by his brother upon festive and official gatherings. I could name people of high standing who saw the manuscript.

In proclaiming his "mistra" of chief arbiter of the world as an evangelium, as a revelation of the grace of God to fallen man through him, the anointed mediator, the Kaiser followed a practice established by most of the champions of big-headedness, past and present.

But reflecting on William's behavior after his fall, I am sure he was posing—posing as a "God," sometimes, as a mad-man at others.

When a week or ten days ago Countess Brockdorff, the ex-Kaiserin's chief servant, returned from Holland, she told me that "Majesty" (she insisted upon according him the title) was "working at his defense." If in that document William is true to himself, there will

be much rot about "divine advice" and "heavenly directions" tendered him "while on his devout knees."

And nothing excited William. Prince of possessors, quite as much as the thought that of his 79,000,000 subjects, one or another would be taking him at the exaggerated valuation he put on himself.

The Lese Majesty Humbug  
 Here follows a story told by General von Scholl, William's boon companion on his hunting trips.

"It happened in Rominton," said Scholl, "and the chase had come off to His Majesty's entire satisfaction, which means everybody else's complete disappointment. That is to say: By the chief forester's trickery all the game was driven before the Emperor's gun, while the rest of us got nothing but a few miserable hares, or rabbits to massacre. Indeed, the Kaiser was so elated with his success as a pig sticker and deer butcher that he indulged in the habit of shooting a rare thing with him. Consequently all present had visions of plenty of champagne and imported cigars in the evening, for, as you know, when the Emperor goes to bed as he comes home, condemning his friends and guests to a diet of Berlin beer and evil smelling cabbage leaf cigars, the rankest in all Christendom."

"As we were walking toward the carriage, young Fuchs, the under-huntsman, came to me and whispered: "Does your Excellency advise me to ask His Majesty now?"

"Go ahead, my boy," I answered, "if he doesn't grant it now, he never will." Fuchs referred to a boon, he desired, namely, a pardon for his old uncle undergoing imprisonment for insult to Majesty.

"His case was one of the rankest that ever came to my notice. Fuchs' relative, it seems, is a well-to-do Pomeranian farmer. During the manoeuvres, the king's horses trampled down the old man's corn. He sued the government and lost. When he threatened to appeal, the state's attorney tried to dissuade him, pointing out that he should feel honored rather, seeing that the Kaiser himself had commanded the troops that destroyed his crops."

"The Kaiser," said the old farmer, "said the old farmer."

"At any rate," continued the General, "old Fuchs simply used a figure of vulgar speech, as all of us are liable to do under provocation, but the public prosecutor has taken the incident as a means for bringing his ignoble career to 'all highest' notice. Forthwith he clapped the farmer in jail and had him tried for lese Majesty."

"Well, seeing that William was in such exceptionally good humor, the horizon ablaze with popping corks and fiddlesticks, the under-huntsman took heart and asked the Kaiser to pardon his old uncle."

"May He Rot in Prison!"

"A gentleman of our party had his eyes on William while Fuchs pleaded his case. He says the Emperor alternately turned red, white and green in the face when he answered the request.

"I am astonished beyond words at your audacity. You ask for a boon—the Kaiser's! I hereby promise you that I will forget the act of damnable hardness you have been guilty of. You shall be punished for asking the liberation of a traitor. Do you know," he added, "what they did with fellows like you in olden times? They might not disembowel or broken on the wheel."

"After that the Kaiser paused and read the Kaiser's letter to me. Listen! Let me state here, once and for all, that under certain conditions I may feel inclined to pardon even a common murderer, but to my mind the man who insults a crown prince is ten times worse than a murderer. Pardon him I never will."

"As to Fuchs' case, his relative is undergoing most inadequate punishment for the grossest of crimes, seeing that his vile tongue insulted God's anointed, the head of the German nation. May he rot in prison!"

His Majesty Curses Old Woman  
 Some years ago when the Kaiser was riding in state through the streets of Berlin to attend the unveiling of one of the lifesized puppets lining the Avenue of Victory and giving palpitations of disgust to every lover of art, a poor old lady dropped an envelope into the Royal carriage.

The Adjutant, sitting to William's left, picked up the missive and, with a respectful bow, held it out in his hand not daring to presume whether the letter should be accepted or not.

The Kaiser grabbed the envelope and, giving a scowl, then, without reading even the address, flung it into the street and rubbed his gloved hand over his coat, as if anxious to remove a stain.

He cursed the old woman who had the "effrontery" to assault him with her dirty letter" at the way down to the place of unveiling and, arrived there, summoned the Chief of Police.

"Fine order you keep," he roared at the official. "On the way here another hussy bombarded me with her filthy missives. Unfortunately, I kicked the rag out of her carriage, otherwise the old tramp's name might have been ascertained for the prosecuting attorney."

I beg the reader's pardon for the language used, it's the "all-highest,"—duly expurgated.

Shoot an American Millionaire!  
 I shall never forget the excitement

created at the Palace one day when "shoot beggars on sight" almost cost the life of a Vanderbilt.

This was in the days before the war when American millionaires thought it quite respectable to visit the Kaiser—the days before his exposure as the arch-conspirator against decency and civilization.

Vanderbilt, it appeared, had driven to the castle over the royal highway. The coach was about to enter one of the outer gates, when the sentinel stationed there, stopped the horses and demanded a card of admission.

"This is His Majesty's friend," said Jacquet, the portier. Mr. Vanderbilt, the courier, with an air of magnificent assurance, but the soldier who stared the harder.

"Your pass," repeated the infantryman.

"You don't understand things. I am Mr. Vanderbilt, the American millionaire!" Hartog was pleading now.

As the word "American" struck the sentinel's long ears, he raised his gun, for his lieutenant had taught him that the United States is "one of those confounded republics," totally devoid of a king, or prince, or even a respectable standing army.

The sentinel, however, in his most pompous mood, what apparently unkindly of Hartog's very existence, "Drive! right about face, forward march! March, I say, and march, third time, or I will shoot!"

The guardman kept his gun leveled on the intruders until the coach vanished behind a cloud of fine white dust, and God knows what would have happened if Hartog, who has a well-established reputation for pug-naciousness and obstinacy, had endeavored to run the blockade in order to please his rich patron; for these things carried sharp cartridges, and if they fired—and they often did so on windy provocation—they fired to kill.

"Fire to Kill!"

I cannot remember now whether the public honoring by the Emperor of a sentinel, who, while on duty, shot down some poor wretch, happened previously to Mr. Vanderbilt's unsuccessful attempt to visit the royal domain, or not. In that case, His Majesty called the offender to the front, shook him by the hand, and assured him of his royal grace, saying: "I am proud to commend you as an obedient and courageous soldier; such devotion as yours will always meet with my highest approval," or words to that effect.

But I do know that the incident was earnestly discussed in the imperial family and the castle about a month later, after the Emperor had delivered another famous speech at the swearing-in of the Potsdam recruits.

Most Damnable Murder Decree in History  
 There are two versions of that address already mentioned in passing. The one which the majority of newspapers printed at the time reads: "Children of my guard, you are now soldiers in my army and must obey my commands; you must follow my rules and my advice without grumbling. It means that, from this day on, you must stand by me and obey me as your enemy is my enemy. And if I command you some day to fire upon your own kin and kin, remember your oath!"

The Kaiser's Conception of Soldier's Duty  
 That version is terrible enough; but compared with the original draft of the speech, which I happen to have seen on the Kaiser's desk, the above is a model of moderation.

There it was, in William's tall, forcibly-rounded hand:

"Recruits! Remember that the German army must be as ready to fight enemies that arise in our midst, as foreign foes. To-day, disbelief and discontentedness are rampant in the Fatherland and a heretofore unheard of degree, consequently, I may call upon you at any time to shoot down and strike to the ground your father and mother, sisters and brothers. My orders in that respect must be executed cheerfully and without grumbling like any other command I may issue. You must do your duty, no matter what your hearts' dictates are. And now go home and attend to your new duties."

"I Found Original Document on Emperor's Desk"  
 I came upon this document quite accidentally. The Empress having ordered me to fetch from the desk in the Kaiser's study the calendar whereon His Majesty's engagements are registered, and the precious composition was written between the spaces between the dates I had to examine.

"Monstrous!" I thought, reading over for the second time what Wilhelm had written, "and he was yet wondrous enough to keep to himself; my heart trembled with anxiety to think that he memorialized this murderous composition with his own hand and with his innocent babies sleeping above! And I—involuntary keeper of a state secret!"

Kaiser's Hatred of Socialists  
 It troubled me a good deal during the night, but next morning's news quickly took the load off my shoulders, for Her Majesty remarked that the Kaiser was much pleased with the impression his enemies had produced,—that of striking terror into the hearts of Socialists and others opposed to the imperial will.

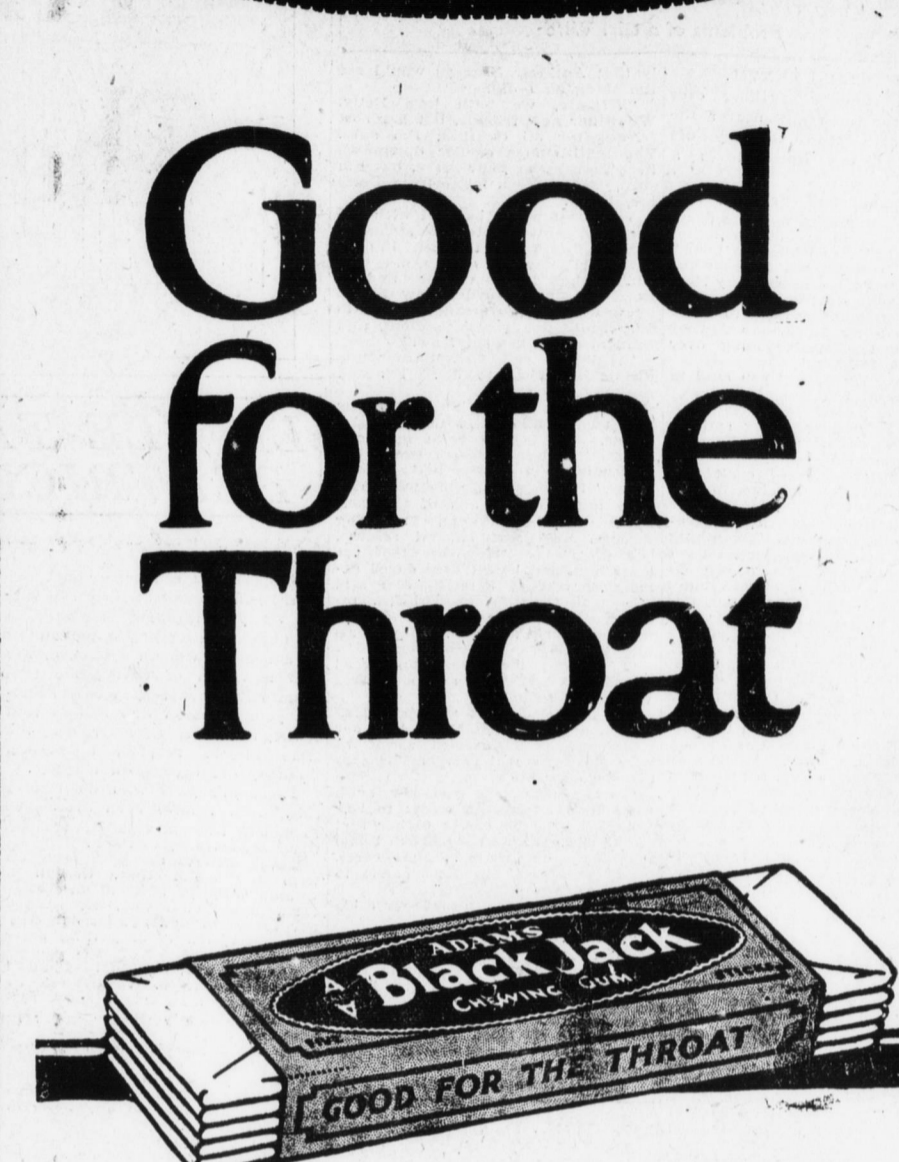
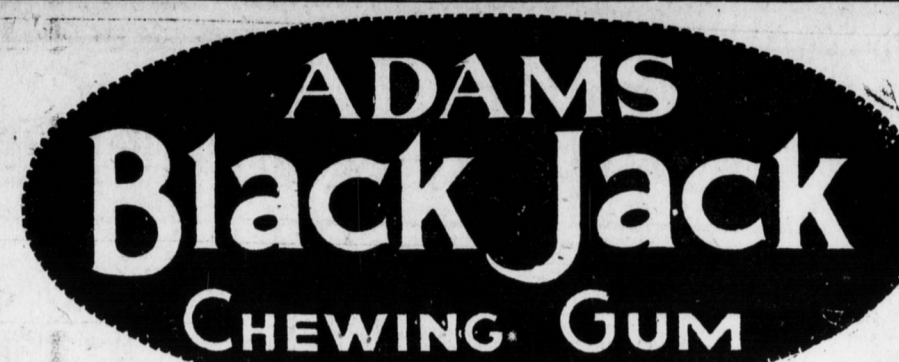
But does not Your Majesty fear misinterpretation on the part of overzealous men?" I asked; "the papers are filled with reports about brutalities in the army, and about the overbearing conduct of the military at all times, even at the unveiling of the Schloss Fountain in Berlin. I even heard a rumor that Vanderbilt came near being shot while driving toward the chateau 'Les Palmes'."

Some Quaint Ideas About U. S. A.  
 That was a lighted match into a powder-barrel! Her Majesty caused inquiries to be made at once, and meanwhile got all her ladies together to discuss the exigencies of the case. Of course, in their opinion, it would not matter much if an ordinary mortal is killed by a sentinel; but "the chest man in the East" that was another thing. Would, in such a contingency, "the United States declare war against Germany?"

The Countesses Bassewitz and Brockdorff, who it would seem they have relatives in the navy; but when I suggested that the Yankees might prefer to take it out of German commerce, Her Majesty became thoughtful.

"I have heard the Kaiser remark that Vanderbilt could cripple the finances of the entire universe," she said, "if that sentinel had shot him, his brothers and heirs might drive our good Miquel to suicide."

The Kaiser a Cancer Victim?  
 I can add but little to the statements already made concerning the Kaiser's health. His ear trouble is increasing and Her Majesty, who is fond of fresh air as was Queen Victoria, was much concerned about the foul atmosphere that gathered constantly in the Kaiser's study and dressing-room, or wherever he stayed indoors for any length of time. The belief that this local disease is a cancerous growth received a new



[To Be Continued To-morrow.]

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