

# The Private Life of the Kaiser

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

Baroness von Larisch-Reddern is the TRUE name of the Berlin Court Lady who gave the story of the Kaiser to Henry William Flaer, Ursula, Countess von Eppinghoven being a nom de guerre, heretofore used to shield her.

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[Continued From Yesterday]

"I know, I know," interrupted Auguste Victoria; "I can forget everything but the words: 'We will not go to Cumberland Lodge a second time.' It was there, at my uncle's seat, that William and I fell in love with each other."

The Kaiser slept, on the night that followed Count Zedlitz's enforced resignation, in his little private bedroom, and next morning departed for Hubertusstock before Her Majesty had arisen. That was enough to paint our gilded salons an ashen gray, in which the children, Her Majesty's ladies, friends, and attendants, vanished as if behind a cloud. Auguste Victoria refused to be comforted; her husband had left her in a fit of irritation; the sovereign lady was seemingly incapable of turning her thoughts from the disquieting subject.

Life at Court ran in smooth channels for some weeks following the little family far just described; the coroneted graphomaniacs who had

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property, but forms part of Germany's navy.

His Majesty had spoken so severely and with such excessive emphasis that the little Prince became frightened and had to be conducted from the room, while the small assemblage of officials and guests sat about dispirited, a feeling of unrest having replaced the previous joviality.

There were always much bickering and tattle and petty disputes in the royal family. I recall William D. Howells's article in the *Illustrated* magazine, "The Great Little Sister," which tells of the Kaiser's little sister, Princess Royal of Prussia, being one of the strongholds of the Hohenzollerns. Howells writes of the poor Margravine's father, "though rich and powerful, was coarse and mean in most things, and bullied the Queen quite like a King in pantomime." He also writes of the Kaiser's ignoble practice of browbeating a sovereign lady begins and ends with the first Frederick William and the Kaiser's popinjays of mimicry. The sympathies of the Kaiser's arm through his own, walked out, preceded by the house-marshal and his adjutants.

When, a quarter of an hour later, and litterateurs never permitted to invade the palace's sacred precincts, may agree with Howells, and it is certainly pleasant to do so, but candor compels me to destroy that cheer which is far as it may apply to the Imperial Court of Berlin. "Willie" and "Donna" have their little unpleasantnesses and homely rows like any ordinary couple, and the Kaiser's attitude toward his Fatherland, the man always got the better of the weaker sex, Wilhelm's superior intellect, his impetuosity and unequivocal bluntness making his ascendancy a foregone conclusion.

Besides, the Empress is deadly afraid of her lord, and readily capitulates whenever and wherever His Majesty's will is done. In the Kaiser's here the eternal sameness of royal and common folks is again emphasized—most of the quarrels between the imperial couple are occasioned by questions of dress, or the Hohenzollern rank in the marine lists? he demanded.

The Kaiser's who had been very pleasant at luncheon, and whose humor had continued in a happy mood while we were sipping our coffee in the Tassen Zimmer, suddenly changed his tone. Assuming the style of a severe preceptor, he made the frightened boy leave his mother's knee and "stand at attention!" "Under which title does the Hohenzollern rank in the marine lists?" he demanded.

"His Majesty's Aviso, the yacht Hohenzollern, at the Kaiser's exclusive disposal," reported the tiny lieutenant.

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"I have had occasion to speak of Her Majesty's jealousy before," said the Hoflager moved to the Marble Palace, where Princess Louise was born, the household had to get along without its official head, Baroness von Larisch, because of a self happens to have beautiful hands and arms and, on that account, was much admired by His Majesty.

And a still more petty thing: Auguste Victoria confiscated a photograph of Queen Emma of the Netherlands which stood on the Emperor's desk. The Queen-Dowager was a most estimable lady, but it would be folly to call her pretty. Still, she had fine hands and everybody and everything liable to interest His Majesty had to go. At about this time the Kaiserin ordered the seamstresses, who occupied a little room overlooking the court-yard, to be dislodged. She trembled lest her husband, who had just returned from his Northland journey, should see one of the women at the window.

So great was Her Majesty's confidence in Herr von der Knesbeck, that if at all possible, she submitted to him every little matter, either verbally or in writing. In the course of a year, Empress and chamberlain exchanged hundreds of letters, some of the Kaiserin's being five and six pages long.

Bodo Knesbeck saved the Empress from making herself ridiculous, and from seriously compromising her husband and the government during the Berlin riots some years ago. Incidentally the chamberlain saved our mistress from her last and lasting displeasure on that occasion, which probably counts more with her than anything else. For weeks we had prepared for the great carnival ball when the invited gentlemen were to appear for the first time in the Court-dress, an event William looked forward to no less eagerly than a girl does to her debut in long frocks.

For the ball, the late King's favorite, premiere ballerina Marie Koebisch-Wolden, had arranged a gorgeous revival of that most graceful dance, menuet a la reine, which was to be tripped before the throne when the evening's festivities were at their height. My mistress meant to surpass all her previous efforts in the matter of personal adornment.

At last the festive day had come. Early in the morning the whole stock of crown-jewels, all excepting the crown itself, were brought to the royal dressing-room, and Her Majesty's Countess Brockdorff, and Frau von Haake spent hours making and remaking new combinations of the stones and ornaments, most of which are put to various uses, as pins, buttons, brooches, etc. Then, all of a sudden, a rumour ran through the Schloss chambers: "Berlin is in revolt!"

There will be no monnet, rather a Carmagnole," lamented the anxious; instead of beribboned and accented silk coats, the blouse; in place of honeyed words and pretty toy words, "pipe in cheek, loaded canes on thigh," as the Kaiserin said when she sang "Vive le son du canon."

People Want Bread and Work Baron Mirbach sent me to my mistress to prepare her for noisy scenes in the neighborhood of the Schloss. I found the Empress in the room facing the great fountain, running excitedly from one window to the other. In the square below, people were assembling in groups, talking and gesticulating.

I delivered the message and, of my own accord, added: "His Majesty will not drive out this morning." "And if he loves me, he will remain, he must remain with us until this awful revolution is quelled."

I entreat Your Majesty to be calm," I made bold to say, as Countess Brockdorff kept silent, "according to the papers, these people want bread and want work; they have no thought of violence. Besides," I said, "Herr von Richthofen has sent the entire police reserves to the Schloss. There are fifty men at each entrance, and more guarding the cellar-openings and the waterside. All the corridors are patrolled, and a dozen men are on the lookout on the roof. The roof!" cried the Empress, as if swayed by a new fear. "Oh, Gratin" (this to Countess Brockdorff), "they may throw bombs on the roof and destroy us all! I must go to the Kaiser at once."

lowing their Majesties' example. The Kaiser's eyes were red with crying, and some minutes before dessert the children came in, a thing that does not happen more than once or twice a year. His Majesty loved his little ones in his own way; that is, he liked to keep them at a distance. If brought into personal contact with the youngsters, his sense of decorum revolted and he did not know what to do with them, except to criticize their dress or military demeanor.

"I am not going on a journey," he said, and, looking at the Crown Prince, added: "You and your brothers have not come to say good-bye!" The Emperor bowed her head and whispered something which the Kaiser leaned over the table, holding his hand to his ear.

"Nonsense," he said loudly enough for all to hear, and pushed back his chair; "I am riding out as I do every day in the year; there is no use making a scene. 'Donna'!" He kissed some of the children, and the heads of the younger ones, and drawing the Empress's arm through his own, walked out, preceded by the house-marshal and his adjutants.

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Second breakfast commenced half an hour earlier than usual, and we hurried through its four courses, fol-

Leopold, were on friendly terms, Auguste Victoria used to take sides with her brother-in-law against the widowed Princess; but at the time of which I write she and Sopiuz Louise hardly spoke, Her Majesty giving her dislike to Baron Wangenheim as an excuse for neglecting her amiable grandaunt. Some little time before Frederick Leopold's wedding, the Kaiser mentioned to Her Majesty that, in a month or so, Aunt Marie would be without a roof over her head. "She is of opinion that I have to provide her with a suitable home," he said.

"Is it possible?" The Empress, who always acts as if she had never known poverty, raised her eyes in astonishment. "Perhaps she aspires to Babelsberg or Charlottenburg, or perhaps she wants me to give up the Marble Palace for her accommodation."

"Calm yourself," replied the Emperor; "I have already decided what to do. I told her she could have rooms at Bruhl."

"Bruhl?" queried the Empress; "where is that?" "This ignorance vexed William. In Southwest Africa, near Klein-

Popo," he said, brusquely, and left Her Majesty and her ladies blushing.

Selfishness is the curse of the domestic relations of the Hohenzollerns. Moreover, the Kaiser is a "bully" in his family. Trouble starts in the morning at the stroke of 6.30, or 7.30 o'clock, when their Majesties emerge from their room. The Kaiser, in pajamas and sporting a jaunty cap, makes at once for his bath, while the Empress, clad only in a woolen wrapper and hostless slippers, ascends to the nursery, where her youngest little ones sleep under care of three or four maids.

If the Kaiser and Kaiserin intended to go for a drive after breakfast, the older children were ordered down to kiss their mother and read a chapter from some devotional book before her. It was a pretty custom, that lacks not impressiveness, and even the lower domestic, who, working in the corridors, cannot help observing the scene in the dressing-room, are deeply moved by it, but stern reality only too often interferes with its popular conclusion.

[To Be Continued To-morrow.]

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