

# The Private Life of the Kaiser

FROM THE PAPERS AND DIARIES OF  
**THE BARONESS VON LARISCH-REDDER**  
 THE Kaiser and the Kaiser's Wife  
 as they were at the Court and in the  
 Household at Berlin and Potsdam.  
 Baroness von Larisch-Redder is the TRUE name of the Berlin  
 Countess who gave the story of the Kaiser to Henry William  
 Fisher, Urania, Countess von Esplingen being a nom de guerre,  
 her maiden name being von Esplingen.

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**The Kaiser's "Uneasy Head" — His Disdain For "Pebeians" — People Without Handles to Their Name — Glimpses of Royal Society — Diplomacy on a Grand Scale — Intrigue at Home and Abroad — The Kaiserin's Constant Jealousy — His Conversation "Smacked of the Stable" — Some of His Escapades — How the Kaiser Was "Shadowed" by His Wife — Some Interesting Anonymous Letters and the Facts That Lay Behind Them — A Stingy Lover Is the Kaiser — Anonymous Letters Show German Society to Be as Rotten as Its Royal Master**

Baroness von Larisch's evidence against the Kaiser is accumulating. It draws a cord around him from which he can never disentangle himself. He stands exposed before the world. The royal chief of household returns in her testimony to her revelations of "social life" among the German nobility. She adds to her startling revelations of the Kaiser's habits and customs for the purpose of exposing the fraud known as "German Kultur" and also the boasted "family life" of the Hohenzollerns. Her story proves William's pettiness and deception, even in the relations with his wife and his court.

[Continued from Yesterday.]  
 The low grade of intelligence which ruled the Imperial Court of Germany despite its much advertised "Kultur" is gloriously set forth in these records of Berlin Court life as Baroness Larisch saw and superscribed it.  
 Although very partial to splendor and festivities, the Kaiser hated nothing more than the fetes which etiquette compelled him to give annually in the Berlin Schloss. He hated them principally because that magnificent pile, so formidable from the outside, being designed for Brandenburg society at the beginning of the eighteenth century, was entirely inadequate to accommodate the many thousands privileged now-

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of Prussia, promised to pay back the millions owing from their pockets when their alchemist should succeed in making yellow metal.  
 The castle was finished under false pretense, the lying neocromancer was hanged without proof that the big pile, commonly believed to be the Hohenzollerns private property, may be seized and sold for the benefit of the allied governments. It might be turned into a first-class hotel or factory—a point worth remembering.  
 Wilhelm's Disdain For Democracy

The winter fetes at our Court were institutions in their way, the splendor of which the Kaiser's favor or disfavor might enhance or reduce, but even his enmity could not blot them out.  
 To do that would seem too much like breaking with time-honored customs and taking away the perquisites of two mighty classes: the trades-peoples profits and the aristocracy's chief opportunity for displaying its few remaining hereditary privileges. Only in case of Court reorganizing, great national disasters, may the fetes be curtailed, and never was a King more eager to take advantage of such an excuse than William.  
 His granduncle, Prince Alexander, shed his first words were: "Now we may rid ourselves of the company of the sweet plebs, for this winter at least," and the Kaiser was straightway ordered to recall the invitations for carnival.

Yet one cannot mourn a relative of the seventh or eighth degree forever, and the Kaiser all the more readily agreed to give me a ball before the end of the season, as the municipal council of Berlin at that time was particularly obstreperous, as it was expected that by a lavish expenditure of money flowing into the people's coffers its good offices could be gained.  
 So, when almost everybody had given up the hope of dancing and snuffing at Kaiser's," several thousand ladies and gentlemen were made happy by receiving the coveted "commands."

I don't deny that the average Berlin-bred man or woman is more fit for a Third Avenue Speck-easy than for a Fifth Avenue parlor, or behold their master, the "All-highest," it was rather noticeable when the tone of his conversation with German subjects, both women and men, did not smack of the tap-room.  
 Kaiser's Indecent Talk  
 Once, while Wilhelm was entertaining a young unmarried countess at a hunt-dinner, I heard him intimate, on an innocent remark dropped by the girl, a double entendre which I should blush to repeat to my mistress, if I were a man. And to make it worse, he insisted upon reiterating the offensive interpretation over and over again to the young lady's utmost chagrin. And that happened in the house of his best friend.

How German Royalty Amuses Itself  
 Madame von Scholl, wife of the imperial adjutant-general, was on very familiar terms with William; she was jolly and good looking, fat and over forty.  
 Born in Southern Germany, Madame was not hampered by that punctiliousness and the conventional scruples which make the Prussian subject, both women and men, did not smack of the tap-room.  
 Suddenly there arose the cry: "Where is Madame von Scholl? Did we leave her on the steamer?" "No, she is here," had seen her at the landing-place.  
 Dignity of the Prussian Court  
 While these questions went the rounds, we heard sharp whistling somewhere from above, and there, on the top of the sand-hill, stood the madame, swinging her parasol, and turning as swiftly on one brown-stockinged foot as her ponderous weight permitted.  
 "The fat rascal!" cried William, "she must have sneaked off the pier and ascended the mountain from the other side."  
 Then the Kaiser put his hands to his mouth and hallowed: "Stand still a second and give me a chance to fix my camera."  
 But at that moment, the parasol and head and arms of the unhappy lady suddenly took a forward tumble, the rest of her body followed, and twice overturning, she rolled down the incline like an avalanche streaked with brown tints and festooned with multicolored ribbons.  
 Did the "all-highest" and his excellencies and ladyships and colonels and privy councillors and learned men and common every-day noblemen laugh?  
 Oh, no. They just roared and bellowed and shouted and held their sides and danced about, and some of us shed tears at the hilarious spectacle; and when we had disengaged our portly friend, she started in to enjoy the situation herself and we had to commence all over again to keep her company.

Kaiser Fools Kaiserin  
 Still, as to downright indecencies, openly practiced, our Court was hardly a patch on that of Dessau, which explains Wilhelm's frequent visits to the little Duchy, whose women enjoyed a well-earned reputation for gawdy.  
 At one time when my mistress learned of the Kaiser's projected visit to that Sodom, she set to work to procure an invitation for herself. This was easily arranged through the Princess Frederick Charles, sister of the Duke, but for quite a while His Majesty remained deaf to his wife's hints and even to direct requests to take her along. Finally, when Auguste Victoria asked him in the presence of his aunt, he had to yield, and the Kaiserin ordered a number of the dresses. If the Dessau ladies were as handsome as her husband claimed, she meant to dazzle them, at least, by gorgeousness.  
 Two days before the imperial couple was to start, the Empress caught a slight cold, but nobody thought anything of it, though William remarked once or twice at table: "You had better look out, Dona, or maybe you cannot go."  
 Her Majesty laughed at this, and there were most elaborate preparations: She was to have a special car, and everything was to be done on the grandest scale.  
 Countess Brockdorff and myself had been ordered to accompany the Kaiserin, and early on the morning our trunks (two truck-loads for a two-day's visit) were carted away to the depot.

At ten o'clock we all partook of a hurried second breakfast in traveling dress, and that over, Her Excellency received orders to drive

ahead to the station, to inspect for the last time the apartment on the train, while I went to fetch the children who were to say good-bye. Returning with the pretty youngsters, I found my mistress ready, when Dr. Leuthold, the Kaiser's physician-general, entered.  
 Diplomacy on a Grand Scale  
 "If it pleases Your Majesty," he said, "let me see your tongue. I will also have to examine your jugular glands once more."  
 "Nonsense," said the Empress, but at the same time raised her veil and stuck out her tongue. "After a momentary examination, the physician pulled a long face.  
 "Thank God," he said, "it is not yet too late."  
 "No, but it will be, if you do not hurry," interrupted the Crown Prince. "Papa will be here presently."  
 Dr. Leuthold took no notice of the child's joke. "I perceive indications of an inflamed throat that may bring on most serious complications," he resumed, gravely. "Your Majesty must go to bed at once, and must not leave the house for three days. In this way the worst may be forestalled."  
 "Then I am not going to Dessau?" gasped Auguste Victoria.  
 "I cannot permit it," answered Leuthold.  
 The Empress dropped into an arm-chair and began to cry.  
 "Is my wife ready?" demanded the Kaiser's voice outside. I advanced toward him. "Has Leuthold given an adverse decision?" he asked, before I had time to explain. His valet entered simultaneously to announce that the carriage was waiting.  
 "I am sorry," said the Emperor, stepping up to the Kaiserin and kissing her hand, "but you know one cannot be too careful of one's throat." Then he bade her and the children good-bye, and turning once more at the door, cried: "I will send back your Brockdorff. She shall keep you company."

Intrigue at Home and Abroad  
 "It was all a deep-laid plot, a conspiracy," said Her Excellency, afterward. "When I arrived at the train, the Kaiser's attendants, exchanged side glances which convinced me that something was up, and when he came and told me to return home, I discovered that our trunks were already on the wagons bound for the Schloss. That shows they had never been freighted."  
 I remarked I did not believe Wilhelm capable of such trickery.  
 "Bah!" growled the Countess, "you may take my word for it, the Kaiser did not want us in Dessau. 'Not us, perhaps, but his own wife—'"  
 The old Excellency shrugged her shoulders.  
 "And Leuthold?"  
 "A man, and in such affairs men stick to each other like glue. This amiable physician-general was given to understand that the Kaiser intended the trip for a stag party. Hence the examination at the hour of leaving, the awe-inspiring prodigies, and the disheartening verdict."  
 Even the Kaiserin Didn't Believe in Williams  
 The Dessau incident happened previous to the great holocaust of favorites alluded to, and at a time when my mistress was almost continuously in a sore state of agitation lest she should lose her husband's love. Sometimes she chased after him for days, following His Restlessness to Berlin, or to various hunting-grounds in the neighborhood, and we ladies had to be prepared to spend the nights on the cars, or in the half-finished chambers of palaces wet with paint and smelling of work-people.  
 When the Empress said: "I will give audiences in Berlin to-morrow," it probably meant that she had learned of His Majesty's resolve to leave her for a while and enjoy himself after his own fashion. But the reception accorded to our mistress, after we had caught up with the imperial runaway, was often far from pleasant. When surprised in Berlin, the Emperor sometimes bolted as early as four or five o'clock in the morning to go on some impromptu hunting expedition, hasty preparations for which had been made overnight.  
 Auguste Victoria would then re-

ceive a few notables at ten in the forenoon, returning to Potsdam for lunch, and, perhaps, take another train for Berlin in the evening.  
 Once the Kaiser vomaged from Hubertusstock, whether he had followed him, unbidden. Going out hunting with his gentlemen at early morn, he sent, at supper-time, when Her Majesty was expecting him, a despatch saying that business of state had called him to the capital.  
 All this plotting and counterplotting, the outcome of jealousy, was ridiculous, wearisome, exhausting—but tame.  
 Kaiserin's Jealousy of Duchess of Aosta  
 More interesting became the matter when a royal woman happened to be in the race, Letitia Bonaparte, Duchess of Aosta, the daughter of the late Pion-Pion, and her father's rue child, for instance.  
 Poor Auguste Victoria! it she could have anticipated the sorry consequences of her good-natured decision to lodge the former King of Spain and his blooming young niece-wife in the Princess' Chambers when they came to Berlin?

The Princess' Chambers are on the same floor and in the same wing of the Schloss as their Majesties' own private rooms. The occupants of both apartments are therefore pushed thrown together—in fact, they cannot help being in each other's company at all times of the day.  
 William had so impressed his wife with the imperativeness of strengthening his relations with the then King of Italy, Umberto, that Auguste Victoria could scarcely do enough for her new friends. So she gave them the apartment reserved for the most intimate relatives, one which even Prince Henry, the Kaiser's brother, had never been allowed to occupy.  
 (In the early weeks of December, 1918, Rosa Luxemburg, the Anarchist, occupied the same apartments, while Liebknecht lived across the way, in the Kaiser's own suite of rooms. They say that at the moment of death by violence all one's life passes in review like in a flash. Rosa and Karl must have chuckled if they remembered their last lodgings as they faced the busy firing squad.)

[To Be Continued To-morrow.]  
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