

THE MAN WHO WILL RULE THE GERMAN EMPIRE

The Growing Importance of Germany as a World Power Makes Its Future Ruler a Figure of Engrossing Interest to Almost Everybody.

WERE you inclined to make the experiment of sounding a score of Berliners selected at random in the streets of the German capital as to the relative popularity of the representative men of the empire the vote would be largely in favor of the crown prince.

That, at least, would be the result if every man spoke his honest opinion, which would be quite unlikely under the circumstances. The Berliners are reputed to be the most discreet persons in the world, and the average citizen of that center of Teutonic imperialism is not to be surprised into an opinion expressed openly.

There is less reserve outside the immediate Potsdam influence. It is in the provinces and even in the states which have been drawn most recently into the confederation that the mere mention of the crown prince's name is certain to bring forth enthusiasm. Of course the dweller in even the most abstruse little principality still maintains a sentimental loyalty toward the harmless princelet who represents the tradition of his almost extinct government, but it is now for the first time that he tosses his cap aloft at the mention of the prince who is to be his actual sovereign. Heretofore his acquiescence has been perfunctory and his outward expression tempered by the memory of how it all happened. Now he is so well satisfied with Crown Prince William that he is almost glad that it did happen.

There is no doubt that this remarkable popularity enjoyed by the prince comes from the fact that he in no way resembles his father. That is not to say that the kaiser is unpopular in the ordinary acceptance of the term.

What it really means is best illustrated by William T. Stead's proposition that the British and German rulers should exchange thrones for a while. "Then we'd be waked up, and Germany would get a rest," he explained.

That is the precise situation—Germany wants a rest. She wants it very keenly, and that is the secret of the popularity of the crown prince. Those who are to be ruled by him know that he is an amiable young man of quiet temperament, eminently safe, and that he will give his empire a wise and beneficent administration, freed entirely from the rigorous and spectacular atmosphere which has enveloped the reign of his strenuous father.

It is the prospect of having a ruler under whom they may breathe more easily that is sustaining the German people. They recognize such a possibility in the promising young Hohenzollern who is next in the line of succession.

Ready For a Change.

For the time is come when the German nation is exceedingly weary. No one has confessed it; that would be to lose majesty. Evidence stronger than words is to be found in the vast and affectionate regard in which the trim and boyish faced William is held by the composite German nation.

Neither in looks nor in temperament does the prince resemble his father. He has not inherited the ambition to be known as a war lord, although he is endowed with enough martial spirit to uphold vigorously all the traditions of the fatherland. He has absolutely nothing of the burning desire to pose as an original which seems to be the chief motive power of his august and tireless parent.

He is a professed unbeliever in the divine right doctrine and is quite willing to accept the theory that rank and fortune are mere accidents of birth. His frank and democratic utterances have been the occasion of much disquietude on the part of his father, who has never emerged from the mysterious exclusiveness which he regards as an essential of his state.

In Potsdam, where the prince has lived all his life, there is an old cobbler with whom the heir to the German throne has been on familiar terms since his early boyhood. Whenever William marched through the royal suburb at the head of his regiment the old shoe mender stood at salute, and his young friend never failed to acknowledge the salutation. Last year the cobbler celebrated his golden wedding, and the crown prince took luncheon with the old couple and a host of children and grandchildren. The young man joined heartily in all the festivities and was addressed as "Wilhelm" and in the familiar "thou" by big and little.

Too Democratic For the Kaiser.

In time the news of this frolic came to the ears of the kaiser, and he undertook to remonstrate. Now, it is well known in the capital that the German emperor's one great and overwhelming weakness is his admiration for his eldest son and his inability to find fault with him.

"But, really, Wilhelm, this is pretty bad," he complained. "The Social Democrats will make capital of it." "I hope they will," his son declared promptly. "The day will come when the Social Democrats will be accustomed to come to court, and I had best be making friends of them."

Although spoken in jest, there was much wisdom in this rejoinder. The kaiser did not combat the assertion, but shrugged his shoulders as his ancestor, the great Frederick, might have done before he quarreled with Voltaire and everything French and went his way.

The German people are fond of comparing Prince William with the first kaiser of that name, that popular Hohenzollern whose memory becomes dearer to the nation as time moves on. Beyond the fact that he seems to be endowed with an equal ability to win friends, the crown prince shows no marked likeness to his revered ancestor. As to his capacity to fill the difficult position which under the present

order of things is his birthright, it may be said of him that he is a young man who has an unusual supply of good common sense, and his opinions of men and events are exceedingly judicial, but tempered with irrepressible kindness. He is notably practical and not in any sense a sentimentalist. "I like a man," he once declared, "who bargains before he promises and performs more than he promises."

Thus far this wide awake young Hohenzollern seems to have made no damaging mistakes. Practically all of his doings that have become public property have strengthened his position and made him dearer to the German people. When it became known last May that it was due to his bold initiative and moral courage that the kaiser was made aware of the scandalous irregularities existing in high

Even Without His Prospect of Becoming Kaiser the Crown Prince Would Easily Be the Most Popular and Picturesque Individual in the Empire.

army and official circles his popularity received a tremendous boost. It was William's first grand opportunity to show that he was something more than a decorative heir to the German throne, and he responded to it boldly and decisively. A reputation as a man of action and daring was established for him in a single day.

Another thing that has helped to "make him solid" with the nation is the knowledge that he is most devotedly attached to his pretty young wife, who is more Russian and French in style and temperament than German, but is a proper and domestic woman who has endeared herself to the national heart by becoming the mother of two little Hohenzollern princes.

The story of the happy matrimonial life of this interesting young couple is not a romance constructed for political purposes. It is vouched for by those who are in a position to know, even by those who for political reasons would be glad if it were otherwise. Modern German history tells of no love match more genuine than that of William and Cecellie. The mating of a crown prince is always a matter of national anxiety, but the German nation has ceased long since to worry over the trying ordeal.

An Affair of the Heart.

This marriage was not an affair of state at all. While the German royal schachens were canvassing the merits and demerits of every marriageable princess in Europe William proceeded to fall desperately in love with the daughter of the Russian Duchess of Mecklenburg-Schwerin. He did not wait for the very deliberate and ceremonious preliminaries which lead up to a royal marriage, but it was all arranged between the young folks long before the state machinery was set in motion.

"How do you know that you can marry our Cecellie—that they will permit you to marry her?" demanded the prudent woman whom he had invited to become his mother-in-law.

"I shall never marry anybody else!" the impetuous lover declared.

When it came to the test there was no serious objection to the prince's choice. Although the Mecklenburgs were scarcely on a political level with the Hohenzollerns, they were up to the requirement in about every other respect, and the Prussian family had quite enough prestige for both. In marrying within the confederation there would be no political danger, and it was also a relief to German sentiment to feel that no Englishwoman would become first lady of the empire.

On the whole, Germany was satisfied, both officially and popularly. The prince married his little brunette duchess and took her to live at the Marble palace in Potsdam, the residence allotted to the heir to the throne. It is the pretty exhibition of genuine domesticity furnished by these royal

lovers that has won for them the enduring friendship of the German nation.

As a Government Clerk.

At the beginning of the present year Prince William went to work as a government clerk.

At the instigation of the kaiser he entered the Prussian department of the interior to be given an exhaustive course of training on the science of civil government. In order to do this he was granted a year's leave from the army, in which he had risen to the rank of major in the Culrassier guards.

Those who are in charge of the department report that the young man is proving himself to be both diligent and capable. He asks and is given no immunity from the ordinary routine of the office and already holds the record for punctual attendance at the dismal old ministry building in Unter den Linden. He appears to have brought to his new occupation the same enthusiasm and sense of duty that have always characterized his doings of every description.

It is the first time on record that a Prussian prince has been excused from military service for so long a time in order to engage in purely civilian duty. Former heirs to the throne have always been given more or less training in government methods, but the crown prince is the first to be assigned to actual service as a government clerk. He is expected to arrive at the ministry building shortly before 9 o'clock on four mornings a week and to remain there at least four hours. He occupies an ordinary higher clerk's room, furnished with a modest desk and other plain furniture. There is nothing whatever on the premises to indicate that its occupant is the second person of importance in the German empire.

Although the kaiser is of the opinion that he has only to array himself in the garments of the great Frederick to be mistaken for that worthy, there is no nonsense of that kind about his son. The young man is not endowed with an imposing personality, and he realizes it. His physique is markedly slight and at first sight gives an impression of weakness, but that is controverted by his well known reputation as a sportsman. He is also a crack tennis player, and those who have seen him wield the racket are of the opinion that he is capable of disposing of President Roosevelt even more effectively than did the bishop of London. It is as a horseman, however, that Prince William has most distinguished himself. His bold feats of hurdling have more than once made the whole nation shudder and have called forth some decided observations from his startled father.

All things considered, Germany is to be congratulated on its crown prince.

GEORGE H. PICARD.



CROWN PRINCE WILLIAM AND HIS ELDER SON.

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