

BOOKS

By WINNIFRED
REEVE

The Kaiser's Memoirs

In reading the Kaiser's Memoirs, one becomes convinced that, despite its labored and even plausible explanation of things that cannot be explained, here is a chronicle that reeks with sophistry and falseness.

Many reviewers have declared that this book reveals a singularly commonplace type of mind. Whatever his faults, the general belief is prevalent that he possesses more than an average brain. Yet, say the reviewers, his Memoirs reveal him as a mediocrity.

I should say that he writes excellently, and that he possesses a brain of no mean power. He could never have been the figurehead and tool he wishes the world now to believe. There was indeed little of importance that transpired in his kingdom, of which he was not cognizant, and he was a keen, callous judge of human nature. From the pedestal upon which he placed himself, he "took the number" of all who passed before him; they were diagnosed and assigned to their niches according to their relation or value to the German Kaiser. But if these memoirs do show a man of more than average brain, they also reveal a mean and cunning nature; a vain and arrogant personality; a monument of egotism and selfishness.

That air of supreme superiority, of intolerable arrogance and power that seemed peculiarly to pervade the whole German military reached the nth degree with the German Kaiser. Certain humorous verses written in caricature, "Me und Gott," were not so very far wrong. The Kaiser firmly believed in his near relationship to God.

That his Memoirs are interesting goes without saying, in spite of the conviction mentioned above. One feels that chapter by chapter, he has deliberately set out to justify and explain and to shift the responsibility upon others for the frightful cataclysm that overwhelmed the world, and which his own ambassador to Great Britain at the time denounced as "A crime against the Holy Ghost." Interesting are the sketches of his various advisers and his royal relatives. But glimpses, sharp and fleeting, are given of such personages as Queen Victoria (whom he calls "Grandma"), King Edward the VII, the Czar of the Russians. For the former he expresses affection and respect. For the two latter it is evident he entertained bitter dislike and envy. Edward he refers to as "The Encircler," and states that it was said of him "The peace of Europe was never so much in danger as when the King of England concerned himself with maintaining it." Upon the Czar's shoulders he places the main responsibility for the war. He adduces considerable evidence, not unworthy of study, that Germany was not solely to blame for the world war. The vacillating, slippery-minded Czar, so the Kaiser claims, failed in his promises, and, too late, sought to undo the harm he had done.

Throughout the book the Kaiser's religious leanings are always prominent. One does not know whether to credit this as arch hypocrisy or self-delusion. At all events he devotes considerable space to religious cant.

As a type of the sophistry current in the book may be cited his lachrymose description of his father's death. The chapter throbs with noisy emotion, and the reader might almost be led to believe in the sincerity of this man's grief, but for certain facts that cannot be explained away.

In the North American Review for January there is an article by Stephen Lauzanne upon the subject of what he describes as the San Remo tragedy. It was at San Remo that the kaiser's father died from his fatal malady—cancer of the throat. During the period of his illness, Lauzanne, then a young reporter, was assigned to cover the story of the sick prince. His description of the two days' visit of the man who was later to be the German kaiser reveals a cold, calculating, heartless and terrible character, a man who came not as a loving son, touched by the tragic and painful passing of a kind father, but who strutted upon the scene with callous curiosity and interest.

"On November 9," writes Lauzanne, "at about 6:30 in the morning he who several months later became William II., got off the train at San Remo. The local authorities and Prince Henry of Prussia . . . met him at the station. With his usual spontaneity Prince Henry rushed forward to throw himself into the arms of his older brother, as he had not seen him for weeks. Prince William stopped this fraternal pride. He showed himself proud, official, hierarchic. In one minute everybody present understood that it was the master of the morrow who had arrived, and that the man who had descended from the train was not a devoted child, anxious to see his sick father, but a visitor who merely desired to see the progress of events for himself. . . . He was ushered into the sick room and remained with his father about ten minutes, showing himself deferential, but cold. He then announced: 'I want to see the doctors.' He called them into conference, and after listening . . . concluded the discussion brusquely. 'If my father is suffering from a cancer of the throat it is something that never relents. . . . He cannot survive.'"

That afternoon he took a walk with his brother and sisters. He walked in front of them, as if he were alone and his companions simple servitors. . . . He stayed near his dying father but 48 hours. . . .

"My father . . . is lost. His trouble is absolutely cancerous. His death is a question of several weeks, . . . perhaps days. I am leaving because there is nothing more to be hoped for in prolonging my visit. . . .

"Certainly. . . . But you know when I shall be emperor, I shall be emperor!"

Thus the German kaiser, who now in his memoirs declares he was kept from the bedside of his dying father while a campaign of slander was directed against him in the press.

Of his predilections and prejudices there is considerable in his memoirs.

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Like the American, Hearst, the kaiser is much concerned with the supposed yellow peril. He talks of influencing the czar to promise to help him protect European culture from the yellow races. That he was sincere in this is questionable, for, it will be recalled, that he made every effort to effect an alliance with Japan against England, France and America. Though the yellow peril is mentioned over and over again in his memoirs there is no word of the white peril, which was responsible for the dismemberment of a large part of China; nor does he refer to the actions of his own swaggering soldiers in China during the Boxer rebellion, whose conduct was said to be more atrocious than that of any of the white troops than in China.

German atrocities, in fact, are a sensitive subject with the kaiser. He dismisses them by a single incident in his book. He tells of how English soldiers looted and ravaged the Chateau de Pinon, belonging to the Princess de Pinon, and how through his orders the place was put in repair and her silver placed in the Bank at Aix la Chapelle. Nevertheless, indignantly writes the kaiser, the ungrateful princess published a letter in the French press to the effect that General Von Kluck had stolen all of her silver.

One wonders who to believe—the Princess de Pinon or the kaiser and his general, Von Kluck; but apropos of this especial general, it is interesting to refer to a book entitled "My Home on the Field of Honor," by Baroness Huard, the American wife (daughter of Francis Wilson, the comedian) of a famous French artist and illustrator. Her summer home, the Chateau de Villiers, was situated near to the Marne, about 60 miles from Paris. She gives a heartrending description of the sacking of her home by the Germans under this same General von Kluck.

"How can I describe it?" writes the Baroness Huard. "Above all, I would have it understood that the chateau was occupied by General von Kluck and his staff. The names crayoned on the doors of my bedrooms in big red letters bear testimony, as well as soiled underlinen marked vK. . . . It seems that everything we possessed was systematically classified as good, bad or indifferent, and the former and latter packed into army carts which for five days stood backed up against my doorstep.

"What remained was thrown into corners and wilfully soiled and smeared in the most disgusting and nauseating manner. . . . Our chateau was installed with all modern sanitary conveniences; these were purposely ignored and corridors and corners, satin window curtains and even beds used for the most ignoble purposes. Everywhere were sickening traces of sodden drunkenness. . . . The straw strewn drawing room resembled a beer garden after a riot, and the unfortunate upright piano was not only decked with empty champagne bottles, but also contained some two or three hundred pots of jam poured down inside, glass and all. Oh kultur! The sights of filth and horror—the stench.

And so forth. Not the Princess de Pinon this time the accuser, but an American born girl, who had given her house and her services to France. Well for the kaiser that he but touches the edge of the subject of atrocities. What words in all the human vocabulary could ever explain away the treatment of the Belgian women, children and old men? What language can blot out the case of Edith Cavell?

It is late in the day for the German kaiser to come now with his memoirs. Possibly he fancies that time may have blotted out unforgettable things. It is very evident that he desires to

Monday to consider the Ruhr situation. Stanley Baldwin, chancellor of the exchequer, who returned to Britain from the United States, Saturday, told newspapermen that settlement of the debt question in the United States was in the hands of politicians and that this situation "constituted the great difference between America and this country."

UNITED STATES

Delivery of dyed stone instead of an order of 100 tons of coal is alleged to have been the cause of the arrest at New York, Saturday of Vincent H. Olsen of Brooklyn, on a charge of grand larceny.

With three days of the National Poultry show over, Lord Dewar of Sussex, has already been awarded 49 ribbons, of which 25 were firsts. Lord Dewar has 100 entries, mostly bantams and pit cocks.

Five persons were killed Saturday morning at Cumberland, Maine, when an automobile crashed through an iron fence on the national pike and dropped 35 feet into Wills creek. The dead are Mrs. Clara McCullough, Eva Dundee, Louise Dundee, William J. Farrell and Edward J. Flynn.

EUROPE

In the name of the little entente, Czecho-Slovakia is about to offer mediation between France and Germany, it has been announced.

An exceptional state, which is a modified form of martial law, was proclaimed for all Bavaria Friday night by the government of Premier von Knilling in consequence of prospective open air meetings by the national socialists at Munich.

The Coblenz area of occupied Germany, held by United States troops since the establishment of the allied watch on the Rhine was turned over to the French troops Saturday noon.

Marquis Curzon, British foreign secretary, speaking at Saturday morning's session of the Near East conference at Lausanne, delivered a scathing criticism of the Turks because of their demand that the cemeteries containing the bodies of British soldiers slain in the Gallipoli campaign be reduced in size.

Pope Pius Saturday published an encyclical on St. Francis of Sales, proclaiming him the patron saint of Christian writers.

Three members of the German Green police were sentenced to death by court martial at Duesseldorf Saturday upon conviction of the assassination of a Belgian lieutenant, Graff, who was killed near Duesseldorf March 23, 1922.

SMUGGLED CATS

LONDON—Among entries at a cat show were several fat Siamese cats, which had to be smuggled out of Siam, where cats are considered sacred.

regain the esteem of the world. He lays great stress upon the fact that he is "half English." His father was German. His mother was a daughter of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert of Saxe Coburg Gotha, the latter pure German, and the former, Victoria, almost pure German. The kaiser was born and bred in Germany, and there is scarcely a British trait to his character. He is all German.

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