

The Secrets of the Hohenzollerns

STARTLING EXPOSURE OF INNER LIFE OF KAISER AND CROWN PRINCE AS TOLD BY COUNT ERNST VON HELTZENDORFF TO WILLIAM LEQUEUX

EDITORIAL NOTE.—William Lequeux, who here chronicles for the first time the revelations of the inner life of the Hohenzollerns, has long been recognized throughout Europe as the possessor of its innermost secrets.

"The English 'Who's Who' says of him: 'He has intimate knowledge of the secret service of Continental countries and is considered by the government (of Great Britain) an authority on such matters.' Another authority says: 'Few people have been more closely associated with or know more of the outstanding inner machinery of Germany than he.'

Lequeux probably has more sources of secret information at his command than any contemporary in civil life, and for the last six years the British government has made valuable use of his vast store of secret information through a specially organized department with which Lequeux works as a voluntary assistant.

Count von Heltdendorff became an intimate of Lequeux several years prior to the outbreak of the war; he has been living in retirement in France since August, 1914, and it was there that Lequeux received from the crown prince's late personal adjutant permission to make public these revelations of the inner life of the Hohenzollerns—that the democracy of the world might come to know the real, but heretofore hidden, personalities of the two dominant members of the autocracy they are now arrayed against.

Another Victim of the Crown Prince

LATE on the night of November 15, 1912, I was busily at work in the crown prince's room at the Marble palace at Potsdam. As his imperial highness' personal adjutant, had been traveling all day with him from Cologne to Berlin. We had done a tour of military inspections in Westphalia, and, as usual, "Willie's" conduct had not been exactly exemplary.

On the night in question much had happened. The emperor had, a month before, returned from a visit to England, where he had been engaged by speeches and handshakes, public and private, blowing a narcotic dust in the nostrils of your dear but too confiding nation.

"Heltdendorff!" exclaimed the crown prince, as he suddenly entered the room where I was busy attending to a pile of papers. "Do get through all those letters and things. Burn them all if you can. What do they matter?"

"Many of them are matters of grave importance. Here, for instance, is a report of the chief of military intelligence in Washington."

"Oh, old Friesch! Tear it up! He is but an old fossil at best. And yet, Heltdendorff, he is designed to be of considerable use," he added. "His majesty told me tonight that after his visit to England he has conceived the idea to establish an official movement for the improvement of better relations between Britain and Germany. The dear British are always ready to receive such movements with open arms. At Carlton House terrace they strongly indorse the emperor's ideas, and he tells me that the movement should first arise in commercial and shipping circles. Herr Ballin will generate the idea in his offices in London and the various British ports, while his majesty has Von Gessler, the ex-ambassador at Washington, in view as the man to bring forth the suggestion publicly. Indeed, tonight from the Wilhelmstrasse there has been sent a message to his schloss on the Mosel commanding him to consult with his majesty. Von Bernstorff took his place at Washington a few months ago."

"But Von Gessler is an inveterate enemy of Britain," I exclaimed in surprise, still seated at my table.

"The world does not know that. The whole scheme is based upon Britain's ignorance of our intentions. We bring Von Gessler forward as the dear, good, Anglophile friend with his hand outstretched from the Wilhelmstrasse. Oh, Heltdendorff!" he laughed. "It is really intensely amusing, is it not?"

I was silent. I knew that the deeply laid plot against Great Britain was proceeding apace.

"Get through all that—tonight if you can, Heltdendorff," the crown prince leaves for Treseburg, in the Harz, tomorrow, and in the evening we go to Nice."

"To Nice!" I exclaimed.

"Yes," he said. "I have a friend there."

A friend there! I reflected. I could only suppose that the attraction in Nice was of the feminine gender.

"Then the lady is in Nice?" I remarked, for sometimes I was permitted, on account of my long service with the emperor, to speak familiarly.

"Oh! is a fool!" he had declared openly to me, after she had left the room in anger.

We had been busy arranging a program of official visits in eastern Germany, when suddenly the crown prince entered, pale with anger and demanded fiercely an explanation of a certain anonymous letter which she held in her hand.

"Kindly read that!" she said laughingly, "and explain what it means."

The crown prince grinned, that cold sinister expression overspreading his countenance, a look which is such a marked characteristic of his.

Then, almost snatching the letter from his young wife's fingers, he read it through, and with a sudden movement tore it up and flung it upon the carpet, saying:

"I refuse to discuss any unsigned letter! Really, if we were to notice every letter written by the common scum we should, indeed, have sufficient to do."

His wife's arched brows narrowed. Her face betrayed fiercest anger. "I happen to have inquired, and I now know that those allegations are correct!" she cried. "This dark-haired singer-woman, Irene Speroni, has obtained great success on the variety stage in Italy. She is the star of the Sala Margherita in Rome."

"Well?" he asked in defiance. "And what of it, pray?"

"That letter you have destroyed tells me the truth. I received it a few days ago, and sent an agent to Italy in order to learn the truth. He has returned tonight. See!" And suddenly she produced a crumpled snapshot photograph of the crown prince in his polo-playing garb, and with him a smartly-dressed young woman, whose features were in the shadow.

"Yes," she cried bitterly. "You refuse, of course, to look upon this piece of evidence! I now know why you went to Wiesbaden. The woman was singing there, and you gave her a pair of emerald and diamond earrings which you purchased from Volggold in Unter den Linden. See! Here is the bill for them!"

And again she produced a slip of paper.

The scene ended in the poor woman, in a frantic paroxysm of despair, tearing off the splendid necklace of diamonds at her throat—his present to her on their marriage—and casting it full into his face.

Then, realizing that the scene had become too tragic, I took her small hand, and, with a word of sympathy, led her out of the room and along the corridor.

As I left her she burst into a sudden torrent of tears; yet when I returned again to the crown prince I found his manner had entirely changed. He treated his wife's natural resentment and indignation as a huge joke, and it was then that his imperial highness declared to me:

"Chili is a fool!"

"Listen, Heltdendorff," his highness exclaimed suddenly. "In Nice I may disappear for a day or two. I may be missing. But if I am, please don't raise a fuss about it. I'm incognito, and nobody will know. I may be absent for seven days. If I am not back by that time then you may make inquiry."

"But the Commissary of Police Eckardt! He will surely know?" I remarked in surprise.

"No. He won't know. I shall evade him as I've often done before," replied his imperial highness. "I tell you of my intentions so that you may curb the activities of our most estimable friend. Tell him not to worry, and he will be paid a thousand marks on the day Count von Grunau reappears."

I smiled, for I saw the influence of the eternal feminine.

"No, Heltdendorff. You are quite mistaken," he said, reading my thoughts. "There is no lady in this case. I am out here for secret purposes of my own. For that reason I take you into my confidence rather than that unnecessary inquiry should be made and some of those infernal journalists get hold of the fact that the Count von Grunau and the crown prince are one and the same person. I was a fool to take this salon. I ought to have traveled as an ordinary passenger. I know, but," he laughed, "this is really comfortable and, after all, what do we care what the world thinks—eh? Surely we can afford to laugh at it when all the honors of the game are already in our hands."

A LETTER FROM THE CROWN PRINCE'S PERSONAL ADJUTANT TO WILLIAM LEQUEUX, POSSESSOR OF THE SECRETS OF EUROPE.

Veneux Nadon, par Moret-sur-Loing, Seine-et-Marne, February 10th, 1917.

My dear Lequeux: I have just finished reading the proofs of your articles describing my life as an official at the imperial court at Potsdam, and the two or three small errors you made I have duly corrected.

The gross scandals and wily intrigues which I have related to you were many of them known to yourself, for, as the intimate friend of Luise, the ex-crown princess of Saxony, you were, before the war, closely associated with many of those at court whose names appear in these articles.

The revelations which I have made, and which you have recorded here, are but a tithe of the disclosures which I could make, and if the world desires more, I shall be pleased to furnish you with other and even more startling details, which you may also see put into print. My service as personal adjutant to the German crown prince is, happily, at an end, and now, with the treachery of Germany against civilization glaringly revealed, I feel, in my retirement, no compunction in exposing all I know concerning the secrets of the Kaiser and his son.

With most cordial greetings from your sincere friend, (Signed) ERNST VON HELTZENDORFF.

dent had sent his compliments through his representative, the bristly-haired little prefect.

As I departed from the crown prince, who yawned and declared that he was tired, he said: "Ah! Heltdendorff. How good it is to get a breath of soft air from the Mediterranean! We shall have a port on this pleasant sea one day—if we live as long—eh?"

That remark showed the trend of events. It showed how, hand in hand with the emperor, he was urging preparations for war—a war that had for its primary object the destruction of the powers which, when the volcano erupted, united as allies.

The Mysterious Lady. After we had been at the Villa Lilas about ten days I was one afternoon seated outside the popular Cafe de l'Opera, in the Place Massena, when a lady, dressed in deep mourning and wearing the heavy veil in French style, passed along the pavement, glanced at me, and then, hesitating, she turned, and, coming back, advanced to the little table in the corner where I was sitting.

"May I be permitted to have a word with you, monsieur?" she asked in French, in a low, refined voice.

"Certainly," was my reply, and I rose and drew a chair for her.

She glanced round quickly, as though to satisfy herself that she would not be overheard. I saw that she was about twenty-four, handsome, dark-haired, with well-cut features.

"I know, monsieur, that I am a complete stranger to you," she exclaimed with a smile, "but to me you are quite familiar by sight. I have passed you many times in Berlin and in Potsdam, and I know that you are Count von Heltdendorff, personal adjutant to his highness the crown prince—or Count von Grunau, as he is known here in France."

"You know that?" I exclaimed.

She smiled mysteriously, replying: "Yes. I—well, I happen to be a friend of his highness."

I held my breath. So this pretty Frenchwoman was one of my imperial master's friends?

"The fact is," she went on, "I have traveled a considerable distance to see you. I said that I was one of the crown prince's friends. Please do not misunderstand me. I know that he has a good many friends, but I have never been introduced to him, and he does not know me. I am his friend because of a certain friendliness toward him."

"Really, madame, I don't quite understand," I said.

"Of course not," she answered, and then, glancing round, she added: "This place is a little too public. Cannot we go across the garden yonder?"

I rose and walked with her to a quiet spot in the gardens.

She told me that her name was Julie de Rouville, but she would give no account of where she lived.

"I have ventured to approach you, because I cannot approach the crown prince," she said presently. "You probably do not know the true reason for his visit here to Nice?"

"No," I said. "I admit that I do not. Why is he here?"

"It is a secret of his own. But, I am aware of the reason, and that is why I have sought you. Would it surprise you if I told you that in a certain quarter in France it will, in a few days, be known that the German emperor is establishing a movement for an entente between Germany and Britain, and that the whole affair is based upon a fraud? The emperor wants no entente, but only war with France and with Britain. The whole plot will be exposed in a few days!"

"From what source have you derived this knowledge?" I asked, looking at her in amazement.

But she again smiled mysteriously, and said:

"I merely tell you this in order to prove to you that I am in possession of certain facts known to but few people."

"You evidently are," I said. "But who intends to betray the truth to France?"

"I regret, count, that I cannot answer your question."

"If you are, as you say, the crown prince's friend, it would surely be a friendly act to let us know the truth, so that steps may be taken, perhaps, to avoid the secret of Germany's diplomacy from leaking out to her enemies."

"All I can tell you, count, is that the matter is one of the gravest importance."

"But will you not speak openly, and give us the actual facts?"

"I will—but to his imperial highness alone," was her answer.

"If his highness will honor me with an interview, then I will reveal all I know, and, further, will suggest a means of preventing the truth from leaking out."

"But you are French," I said.

"I have told you so," she laughed. "But probably his highness will refuse to see Julie de Rouville, therefore, I think it best if you show him this."

From her little gold chain-purse she produced a small, unmounted photograph of herself, and handed it to me.

"When he recognizes who wishes to see him he will understand," she said, in a quiet, refined voice. "A letter addressed to Julie de Rouville at the Post Restante at Marseilles will quickly find me. I do not wish the letter to be sent to me here. From Marseilles I shall duly receive it."

I was silent for a few moments.

"I confess," I exclaimed at last, "I confess I do not exactly see the necessity for an interview with his highness, when whatever you tell me—as his personal adjutant—will be regarded as strictly in confidence."

"I have already said, Count von Heltdendorff, that I am his highness' friend, and wish to approach him with motives of friendship."

"You wish for no payment for this information, eh?" I asked suspiciously, half believing that she might be a secret agent of France.

"Payment—of course not!" she answered, half indignantly. "Show that photograph to the crown prince, and tell him that I apply for an interview."

Then, rather abruptly, she rose and walked away, leaving me with her photograph in my hand.

The crown prince was out motoring, and did not get back to the villa until after seven o'clock.

As soon as I heard of his return I went to his room and recounted my strange adventure with the dark-haired young woman in black. He became keenly interested, and the more so when I told him of her secret knowledge of the Kaiser's intended establishment of a bogus entente with Great Britain.

"She wishes to see you," I said.

"And she told me to give you her photograph."

I handed it to him.

At sight of it his face instantly changed. He held his breath and then examined the photograph beneath the light.

Next second, however, he had recovered his self-possession and said:

"Yes, of course. I know her. She wants me to write to Julie de Rouville at the Post Restante at Marseilles, eh? H'm—I'll think it over."

Late in the afternoon, two days later, his highness, who had been walking alone, returned to the villa with a stranger, a tall, rather thin, fair-haired man, undoubtedly a German, and the pair were closeted together, holding counsel evidently for a considerable time. Where his highness met him I knew not, but when later on I entered the room I saw that the pair were on quite friendly terms.

His highness addressed him as Herr Schafer, and when he had left he told me that he was from the Wilhelmstrasse and had been attached to the embassy at Washington, and afterwards in London, "for affairs of the press."

Whatever was in progress was a strict secret between the pair. The more I saw of Hans Schafer the more I disliked him. He had cruel eyes and I could see that he was a very clever and cunning person.

For a full fortnight the crown prince and the man Schafer were almost inseparable. Was it for the purpose of meeting Schafer that he had gone to Nice? The man had been back from London about two months and had, I learnt, been lately living in Paris.

One evening while strolling along the tree-lined Promenade des Anglais I suddenly encountered Julie de Rouville, dressed in mourning, a quiet, pathetic figure, just as we had last met.

I instantly recollected that since the evening when I had given her photograph to the crown prince he had never mentioned her.

"Ah, count!" she cried. "This is indeed, a welcome meeting! I have been looking out for you for the past two days."

"I've been staying over at Cannes," was my reply. "Well?"

"I have to thank you for giving my photograph and message to his highness," she said.

"I trust that the crown prince has written you—eh?"

"Well, no—" was her rather vague reply.

"Then how are you aware that I gave your message?"

She shook her head and smiled.

"I had my own means of discovery. By certain signs I knew you had carried out your promise," she said. "But

as I have heard nothing, I wish you to deliver another message—a very urgent one. Tell him I must see him, for I dread daily lest the truth of the Kaiser's real intentions be known at the Quai d'Orsay."

"Certainly," was my reply. "I will deliver your message this evening."

"Tell him that my sole desire is to act in the interests of the emperor and himself," she urged.

"But, forgive me," I said, "I cannot see why you should interest yourself in the crown prince if he declines to communicate with you."

"I have my reasons, Count von Heltdendorff," was her rather haughty reply. "Please tell him that the matter will not brook further delay."

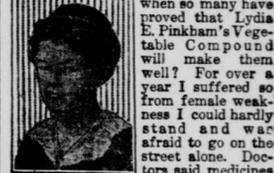
I had seen in the London newspapers during the past week how eagerly the English journalists, with the dust cast into their eyes, were blindly advocating that the British public should welcome the great German national movement, headed by Baron von Gessler, supported by Ballin, Delbruck and Von Wedel, with the hearty cooperation of the emperor and the imperial chancery—the movement to establish better relations with Great Britain.

I knew that the secret should at all hazards be kept, and that night I told the crown prince of my second meeting with the pretty woman in black and her urgent request.

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Fulton, N. Y. — "Why will women pay out their money for treatment and receive no benefit, when so many have proved that Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound will make them well? For over a year I suffered so from female weakness I could hardly stand and was afraid to go on the street alone. Doctors said medicines were useless and only an operation would help me, but Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound has proved it otherwise. I am now perfectly well and can do any kind of work."—Mrs. NELLIE PHELPS, care of R. A. Rider, R.F.D. No. 5, Fulton, N. Y.



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"I can't see why that man is boss over me. I do most of the work around here."

"I guess that is so."

"It is. I know more about the business than he does. Whenever he wants to know anything about what's going on he comes to me to find out."

"That's usually the way."

"I'm the fellow that ought to be the boss."

"A lot of men think that way, and yet there's one big difference. He knows something that you don't know."

"What is it?"

"He knows enough to hire good men like you to do the work. If you knew that you'd be the boss and he'd be in your place."

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He Settled It. An amusing story is told at Stratford-on-Avon. In the smoking room of a hotel a few years ago an Englishman and a Scotchman engaged in a heated argument. John Bull was declaring William Shakespeare to be the only poet of the world, and Sandy McPherson was standing up for his Bobby Burns.

Words ran high and blows seemed imminent when a self-confident little commercial traveler determined to throw oil on the troubled waters.

"Gentlemen," he said, stepping between the heated disputants, "let me settle this amicably. Who is this Shakespeare-Burns?"—London Telegraph.

Boosting Business. The Travelling Salesman—You boosted for the school committee to bring a pretty schoolmarm from Chicago. Why, you haven't any children!

The Boomtown Storekeeper—No; but I have an eye for business. As soon as the pretty teacher showed up all the big boys began sneaking down to my store to buy hair oil, clean collars and scented soap by the wholesale.

Gloomy Outlook. The Brigadier—Now, Captain Wilson, suppose you found your company cut off from the rest of the battalion, hopelessly outnumbered, and surrounded on every side; what would you do?

Captain Wilson—By Jove, sir, you are a pessimist.—Cassell's Saturday Journal.

Fix Many of Us Are In. Footpad—Your money or your life! Mr. Lanks—My friend, as I am trying to support a family of six persons on fifty dollar a month, I have neither!

Beware of Closed Mind. This sounds like a paradox when addressed to young men, yet it will, think, bear examination. It is a truism to say that the danger of maturity, and especially of age, is the closing of the mind to new ideas. Habit, most powerful of influences, hard experience the very passage of the years, all alike tend to stiffen the muscles and to harden those of the body. It is a misfortune with which advancing age must struggle, and the effort is severe and too often either neglected or fruitless.—Senator Henry Cabot Lodge.

In Style. Jane went shopping with her mother to buy some dresses. One which particularly took Jane's fancy was too small and could not be had in a larger size. Jane, not understanding why she was denied that dress, was persistent in her entreaties for it, so her mother, to convince the child, tried the dress on and said: "Don't you see how short it is?" "But mother, all the ladies are wearing their dresses very short now," said Jane.

Reversion of Type. Wig—How is it he kicks so much at what his wife says? Wags—Maybe it's because she persists in calling him a mule.—Town Topics.

Liberty. God grants liberty only to those who love it, and are always ready to guard and defend it.—Daniel Webster.

Instant Postum as coffee's successor on the family table makes for better health and more comfort. Preferred by Thousands. There's a Reason.