

# 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 his friend, Count Ernst von Helztendorff, the latter's revelations of the inner life of the imperial German court, 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 Helztendorff became an inmate 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 democracies of the world might know the real, but heretofore hidden, personalities of the two dominant members of the autocracy they are now arrayed against.

### The Kaiser's Secret Trip to the Hague.

ONE May morning in 1906 I was walking on the terrace of the castle of Halber, at that time in the possession of the late Freiherr von Stumm, whom the emperor often visited.

On the previous day we had arrived with a numerous suite and a large number of personal attendants, and during the journey his majesty had been very busy receiving the daily reports, signing documents that had been submitted to him and dictating some personal letters in French to certain sovereigns with whom he was on friendly terms.

I think, however, that our host became secretly irritated at the frequent visits of his imperial guest, for certainly what with the establishment of the special telegraph to Berlin and a special post office, and the finding of accommodation for the crowd of personal attendants, each visit must have cost poor old Von Stumm a considerable amount.

I had already been busy upstairs in the room allotted to me, and had come out to take a walk in the warm and welcome sunshine, when suddenly I saw the emperor in a suit of brown civilian clothes striding towards me.

He seemed to be in a humorous mood and joked with me as I walked beside him.

Suddenly he halted, as though recollecting something and asked: "Heltzendorff, have you with you some of our paper for important documents?"

"Certainly," was my reply.

"Ah! then please place some of it with envelopes upon my table, and also write to Berlin to send here ten couriers."

"Ten couriers?" I echoed in surprise. "Yes, ten. I may want even twelve or more."

I saluted and re-entered the schloss to put the imperial command over the special wire, after which I took out and placed upon the emperor's table some sheets of that special dark blue paper which bears the imperial crown and cipher embossed in black, with the words in German "document of the highest importance," the formidable looking envelopes to match bearing the same words.

Just before eight o'clock that night I was informed that the couriers were waiting below, and on descending found six of the imperial messengers and four from the ministry of foreign affairs, ready to travel anywhere, even to the uttermost ends of the earth.

**A Stupendous Hoax.**

On informing his majesty, the latter handed to me about thirty of the great blue envelopes containing "documents of the highest importance," addressed in his own hand to various officers of state, princes, princesses, and other prominent people in all parts of the empire.

"These are to be taken at once, Heltzendorff," the emperor said. "The messengers are to bring us replies."

"In every case?" I asked.

"Yes, in every case," he answered.

Then I carried the batch of correspondence below, and much puzzled at the nature of this latest activity in private letter-writing, I handed them to the couriers, who sorted them out and distributed them among themselves.

Half an hour later the documents were being conveyed to various parts of the empire.

When I returned to the study I found the emperor laughing quietly to himself, and wondered what could be the reason. He signed some documents I read to him, but ever and anon a broad smile would cross his usually stern features.

of the night to be handed a dispatch from the emperor; old princesses jumped out of bed to receive an imperial communication; officers tore open the envelopes eagerly expecting high appointments; the admiral of the grand fleet believed that war had been declared; and insignificant foreign diplomats were under the impression that the emperor had at last deigned to notice them.

The whole thing was a huge joke invented by the emperor on the castle terrace, and the court and the imperial family were in fits of laughter over it for a week.

**A Message to the Emperor.**

One afternoon when we were back again at the palace at Potsdam the emperor was explaining to me a certain order he wished carried out. Presently one of the flunkies entered with a private note for his majesty. The emperor read it, and instantly I saw that his countenance grew pale and his manner changed.

He read it again, and then re-read it, his lips compressed, his eyebrows narrowed, and his cheeks unduly pale. Afterwards he struck a match and burned the letter in the grate.

That missive no doubt contained some grave news, the nature of which I could not guess, because he suddenly abandoned his work, and telling me to meet him in the study at eight o'clock that evening, he strode out.

When he had gone out I picked up the blackened tinder and examined it, but it was so charred that I could not read any word, though from the two or three marks of the pen I realized that it had been written by the hand of a woman.

At four later I learned that the emperor had left Potsdam. He had by receipt of that letter evidently become seriously perturbed.

I called the flunkie who had handed him the missive and questioned him. He had received it from another servant, who had received it from someone else, until at last I discovered that it had been handed by a young girl to one of the sentries on duty outside the palace, who in due course had sent it in to his majesty.

While passing along one of the corridors that evening I met bald-headed old Von Klupfel, who was at that time grand chamberlain, and he beckoned me into his cozy room. Then, when the door was closed, he asked:—

"What has happened? The emperor has left incognito and all of a sudden. The state ball tomorrow night has been cancelled."

"Cancelled?" I echoed. "Where has the emperor gone?"

"Nobody knows—except Herman, his personal valet, whom he has taken with him."

"Curious," I remarked, thinking of the letter, though, of course, I told Von Klupfel nothing of it. Whatever transpired within his majesty's study was always regarded as a strict secret. More than one serious family quarrel had occurred there in my presence.

"Well, something serious has certainly occurred. That is my belief," declared the old chamberlain. "Uncle Zeppelin was coming to the palace tomorrow on a visit, and I have just sent him a telegram to postpone his journey."

"But his majesty had two important engagements tomorrow, and in addition, a military parade in Berlin," I said.

"All is canceled, my dear Von Heltzendorff," replied the old fellow. "The emperor has left for a destination unknown. I suppose I had better report his absence to the imperial chancery—?"

"No, if I were you I would say nothing," I replied. "For some private reason his majesty has evidently been forced to go on a journey. Without doubt I shall hear from him tomorrow. As soon as I do so I will tell you."

**A Telephone Message From "Herr Zeller."**

My expectation was realized, for the next day just after six o'clock in the evening I received a telegram dispatched from Haarlem, in Holland, ordering me to go to the Adlon hotel, in Berlin, at once and register there. The concluding words of the message, sent in English, were: "You will receive a telephone call at 10:30 tonight." It was signed "Zeller," one of the names used by the emperor when he traveled incognito.

I ordered the car and drove into Berlin, taking with me a small bag, and engaged a room in Herr Adlon's hotel, in which was a telephone.

Soon after ten o'clock I told the telephone operator that if anyone rang me up I should be in my room.

Half-past ten came, and then slowly the hands of the clock passed round to eleven, and past.

Suddenly there was a sharp ring, and I took up the receiver.

A strange voice sounding far away asked for me, and I replied in the affirmative.

Then in a few seconds another voice—which I instantly recognized as the emperor's—asked in English:—

"Is that you, Von Heltzendorff?" and having received my reply, he said: "I am Zeller, speaking from the Hotel des Indes, at The Hague. Will you tell madame I am here? Instruct Klupfel to cancel all my engagements for the next fortnight, and tomorrow night come here and bring any papers that I have to attend to. It would be as well to tell them at my office that I have been called to Hamburg. Can you hear me?"

"Perfectly," was my reply. "I quite understand your orders, sir, and will attend to them at once. I shall leave for The Hague tomorrow night."

"Good. And bring me another suit of civilian clothes."

Then there was a sudden buzzing in

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

Veneux Nadon, par Moret-sur-Loire, 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 Luisa, 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 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 Paris, I remain, my dear friend, Your sincere friend,

(Signed) ERNST VON HELTZENDORFF.

the instrument, a sharp click, and all was again silence.

I put down the receiver in wonder. I saw that to telephone to me at the palace was impossible, as it would go through the exchange there, and somebody might be listening. For that reason he had sent me to the Adlon, and from his conversation he was evidently representing himself at the Hague to be a prosperous German merchant, as he had done at Nice and other places.

At nearly two o'clock in the morning I passed the sentries on duty, and re-entered the Potsdam palace. It was then too late to give the Kaiser her husband's message, therefore I waited till morning, and gave it to her verbally when alone with her in her breakfast room.

The empress seemed greatly relieved when I told her of the telephone conversation, and during the day wrote me a note to hand to the emperor on my arrival at The Hague. That night I left for Holland, and I next morning duly inquired at the Hotel des Indes for Herr Zeller. I was conducted to a small suite of rooms on the first floor, where, dressed in a gray suit, his majesty rose to meet me, smiling at my astonishment.

"Well, you heard me plainly on the telephone, eh?" he asked. "Ah, I see you are surprised that I am here. I, too, am equally surprised to find myself here. And, further, I do not know how long I shall remain."

"I have brought the clothes," I remarked, and afterwards drew the empress' letter from my pocket and handed it to him.

"Her majesty should have left for Prague yesterday," he said. "Did she go?"

"No. She was still at the palace when I left at eight o'clock last night."

The emperor gave vent to a grunt of dissatisfaction. From the books lying about his room I gathered that he passed his time in reading, preferring not to go out in the day time for fear of being recognized. Apprehension on that score was unnecessary, for the Kaiser, shorn of his uniform and decorations, presents in civilian attire a very ordinary appearance and not readily recognizable by the man in the street. For that reason he was often able to spend a week in Paris, Nice, or on the Italian Riviera without anybody being the wiser.

**Mystery of the Royal Scheme.**

I engaged a room close to that of Herr Zeller, and for some hours remained with him while he signed a number of state papers which I had brought with me. He seemed strangely absent-minded, I thought, but presently he took up one of the formidable blue documents which, by the heading, I saw was an urgent report from the imperial chancery.

"Look, Heltzendorff! Look at this!" cried the emperor.

"The chancery reports that the editor of the Cologne Gazette has called at the chancery and inquired how long it was intended that I should remain out of the country? Think of it. My absence is known?"

"That may be so," I responded, "but your majesty's whereabouts is unknown to all save her majesty the empress."

"Yes, yes," said the emperor impatiently. "But our police will commence making inquiries, and I shall be traced here."

"Why not leave at once," I suggested, in the hope of elucidating the truth.

"Ah! That is just the unfortunate point. I am unable to leave," he replied. "I must remain—and I do not know for how long!"

Further than that he would tell me nothing. The fact that his absence from Germany was known greatly upset him. It seemed to me as though, by that truth leaking out, some clever secret plan of his had been thwarted.

From his countenance, as he re-read that document, I saw that serious trouble was brewing for somebody. His majesty, seized by his mania for travel would very often at five minutes' notice leave Potsdam and journey to the farthest end of the empire. But the papers were always at once informed, and the Kaiser never went out of his country without first acquainting the chancery of his intentions. In this case, however, he slipped away by a night train, and nobody knew until next morning.

**The Dark-Haired Woman.**

On concluding the correspondence, I went out for a stroll, when, not far from the hotel, I noticed a well-dressed, rather handsome, dark-haired woman approaching. To me her face seemed familiar, and I was puzzled to know where I had seen it before.

I passed on, and, entering a cafe, sat down to smoke and to think. Memory of that woman's face still haunted me. I felt that I had met her somewhere, and had had good cause to re-

member her, yet, for the life of me, I could not recall the circumstances of our meeting.

An hour later, on returning to the hotel, I saw her speaking with the concierge.

She was evidently staying there, hence a few minutes afterwards, when she had ascended the lift, I questioned the man, and learned that she was Madame Rosales, from Malaga, in Spain. She had arrived with her husband three days ago, but monsieur had left the same morning for Paris, and she was now awaiting his return.

The motive of the emperor, usually so restless and pompous, in remaining virtually a prisoner in the hotel, and posing as a merchant, was certainly most mysterious, and even a chat with Herman, his majesty's chief valet, elicited no information.

That night, as I sat alone eating my dinner—for Herr Zeller took his meals in his private sitting room—the dark-haired woman sat at a table near me. With her was a pretty girl in a pale pink dinner gown, evidently a friend who lived in the town.

The pair chatted together and laughed merrily over their meal, while I watched them covertly.

Why, I cannot even now tell, but I held Madame Rosales in distinct suspicion. Yet I could not recollect where we had met before. Now, however, as I sat there in the corner eating my meal I felt convinced that, on her part, she had recognized me, and further, that she had pointed me out to her companion.

At first I tried to dissuade him, but he was so persistent that I described at which table she sat at lunch, and it was agreed between us that while we were eating our meal he should come to the door of the dining room and peep in.

This the emperor did, and cleverly, too, for she never saw him, being at that moment engaged in conversation with a waiter.

When I rejoined him in his room he said: "No, Heltzendorff, I have never seen her before."

"Well, majesty," I declared. "I am certain I have seen her or her photograph somewhere, and that she is not what she represents herself to be."

"She's an adventuresome most probably," replied the emperor. "Many women are. Indeed, it is difficult to discover one who does not adventure either in love, in politics, or in crime."

**A Trip to Berlin for Information.**

His words impressed me. An hour later I went to a photographer's and arranged for a surreptitious portrait to be taken of Madame Rosales the next time she took a walk.

All day the young photographer haunted the vicinity of the hotel until the light faded. Yet next morning as she came out he snapped her without her knowledge, and in three hours I had a rough print of it in my pocket.

That night, after writing down a great mass of memoranda, instructions to various departments of the state, I left again for Berlin, with orders to Herr Zeller on the telephone from some unsuspecting place every night at ten o'clock.

I returned to the Berlin Schiess absolutely mystified, and next day spent the greater part of the time visiting the chancery and the various ministers, and giving them the emperor's commands. Then at about six o'clock I called at the chief bureau of police in the Alexander Platz, and entered the private room of old Leibbrand, who at that time was chief of the detective service.

To him I showed the surreptitious photograph of Madame Rosales. The astute thief catcher removed his spectacles, and examining the picture with the aid of a big reading glass, gave vent to a loud grunt.

In response to his bell a younger and more alert man entered, and to him he handed the photograph, saying: "Please see if anyone recognizes this. I believe I do—but I may be mistaken."

He then became inquisitive as to where and how I had obtained the picture, but naturally I said nothing.

"I've been away on a journey," I said, "and meeting the woman, I thought her suspicious."

"And if my memory serves me properly I think, Count, that your suspicions are very well grounded."

"Why?" I asked.

"Let us wait for the report from outside," replied the old fellow. Then, in order to turn the conversation, he asked news of Balz, who was at that moment the detective in attendance on the Kaiser's person, and whose vigilance the emperor had, of course, evaded.

"Oh! He's at Potsdam," I laughed. "I haven't seen him lately, for I've been away on a mission."

"The emperor is in Thuringia," Leibbrand said. "There seems to be some mystery as to his whereabouts, but Balz telephoned me today to say that his majesty has gone to Thuringia without any staff or personal attendants."

"That is so, I believe," was my reply, but I smiled, for the Thuringia myth had been invented by myself before I had left for Holland. It is at any time difficult to impose upon the Berlin police, but, of course, news given out officially from the court they naturally believe to be the truth.

**Peril of the Emperor.**

A quarter of an hour later Leibbrand's assistant re-entered the room, and, handing back the photograph, placed a file of papers before his chief, saying: "The woman is a famous Spanish dancer, and one of the most active members of the anarchist society of Geneva—the society which committed the bomb outrage upon King Alfonso, and who were responsible for the recent attempt on the king of Italy."

"An anarchist?" I gasped.

"Yes," answered the official. "And a very dangerous one, too. If she put foot into Germany, we should have her at once under lock and key."

"Why?"

"Because it is known that there is a conspiracy on foot, organized by that league in Geneva, against his majesty the emperor. We had news of it from the Swiss police a month ago."

"Is there really a plot against the emperor?" I asked, much startled.

"There certainly is in Geneva," replied Leibbrand. "At the present moment we are watching for this dancer's appearance in Germany. I thought I was not mistaken when I first saw her picture."

I stood in that bare official room utterly staggered. I dared not tell those two men the truth or give them warning of the emperor's peril.

I saw, however, that I must act instantly. In five minutes I had gathered that the woman was one of the most dangerous anarchists in Europe, and I also realized that my memory had served me very well, inasmuch as I had seen her picture in an illustrated paper a year before, when she had been arrested in Rome in connection with an alleged attempt upon the life of the king.

"Herr Leibbrand, will you please write down for me the facts you have just related?" I urged.

"Most certainly," was his reply, and

taking up his pen he scribbled the truth, signing it with a flourish.

Eighteen hours later I ascended in the lift at the Hotel des Indes to the suite occupied by Herr Zeller.

Without waste of time I produced the snapshot photograph and asked him whether he recognized it.

"Certainly," was his reply. "It is Madame Rosales," adding, laughingly, "I became acquainted with her and her husband in a curious manner in the lift last night. We were ascending together, madame, who wore a soft blue evening blouse, standing next to me. Unfortunately the button on the wrist of my coat caught in the sleeve of her blouse and tore it very badly. I apologized for ruining the blouse, and insisted that her husband should send the damaged garment to me so that I might replace it with something better. It arrived only five minutes ago, and is in that little box over there," and he indicated a cardboard box lying upon the couch.

"Ah! You haven't opened it, I see!" I exclaimed. "Your majesty must not open it! Please read this!" And I put before him Leibbrand's signed statement of the identity of Madame Rosales.

When the emperor read it he instantly realized the situation.

**Luring the Kaiser.**

"Ah! I see it all, Heltzendorff. My practical joking becoming known, the anarchists have taken advantage of it. I have been lured here, out of Germany, by a cleverly conceived dodge for I came here believing that I was to meet in secret General Oranovski, chief of the czar's military cabinet, who wished to confer with me. And though he was due three days ago he has not arrived. Instead, this woman and her friends are busy plotting my death."

"Without a doubt, probably had you opened that box under it might have been fatal," I said. "Is it not wise to leave at once for Berlin?"

Herr Zeller acted promptly upon my suggestion, and we carried back to Germany the box containing the actress' blouse. Next day in my presence, the box was carefully opened in the military laboratory, when we found, wrapped in a pretty blue crepe de chine blouse with heavy beaded trimming, a small canister filled with a high explosive, the fuse so arranged that had the string of the box been suddenly released by cutting in the ordinary way a terrible explosion must have ensued.

Certainly the emperor very nearly lost his life as a result of his own practical joking.

As for the Spanish dancing girl, she apparently followed the emperor, for two days later she and a man named Ferroni, a well-known Italian anarchist who was posing as her husband, were arrested at Herbestal when about to enter Prussia, and both were eventually sent to prison for ten years.

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**Fighting Tuberculosis.**

Tuberculosis is being vigorously fought in Australia, for though the percentage of deaths from tuberculosis in Australia is less than in most other countries, the federal government is not unmindful of the fact that its pension list contains the names of many persons who are rendered physical wrecks through the undermining influences of diseases of the respiratory organs. A federal committee on the causes of death and invalidity in the commonwealth is conducting an investigation of tuberculosis and means of combating it. The figures for 1914 when there were 3,574 deaths from tuberculosis, indicate that the disease is most destructive in its effect between the ages of twenty-one and thirty-five years, as far as both sexes are concerned, but after this life period deaths in male cases predominate.

**Hunting at the Front.**

All game laws are in abeyance in France, and, with that strange disregard of shell fire observable among the wild life to be found on the western front, pheasants, partridges, rabbits and hares have increased to an extraordinary extent. No man's land teems with game, while the marshes beside a certain river (which must be nameless) are full of wild duck and snipe. There are no shotguns, and service revolvers do not make good shooting when fired at the flying birds, so the snipe and wild ducks are stalked in wary style and shot "sitting". The sport of sniping snipe in the marshes is fraught with many dangers, and it requires a very ardent sportsman to crawl through the reeds, amid the everlasting mud, in the hopes of potting snipe.—From Soldier's Letter.

**The Reichsrath a Babel.**

That parliament of Babel, the reichsrath, now engaged in playing an obscure part in the Austro-Hungarian necesse hunt, is permitted to express its emotions in eight official languages—symbolic of the war of tongues raging in the empire itself. In the great vocal chorus the Slavonian may be said to have struck the strident top note, for the very word he has coined for himself expresses the belief that no man is a talker except himself. "Slavonia," in Old Slavonian, meant "to speak," and as the Slav understood no other speech, the others were naturally the dumb dogs.—London Daily Chronicle.

**The Failure.**

The \$400,000,000 distributed in gifts to workers at the year's end by the employers of America led George W. Perkins to say at a dinner in New York: "It is impossible to miss success in America; it's impossible to fail in this rich land, unless, indeed, you've got the spirit of the Paint Rock storekeeper."

"The keeper of the Paint Rock store was playing checkers and chewing tobacco beside the blazing stove in the back room when a man came in and said: "There's two customers in their waitin', si'."

"S-sh," said Storekeeper Si in a whisper. "Keep quiet, an' they'll go away ag'in."

Christiania was, 292 years ago, known as Oslo, which, for the 600 years preceding, was the capital of Norway.

### Is Your Work Hard?

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Visitor—My poor man, when you get out of this place, do not yield too hastily to temptation. Take time to think; take time.

Courier—That's what I'm in for. I took too many watches.

**Catching On.**

"What is the meaning of 'alter ego'?" asked the teacher of the beginners' class in Latin.

"It means the 'other I,'" responded a pupil.

"Give me a sentence containing the phrase."

"He winked his alter ego."—Boston Transcript.

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**Willing to Share.**

She—Ninety-nine women in a hundred are naturally generous.

He—Yes; where one woman will keep a secret, ninety-nine will give it away.

**Her Parting Shot.**

"You have returned all my letters and presents, Hortense," says Egbert, "but you seem to be retaining my photograph. May I yet dare to hope that—"

"Oh, your photograph? I sent that to Life, thinking the editor would want to run it as one of those pictures for which they pay a \$100 to anybody that can supply a proper title."—Life.

**Rubber Consumption Growing.**

Consumption of rubber per capita is more than twice what it was 25 years ago. One company expects to manufacture uppers of shoes from rubber as well as soles. This company will operate its own merchant marine to bring crude rubber from Sumatra and carry manufactured articles to all parts of the world. The company now employs 28,621 men, and manufactures 218,530 pairs of rubber shoes a day. More than a million trees on Sumatra plantations are being tapped.

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**"Give all the kids Post Toasties—They like 'em"**

Bobby

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