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STEER BROTHERS.

"Uneasy Lies the Head That Wears a Crown"

Just Who and What the Heads of the Neutral European Powers are.

(Specially Written for the Mail and Advocate)

Wm. W. S. Gilbert's "Pirates of Penzance" to be revised, we would suggest a substitute for the "Police-man's chorus" and write a ditty which would fit into a war mould and set the refrain as a "Ruler's Life is not a happy one."

Apart from the Rulers of the belligerent nations, there are in Europe today six crowned heads whose lot is by no means "a happy one." There are at the very edge of the maelstrom and of all kinds are pulling them into the vortex. These crowned heads are the sovereigns of Norway, Sweden, Holland, Denmark, Greece and Roumania, who are trying to safeguard their countries by a forced policy of neutrality.

These Rulers are all allied by ties political, racial, or personal to the belligerent rulers, and it may happen at any day that some of them, at least, may be forced by the exigencies of circumstances into the war game.

The Kings of Norway, and Roumania have English wives; the Kings of Denmark, Sweden and Greece have German wives; whilst the Queen of Holland is married to a German prince. The King of Greece is the brother-in-law of the Kaiser; while the King of Norway is brother-in-law of King George. Both the King of Roumania and the Queen of Greece are Hohenzollerns, whilst their subjects are decidedly pro-Allies. The Court of Holland is pro-German; but the Dutch people have a great dislike to Germany. The Court of Sweden is also pro-German; and the people are mainly so especially the higher classes and the merchants who have been reaping golden harvests since the war began through shipments of imported products to Germany. The only ruler that is actually removed from the fringe of the war is the King of Spain. That there are certain factions of pro-German tendencies in Spain has been demonstrated on two or three occasions since the outbreak of the war; and it is a matter of history that many of the big plots that have come to light were hatched in Barcelona. It is claimed that the whole Mexican embargo was concocted there. An American newspaper stated some time ago that the return of Huerta to America was arranged at Barcelona. Huerta, it will be remembered, was arrested by the American authorities at El Paso as he was trying to get across the border. It was stated further that he had the assurance of financial and military support from

ideas; and would doubtless have launched a Republic when the country was separated from Sweden, but its existence as an independent nation was none too secure.

The King of Denmark is in a position similar to that of the King of Sweden; but the people do not forget the Bismarckian policy which wrested from Denmark two of its fairest provinces Schleswig and Holstein. The Queen of Denmark was a German princess, Alexandrine of Mecklenburg, and she is in sympathy with the Vaterland.

The least enviable position of all these sovereigns is that of Wilhelmina, Queen of Holland whose consort is a German prince—Henry of Mecklenburg-Schwerin. The country, though at peace, is sadly distracted by the war. Some time ago, the army was mobilized fearing an invasion; and Germany is a constant source of menace. The commercial interests of Holland have reaped rich harvests from the war, as much of the stuff which finds its way to Germany passes through Rotterdam. There is much dissatisfaction among the populace regarding the arrogance of Germany; but the Queen has striven to keep matters from developing into a cause of quarrel. Wilhelmina was not long since the best beloved sovereign in Europe; but since the beginning of the war her popularity has waned.

The King of Spain is farthest removed from the conflict. His consort, Victoria of Battenburg, is an Englishwoman, first cousin to King George, and of course, intensely English in sympathies. Though King Alfonso is by descent a Hapsburg—his mother being an Austrian princess, he cares little for family ties, and is without any shadow of doubt in sympathy with the cause of Britain. It is not unlikely that when peace comes, he will be the chief arbiter in adjusting the terms. He is, possibly, the only European monarch at the moment who has no fears for his throne. The others are realizing to the fullest extent the wall of a former potentate who declared "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown."

The meek may inherit the earth all right, but will the other fellows let them have possession?

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H. Brownrigg.

War to Last Another Winter

Boston News Bureau:—A goodly number of the devotees of the market place appreciate the fact that the stock market must be discounting something. For lack of more adequate explanation, many of them profess to believe that it is discounting the early ending of the war. And even large bankers have not hesitated to voice this opinion during the past few days.

While it is possible that the United States, with its war news from all fronts and with the perspective which distance creates, may have a better horizon for measuring the probable termination of the war, the opinion of Englishmen and Frenchmen who are in the thick of the turmoil is entitled to very considerable weight.

It is a known fact that the food pressure in Germany to-day is very intense. The 1915 crops were poor for a variety of reasons, including unskilled labor, lack of nitrates, stable manure and phosphates. But the harvesting of the new crop is now at hand. It will not be up to pre-war crops, but it will almost certainly be a better crop than that of 1915 and its harvesting will for the time being relieve the economic pressure which is leading Germany to adopt such wholesale socialism as state feeding of vast populations.

Based largely on this argument, some very good judges are now of the opinion that the war will go through another winter and will find its termination in the spring of 1917.

It is believed that on the eastern front the Germans and Austrians will at some point turn on their Russian attackers and stem the tide of advance. Even in England itself the success of the Russian has been, positively unexpected, and if the truth were known, the Russians must have surprised themselves.

It is believed by those in a position to know that Germany will make attempts to sound out peace at the first opportune date: it is also believed in England that resumption of submarine warfare cannot be long postponed.

But it is not stretching the truth in any degree to assert that on no possible peace terms which Germany could offer or to which she would submit would the allies make peace to-day. They are bent on demonstrating to Germany that her armies are not invincible and that she is not being defeated solely by economic pressure, but by the progress of armies in the field. When this defeat is accomplished there will be talk of peace in earnest. Till then peace expresses the hope of Germany and Austria only. And there are very good grounds for believing that the allies doubt their ability to administer this decisive military defeat until the war has dragged its course through another winter.

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