

BELGIUM

As he sat there he smoked a light cigar and took an occasional sip from the goblet of beer the old servitor had placed on a little table before him, and then at nine o'clock—it was ten o'clock their time—he rose and said that inasmuch as we should have to arise early in the morning he would allow us to depart and get some rest. Then, amid universal bowing and clicking of spurred heels, he withdrew.

At the dinner-table there were, besides His Royal Highness, the Count on my left, and Villalobar, Lancken, Harrach, and I, and four other officers—one of them a red-faced, heavy German who said nothing during the entire meal. Next to him and across from Villalobar was a well set-up chap with a head somewhat like that of Louis Philippe; he spoke in a heavy voice, and when he was not talking German he seemed to prefer English, which he spoke with an English accent—indeed, he may have belonged to that class of younger Germans who, as the French put it, *singent les Anglais*. There was another young officer of the same type, wearing a monocle and English puttees, also speaking English with a pronounced English accent. The first of these two, a Captain, had been detailed by the Crown Prince to conduct us on our visit of inspection on the following day. As we were about to leave he explained to me that we must be ready and awaiting him at the hotel at six-forty—that would be twenty minutes to six, Belgian time.

Villalobar, knowing that I had neglected to cultivate the habit of early rising—perhaps the easiest device known to man for acquiring cheaply a reputation for virtue—laughed and said:

“That’s too early for you.”