

Letter From Germany

Mrs. E. J. McIntyre Writes Another Interesting Letter to the Planet—Entertaining Description of an Ancient Church.

Although for many years Episcopalian services have been held in Berlin, yet it is within the closing quarter of the last century that the handsome sacred edifice in which the Anglican community now worships was erected. The scheme which resulted in the building of this beautiful and somewhat historical church was set on foot by the Rev. B. Briscoe, who was appointed to the chaplaincy by the English Society for the propagation of the gospel, under the license of the Bishop of London. He assumed his ecclesiastical duties in Berlin in October, 1880, and while hitherto there had been but one Sunday service with a monthly celebration of the Holy Communion, Mr. Briscoe soon added a Sunday evensong, with a weekly celebration.

Shortly after his arrival he found the increasing congregation required more adequate accommodation, and at once began the serious consideration of ways and means to meet this demand. Finding that in January, 1883, the silver wedding of the Crown Princess of Germany (the Princess Royal of Great Britain and Ireland, subsequently the Empress Frederick) was to be celebrated, the chaplain happily seized upon this occasion to further the collection of funds necessary for the building and endowment of a permanent church as a memorial of the event. This project greatly pleased the Crown Princess, who being offered at the same time a wedding gift of \$7,500 by the British Consul-General, Herr von Bleichroder, graciously accepted it on the condition that it should be applied to the fund for the memorial church.

A committee was at once appointed with the Right Hon. Lord Ampthill, H. B. M. Ambassador, as chairman. Among other members were the Private Secretary and Treasurer of the Crown Princess, as well as the Secretary of the American legation in Berlin, and in this way the English-speaking foreigners drawn together in a common cause. The original idea was to raise \$25,000 for the building and a like amount for the endowment of the church, but I believe the latter fund has not yet reached the desired total. While the Berlin committee was soliciting subscriptions, another committee was formed in London, at the suggestion of the Crown Princess, to promote the same object. Its members numbered thirteen, among whom were H. R. H. the Duke of Connaught, His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord Bishop of London and His Excellency the Hon. J. Russell Lowell, American Ambassador in London, thus making the memorial to the future Empress of Germany an international affair. Our present King, then Prince of Wales, greatly interested himself in the undertaking, and through his intervention the German Emperor, William I., graciously granted a site for the church in the beautiful Monbijou Garden.

But the honor of raising the greater part of the building fund is due to England, the money being obtained by a superb fete at the International Fisheries Exhibition, London, lent for the occasion by the directors as a personal favor to the Prince of Wales. The committee for the fete included several members of the Royal family, and the Princess of Wales herself undertook the charge of a stall, while thirty-three ladies of the highest rank and influence were numbered among the patronesses. The London fashionable world hastened its attendance; the entrance tickets brought three dollars each if previously purchased, and if not obtained till the day itself five dollars each. Under these favorable auspices the fete of July 13, 1883, was a brilliant success, \$22,500 being realized. This being augmented by a number of private subscriptions, the total sum raised in England alone amounted to \$22,000.

In the meantime a donation of \$250 was made by the Empress Augusta of Germany, and a like sum was contributed through the Countess Walden. These, added to the anniversary gift of Herr von Bleichroder to the Crown Princess, swelled the amount to \$37,000, and the erection of the edifice was now assured. The Berlin committee had also been actively at work, and had succeeded in collecting \$7,250, and after much discussion it was decided that the former amount should be entrusted to the appointed trustees, the chaplain and church wardens, as the nucleus of the Endowment Fund.

The church was designed by the court architect, under the instructions of the Crown Princess, whose interest in the undertaking daily increased. On May 24, 1884, in commemoration of the birthday of Her Majesty, Queen Victoria, the foundation stone was laid under the site of the altar by the Crown Princess, and the church was dedicated to St. George, England's Patron Saint. As a knowledge of the terms under which the church was handed over to the Anglican community may interest some of your readers, a full copy of the Royal Decree is herein inscribed:

"The English Church of St. George in Berlin, having been erected by Her Imperial Highness, the Crown Princess, on Crown Land assigned by His Imperial Majesty, the King of Prussia, out of monies presented to Her Imperial Highness for the purpose, on the occasion of the celebration of Her Imperial Highness' silver

wedding in 1883, and out of sums personally collected by Her Imperial Highness, is hereby placed by Her Imperial Highness at the disposal of the Anglican community in Berlin, to be used for the celebration of divine service and the other offices of the church, according to the use of the established Church of England, on the following conditions:

"The use of the church will commence on the day of consecration. The community having in the year 1880 permanently placed the appointment of its chaplain in the hands of the society for the propagation of the Gospel, shall now take immediate steps to obtain from the society the restoration of this right of appointment, and having obtained it, shall place the same with the Bishop of London, by whom the community is governed in matters spiritual, while its temporal affairs are managed by the community itself through its wardens and church committee, according to the rules agreed to at the general meeting of the members held on the 13th of November, 1885.

"The community shall provide all things for the decent performance of divine service, including the stipend of its chaplain.

"The architect shall remain in charge of the church so far as the structure of the church is concerned. No alterations in the structure or fittings of the church shall be made without the sanction of Her Imperial Highness.

"The custody of the church in regard to fire, accident, etc., shall rest with the Royal Castellan of the Palace of Monbijou.

"The approaches to the church shall be kept up by the Royal Gardener.

"VICTORIA ADELAIDE MARY LOUISE,

"Crown Princess of Germany and Prussia and Princess Royal of Great Britain and Ireland.

"Neues Palais, Potsdam, November 13, 1885."

On November 21, 1885, the birthday of the Crown Princess, St. George's church was consecrated by the Right Rev. Bishop Titcomb, Coadjutor Bishop for North and Central Europe. He was assisted by the resident chaplain, R. B. Eare, several clergymen holding Anglican charges in other German cities, as well as two or three clergymen from England. Their Imperial Highnesses, the Crown Prince and Princess, with the Royal children were present at the service, and as the chaplain was leaving the church, the Crown Prince went forward, took him by the hand and placed the other hand on his shoulder, thus offering a silent though eloquent testimony to Mr. Eare's efforts.

Before building operations were commenced, Professor Raschdorf, the court architect, went to England at the wish of the Crown Princess for the purpose of studying English architecture. The result is a building of great beauty and the best workmanship. The style is modernized German Gothic. The church has two public entrances, the first, perhaps the most used, being through the front of the church, and the second, which is less used, is through the side wall, from the Oranienburger Strasse, and was only added seven years ago. His Majesty, the Emperor, graciously assuming the expense. The structure itself is formed of rather dark mottled red stones and these being very irregularly shaped, the outer walls present a very pleasing effect.

In the spire of the church there are two bells, hanging, yet their silvery tones are never heard. It seems to have been beyond the power of the architect to arrange them so they could be conveniently rung. This is mortifying knowledge indeed. The present chaplain was asked one Sunday evening by Her Majesty, the Empress Frederick, why the bells were not ringing, but of course he could not give her the reason.

Ascending the stone steps, in the open porch leading from the Monbijou Garden, we open the massive oak doors and find ourselves in a roomy vestibule containing various

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Munyon's Liniment Cures Burns, etc.

little compartments for the reception of great coats, umbrellas, gloves and other cold and rainy weather accessories. Divesting ourselves of these we open the inner door to the main body of the sacred edifice, and pause a moment on the threshold to note the harmonious blending of the interior artistic workmanship, which is softly lighted up by a subdued sunlight streaming in through richly stained glass windows, replete with well-known Biblical representations.

Entering, within we notice the pews and floor are of oak in antique finish, the latter being slightly elevated above the colored tile pavement of the various aisles. No upholstery is visible except the dull crimson covered foot rests upon which kneel the devout worshippers. The sanctuary walls are laid with modestly tinted majolica tiles resting upon a marble base about five feet high, in sombre tones of red. The unique ceiling is arched, heavily, but handsomely paneled in a style belonging to an old English period. The left hand side of the church presents somewhat the appearance of an addition to the main body, the highest line of its one-sided diagonal roof being laid upon majolica tiled archways, supported by massive tubular red-toned granite pillars brought from the Rügen Mountains, for which stone these are famous.

A similar archway across the central end of the church leads into the chancel, which contains pews for the accommodation of the voluntary choir. On the left side, with all but its imposing front enclosed, stands the powerful, rich toned organ, built at the expense of the Crown Princess. Against the chancel wall at the back and directly in the centre, the communion table is placed. The Reredos above it, a very beautiful representation in mosaic of the Last Supper, with carved carved oak frames, was the gift of the Crown Princess, as were also the handsome brass standards in the sanctuary. The altar cross, candlesticks, and vases were given by the Empress Augusta. The vesper candlesticks were added by the present chaplain, and the brass altar desk was the gift of Mrs. Krüger, but not the wife of the noted Oom Paul, of South African fame.

The altar frontals were presented by different donors—the white by the Countess-General, Mrs. G. von Bleichroder, the red and the green by the Crown Prince and Princess, and the violet by the Princess Christian of Schleswig-Holstein.

The handsome brass lectern was the gift of Mr. and Mrs. Sydney Everett. Mr. Everett was then secretary to the American legation.

The large folio bible was given by the Crown Princess. It had originally been presented to Her Imperial Highness by the S. P. C. K.

One gift, the holy communion set of plate, had been presented four years previously to the building of the permanent church, by an anonymous donor.

The large window over the altar, representing the four evangelists, with a half-figure of our Lord above, the central stained glass window, and with the English, German, Saxon and Prussian coats of arms below, was given in October, 1898, by H. I. M. the Empress Frederick, in memory of the late Emperor, her husband.

To the right of the chancel and towards the central part of the main outer wall, a separately added wing, with its own private entrance, contains the royal pew, so often occupied by the Crown Princess and her royal daughters, who frequently accompanied her. The panelling of its end wall, show etched designs of the Scotch thistle, the shamrock, and the red rose of England alternately. The window in the side wall representing the angel of peace holding the arms of England and Germany, contains the best stained glass in the church. It forms part of the decorations of the royal pew, and was given by the congregation. The beautiful rose window over the royal pew was the gift of sorrowful worshippers in memory of the short-lived but greatly beloved Emperor Frederick. It represents an angel bearing a scroll upon which the words, "Thy will be done," are inscribed.

The jubilee window, on the right hand side of the church, and nearest the royal seats, represents Solomon receiving a thank offering from the Queen of Sheba. It bears the inscription, "Victoria, Queen and Empress, in memory of her Jubilee, 1887," and was given by the congregation, who had honored Great Britain's faithful queen.

The window next to it, with figures of St. Michael and St. George and the Dragon, was given in 1898 by His Excellency, Sir Edward Malet, formerly ambassador at Berlin, Lady Ermytrude Malet, the present Duke of Bedford and Lady Edith Russell. In memory of Hastings, 9th Duke of Bedford, 1891.

The large window over the entrance door with figures of St. George and St. Michael and emblematic figures of Peace and Plenty—a very fine work—was given by the late Duke of Bedford in memory of the former ambassador, the Right Hon. Lord Ampthill. The font, which finds its place in the left side of the church, at the angle, is a very beautiful piece of work, and was given by the builder of the church, its handsome brass cover, representing a gothic badachin, was the gift of Lady Bloomfield, in memory of Lord Bloomfield. To this was added a bronze figure of St. John the Baptist, by His Excellency, the Hon. W. W. Phelps, who was at the time of its presentation the U. S. representative here. The brass cover was given by Mrs. Earle, the wife of the chaplain.

Close to the font, and on its left is a beautiful little window illustrating the text, "Suffer little children to come unto me," which was presented by a young lady of the congregation.

On the south wall, near the Jubilee window, is a marble replica of the Madonna and Child, with inscription "To the memory of H. F. Joseph Baron Triguet, by Victoria, Crown Princess of Germany."

Besides these very fine, important, decorative and useful gifts, there are several minor ones which I shall forbear to note.

On the occasion of the Queen's jubilee, June 21, 1887, a special thanksgiving service was held at St. George's Church, and an address was sent to Her Majesty. In the following year the church was in April 21, visited by Her Majesty, Queen Victoria, whose signature is to be seen in the vestry book, with many other royal autographs; and, on an address being presented by the chaplain and congregation, Her Majesty sent a very gracious reply to their kind and welcome greeting.

When the beloved old Kaiser Wilhelm I., died in 1888, memorial services were held at St. George's, the one on the Sunday following the funeral being attended by the Prince of Wales and Prince Albert Victor. The illness and death of the Kaiser Frederick, after his too short reign of but a few months, caused deepest sorrow to the English residents of Berlin. To them the loss was great indeed, of one who had their interests so much at heart, and had shown them so much kindness and sympathy, and who had as Crown Prince, many times assembled with them to worship. On the day of the funeral a memorial service was held in the beautiful little church, and an address of condolence was presented to the Empress by the British and American members of the congregation. On the Sunday after the funeral the royal pew was once more occupied by the Prince of Wales and Prince Albert Victor, who were upon this occasion accompanied by the Princess of Wales, all attending the morning service.

In the following year, while on a pastoral visit to Berlin, Bishop Wilkinson had an interview with the present Emperor, and His Majesty promised to take into consideration the grant of a site in the Monbijou Garden for a chaplain's residence. As yet, however, there seems but little prospect of its realization, since, as I before remarked, the necessary funds have not been obtained.

Ten years' residence in Berlin, the Rev. R. B. Earle resigned the chaplaincy and returned to England. A period of royal progress in the history of the church marks his years of labor here. Throughout he enjoyed the support of the Imperial House, the basy and the Bishop; the results of his efforts are lasting memorials of his zeal and energy. On his arrival at Berlin the congregation only numbered about 180, on his departure it increased to the utmost increased accommodation of the new church. In the first year of his chaplaincy the stipend was about a thousand dollars; in the last year he received two thousand. Upon his assuming charge the number of communicants was only 187; when he left it was 2,023. When leaving the city, the Rev. R. B. Earle was presented with a handsome illustrated address and a purse of two hundred and fifty dollars.

The present chaplain, the Rev. J. H. Fry, accepted the appointment to the chaplaincy upon the resignation of the Rev. E. Owen, who held the position for a short time after the departure of the Rev. R. B. Earle. When Mr. Fry came to Berlin he was very warmly welcomed by the Dowager Empress Frederick, from whom he ever received marked kindness. He was also greeted with the warmest welcomes by the church committee and the congregation generally, and has enjoyed a very happy period of labor in Berlin, notwithstanding the fact that upon several occasions adverse clouds have darkened the official sky. The first of these was the outbreak of the Boer war, when the feeling against England became very strong, and many who had hitherto shown kindly interest towards the Anglican community withdrew their friendship; many Americans who disapproved of England's action left the church, and as a result there was a great falling off in the revenue which the death of the Empress Frederick entailed.

It has been the sad privilege of Rev. Mr. Fry to officiate at many memorial services, the saddest and most impressive being the one held for the late Queen Victoria. The first of sorrowful services was that held on Jan. 30, 1896, for H. E. General Ruyon, Ambassador of the U. S. The church was crowded with the Diplomatic Corps, representatives of the Emperor and of the Empress Frederick, and the officers of the German army. The funeral oration was given by the Rev. Dr. Dickie, who is in charge of the American Undenominational Church here.

On Feb. 5, 1896, the chaplain held a second memorial service, this being for Prince Henry of Battenberg, who had died of fever on his way home from Africa. The Emperor and Empress, the Empress Frederick and many princes and princesses, with the officers of the Gardes Du Corps, attended the service.

On April 6, 1897, Mr. Fry officiated at the funeral of H. E. Lady Lascelles, wife of the British Ambassador, whose loss is one that has never ceased to be felt, she ever giving evidence of her readiness to offer sympathy and help towards all the concerns of the community and the church. The royal and diplomatic authorities were largely represented at the solemn service. The Emperor and Empress were themselves present, several princes and princesses, the whole diplomatic corps, and the officers of Queen Victoria's Regiment.

On Jan. 22, 1901, two memorial services were held in succession for her late Majesty Queen Victoria, the first being official in character was attended only by royalty and uniformed people. The Emperor, who, of course, was in England at this time, was represented by Prince Frederick Leopold, but the Empress was personally present. The Dowager Empress Frederick was represented by Prince Augustus, Prince Oscar, Princess Henry of Prussia, Prince Albrecht's three sons, Duchess William of Mecklenburg, Princess Ernestine of Saxe-Albany, Princess Reuss, Hereditary Prince Charles of Hohenzollern, Princess Pless and Count von Wedell-Bruche. The German Chancellor and his wife, Count and Countess von Bulow, with many members of the Reichstag, were present on behalf of the German Government. All the ambassadors and their suites, the ministers and secretaries of state, Knights of the Black Eagle, Chiefs of the three Imperial Cabinets, the officers in uniform of the late Queen Victoria's Regiment, and the whole diplomatic corps also joined in the service, the church being completely filled.

The second service was held immediately upon the conclusion of the first, and was attended only by the members of the congregation, all being clad in deep mourning. As was the case in the former, the pews were all occupied and the service deeply impressive. Appropriate prayers and hymns were said and sung, and the chaplain delivered an address upon the Queen as a Christian Woman.

The death of the Empress Frederick, foundress of the beautiful little church, was the greatest blow that has fallen upon it. Sad, indeed, was the memorial service held for Her Majesty on Aug. 13, 1901. Occurring at the same time as the interment took place at Potsdam, only the lesser members of the embassies were held in St. George's church. This mournful gathering was more like that of a sorrowful little family gathered together within the sacred precincts of the home, facing the melancholy truth that now its children had lost the last protecting arm and must henceforth go forward alone to battle with the contending elements of the world.

On Jan. 22, 1902, the anniversary of Her Majesty Queen Victoria's death, a memorial service was again held in St. George's Church. The Emperor and Empress, Prince and Princess Henry of Prussia, Prince and Princess Frederick Leopold, Duchess of Albany, Duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, Princess of Albany, Princess Henry of Pless, the Regent of Brunswick and his two sons, the German Chancellor, Count von Bulow and many other members of the nobility, as well as state representatives assembled with the congregation to pay a second tribute of respect to the memory of the Queen, whose greatness and goodness will never become obliterated from the world's history.

In this present year, again upon Jan. 22, the anniversary of Queen Victoria's death was the church the scene of an impressive service, the Memorial Brasses of Her late Majesty and the late Empress Frederick being unveiled by His Majesty, the Emperor, who was attended by many members of his court. The church, admittance to which was obtained by special cards of admission, was filled to overflowing. The appointed hour for the commencement of the service was eleven o'clock, and shortly before this time the Crown Prince and Prince Eitel-Frederick entered the sacred edifice, the large congregation rising and remaining standing until the princes took their seats in the royal pew. Punctually at the above named hour the Emperor arrived at the private entrance to the church, wearing the handsome uniform of a colonel of the British Regiment, the Royal Dragoons. He was received at the door by Sir Frank Lascelles, the British Ambassador in Berlin, with whom were the members of the British Embassy, by the chaplain of the Rochester and the church wardens. The American Ambassador, Mr. Charlemagne Tower, with members of the U. S. Embassy, and many uniformed officers occupied prominent seats.

The Emperor was led to a seat prepared for him on the right hand side of the altar, the congregation rising and remaining standing until His Majesty and attendants during the playing of the National Anthem. The beautiful folio Bible and the prayer book, both elegantly bound in the finest of silver grey plush, with their upper covers emblazoned by the intertwined English and Prussian coats of arms, surrounded by the respective crowns of each—these two gifts the most prized of all those presented to the church by his royal mother as Crown Princess—rested upon two silver grey satin cushions before him.

Each Memorial Brass, having its own fixed place on either side of the altar, seems to be slightly imbedded in the wall, the massive oak frame surrounding each standing out in bold relief. The central object of the Queen Victoria tablet—the first to be unveiled—is the bronze medallion of the late Queen with the Empire flag, that is, the Union Jack on one side and the Royal Standard on the other. Beneath is the following inscription:—

"In un fading memory of the glorious reign and exemplary life of Her late Majesty Victoria, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Queen, Empress of India, Defender of the Faith, born May 24, 1819, ascended the throne, June 30, 1837, entered into rest, January 22, 1901. This tablet is erected by the members of the congregation of the Church of St. George and others residing in Berlin. Being dead, yet speaketh."

At the top left hand corner are the arms of England; at the top right

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hand corner those of Scotland; Ireland and Wales at the two lower corners, the Welsh harp occupying that to the left; on the right hand centre the dear old flag of our own beloved Canada; on the other side that of India, and at the bottom, of Australia, Britain's three great colonies. The border at the bottom is of the rose, shamrock and thistle; the other spaces being of the olive and laurel alternate, for peace and victory.

The central object of the Empress Frederick tablet is the bronze medallion of the late Empress with an oak branch on the one side and an olive branch on the other, for strength and victory. The following inscription is inscribed beneath:—

"To the memory of Victoria Adelaide Mary Louise, Princess Royal of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress Frederick of Germany, born November 21, 1840, died August 5, 1901. This tablet is erected by the English and American members of the congregation in grateful remembrance of Her Imperial Majesty as the foundress of this beautiful Church of St. George in the year of our Lord, 1883."

This memorial bears neither arms nor flags thereon, the whole being composed of the rose, the shamrock and the thistle.

The singing of a hymn, the utterance of a short prayer and the reading of a Psalm formed the first half of the service, at the conclusion of which the unveiling ceremony took place, the Emperor being led to the altar by the British Ambassador. Upon the words, "To the praise and glory of God, in memory of Queen Victoria, Empress of India," being said by the Bishop, the dainty hanging covering the Queen Victoria tablet was loosed at the command of His Majesty, and the beautiful memorial exposed to view. Stepping to the other side of the altar the Emperor, by a similar gracious sign, sanctioned the uncovering of the Empress Frederick memorial.

As the silken hanging fell from before the tablet bearing his mother's image, His Majesty stood before it for a moment or two in reverential attitude, and, looking into his face as he gazed into that memorial image, one was led to wonder as to the nature of the thought possessing his imperial mind. Was it the knowledge that one day in the near or distant future some loving hand would be performing a like tribute to his memory, or was it realization experienced of the grave responsibility ever resting upon the shoulders of an Empress Consort? A grave responsibility indeed, owing to its double nature. The first, that of a faithful wife, her womanly nature exerting its tender influence over the sternest one of the reigning sovereign, that all which is noblest and best within him might centre its forces upon the welfare of his country; the second, that of a loving, devoted mother, faithfully directing the forward footsteps of a succeeding monarch, that no march of retrogression should dim the glory of his honored birthright. Who shall say? But either thought was worthy and carried its own significance.

Upon the Emperor resuming his seat, an anthem being sung, a prayer offered up and a blessing given, the memorable service was brought to a close. As the organ, under artistic touch of Dr. Sinclair, Hereford Cathedral, pealed forth national strains of the Imperial March, His Majesty, the royal princes and members of the court left the sacred edifice. Pausing for a moment in the open portico, His Majesty, the Emperor, expressed to the chaplain his heartfelt gratification upon this further mark of love and respect which the Anglican community had this day shown to the memory of Her Imperial Majesty, the late Empress Frederick.

L. A. MacINTYRE.

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