

UGLY ..MEN

QUEEN Wilhelmina's choice of the plainest prince in Germany proves once again that women are totally indifferent to good looks in men. Wilkes, a famously homely man, was absolutely irresistible to the sex, as was the power exercised by the mad Duke of Richelieu, Theodore Hook, and others.

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...By...
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LITTLE Queen Wilhelmina's selection of a husband has created no small amount of astonishment in the European courts, for on the least of all her suitors, in a worldly sense, her choice has fallen. Duke Heinrich of Mecklenburg-Schwerin has up to this time played the part of a very small potato for a more or less royal personage. He is the youngest son in a family of many boys, he is the least handsome of the brothers, he has never distinguished himself in court, or camp, or grove, in all his twenty-four years, and yet it is no secret that since Wilhelmina, the proud and independent, first saw him at Potsdam, nearly two years ago, she has had his image graven on her loyal and royal little Dutch heart.

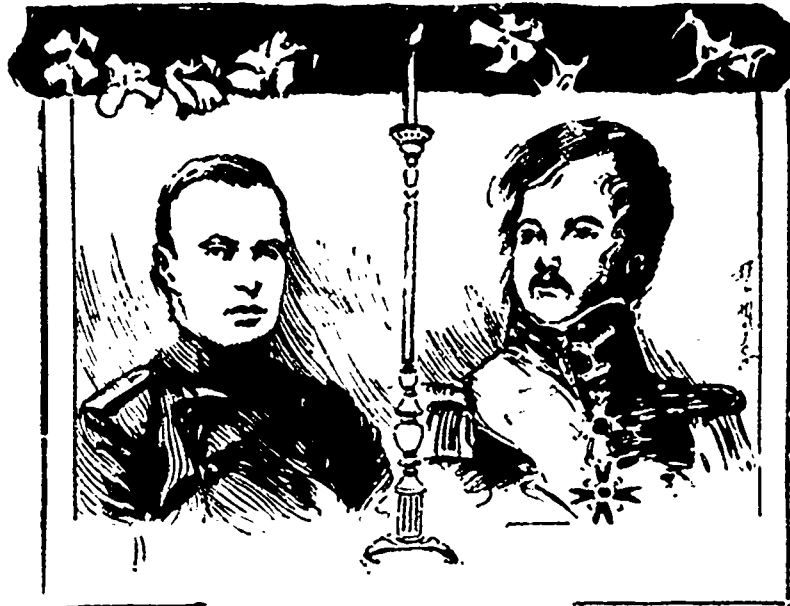
At Potsdam Duke Heinrich, who was not heir to even pretty good expectations, appeared as a mere incidental. He was not supposed to aspire to the hand of the Queen, he even paid her no more than the perfunctory courtesies due a young lady and a sovereign, and his far handsomer, far cleverer and far more interesting elder brother, Duke Adolph, heir to the Mecklenburg-Schwerin duchy, was flatteringly regarded as standing high in the young Queen's graces.

As a matter of fact nobody paid very much attention to the clean shaven stout young Duke, but Wilhelmina fell in love with him and he did not know it. Nevertheless, he had made his impression, and when the Queen went to see her cousin Pauline of Wurtemberg's baby baptized last spring, she wrote Princess Pauline the state of her heart, and her cousin promised to see that the Duke duly received a hint.

Gossips whisper that the Duke was taken by surprise, and yet it was not the first time, in spite of being a good deal of a detrimental, that he has been admired by royal ladies. Everybody knows that when pretty Princess Helena of Russia suddenly broke her engagement with Max of Baden, it was because she hoped to persuade her parents to let her marry the stout, blonde, young dukeling whom Wilhelmina has selected; and the youngest daughter of the Duke of Edinburgh has loved the young duke in vain. In short, Heinrich of Mecklenburg-Schwerin is a good deal of a lady-killer, and he knows it. Fat and plain of face, and, for a royal person, distinctly poverty-stricken, he has a fascination for womankind. The sort of fascination that there is no use trying to explain because it is not perceptible to any but the persons fascinated, and they are always plainly beyond the reach of reason, though they are often just as sensible, matter of

fact and unromantic individuals as Queen Wilhelmina.

Lots of men have exercised this power before, and Duke Heinrich is no exception to the rule that Providence often sees fit to bestow this peculiar and potent quality on curiously unhandsome individuals. Since he was first about the well-conducted courts of tiny Mecklenburg-Schwerin and pompous Prussia he has had not the least difficulty in winning feminine friends. The German Empress has treated him as though he were a nice young brother, the ladies in waiting yield a smile and a sigh as he prances by in



DUKE HEINRICH OF MECKLENBURG-SCHWERIN

UGLY WILKES.

his white uniform and yet he is not overfond of feminine society.

He has accepted his betrothal, to the sweetest little girl queen in the world, very calmly, while the Queen herself is madly happy, and the other young princelings and dukelings, who were on the matrimonial string, wonder how the heavy faced, easy going, unambitious Heinrich carried off the prize, without dancing any attendance, without condescending to flatter and call upon and placate the capricious lady and the critical Dutch people. One thing is certain, and this in a way adds to the glory of Heinrich's conquest, that if the loyal Dutch had objected to this choice of the Queen she would have married him anyway. She said as much when some doubts were expressed as to how he would please the nation.

All this goes to prove that the future King Consort of Holland is one of those men whose charm is with women unquestioned, and even a Queen would make large sacrifices for him. One of the men who possessed this faculty to a most surprising degree was Napoleon Bonaparte's rival in the affections of Marie Louise, the infamous and all-powerful Neipperg. He was an ugly creature, with small abilities

and yet smaller fortune, and he had broken many hearts about the Austrian court before Marie Louise saw and fell furiously in love with him. With everything to lose and nothing to gain by her encouragement of the man, she left no stone unturned until she was able to make herself Neipperg's wife. In the eyes of the world it was a terrible degradation for the widow of the French Emperor to become the wife of an Austrian count, but she cared not a whit what the world said, as was the case with the women who ran after the ugly spendthrift, Wilkes and the mad Due de Richelieu.

Wilkes was famous in his day all over England, not only as Lord Mayor and Chamberlain and a very loud talking patriot, but as the ugliest man of his time and the most admired by the women. He flouted and ill-treated all of them, with the exception of his daughter, but it had not the desired effect of cooling their affections. As to the Duke de Richelieu, though men could not tolerate him, when he was shut up in the Bastille crowds of women, old and young and rich and poor, used to collect every day, at the hour when he took his exercise on the parapets, and adore him from a distance, and deplore the incarceration of so charming a person.

Theodore Hook was another ugly man who was irresistible to the softer sex: for it is proven clearly that when a man is agreeable to women they care not in the least what his personal appearance may be. Liszt proved this, when an old man with a hard, ugly face, women begged permission to kiss his ugly hands and raved and sentimentalized over him as though he were Adonis' self. Dozens of school girls and countesses who worshipped at his shrine cared not a pin for his music, nor understood a note of it, but were keenly alive to the charm of his personality which no woman so far as we know was ever able or willing to withstand.

DOLLY: "What makes you think Charlie doesn't get much for his money?"
MADGE: "He bought a straw hat, and the ribbon has only four different colors."

"I WILL admit," said the Cornfed Philosopher, "that oratory is mostly gas; but even gas is illuminating—not to mention the way it rips things open sometimes."



FRANK LISZT.