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## VON TIRPITZ AT CLOSE RANGE

**I**S patriotism in some cases a curse, instead of being one of the noblest sentiments of humanity: does it, in the human heart sometimes give birth to lust for the blood of the enemy, to the forgetting of all basic laws of humanity towards women and children and helpless non-combatants?

In asking this, I refer particularly to Grand Admiral Alfred Von Tirpitz, till recently commander of the German navy. With the memory of those years between February, 1909, and January, 1912, during which I saw him daily, lived as a part of his household, sat at his table as one of the family, I cannot but believe that the former is true. That he—the kindest of men, the great soul whose heart was warm for all humanity, the man whom servants, children and all those around him worshipped—that he could have been the instigator of all the horrors caused by Germany's submarine policy seems to me to answer most emphatically "Yes" to the first part of the question put above.

It was through the Baronin von Thielmann, wife of the late German ambassador to Washington, that I came in contact with Frau von Tirpitz. The Tirpitz's English governess had just left for her native country, after a stay of several years with the grand Admiral's daughters, Elsie and Margaret; and the girls—possessing now a perfect English education, having spent two years in an English school at Chelsea, and conversed continually since their infancy with English governesses—had turned their attention to French. To that effect I was engaged as a companion to them, speaking as I did both German and French.

I was very favourably impressed when I first met Frau von Tirpitz one bright January morning in 1909 at her home in the Navy Ministerial building on Leipziger Platz. I was quickly brought into her Excellency's presence, a very youthful appearing woman—not looking at all her forty-three years—with a smiling, motherly face. Right away we came to terms as to my obligations and duties.

It was late in the afternoon of the day appointed when my taxi halted before their door. The porter and butler carried my things up-stairs to the room assigned to me, one next to the Admiral and his wife. It belonged really to the eldest son, Wolfgang, a lieutenant in the navy, at that time cruising in the neighbourhood of Tsing-Tau, China, at which place he was taken prisoner when that fortress surrendered to the British and Japanese early in the present war. I took possession immediately, unpacking my things and placing them in their respective drawers and closets. Then, it being after six o'clock, I proceeded to change and dress for dinner. A little time before eight o'clock, the usual hour for the evening meal in Germany, I heard a rap at my door, and her Excellency in evening dress came in to welcome my arrival, accompanied by her two daughters, Elsie, a tall, slender blonde, with porcelain blue eyes and a real German complexion, and Margaret, shorter and stout, of a faint Jewish type, in spite of her fair hair and blue eyes. It may be stated here for the first time, a fact not generally known, that Frau von

*How a man who had all the human qualities that Alfred Von Tirpitz seemed to have, and yet appear to be the monster that people think he is—makes the Jekyll-Hyde anomaly described in this article.*

By SUZANNE GARNIER

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"Yes," he said, "we now have a navy that will blow England's from the seas. If the fleets ever do come together, the battle cannot last at best over twelve hours."

Illustrated by H. E. Sampson.

Tirpitz's father was a Jewish antiquity merchant of Geneva, Switzerland.

**S**HORTLY after their leaving me the butler announced supper, and, taking a book along, I made my way down the silent, white marble carpeted stairs. Arriving at the main floor I stood hesitating a moment, no servant being in sight to guide me. However, noting a light filtering from

under a nearby door, I took a chance and entered. I had conjectured correctly. It was the dining room, a huge oblong space with a long table, capable of seating thirty people, holding the centre of the floor. The table was laid for one. An immense silver surtout occupied the middle, decorated with flowers. A little shyly I took my place, set at the head of the table, and immediately the round-faced but-

ler served supper. I felt very small sitting there alone at this immense festal board, under the glance of his Majesty Wilhelm, painted life size above the sideboard; the feeling was further heightened by the electric chandeliers' light, which, bright as it was, illuminated only the table and immediate vicinity, leaving the corners of that vast silent room in shadow, little abysses of darkness, very much like my thoughts during that silent meal in the stately home of the Admiral, one of the first men in the German Empire.

Since the starting of the terrible old world struggle, I have read many of the Allied nations' papers' accounts of the Grand Admiral's actions, representing him as a cold-blooded murderer of innocent women and children travelling upon the high seas. He is given as the instigator of all the submarine terrors which have held the Allied Nations, and also the Neutral Powers, in continual dread for those dear to them that were upon the sea. And then, often after I had read one of those accounts or seen him pictured with flamboyant eyes pouring looks of hatred for all humanity opposed to Germany, I close my own eyes, and my thoughts race back to that second day of my stay at the Minister's, and the familiar picture Alfred von Tirpitz made coming towards the dining room from his study, his arm around his wife's waist, and looking down upon her from the height of his wonderful carriage with such loving eyes; while on the other side, walking close to him and hanging to his arm his two daughters, like two playful children, talking and laughing to him; and then him sitting at the table with her Excellency, not at the other end, as etiquette would have, but close to him at his right, and him holding her hand now and again between replying to Margaret and Elsie, and teasing them as to whom they had danced with at the Royal ball the previous evening.

When I think of that scene, and many other similar ones that I witnessed during my stay in the Admiral's household, I cannot realize that the actual man of then and the man of to-day, hated by nearly all the civilized world, are one and the same. And it sets me to repeating to myself the questions asked in the opening paragraphs of this article.

Following the Admiral's entrance into the dining room, I was introduced, and was immediately enchanted by his joviality. In a very broken French he made me welcome to his home, and at once began to tease the girls, expecting them to be already accomplished Parisians.

From that day on the routine of life started, not bringing anything startling. In the morning, Margaret, the youngest daughter, and myself, would go for long walks through the Thiergarten, enjoying the beauty of spring in that unique park in the heart of Berlin. Sometimes I would go and meet her at her music teacher's, sometimes at one of her girl friend's home. During our walks, Margaret would exercise her French, which she already spoke slightly, telling the gossip of her set, anecdotes of her father's life and much of the family history which

Editor's Note:—For three years Miss Suzanne Garnier held an intimate place in the household of the Grand Admiral, as companion to his daughters. She now sets forth in this striking article some interesting features of the working habits and social life of the man who for so long has held such a place in the world's eye. Here are given for the first time unknown facts in connection with the Kaiser and von Tirpitz, and one of the reasons for the animosity between von Bethmann Hollweg and the Grand Admiral. Miss Garnier is now a resident in Canada. She has one brother at the front who was recently presented with the French Military Cross for valour in delivering despatches at great risk of life, and received the Russian Order of St. George for single-handed taking prisoner three heavily armed Germans.