

Frederic William IV.—Tragedy of Good Intentions

Among the treasures of the British Crown is a silver shield, which bears a curious design. Its centre is occupied by a head of Christ. Beneath are seen the rites of baptism and the Lord's Supper, the two sacraments recognized by the Protestant Church. The special significance of this symbolical piece of armor is, however, to be found in the subjects to the right and left of the Saviour's head. One of these is plainly the entry into Jerusalem, but the nature of the other is not so clear. It represents a steamer nearing the shore. An angel stands at the wheel, and on the deck is a little group of men gazing towards the land. Here their arrival is awaited by three figures, which may be recognized as those of St. George, the patron saint of England, the Prince Consort Albert, and the victor of Waterloo. Few, however, would today be able to identify the passengers on the steamer, or to guess the object of their mission. The central personage of the group is none other than the godfather of King Edward, Frederick William IV., King of Prussia and eldest brother of the first German Emperor, and he is bound, as we see him on the vessel's deck, for Windsor, to stand sponsor to the present ruler of the British Empire. Only one of the august traveller's companions deserves to be mentioned today. He is Alexander von Humboldt, who is represented as carrying in his hand an olive branch on this momentous and historical journey, from which the new epoch of Anglo-German relationships may be said to date. For the visit of 1842 was but the prelude to the betrothal of the Princess Royal to the son of the heir-presumptive to the throne of Prussia.

Immediately after his return to his capital, and while he was still under the first overwhelming influence of his experiences in England, that country, which he now more firmly than ever believed to be the natural ally of his own, the Prussian Sovereign entrusted the designing of the shield to Peter Cornelius, one member of that band of distinguished artists who had been assembled in Berlin by the Royal Maecenas, in the hope of making it the Athens of the North. The rough ideas were, as usual, supplied by the monarch himself. The shield was to symbolize the spiritual armor which the little Prince had put on at the solemn ceremony in St. George's Chapel, and when it was completed it was forwarded to Windsor as a christening gift.

A Forgotten European Figure

At that time Frederick William was the most brilliant, fascinating and bewildering actor on the political stage of Europe. Today he is entirely forgotten outside his own country, and only remembered in Germany as the monarch who capitulated before a street revolution, who rejected an imperial crown, who suffered at Austria's hands the humiliation of Olmutz, who propounded with an intense fervor of conviction a new doctrine of the divine right of sovereigns which was never more incomprehensible than to his own generation, and who closed his days in the isolation of mental darkness under the regency of his younger brother. Conventional history will, perhaps, pass over which he managed to keep that peace whose sacredness he so unceasingly asseverated. For the Prussian constitution which he set up was a reform rather in name than in substance, and no great change, religious, political, or social, was left upon his country by his brilliant and versatile intellect. But though the generations which have succeeded him may have accurately estimated the achievements of the monarch, they have, at the same time, done a grave injustice to the notable talents of one of the cleverest and best-intentioned of men. Who can say but that, under the guidance of a minister who could have controlled the fertilizing ebullitions of his spirit, Frederick William might not have fulfilled many of the extraordinarily high hopes with which his accession was hailed, and with which his reign opened?

Frederick William III. was not personally unpopular at the time of his death in 1840, but he had disappointed the aspirations of his people. Under the influence of Maternich, the Liberal movement in favor of a united Germany, which had contributed so largely to the emancipation of 1813, had been stifled, and the most generous of the patriots were either languishing in prison, pining in exile, or starving in obscurity. The promised constitution, which was to have been the reward of the national self-sacrifice in the rising against Napoleon, had not been granted. At last the politicians ceased to look for radical changes from a monarch who was approaching three-score years and ten, and set all their hopes on the Crown Prince, who was twenty-five years younger.

Early Hopes and Ideals

And these hopes appeared to be well founded. All Germany rang with the fame of the new King's dazzling and varied gifts. "This great talent," declared Goethe, "is bound to awaken other talents." "Even as a boy," says von Sybel, "he had shown unusual self-assurance and a marked independence of will; he was highly gifted with attainments and interests of every kind, and from his earliest days he had been guided by his instructors in the direction of religious, aesthetic, and intellectual development. Thus, he appeared as an adult well equipped with knowledge and taste, with an effervescent intellect and manifold talents, and at the same time morally pure to the core, tender-hearted, and of easily-excited emotions, but always enthusiastic on behalf of every lofty and noble cause, and full of warm confidence in God and humanity." It was a grim caprice of fate that a monarch with these qualities of head and heart should have brought to his people and himself nothing but

disappointments — disappointments which roused his people to revolt and permanently disturbed the balance of his own mind.

When he ascended the throne his head was already full of plans for the welfare of the nation. Everything was going to be for the best in the best of all possible worlds. After long and earnest spiritual struggles, he had surmounted the doubts which the eighteenth century had spread about in the world, and had formulated an original theory of his own relation and responsibility to the Deity. He believed not merely that he held his royal office directly as a trust from Heaven, but that the sovereigns of the world were at the moment of their accession endowed with a higher degree of wisdom than is ever vouchsafed to a subject mortal. "There are," he once said, "things which only a king can understand, and which even I myself could not understand when I was only Crown Prince." His relation to his people he conceived as that of a father to his children. "Solomon and Sirach," he remarked on one occasion, in a moment of anger against the nation, "enjoined that naughty children should feel the rod at times." But he was determined to be a good father, and to make his children happy. Only they must obey. He even spoke much of "liberty," but this word meant to him merely so much freedom as he should of his own initiative think fit to grant, in relaxation of his divine right to exact unconditional, unquestioning obedience.

No class of the population was to be left uncared for, no deserving form of human activity to lack encouragement. The sciences and arts were to flourish under his protecting hand; trade and commerce were to be fostered; communications were to be developed; and the artisan classes were to have their burdens lightened. The superficial scope of the King's knowledge was commensurate with that of his interests, and he believed that he understood each man's longing and knew how to satisfy it. Everyone was to be made happy through his instrumentality, and Prussia led on to a future of unimaginable glory and splendor.

"A Just and Peaceable King"

There are few more stirring episodes in history than the delivery of the speech which the newly-crowned monarch addressed to his subjects in the square before the Berlin Schloss, and in which he took them into his confidence and appealed to them for co-operation in the carrying out of his splendid, if somewhat nebulous, plans. Standing before a throne in a pavilion of gold and purple, he swore to rule as a just and peaceable King; and then, with the penetrating eloquence of which he was master, he spoke to those present the following moving exhortation: "Will you stand by me, and help me further to develop into greater magnificence those qualities which have added Prussia, with her 14,000,000 inhabitants, to the great powers of the earth—namely, honor, fidelity, the striving towards light, justice, and truth, the persevering advance in the spirit both of the wisdom of age and of youth's heroic and fiery courage. Will you never fail me nor abandon me in this effort, but remain true and constant through good and evil days? Oh, then, answer me

plainly, with the most beautiful sound of our mother-tongue—answer me with an honor-firm 'Yes.'" The audience was completely carried off its feet by this thrilling appeal, and the word "Ja" was roared back to the monarch from thousands of throats. Even a heavy shower, which fell with malign omen at that particular moment, could do nothing to damp the enthusiasm, which rolled from the square like a tidal wave through the streets of Berlin. A few years later another wave was to start from the same point and take the same direction, but this time it was a wave of blood.

The impetuosity of his feelings and the volcanic flow of his eloquence were at once the King's weakness and his strength. His command of language was not the mere irresponsible garrulity which gushes out in a flood of conventional phrases—with no substantial meaning behind them. On the contrary, his speeches, letters, and gubernatorial documents are full of original turns and expressions that show that real feeling for the fine shades of verbal significance which is the basis of all true literary talent. His conversation was found irresistible by the greatest savants of his time, even when he was discoursing to them about matters on which they were the only authorities. Peter Cornelius was in his later years ever moved to tears when he thought of the ravishing charm of his dead patron's society. Leopold von Ranke once blurted out in an assembly of men of note in the worlds of science and literature: "He is my master. He is your master. He is the master of all of us." Alexander von Humboldt, though he occasionally, in his correspondence, exercised his wit at the King's expense, felt that something was lacking to every day on which he had not had the pleasure of listening to the royal eloquence. Frederick William's portly and ungainly figure looked rather out of place on a horse, but he perpetually spoke with pride of his position as a Prussian officer, and he followed the course of the manoeuvres with great assiduity. On such occasions he astonished the members of his staff by his vivid and trenchant criticisms of the operations.

The Exuberance of Verbosity

The secret of the charm which he exercised on all in his moments of good humor was that he spoke freely from a full heart, and allowed the sparkling ideas which chased one another through his well-informed and well-lubricated brain unimpeded passages through his lips. He was not always like this, for he was a man of moods, and Treitschke says of him: "He thought that by the aspiration of his kingly office and by the power of his personal talents he could supervise the whole world, and it pleased him at times to veil his ideas in cloudy and ambiguous words in order to perplex minor mortals." But in his sociable moods he lacked the gift of verbal retention. Whatever he thought and felt had to come out. "It left me no peace," he was wont to say; "I had to speak." And this was equally true when he was irritated or indignant. When he had once opened his mouth, it might be said of him, as Disraeli said of Gladstone, that he was intoxicated by the exuberance of his own verbosity. When he sat down to write the spontaneous impetuosity of his mind chafed at the slow op-

eration of the pen, and the surge of feelings which could not wait for articulate expression found an outlet in multiple underlinings and a lavish use of marks of exclamation, which often stood in rows at the close of a period like a line of soldiers. Treitschke says that "he always had to be intellectual and witty, even though he might, by some paradoxical idea, endanger an important state transaction."

Opposition was, of course, intolerable to a temperament like this, especially since it was coupled with firm belief in its own infallibility. The King was unable to understand how men could be such blockheads as to place obstacles in his way when he was engaged in contriving their happiness in obedience to divine inspiration. "Only Jacobins, hawgwis, and jackasses," he wrote to one of his ministers, "can any longer doubt my sincere love for freedom." Writing of a recalcitrant parliament, he summed up the whole assembly as "the mangy sheep of the right and the scabby goats of the left." Even the splendid official machine to which Prussia owes so much excited his utmost impatience, for he could not bear the restraint which the slow-moving routine of departmental business necessarily imposed. While "he heaped assurances of affection on his friends with so much insistence that it often brought him under the suspicion of insincerity, though it was always the spontaneous outcome of his mood," he turned coldly away from them as soon as they attempted to thwart his plans. For, "in every avowed political opponent he saw a personal enemy, and, after the manner of all men who are governed by moods, he treated estranged friends as much with harshness and injustice as formerly with tenderness and affection; though he continually asseverated that it was the dearest wish of his heart to be fair to everyone" (Treitschke). Consequently no one had any influence over him, for he would only listen to those who were of his own opinion.

The King's Pious Acts

This trait prevented him also from being a good judge of men, and square pegs in round holes were one of the causes of his misfortunes. His impatience of opposition frequently issued in accessions of fury, which his Queen, a Bavarian Princess, who had adopted the evangelical confession previous to her marriage, had the greatest difficulty in curbing. She was wont on such occasions to peer round the room with the remark, "I am looking for the King." Yet the impression which his character as a whole made upon her was such that, after long experience, she could say with all sincerity to Pope Pius IX. "When one has as a husband a man like this, whose very life is the gospel, one feels certain of the truth of the evangelical faith." No characteristic of Frederick William was, indeed, more conspicuous than his piety, and during the twenty years of his reign he built or restored as many as 300 churches. Cornelius' cartoons, which are still to be seen in the National Gallery at Berlin, were the designs for a series of frescoes that were to embellish a sumptuous new church opposite the Schloss. The building was to serve at once as a kind of headquarters for the evangelical religion and a resting place for the bones of the Hohenzollerns. Though the

scheme had to be abandoned at that time, it has been carried out in the present reign.

If his rhetorical and conversational proclivities made him the very reverse of his taciturn father in one direction, the contrast between them was not less striking in others. Chastened by the stern ordeal of the French occupation, and by the difficult problems which subsequently confronted him, Frederick William III. had, during the later years of his reign, held a very simple manner of life. This his son thought to be unworthy of the dignity of the House of Hohenzollern. He had feasted his imagination on the pictures of the Holy Roman Empire as it existed in the days of its greatest magnificence, and he dreamt of reviving the picturesque pageantry of the ages of romance. The ceremony of the Court was elaborated, and its trappings enriched. The season at Berlin was enlivened by a constant round of fancy dress balls, concerts, tableaux vivants, and theatrical performances. Famous artists, scientists, musicians, were enticed to the Prussian capital to lend lustre to its Court. The King was ever indefatigable in suggesting subjects, sketching drafts for public buildings, amending, correcting and generally attempting to fulfil what he believed to be his Heaven-sent mission to stimulate and direct every activity of the national life. With his strong leaning towards the romance of tradition, it was not surprising that he devoted special attention to the restoration of the mediaeval ruins which look down upon the broad stream of the Rhine. It was in one of these, Stolzenfels, that he feasted Queen Victoria, after she had been welcomed from the heights of Ehrenbreitstein with a salute of a thousand guns, and that he subsequently received the news of the betrothal of his nephew to the British Princess Royal. Nor was his mercurial spirit content to stay at home, for he was never happier than when he was travelling about, viewing fresh scenery and taking in new impressions.

It can easily be imagined what a blow it was to this father of his people when his children of Berlin rose against him in rebellion. While the troops were clearing the barricaded streets, the populace execrated his name as that of a bloody and relentless tyrant. Meanwhile the object of their curses was passing the time between paroxysms of violent sobbing and fits of melancholy stupefaction. He felt that it was the blood of his children which was being shed; permission for each move forward of the military force had to be torn from him by his advisers, and it was like wrenching at his heart-strings. If the rabble on the barriers had seen him four years before, when, after stubborn resistance to the united entreaties of his ministers and the heir-presumptive, and with tears coursing down his cheeks he signed the death warrant of the man who had fired a bullet into his body; if they had heard the message of forgiveness and love which his confident Kleits conveyed to the condemned man in his cell, they would have attributed his vacillating conduct during those "March days" to something else besides brutality and weakness. It is a strange commentary on the passions of the multitude that his step-brother, who was even more unpopular than himself, and was obliged to seek in England a refuge from the storm, lived to be the first German Emperor and to bequeath to his successors a treasure of devotion and loyalty to the reigning house such as is probably without a parallel in history.

Refusal of the Imperial Crown

But though the King issued the appeal to his "dear Berliners," and acceded to their demand that he should withdraw the soldiery from the city, though he drove through the streets in a carriage decked with the black, red, and yellow, which were to be the colors of the new Empire, though, with bared head, he addressed words of eloquent mourning to the corpses of those who had fallen on the day of the barricades, the awful experience of the rebellion left him a broken man.

Yet he was still to have the greatest chance of his life. The National Assembly at Frankfurt offered him the Imperial Crown of the new Germany that was to be. He refused it, because he did not admit the competence of the people to give what rightly belonged to the Princes. He had hopes that the latter would urge him to reconsider his decision; but the opportunity of standing at the head of a united Empire did not return. The double shock rapidly undermined his remarkable intellect. He complained more bitterly than ever that no one would, or could, understand him and his aspirations and ideals. The gay and sparkling moods became more and more seldom; those of morose silence more and more frequent. He was also subject to complete lapses of memory, and his fits of passion were more violent and ungovernable than they had ever been. Finally, he was prostrated by a stroke, and was obliged to resign the duties of government into his brother's hands.

One of the bitterest ironies of this tragedy of high hopes, brilliant talents, and good intentions was that the final official act of his reign was the confirmation of a batch of eleven death sentences. The most tender-hearted of monarchs had latterly become possessed by the idea that as penitence for his own sins he had been ordained to punish with severity those of others, and the prerogative of mercy was now the regal function, which he most unwillingly performed. Three years later he closed his eyes for the last time in Frederick the Great's miniature palace of Sans Souci, which in pious veneration, had been left vacant by his two predecessors, but in which he, challenging a dangerous comparison, had taken up his quarters immediately after his accession.

The Importance of the Fashionable Shoe

Her feet beneath her petticoat
Like little mice, stole in and out.

If the heroine of these lines had worn comfortable sixes instead of the fairy-like foot coverings, two and a-half at the most, on her feet, I feel sure the simple country bumpkin who went to her wedding would never have sung her praises with so much enthusiasm. But all the same, although Dame Nature or otherwise, the importance of its coverings in the outward adorning of fair woman cannot be gainsaid from other points of view, perhaps, than that of fashion.

Who tells the true story of the young man seeking the home of his heart's desire, with his courage screwed up to the proposal point, being shown by the new housemaid, not into the drawing-room of state, but that holy of holies, the feminine sitting-room, littered with delightful girlish odds and ends? As he waited with beating heart for the advent of his affinity, his eye fell upon a pair of shoes lying under the table. A thrill of recognition ran through him, he knew those shoes; when last he saw them they adorned her dainty feet as they sat in the sympathetic shade of a flower-filled conservatory. That was two months ago, when this star of his existence beamed upon him. But now—they were the same—but not the same. The heels were trodden down, the once coquettish rosette was torn off one, and in the other, oh! horror, a gaping wound showed in the side. They had been part of her, were they part of her now? And as the youth gazed with fascinating eyes at the derelict footwear, he began to think, for he was a young man of strictly domesticated habits and careful upbringing. Visions of undarned socks, buttonless shirts, yes, and curl-papers at breakfast, passed before him, and so, to cut my story short, those words of proposal were never uttered, and in all unconsciousness a foolish maiden mourned a lost lover and husband. Oh, yes! There is truth and common-sense in the statement that the shoe is of importance, and further that it is an index to character. I only refer to woman's footwear now, for some of the nicest men I have known

have worn the ugliest boots. But pick me out haphazard a dozen pairs of boots and shoes belonging to lovely woman, and I do not think either you or I will go far wrong in diagnosing the tastes and chief characteristics of the wearers thereof.

This pair of brown boots, not so small, but of smartest cut, low-heeled, sensible, but not frumpish, made of good English leather and sewn by English hands. These belong, I feel without asking, to the well-bred country woman, one who can do her ten-mile walk and smile at that. You can see the practical well-cut tweed skirt that will be worn above these boots, the general neatness which will characterize the wearer. Examine them further, see they are evenly worn, the heels not the slightest bit trodden down. This shows the equitable, well-balanced mind. Now here are boots, slender pointed, in thinnest of gait and patent leather, black, severely plain, buttoned, not laced—they are the acme of good style, and we can see the elegant woman who wears them and feel sure that the rest of her attire will match her footwear. They are a little bit worn at the toes, one sole is a little trodden over; the wearer is a lady of somewhat restless temperament and quick in thought, I gather from these signs.

A pair of shoes, with aggressively square toes, in dull unshinable leather, low almost heedless, what is called clump soled and tied with thick, woollen laces. No need to try and imagine their owner, a babe could spot her. She may be young, she may be elderly, but romance, which means beauty and attractiveness, and she have not one single point in common. She is a devotee of hygiene (though why the goddess of beautiful health should be so hideously typified nowadays I cannot tell); boneless corsets, slack waists and unbrushed, lustreless tresses all appertain to these shoes. Their aspect is depressing. Let us turn from them to these charming little foot coverings of grey suede, Puritanical in their neatness, with no ornament but a quaint silver buckle; they are surely indicative of the refined little lady who wears them. Their first freshness is gone, indeed they might be

called shabby, but they have been worn lovingly.

What of these white gait shoes, much brogued, wasp-heeled, with extravagantly broad ribbon ties? They might be nice, but, alas! they are cheap, and to me speak most insistently of the owner's taste in dress—she would spoil a good gown with inferior lace, and even descend to the iniquity of a rolled-god bracelet.

But look at these red satin slippers—so small as to belong, it must be to Cinderella's descendant—cut and fashioned so exquisitely, high-heeled, hand-embroidered with gold; how dainty, how delightful, how wicked they are! We can imagine the butterfly owner dancing through life in these and kindred footwear, she who would love beauty and the sunshine of life and win it at any cost.

And these—no, no more. I have shown you enough to convince you of the importance of the shoe in the wardrobe of fair woman in more ways than one, and "Spend a pound on your gown, and on your shoe two," is an old saying the wise woman will lay to heart.

On the second day of February comes Candlemas Day, which was at one time observed as religiously as Christmas, and like most festive days, had its origin in religious rites and ceremonies. Among the superstitious in those ancient days to burn candles on this day was supposed to ward off evil spirits for the ensuing year. The candles used in the religious ceremonies were symbolical of our Lord being the "Light of the World." In these modern times the observances of Candlemas rank with those of Halloween. Young men and maidens may enquire of their matrimonial future by burning candles. Each being supplied with a tiny candle, lighted by its owner, the owner stands back three paces and endeavors to blow out the flame with as few puffs as possible—for each attempt denotes a year's delay in the wedding. Or, the candles may be allowed to burn out; the one burning the longest means a happy, prosperous marriage, the one that goes out first augurs ill for the bride or groom, as the case may be.

tuna, 300 miles; from miles; Kirin to Taitai-Sansing, 337 miles; ontier at Sanchiakou, ontier at Hunchun, 342

anchuria is either the the large lumbering f. The structure of the turns round the axle, ter and inner edges of on plates. These carts his belongings from an ox is used in the rules as leaders. The bitted, but a piece of tween upper gum and n attached on the near ne by voice or whip, the country, but the and mules furnish a are few harder ani a Mongol pony. They a of the roadside horse, by fairs are often held. chong, where several old on a serai just in-

rich market, in which antage. The chief ex- and bean cake—many ngaged in this trade of steam tonnage being ade from Dalny alone. n products make up 85 the remaining fifteen of silk, millet, samshu, eds, furs and cattle. nd piece goods and alued at about fifty ports. Of cotton goods e cloths, the greater an, which country be- ia, had but ten per has the biggest share, g possessed by the d by others. Other re sugar, tobacco, old tea, opium, railway matches, flour, coal

at cities of Manchuria Liaoyang, the ancient Dalny (new known un- of Tairen), New-Taitaihar, Ninguta, icheng and Antung. er crowded cities with ed walls bounding ed are the more im- between Japan and Japanese have been of each, first the e traders. Mukden, als, each as wide as a et high, with crenel- tresque towers over plain two miles north enters the Taize-river of Liaoyang, about ty. Three miles from tombs and temple on of the founder of . The city walls in- more than a mile in about three-quarters e Boxer uprising the cathedral here was d his staff massacred. e base of operations uth Manchuria; now ominaly China rules. city similar to Muk- with the exception of own fortress town, lny and Newchwang, are similar in appear- ns in Russian 'Far as the outlet for the Russia and many fine and. The harbor is pacific, free of ice and enter on any tide.

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USEFUL

the smokeroom of the luxurious motor cars, Marquis of Anglesey, some five years ago, re the most luxurious elmont. "The young gh. Once, at his his- re was a slight fire. burn down, he or- ty of hand grenades, London. When the re hung all over the an enormous place, dozen grenades left hanging. "And what lord?" the butler as- ked—he was already said dryly to the but- in my coffin."

You're talking in

It's the only chance

your mistress isn't

ou don't doubt her