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German Influence in European Court Circles

By Charles Lowe.
IF the late Christian of Denmark came to be called the "Father-in-law of Europe" from his having given a Queen to England, a King to Greece and an Emperor to Russia, not to speak of other sovereign relationships of a minor kind, William II. of Prussia, German Emperor might now equally be termed its "brother-in-law," so that his political or, say, diplomatic power is most extensively subserved by his family connections and influence at other courts. It used to be said that dynastic ties have ceased to have any influence on international relations, but that is not so. The present complications—more especially in the Balkans—give the lie to it. Those complications, indeed, are to a great extent due to the family influence exercised by the Kaiser in Greece, Bulgaria and Roumania.

To these States I shall presently return, after a hurried look round the rest of Europe commencing with Britain where, of course, the family influence of the Kaiser is now simply nil, and will always be so to the end of his line, as well as that of all his successors. Then there is Russia, where the German Emperor's first cousin, of Hesse-Darmstadt, Queen Victoria's granddaughter, shares the Czar's throne, thought it may be safe to assume as a certainty that her sympathies are just as much with the Allied cause as those of the Duchess of Connaught, daughter of the famous "Red Prince," Frederick Charles, the captor of Metz. The truth is that women are not "political animals" in the Aristotelian sense of the term, to the same extent as man, and more readily adapt themselves to the circumstances and causes of their adopted countries, in accordance with the French maxim, "Qui prend mari, prend sa patrie."

The Kaiser's Tactlessness.
In the case of the Czarina it must be the less difficult for her to do this, seeing that, before becoming a Russian, she was almost more than half British—in sentiment and sympathy, like all our Queen's grand-daughters born in Germany, as Bismarck used so often and so bitterly to lament.

One strong counter-irritant to any German influences at the Russian Court is to be found in the persons of the Dowager Empress, sister of our Queen Alexandra, who belongs to a generation imbued with the bitterest hatred of Prussia for the wrongs inflicted on brave little Denmark in 1864. The Prussians captured the redoubts of Drøppel, but they could never conciliate their victims—in the lifetime, at least, of Christian IX., "Father-in-law of Europe."

On the death of that monarch the Kaiser, with his usual tactlessness, obtruded himself on his funeral obsequies, to the secret disgust of several members of the Royal Family of Denmark, just as he had contrived to be at Copenhagen for the celebration of King Christian's 85th birthday, after which, with incredible effrontery, he telegraphed to the venerable sovereign the expression of his thanks "for your having received me into your family circle"—which must have caused the members of that house, tacitly at least, to beg his Imperial Majesty to refrain from what the French called his "fraudulent carresses," and, in Scots phrase, to "keep his ain fish guts for his ain sea-maws (mews)."

Denmark gave a King to Athens in the person of the present Greek sovereign's father, and Constantine, or "Tino"—as the Kaiser, with more familiarity, perhaps, than affection, calls him—is his German Majesty's brother-in-law. It was asserted by a recent writer—who ought to have known better—that the Kaiser was most bitterly opposed to "Tino's" marriage to his favorite sister, Sophie. Far from that, his Imperial Majesty adjourned to Athens to shed the lustre of his sovereign presence on the wedding—thereafter proceeding to Stamboul to kiss the cheek of the great assassin, "Abdul the damned"—when he did all he could to ingratiate himself with the Greeks. It is known that Constantine is possessed by an almost superstitious veneration for his Imperial brother-in-law, and that this feeling is furiously fanned by his German wife, an ardent, hero-worshipper of her brother "Willie," as he used to be called in the family circle—and it was to her that the Kaiser addressed several of his telegrams intended for publication—such as the one about the irresistible might of his destroying sword, as of the Angel of Death, and his "Hip, hip, hurrah!" (in English, the language of their youth), on hearing of the capture of Salonika by the Greeks in the first Balkan war.

German Influence in the Balkans.
It will be remembered how, on visiting Berlin after the Peace of Bucharest, "Tino," in the exuberance of

his brother-in-law feelings, post-prandially ascribed to German military tuition the victories of the Hellenic arms; whereas, in point of fact—as he afterwards had to admit, when passing through Paris—the compliment should have been addressed to the French army. It comes to this, that Greece is now sitting still—which is rather more than sitting on the fence—in consequence of the personal pledges exacted from "Tino" by "Willie" and his sister Sophie. If ever there was a case of international relations being affected by family ties it is this; but it is a Imperial interference with Hellenic affairs which may well cost King Constantine his crown. All the omens point to as much predominance of the German influence at Athens as it Stamboul.

As to Ferdinand of Bulgaria, little need be said, save that, though a Frenchman on his Bourbon-Orleans side, he is really a German by birth, training, interest, and second marriage—his second wife being a Princess of the house of Reuss. As for interests, he has large private estates both in Germany and Austria, which would run the risk of confiscation or sequestration in the event of his taking the field against the allied Kaisers, who have tubs the whip hand over him. When he accepted the Kaiser's Iron Cross he—this perfumed dandy and bird-fancier, with the face of "an old rogue-elephant"—one could not help recalling the remark of Bismarck that decorations are conferred—not so much for services rendered as for services to come.

When rooks desert the rookery it forbodes the downfall of the family on whose property it is.



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Famine Stalks Thru War-Racked Serbia

Men, Women and Children Starving—Scenes of Great Horror Described.

Monastir, Serbia, Nov. 23.—Serbia is starving! Men, women and children, and even animals, fleeing before the hostile armies, are dying of hunger by the roadsides and mountain paths.

In large areas of this war-racked country there has been no food for many days. Packs of dogs prowl the breadless land like wild animals, searching for food.

The world-war has developed no scenes of greater horror than those being enacted along the trail of the marching armies.

The road from Nish to Monastir is a highway of agony, more dreadful than the corpse-strewn Klondike trail. It is lined with dead horses, interspersed with the bodies of men, women and children, fugitives who dropped out through exhaustion and lack of food. More refugees are still streaming in, stumbling into the outskirts of Monastir, semi-delirious because of the privations they have suffered, are hysterical with joy over their safe arrival in a spot where they may at least find some food.

Terrible Trip.
Madam Slavko Grotich, who arrived here to-day after a terrible twenty-day trip from Nish, described some of her experience.

"Even the horses we rode were starving," she said. "Some fell exhausted by the roadside and died before our eyes. We were members of a government party, but the most we could get to eat each day was a scanty half loaf of bread.

"The others, women and children as well as men, dragged themselves along day by day on foot with little or nothing to eat. Women fell ill for lack of nourishment, and lay down in the road to die, surrendering babies and little children to the care of strangers.

"Only one narrow horse-trail thru Albania now leads into Serbia since the railroad was cut by the Bulgars. The same road supplies Montenegro and Albania. The people of those countries are facing starvation, too. But what is happening in Serbia is the blackest page in human history."

Bread, Not Money, Needed
M. Michotte de Welle, Belgian minister to Serbia, and one of the party of refugees of which Madam Grotich was a member, corroborated her statements.

"Before I left Albania I offered my servants money," said the Belgian minister. "They burst into tears and cried to me: 'We can't eat gold; for God's sake have you no bread?'"

"Fleeing here from Nish we heard the wild screams of a man along the mountain road one night. They told us the next day the shrieks came from a man who had been murdered—for his little chunk of bread.

"All Serbia is looking toward America for relief. Germany must let America help the Serbians. Cut off from the world, they will starve by thousands unless food comes."

Appeals For Aid.

Madam Grotich herself has wired John D. Rockefeller asking aid for starving non-combatants. The message will be delayed several days in delivery, and no answer is expected before the end of the week.

Food is very scarce here now. Even the hospital, full of wounded, lacks supplies of fuel.

Monastir's fall is expected very soon. If it comes within a few days thousands of refugees, now en route here, will be caught on the trail from Nish without food and with no place of refuge but the mountains. Only a miracle can save them.

Madame Slavko Grotich, mentioned by Correspondent Shepherd in the above Monastir dispatch, was formerly Miss Mabel Dunlop, of West Virginia, now the wife of the under-secretary of foreign affairs of Serbia.

Mme. Grotich came to the United States June 24, 1915, in the interests of Serbian relief and spent several weeks here. She became well acquainted with officers of the Rockefeller Foundation. It was said at the Rockefeller officers to-day that her cablegram urging relief has not yet been received.

GERMAN LOSSES NEAR FOUR MILLION

NEW YORK, Dec. 1.—A special copyright cable to the World from London says:

"Three million seven hundred thousand is the total number of casualties in the German armies during the war up to and including November 22 last.

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