

SPIES OF THE KAISER

We sat until nearly two o'clock in the morning. Griesbach had been many years in London, and was apparently financing the scheme of the brothers Engler, a scheme which, on the face of it, seemed a very sound undertaking.

All three were thorough-going cosmopolitans, cheery, easy-going men of the world, who told many quaint stories which caused my room to ring with laughter.

Next day was Christmas Eve, and Griesbach suddenly suggested that if I had nothing better to do he would be delighted if I would join their party at dinner on Christmas night at his house over at Barnes.

"I regret very much," I said, "but I've already arranged to dine with my friend Raymond, who shares chambers with me in Lincoln's Inn."

"Oh!" exclaimed Otto Engler, "I'm sure Herr Griesbach would be very pleased if he came also."

"Of course!" cried the German merrily. "The more the merrier. We shall dine at eight, and we'll expect you both. I'll send a note to Mr. Raymond, if you'll give me his address."

I gave it to him, and nothing loath to spend the festival in such jovial company, I accepted.

I entertained a shrewd suspicion that by their hospitality they wished to enlist my aid, because I had one or two friends in the City who might, perhaps, assist them materially in their scheme. And yet, after all, Otto Engler had often been my guest in Bremen.