

Book Notices.

"Imperator et Rex. William II. of Germany." By the Author of "The Martyrdom of an Empress." Illustrated. New York: Harper & Bros. Toronto: William Briggs. 8vo. Pp. 282. Price, \$2.25.

In the German Art Section at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition was a magnificent portrait of the German Emperor, William II.—a majestic figure like a Norse god standing by a stately ermine-covered throne, one of the most grandiose imperial figures conceivable. Such is the portrait painted of Kaiser Wilhelm in this book. The anonymous author has had unrivalled knowledge of European court life, and has extraordinary skill in depicting its pomp and pageantry and strong personal sympathies in character drawing. She traces her hero's career from ingenuous boyhood to his domination of Europe as the foremost Continental sovereign.

To British readers the life story of this remarkable man is of special interest. The grandson of Queen Victoria, the nephew of King Edward VII., and cousin of the present Empress of Russia, he is allied with the chief reigning houses of Europe. At the University of Bonn he was a hard-working student, and laid the foundation of that wide superstructure of knowledge which he has built thereon.

The story of his courtship and of his marriage at the age of twenty-three, is of romantic interest, and furnishes a congenial theme for the author's graphic pen. In contrast with this love marriage was that of Crown Prince Rudolf of Austria, which soon followed, to be succeeded by such a tragic doom. The conjugal relations of the young Kaiser have been of the happiest kind. A kind and loving husband and father, he is an ideal man. Nevertheless his early married life was clouded by party strife. During the long illness of his father court factions struggled for the mastery. Bismarck against the Crown Prince Frederick and his English allies. The bitterness of the strife between the Prussian doctors and Sir Morell Mackenzie, struggling for the possession of the dying Crown Prince, it is almost impossible to conceive.

The Iron Chancellor was the lifelong enemy of the Empress Augusta,

whose womanly sympathies delayed the bombardment of Paris, and made her the object of the savage animosity of Bismarck. The liberal affiliations of the Crown Prince Frederick and his favour for constitutional and parliamentary methods were the pet aversion of the stern Chancellor, who ferociously endeavoured to prevent his succession to the Crown. Sir Morell Mackenzie, on whom our author heaps much satire, declared there was no cancer of the throat such as would prevent his accession. Under his treatment the Prince Frederick was able, in 1887, to attend the Queen's Jubilee as the most heroic figure in that stately pageant. For months the battle with fate continued at San Remo, and on the old Emperor's death, in his ninety-second year, the dying man was brought to Berlin to hold for three months the mocking insignia of the crown and sceptre. The young Prince William was sore bestead. Bismarck was his father's enemy, and the Prince was bitterly calumniated as an unfilial son.

In this fight was Death the gainer,
Spite of vassal and retainer ;

and the sceptre soon fell from the nerveless grasp of Frederick to the stronger hand of his masterful son.

"A hurricane of denunciation," says our author, "greeted the young Emperor's action in the surrounding with troops the palace where the body of his father had not had time as yet to grow cold." This was done, it is explained, to prevent the smuggling to England and publishing of a very circumstantial diary which Frederick had kept for thirty years, which was studded with state and family secrets. The Iron Chancellor won for the time, but soon felt the grip of the masterful man whom he had helped to place in the saddle.

The young Emperor issued his manifesto: "I have vowed to Almighty God that, after the example of my forefathers, I will be a just and clement Prince to my people, that I will foster piety and the fear of God, and that I will protect the peace, promote the welfare of the country, be a helper to the poor and distressed, and a true guardian of the right."

He had no doubt of his right divine to rule as God's anointed, supreme over chancellor, ministers or