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The Kaiser as I Knew Him  
for Fourteen Years

By ARTHUR N. DAVIS, D. D. S.

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for the raid," the officer, told me regretfully, "we received orders direct from the kaiser to hold off—I saw his signature to the order. Of course, there was nothing for us to do but comply, but if we had had the kaiser there, I believe we would have strung him up by the neck! We still have those bombs, however, and you may be sure they will yet be used!"

For some unknown reason the kaiser stopped the use of those lethal gas bombs for the time being. Why didn't he move to save the women and children on the Lusitania?

When I went back to Berlin in the fall of 1915, after a visit to the United States, the kaiser was very anxious to ascertain from me just how America felt towards the war.

I told him that before the sinking of the Lusitania American opinion had been divided. There had been many who were strongly pro-ally, there had been others who were openly pro-German and there had been still others who maintained an absolutely neutral attitude. After the Lusitania tragedy, however, there had been a distinct change in public feeling. I told him, practically the whole country having become decidedly anti-German.

"Perhaps if the U-boat commander had known so many women and children were on board," was the kaiser's only comment, "he might not have sent forth the torpedo which sent the vessel to the bottom, but what he was thinking of most, of course, was the 5,000 tons of ammunition on board which were destined to slaughter my people!"

Of course the kaiser knew that if the U-boat commander's orders were to sink the Lusitania, disobedience upon his part would have left but one course open for him: suicide. If, on the other hand, the kaiser meant to intimate that the U-boat commander sank the Lusitania on his own initiative or without special instructions from his superiors, the fact still remains that the kaiser could undoubtedly have prevented the tragedy and didn't.

But if there can be any doubt as to the kaiser's direct responsibility for the sinking of the Lusitania, certain it is that he fully approved, openly defended and even exulted in the murder of women and children by Zeppelin raids on London, Manchester, Liverpool and other non-military cities and towns.

"England expects to starve my women and children to death," he declared to me early in the war—long before we in Germany had begun to feel the slightest effect of the diminishing food supply, "but our Zeppelins will give their women and children a taste of war, too. Confound them! They sit on their island and try to starve us; we will give them a taste of what war is!"

This was the man whose various acts of consideration towards me, whose talents and personal charms, had made such a favorable impression upon me! How trivial and inconsequential they all seemed now! Clearly, they were all a part of the role he had been playing for years. While he was outwardly displaying all the earmarks of a gentle character, he was inwardly plotting to dominate the world. For twenty-five years he maintained the peace of Europe, he frequently boasted. He maintained peace just long enough to complete his final preparations for the wickedest war that was ever waged!

And yet strangely enough, even after the war had revealed the kaiser to me in his true colors and had shown him to be capable of deeds which I should have thought were foreign to his nature, his presence always had a most remarkable effect upon me.

I have a vivid mental impression of him now as I write. He is standing in the center of my room, drawn up to his full height, his shoulders thrown back, his left hand upon the hilt of his sword and his right emphasizing his remarks, protesting in the most earnest manner that it was not he who was responsible for the war and all its horrors, but that it had come upon the world despite all he had done to prevent it. His ready, well-chosen words entrance me, I feel that this man must be telling me the truth and I am ready to believe that before me stands the most unjustly judged man in the world.

And then he shakes my hand in farewell and is driven away, and as I gaze at the spot where he stood, there comes before my eyes the desolation of Belgium, the tragedy of the Lusitania, the despoliation of France and Poland, the destruction of women and children in London and Paris and a thousand and one other atrocious deeds which belie the kaiser's fair words, and I realize that I have been talking to the world's most finished actor and have simply been bewitched by the power of his personal magnetism.

CHAPTER IV.

America Disappoints Kaiser.  
The kaiser ascended the throne in 1888. For twenty-six years his reign was unmarred by a single war, although twice during that period, once

In 1905 and again in 1911, he nearly succeeded in precipitating a conflict. Subsequent developments have brought out clearly enough that during all these years of peace, the kaiser was only awaiting the opportune moment to bring on war.

Germany's preparation consisted not merely in building up her army and navy and developing a military spirit in her people, but in trying to establish friendships abroad where they would do the most good in the event of a world war.

The German military preparation was more or less obvious. The kaiser was always its warmest advocate and

frankly admitted that it was his intention to remain armed to the teeth, although he protested to me many times that his sole object was to maintain the peace of the world.

In 1913, for instance, I was in The Hague when Carnegie delivered a speech at the opening of the Peace palace, in the course of which he declared that the kaiser was a stumbling-block in the way of world peace. When I got back to Berlin I mentioned the fact to the kaiser, hoping to draw him out.

"Yes, I know exactly what Carnegie said at The Hague," he replied rather testily, "and I don't like the way he spoke at all. He referred to me as the 'war lord' and said I was standing in the way of world peace. Let him look at my record of twenty-five peaceful years on the throne! No, the surest means to maintain the peace of the world is my big army and navy! Other nations will think twice before going to war with us!" The fact that he had previously accepted 5,000,000 marks from Carnegie for the furtherance of universal peace didn't seem to occur to him.

And the world at large learned more or less of German intrigue and propaganda since the war, but it is not generally known that the same sort of thing was going on even more actively in time of peace. Countless measures, of the most subtle and insidious character, were taken to lull into a sense of false security the nations she intended eventually to attack and to inspire fear in or command the respect of nations which she hoped would remain neutral or might even be induced to throw in their lot with hers in the event of war.

In this phase of Germany's preparation for war, the kaiser took a leading part.

It is a fact, for instance, that practically every officer in the Chilean army is a German, and the kaiser has spared no pains to foster the friendship of the South American republics, commercially and diplomatically.

One of the South American ministers told me of an ex-president of Peru who had visited Berlin. This Peruvian had previously visited London and Paris and had received little or no official attention in either of those capitals. For reasons best known to himself, the kaiser decided to cater to this gentleman, and accordingly arranged an audience.

In the discussion which took place when they met, the kaiser displayed such a remarkable acquaintance with Peruvian affairs and the family history and political career of his visitor that the South American was stunned. When he returned home he carried with him a most exalted idea of the all-pervading wisdom of the German emperor. To what extent the kaiser had spent the midnight oil preparing for this interview I have no knowledge, but knowing the importance he placed upon making a favorable impression at all times I have a mental picture of his delving deeply into South American lore in preparation for his guest.

There is nothing dearer to the kaiser than caste and social distinction. Morganatic marriages were naturally abhorrent to him. Nevertheless, before Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the successor to the Austrian throne, was murdered, the kaiser not only recognized his morganatic wife, who was only a countess, but went out of his way to show her deference. He placed her at his right at all state functions which she attended. To bring Austria and Germany closer together, he was willing to waive one of his deep-rooted prejudices.

The significance of the kaiser's many visits to Italy, his presentation of a statue to Stockholm, his yachting excursions in Scandinavian waters, his flirtations with Turkey from his castle on the Island of Corfu, and similar acts of ingratitude, becomes quite apparent in the face of more recent developments, but his efforts to curry favor with America during all the years of peace which preceded the war were so much more elaborate that they deserve more than passing mention.

No more subtle piece of propaganda was ever conceived than the kaiser's plan of exchanging professors between the United States and Germany through the establishment of the Roosevelt and Harvard chairs at the University of Berlin and corresponding chairs at Harvard and other American universities. Ostensibly the purpose of the project was to foster good-will between the two nations. Actually, it

(To be continued)

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