

Long Live The King

MARY ROBERTS RINEHART

A sudden suspicion came in Hedwig's mind, and made her turn pale. What if they had sent him away? Perhaps they feared him enough for that! If that were true, she would never know. She knew the ways of the palace well enough for that. In a sort of terror she glanced around the group, so comfortably disposed. Her mother was looking out, with her cool, impassive gaze. Miss Braithwaite knitted. The countess, however, met her eyes, and there was something strange in them—triumph and a bit of terror, too, had she not read them. For the countess had put in her plea for a holiday and had been refused.

The new fortress faced the high road some five miles from the Karlian border. It stood on a bluff over the river, and was, as the crown prince decided, not so unlike the desk, after all, except that it had a moat around it.

Hedwig and the countess went with the party around the fortifications. The archduchess and Miss Braithwaite had sought a fire. Only the countess, however, seemed really interested. Hedwig seemed more intent on the distant line of the border than on anything else. She stood on a rampart and stared out at it, looking very sad. Even the drill—when at a word all the great guns rose and peeped over the edge at the valley below, and then dropped backed again as if they had seen enough—even this failed to rouse her.

"I wish you would listen, Hedwig," said the crown prince, almost fretfully. "It's so interesting. The enemy's soldiers would come up the river in boats, and along that road on foot. And then we would raise the guns and shoot at them. And the guns would drop back again, before the enemy had time to aim at them."

But Hedwig's interest was so evidently assumed that he turned to the countess. The countess professed smiling terror, and stood a little way back from the guns, looking on. But Prince Ferdinand William Otto at last coaxed her to the top of the emplacement.

"There's a fine view up there," he urged. "And the guns won't hurt you. There's nothing in them."

To get up it was necessary to climb an iron ladder. Hedwig was already there. About a dozen young officers had helped her up, and ruined as many pairs of white gloves, although Hedwig could climb like a cat, and really needed no help at all.

"You go up," said the crown prince eagerly, turning to the countess. "I'll hold your bag, so you can climb." He caught her handbag from her, and instantly something snapped in it. The countess was climbing up the ladder. Rather dismayed, Prince Ferdinand William Otto surveyed the bag. Something had broken, he feared. And in another moment he saw what it was. The little watch which was set in one side of it had slipped away, leaving a round black hole. His heart beat a trifle faster.

"I'm awfully worried," he called up to her, as he climbed. "I'm afraid I've broken your bag. Something clicked, and the watch is gone. It is not on the ground."

It was well for the countess that the colonel was talking to Hedwig. Well for her, too, that the other officers were standing behind with their eyes worshipfully on the princess. The countess turned gray white.

"Don't worry, highness," she said, with stiff lips. "The watch falls back sometimes. I must have it repaired."

But long after the tour of the ramparts was over, after ammunition rooms had been visited, with their long lines of waiting shells, after the switchboard which controlled the river mines had been inspected and explained, she was still trembling.

Prince Ferdinand William Otto, looking at the bag later on, saw the watch in place and drew a long breath of relief.

CHAPTER IX.

Old Adelbert.

Old Adelbert of the opera had lost his position. No longer, a sausage in his pocket for refreshment, did he leave his little room daily for the opera. A young man, who made ogling eyes at Olga, of the garde-robe, and who was not careful to keep the lenses clean, had taken his place.

He was hurt in his soldier's soul. There was no longer a place in the kingdom for those who had fought for it. The cry was for the young. And even in the first twenty-four hours a subtle change went on in him. His loyalty, on which he had built his creed of life, turned to bitterness.

The first day of his idleness he wandered into the back room of the cobbler's shop near by, where the butter seller from the corner, the maker of artificial flowers for graves, and the cobbler himself were gathered, and listened without protest to such talk as would have roused him once to white anger.

But the iron had not yet gone very deep, and one thing he would not permit. It was when, in the conversation, one of them attacked the king. Then indeed he was roused to fury.

Once upon a time a student named Haeckel had occasionally backed him up in his defense of the royal family. But for some reason or other Haeckel came no more, and old Adelbert missed him. He had inquired for him frequently.

"Where is the boy Haeckel?" he had asked one day. "I have not seen him lately."

No one had replied. But a sort of grim silence settled over the little room. Old Adelbert, however, was not discerning.

But, that first day of idleness, when he had left the cobbler's, he resolved not to return. They had not been unfriendly, but he had seen at once there was a difference. He was no longer old Adelbert of the opera. He was an old man only, and out of work.

He spent hours that first free afternoon repairing his frayed linen and his shabby uniform, with his wooden leg stretched out before him and his pipe clutched firmly in his teeth. Then, freshly shaved and brushed, he started on a painful search after work. With no result. And, indeed, he was hopeless before he began. He was old and infirm. There was little that he had even the courage to apply for.

True, he had his small pension, but it came only twice a year, and was sent, intact, to take care of an invalid daughter in the country. That was not his. He never used a penny of it. And he had saved a trifle, by lying on air, as the concierge declared. But misfortunes come in threes, like fires and other calamities. The afternoon of that very day brought a letter, saying that the daughter was worse and must have an operation. Old Adelbert went to church and burned a candle for her recovery, and from there to the bank to send by registered mail the surgeon's fee. He was bankrupt in twenty-four hours.

That evening in his extremity he did a reckless thing. He wrote a letter to the king. He spent hours over it, first composing it in pencil and then copying it with ink borrowed from the concierge. It began "Sire," as he had learned was the form, and went on to remind his majesty, first, of the hospital incident, which, having been forty years ago, might have slipped the royal memory. Then came the facts—his lost position, his daughter, the handicap of his wooden leg. It ended with a plea for reinstatement or, failing that, for any sort of work.

He sent it, unopened, in a large flat envelope, which also he had learned was the correct thing with kings, who for some reason or other do not like folded communications. Then he waited. He considered that a few hours should bring a return.

No answer came. No answer ever came. For the king was ill, and secretaries carefully sifted the royal mail.

That night, in the concierge's bureau, he was treated to many incidents, all alike. The government took, but gave nothing. As well expect blood out of a stone. Instances were given, heartlessness piled on heartlessness, one sordid story on another.

And as he listened there died in old Adelbert's soul his flaming love for his sovereign and his belief in him. His eyes took on a hard and haunted look. That night he walked past the palace and shook his fist at it. He was greatly ashamed of that, however, and never repeated it. But his soul was now an open sore, ready for infection.

And Black Humbert bided his time. On the day of the excursion to the fortress old Adelbert decided to appeal to his fellow lodger, Herman Spier. Now and then, when he was affluent, he had paid small tribute to Herman by means of the camp cookery on which he prided himself.

"A soldier's mess!" he would say, and bring in a bowl of soup, or a slice of deer meat, broiled over hot coals in his tiny stove. "Eat it, man. These restaurants know nothing of food."

Herman could not help him. But he eyed the old soldier appraisingly. He guessed shrewdly the growing un-casiness behind Adelbert's brave front. If now one could enlist such a man for the cause that would be worth doing. Among the veterans the old man was influential, and by this new policy of substituting fresh blood for stale, the government had made many enemies among them.

The old man's bitterness had been increased by two things. First, although he had been dismissed without notice, in the middle of the week, he had been paid only up to the hour of leaving. That was a grievance. Second, being slow on his feet, one of the royal motor cars had almost run him down, and the police had cursed him roundly for being in the way.

At last he determined to find Haeckel, the student. He did not know his Christian name, nor where he lodged. But he knew the corps he belonged to, by his small gray cap with a red band.

He was very nervous when he made this final effort. Corps houses were curious places, he had heard, and full of secrets. Even the great professors from the university might not enter without invitation. And his experience had been that students paid small respect to uniforms or to age. In truth, he passed the building twice before he could summon courage to touch the great brass knocker. And the arrogance of its clamor, when at last he rapped, startled him again. But here at least he need not have feared.

The student who was also door-keeper eyed him kindly. "Well, comrade?" he said.

"I am seeking a student named



"I Am Seeking a Student Named Haeckel."

Haeckel, of this corps," said old Adelbert stoutly.

"Haeckel?" repeated the doorkeeper. "I think—come in, comrade. I will inquire."

For the name of Haeckel was, just then, one curiously significant.

He disappeared, and old Adelbert waited. When the doorkeeper returned, it was to tell him to follow him, and to lead the way downstairs.

Two or three students came toward him at once. "You are seeking Haeckel?" one of them asked.

"I am. I know him, but not well. Lately, however, I have thought—is he here?"

The students exchanged glances. "He is not here," one said. "Where did you know him?"

"He came frequently to a shop I know of—a cobbler's shop, a neighborhood meeting place. A fine lad. I liked him. But recently he has not come, and knowing his corps, I came here to find him."

They had hoped to learn something from him, and he knew nothing. "He has disappeared," they told him. "He is not at his lodging, and he has left his classes. He went away suddenly, leaving everything. That is all we know."

It sounded sinister. Old Adelbert, heavy hearted, turned away and climbed again to the street. That gateway was closed, too. And he felt a pang of uneasiness. What could have happened to the boy? Was the world, after all, only a place of trouble?

But now came good fortune, and, like evil, it came not singly. The operation was over, and his daughter on the mend. The fee was paid also. And the second followed on the heels of the first.

He did not like Americans. "But often, in better days, had he heard the merits of the American republic compared with the shortcomings of his own government. When, as happened now and then, he met the American family on the staircase, he drew sharply aside that no touch of republicanism might contaminate his uniform.

On that day, however, things changed. First of all, he met the American lad in the hallway, and was pleased to see him doff his bit of a cap. Now many, nowadays, uncovered a head to him. The American lad was going down; Adelbert was climbing one step at a time, and carrying a small basket of provisions.

The American boy, having passed, turned, hesitated, went back. "I'd like to carry that for you, if you don't mind."

"Carry it?" "I am very strong," said the American boy stoutly.

So Adelbert gave up his basket, and the two went up. Four long flights of stone stairs led to Adelbert's room. The ascent took time and patience.

At the door Adelbert paused. Then, loneliness overcoming prejudice, "Come in," he said.

(To be continued)

It might be suggested that American mobs couldn't harm the enemy aliens if the latter were safely behind iron bars.

Up to date no enterprising Paris reporter has interviewed von Hindenburg to learn how he likes the city

SIMPSON KNOWN AS "L. J."

Merchants and Workers Call Him By His Initials.

Down at Coos Bay, L. J. Simpson one day had occasion to show around a man whom he was trying to interest in the possibilities of Oregon as a place in which to invest.

The visitor was well impressed and noted among other things the spirit of comradeship which everyone in the county seemed to share with Simpson. Every other man they met, workers from the mills and merchants from the stores, all had something to talk over with Simpson, and hailed him as "L. J."

A whole community in this unostentatious way pays unconscious tribute to this man.

It pleased the visitor not a little and they continued on their way, Simpson showing him among other things, his big farm which he has established right at the edge of the Pacific, and where he grows many products which formerly were considered as impossible of preparation in Oregon.

He showed the visitor his chickens, of which there are 1600. Here the visitor stopped.

"Mr. Simpson, this is positively too much. Even these workers in the hen yard begin chuckling 'L. J., L. J.' the minute you approach."

FRIENDLY TO SIMPSON

Old Time Employees Are Strong for Him for Governor.

Many thousands of men who have worked for L. J. Simpson, when he was actively engaged in the lumber and manufacturing business at Coos Bay, say that he is their kind of a man for Governor. Their slogan is "a good man to work for is a good man to vote for."

As indication of how the wind blows several men who had previously worked for him started a petition in the mills and plants of Coos Bay and in a short while had presented an endorsement to some eight hundred men. In the eight plants visited only three men out of over 800 refused to sign.

Today the same endorsement has more than 3000 actual workers' signatures on the endorsement of his candidacy. Mr. Simpson is immensely pleased that these men and workers who have known him so long and so well are unanimous in his support.

HOMES FOR SOLDIERS

L. J. Simpson Favors Great Hospitals in Oregon.

Great hospitals built at places of scenic advantage throughout our state, for the recuperation of injured and wounded soldiers returning from the battlefields, is a plan which L. J. Simpson recently broached to a group of Portland hotel men.

Mr. Simpson believes the plan quite workable and one which would serve the double purpose of aiding in a great work and preparing for a harvest of tourists which Oregon is sure to reap some day when she has made the proper preparations for the tourist.

"There is no reason why these hospitals, when built, should not be placed at some point there, after the war, they could be quickly changed over to serve the purpose of the tourist trade.

"There is talk of sending thousands of the crippled and wounded to the West as the place where climatic conditions and chances of recovery seem best. There are today no buildings which could be immediately used for this purpose and if in building these hospitals they were to be located at points in our state where the soldier would have the added inspiration of our wonderful land, it would seem a step forward."

State Development.

The world cry for greater production of foodstuffs should find a ready response in Oregon. At this time as never before should encouragement be given irrigation, drainage and the reclamation of logged off lands. Our state must awake to its duties and opportunities.

L. J. Simpson, in his campaign for the Republican nomination for Governor, has been dwelling a great deal on the question of state development, with the object of producing more and manufacturing our raw materials into finished products at home.

Must Seek Market.

Can we guarantee continued prosperity for the state?

In a recent talk on this subject, L. J. Simpson stated very emphatically that our future rests largely on the development along modern lines, of our great basic industries—lumbering, fishing, farming and stock raising. If those connected with these industries are prosperous, all Oregon will prosper.

His contention is, that Oregon never yet has made a determined effort to seek a market for its goods.

Thrift Will Help.

"We must win this war—the quicker the better. A little extra effort on the part of everyone will accomplish much. By a little more work, a little less waste, a little more thrift, each can do his bit."—L. J. Simpson.

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