

# FOR THE KAISER'S HOME

WORK DONE ON THE OLD  
SCHLOSS IN BERLIN.  
HISTORIC INTEREST OF THE EDIFICE—  
WHERE THE OLD EMPEROR LIVED  
—BERLIN SOCIALISTS.

LONDON, Jan. 15.—The death of the aged Dowager Empress Augusta leaves tenantless the so-called Kaiser's Palace on Unter den Linden, with which are associated all the memories of the new empire in Berlin. Why the old Emperor ever wanted to live in this palace instead of one of the others close at hand I could never make out. It is the least commodious of the three—a plain, broad-fronted building, built almost flush with the sidewalk, and looks far more like a bank or public library than a palace. It has no attractive historical associations, since it was built no earlier than 1834. The interior is certainly very fine, with its marble staircase and its inclosed Winter garden; but there are a dozen private residences of Princes and great nobles in Berlin which far exceed it in splendor, while it cannot in this respect be for a moment compared with the Schloss on the other side of the river. But the tastes of monarchs in this matter of habitations are inscrutable. Queen Victoria, for example, will never sleep in the sumptuous Buckingham Palace when she comes to London, but uses it solely for great state functions, and lives by preference in the dingy old barrack called St. James's Palace, on the Pall Mall side of the park. So William preferred to live where he did, with all the windows of his ground-floor apartment close to the street and overlooking the great equestrian statue of Frederick II. Here, almost to the last week of his life, he used to show himself at the familiar left-corner window at 1 o'clock to watch the guards march past, and a crowd of Berliners and strangers as regularly gathered to watch him. Here in the severely plain inner room of this suite, on the narrow old iron camp bedstead which he had used at Waterloo as a boy, the aged Emperor died. And now his widow, who for so many years lived in the rooms directly overhead, is gone, too, and the palace of the first Hohenzollern Emperor is deserted. There is no hint as yet about its future occupant. It may be given to the Dowager Empress Frederick, or even more probably to her second son, Prince Henry. But there seems no chance that it will ever again be the home of a ruling sovereign.

As for the young Emperor, all Berlin is agog over the social splurge he is expected to make in the big historic palace of the town, commonly called the Schloss. This is almost the only building in Berlin which conveys the slightest suggestion of mediæval picturesqueness, and even here this aspect is confined to a single view of the back of the palace. Berlin is in one sense by no means a new place. It had its beginnings in the remote twelfth century, when Albert the Bear was Margrave, and it was a town of enough importance to belong to the Hanseatic League long before the Hohenzollerns had got any further northward than Nuremberg in their progress from the ancestral Danubian nest. As early as 1486, too, it became a royal residence—and has remained so ever since. The astonishing thing, therefore, is that, with this slight exception of the back of the Schloss, you cannot find in Berlin anything which, architecturally speaking, might not have been built fifty years ago. Every other German town has its antique quarters, its remains of mediæval days. Berlin is all new, at least in appearance. The cluster of palaces and public buildings all about this lower end of Unter den Linden—embracing the Academy, the Opera House, the Arsenal, the two museums, the library, the three palaces, and the National Gallery—really represent more different generations of builders than there are structures. But their fronts all look alike, and might all have been built in the present century. The same thing is almost as true of even the oldest private parts of the town. The explanation is to be found, I suppose, in the enormous artistic influence which French standards and French tastes always had upon the Hohenzollerns. They all tried to build as much in the style of Louis XIV. as they could. The foremost architect of his day in Berlin when the kingdom was founded, in 1701, was a Hamburger named Andreas Schlüter. He began the principal portion of the modern Schloss, built the academy and the château out beyond the Thiergarten at Charlottenburg, and his pupils finished the Schloss and erected others of the edifices already named. Frederick the Great built the university, the library, and the Opera House, and in all three reigns the architects and royal patrons seem to have had no dearer ambition than to make their work as close an imitation of Versailles as they could. The result is, as has been said, that Berlin is alone among German cities in the lack of distinctive old German architecture.

The one exception is the view of the Schloss buildings to be obtained from the Kaiser Wilhelm Bridge, which spans the narrower of the two arms of the Spree between the palace stands. Here presents straight from the water's edge a very handsome group of buildings, gray with age, and capped with tall, gabled roofs of varying heights and angles in the noblest manner of the German Renaissance. These date from the days of Joachim II., and perhaps contain portions of the earlier castle built by the Elector Frederick II. in 1451. But on all the land sides this lovely old fragment of really national architecture is hidden from sight by the tasteless pseudo-French additions built by later monarchs. Almost every one of Joachim's successors had his go at the Schloss, and left it bigger than he found it. Schlüter's patron, the first King, really intended to pull everything down to make room for the magnificent palace he had resolved to build, but fortunately Schlüter died after he had built the two great modern façades and before he had had time to destroy Joachim's water front. In this palace Frederick the Great was born and lived, and here the far-famed ghost of the White Lady on occasion walks.

It is this huge building—half old, half modern—which the young Kaiser at once determined to occupy when he ascended the throne. No Emperors had lived there and no King of Prussia for nearly a century. The vast, cold, sprawling, overdecorated imitation of Versailles had been too big and costly and cheerless for the Kings who followed Frederick the Great, and who were as poor in pocket as they were luckless on the battle field. They built additions here and there in a desultory way, but they kept their residence elsewhere. But if this Schloss were twice as big and four times as gaudy it would not be too fine for young William. The mourning emblems for his grandfather and father had scarcely been taken down from the façades of the building before carpenters, plumbers, and upholsterers were at work putting it into shape for occupation by the new Emperor. I hear most remarkable accounts of the changes that have been made or are now approaching completion. Evidently there is to be no other palace in Europe fit to be mentioned in the same breath with it either for magnificence of appointments or the size and impressiveness of the retinue of service involved. The days of great palaces in Europe had been thought to be over. Even among sovereigns who possessed them, the growing habit has been to reserve them for occasional court displays and live in smaller and more comfortable structures. But William is not organized on those lines. He is full of the histrionic side of his position. There was never a more self-conscious young man. The thought of how he is appearing in the public eye, of what people are thinking and saying about him, seems never absent from his mind. To such a temperament, the impulse to live more grandly in this great Schloss than anybody else lived anywhere

would be overwhelmingly strong. And so far as in him lies, this is what he is going to do.

The effect of this on Berlin will be very curious to note. The town itself has grown of late years in a perfectly inexplicable fashion. In 1885 it had a population of 1,315,000 inhabitants, a gain of nearly 200,000 in five years. It is apparent to every observer that the growth has been much more rapid since that date than it was before. Before the century is ended Berlin bids fair to pass Paris in the race and become the second city in Europe. But why this should be so is what no one can explain. It is situated on an unnavigable river, on the road to nowhere in particular, and in the centre of a vast sand plain which is but sparsely populated and is poorer than Job's proverbial turkey. Yet it has successively distanced Amsterdam, Antwerp, Hamburg, and even Liverpool as a focus of population. It manufactures very little; it buys everything and has next to nothing to sell; its principal industry is the building of new houses for the swarm of new people who are continually pouring in from the country. Presumably these people are most attracted by the fact that Berlin is the centre of government, the hub of the empire, and the permanent residence of an army corps. The threads of German public life, civil or military, financial and social, are all knotted here, and so everybody goes there because somebody else has gone. This makes a big population; it makes also a dangerous population. In the nature of things Berlin is a very hotbed of discontent. It is crowded with poor people who have no business there at all by any economic rule, but who none the less bitterly resent their poverty. They are governed very roughly by the police and military, and this adds wrath to their resentment. As a result Berlin elects a full delegation of Socialist Deputies to the Reichstag by majorities each time more sweeping than before. Its workingmen's quarters are honeycombed with Anarchist societies and semi-Nihilistic conspiracies. Thus far these have not done much beyond voting. But it is obvious enough that they could do a great deal more if they wished, and if sufficient provocation were offered. It will be most interesting to watch the effect produced on this great discontented mass—which really is much more powerful in Berlin than the like element ever was in Paris—by the young Emperor's forthcoming career of expensive ostentation.

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