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### *BERLIN REVISITED BY A BRITISH TOURIST*

TWENTY-EIGHT years are apt to bring changes enough in the lives of individuals, but in few human beings can the flight of time have wrought a more complete transformation, both to the outward and to the inward eye, than in the Emperor William's capital since the early 'eighties.

There are not a great many places indeed where the traveller, who returns after so long an interval, can take up his station and look round with any complete sense of recognition. The chief of these is, of course, the approach from the Thiergarten by the Brandenburg Gate, whence the long and stately lines of Unter den Linden in spite of many new constructions present their well-remembered aspect. And here close at hand, if you are in luck's way, the soldiers in their historic uniforms still come rushing out of the little guard-house to salute the passing of some eminent personage with all the complicated ceremonial used by their forefathers in the days of the great Frederick. On the left the French Embassy, as of old, arrests the eye by a peculiar grace of proportion and outline which distinguishes it amongst more imposing neighbours. Lower down loom the buildings of the Wilhelm Strasse, still eloquently reminiscent of the overshadowing presence which brooded over them then, forging thunderbolts for the world outside the Fatherland. A few minutes' further stroll brings us to the plain stone mansion with its long array of unveiled windows on the first floor, blank now, but how full of memories! That one next the corner framed a sight not easily to be forgotten when the traveller, then a schoolgirl, passed this way last time and was suddenly bidden to look up. Two figures were plainly visible through the clear glass, in no way screened from public observation. One seated at a table, white-haired, white-  
as obviously talking eagerly as he looked up at the other  
ve head standing beside him, the deep-set eyes gazing  
wide public place and the busy traffic of the city's  
t that evidently, but what other visions past or future,  
ay, in which his master's subjects no doubt played their

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unconscious part? Who could say? It was a sight which made the stranger stand still involuntarily and draw in his breath; but the good Berliners were evidently too familiar with it to pay much heed as they hurried by, intent on their own concerns. No doubt, though, the passing glances occasionally cast up at those two stark watchdogs of the Fatherland keeping their vigilant guard, must have given an added sense of security to the citizen intent on his more trivial round, and perhaps also to the humbler workers, without whom Prince Bismarck himself could have fashioned no edifice of Empire.

That window now is bare and empty. One of the figures sits in effigy, it is true, mounted on a charger close by upon a pile of cumbrous masonry which blocks the river façade so fine in its simplicity of the old Schloss, which has been the scene of so many Hohenzollern pomps and festivals. Certain feminine figures of portentous size are grouped about the horse and his rider. These sylphs at first appeared, it is declared, in native beauty unadorned by all the massive draperies which clothe them now in deference to public opinion; the good citizens of Berlin having stoutly objected to classic traditions in attire for the emblematic females who form the bodyguard of their first Emperor.

His successor, beloved of so many hearts, has found commemoration most appropriate in the fine museum called by his name in which the magnificent art collections, lavishly acquired for the city of Berlin, have been lately so beautifully arranged. Here there is neither space nor capacity to speak of the wealth of treasures which dazzle you on every wall in the larger rooms; but perhaps a word may be allowed upon the rare pleasures provided by the presiding genius of the galleries in those little cabinets, leading out of one another, into which the visitor may pass and find such fresh delight and repose. For it is here that certain pictures have found not only space but an actual home. These rooms, their walls covered with dim harmonious brocades, hold just a few treasures in each, arranged with such consummate art that all sense of gallery and museum is forgotten. You find yourself in a moment transported to quite another atmosphere, to the smaller palace chambers of some princely collector of another age, for whom the painters painted and the craftsmen wrought the things you see before you, destined to occupy the places where they are. The Ryks Museum at Amsterdam, the Musée Plantin at Antwerp, or the best of the Italian palace collections hardly convey a more complete sense of absolute harmony and fitness. Each perfect thing is shown not only to its own best advantage, but all are combined so as to form parts of a scheme. A Tuscan painting, delicate and glowing, is companioned on each side, say, by sconces of the same period and worthy of their place; they would light also some little masterpieces in bronze of the same period, while below is a chest of

wonderful Florentine workmanship, and opposite the best examples of Della Robbia ware and a tazza of Benvenuto Cellini fill the space where you would expect to see them in just such a Florentine chamber. The same plan holds good as you pass from one room to another. What a delight, too, awaits the traveller when he meets the masters of the old German school in another chamber, a revelation of splendid colour and design to those of us—and that is necessarily the great majority—who have scant acquaintance with their unsuspected magnificence. All find themselves in company with other works of artist-craftsmen who in those days had recognised no divorce or incompatibility between different forms of beauty in the making.

The particulars must be left to Baedeker and to higher powers with authority to speak in these matters. Yet it is hard to forbear all mention of the delight with which these rooms impress themselves on the memory of a British tourist, of the way in which Rembrandt's warrior with the brass helmet, for instance—that vision of the seared and dinted, unconquerable fighter, battered with a hundred fights—haunts one as on a crowded wall he might not have power to do to the full; or of the unforgettable radiance of Holbein's *Merchant of Basle*, whose extraordinary grace of design and beauty of colour required all that amount of clear wall-space which it has now been given. How one goes back to the deep rose-coloured carnation in the tall vase, recalling the colour of the velvet sleeves and leading up, slim and graceful, to the delicate, dreamy face above it, and the suggestions of a business life in a background more beautiful to the eye than any merchant's office, whether in Basle or in London or Berlin, could offer to-day! Well, one loves without knowledge, and the professional critic, no doubt, is the only person who has a right to express himself in these matters; so to him be left the manner of it, but to all is given the sheer delight even without his guiding hand.

It is impossible to think without many a sigh of treasures equally beautiful and rare, scattered in different obscure corners of various London museums, bronzes, jewellery, furniture, and so on. Why should they not be brought together again into the company of the painters of their own age? Even in Berlin this conception has not been carried nearly far enough; in London, only the Wallace Collection here and there hints at it. The material obstacles are, no doubt, so great as to be almost insurmountable, but all difficulties declared to be insurmountable are likely to remain so until a generation arises which loses all consciousness of them in view of a desired end. Thus the uninitiated, the British tourist, arranges for a future in which there will be no more great bare galleries whose walls are plastered thick with paintings, jostling each other, encroaching on one another, dazzling, dazing, bewildering, exhausting with a perfect chaos of beauty.

In another place, the Pergamon Museum, the way in which the fragments of the great altar to Poseidon have been carefully pieced together and a reconstruction practically effected is only another example of that laborious working with a view to the whole rather than to kaleidoscopic chaos of details which is so characteristic of every branch of modern German activity.

Indeed, when the traveller turns reluctantly from the splendours within doors and passes to the glaring white streets rising line upon line, one after the other, all exactly alike round and about Berlin, he could wish for a less magnificently ordered uniformity, for some sign of individuality, for some tokens from the past, if only a remnant of the charming irregular roofs and towers now only to be seen in old prints and pictures of the former city on the Spree. How they oppress one those miles of symmetrical streets and boulevards of pompous design, all as much alike and mathematically symmetrical as the rows of Imperial troops on the Tempel Hof ground on a review day! The concessions made to poor humanity in the way of sculptural or other adornment follow the same law of reiteration, fixed and made immutable, it is said, in obedience to an omniscient ruler and compass. In 'la vieille Allemagne' originality and individuality found a genial soil, it is otherwise under the rule of modern Prussia.

A search for old landmarks and historic links (apart from the Schloss itself) is most easily rewarded by a visit to the Hohenzollern Museum, a moderate-sized and somewhat secluded palace, occupied by the great Frederick during his precarious existence as Crown Prince, in the lifetime of that appalling old Turk, Frederick William the First. Here again the sacred right of guidance must be left to Baedeker, or let us rather say to individual vagary, that most irresistible and delightful of all guides. Here it is the lover of history, and above all of historical personalities, rather than the artist, who finds his reward. Only a few of the paintings have much artistic value, though many have immense interest of another kind. One passes quickly by the somewhat desolating procession of the families of successive Electors who filled the space between him of Brandenburg the founder of Prussian supremacy (a real mailed fist that!) and the furious old tyrant who was with such difficulty restrained from taking the life of his firstborn; but Frederick was destined, as we know, to play out his part. Of greater interest than these wooden faces on the wall are the objects below, which speak more eloquently of personalities. The array of old Frederick William's pipes recalls the vivid descriptions in the Margravine of Bayreuth's *Memoirs*, of those terrible smoking parties at which the compulsory guests gathered, trembling with the same misgivings that haunted Alice's friends at the Duchess's garden-party, and with at least as much foundation. To how many rages and storms did that array of flageolets and flutes belonging to her great brother give rise on the part of their appalling parent? The

beautifully printed volumes of Frederick the Great's poems, all scored and corrected by the author's own hand, possess an interest not intrinsically belonging to those elaborate effusions as they were given to the world. Many letters exchanged between him and Voltaire can be read; there is certainly more vitality here than in the stilted pastorals of the royal author.

There is another room close by from which it is hard indeed to tear oneself away, for here it is impossible not to realise with special vividness something of the lovely and radiant presence which has left its traces on this motley and pathetic collection. There are the *escritoire* and the very pen that she used for some of those enchanting letters which have fortunately been preserved. That travelling writing-case was doubtless used during the long flights from the French conqueror northwards to ice-bound Memel through the bitter winter weather after the disasters of Jena. Here is a piece of half-finished embroidery, those are her little satin slippers all creased and worn, and her very dresses with the short waists and sleeves, all dim and faded now. A hundred things that were hers and speak of her intimate daily life give one a feeling of having intruded into her privacy. What right have we amongst the personal possessions of this most feminine dead woman, at once so delicate and so strong, of so stout a heart and so gracious a charm? Louisa at all stages of her short life smiles down upon us from her pictures on the walls, most often as the beautiful Crown Princess, radiant with happiness, that happiness which she had the secret of creating from the least promising materials and preserving through all vicissitudes; lovely and beloved of her subjects, long before the evil days came to prove how well she deserved the title of 'mother of her people' which they bestowed upon her before she was twenty-one! She died at thirty-four, worn out in their service, having striven as hard to save her country from the overwhelming tide of Napoleonic victory as any of her generals, and certainly more dreaded than they by the conqueror himself, who stooped to the basest weapons of coarse libel and calumny to undermine that popular devotion of which he realised the strength and the danger. He himself has told how near he came to yielding up something of his spoils at her exquisite intercession during that momentous interview at Tilsit, which was so fatefully interrupted by the always inopportune Frederick William the Third. It is no wonder that Queen Louisa is an adored memory in her own country; in others also she holds her place as not least amongst the company of heroic figures in her day. Here, amongst these feminine possessions of hers, lingers more than a touch of her personality; in the tokens of a delicate taste, in all these pretty faded things that she wore and handled, chose and used. Here we come much more closely in touch with the personal dignity and refinement of the woman and the Queen than in that much-vaunted theatrical monument by Rauch at Charlottenburg, where the effigy

suggests nothing so much as a restless sleeper, covered with much-increased folds of draperies, fretted by uneasy tossings; neither the repose and dignity of death nor the joyous vitality of the woman are to be found there.

Passing out of the house of memories, it was interesting to stroll homewards again by way of Unter den Linden in the company of an elderly companion, of that fine blond type to which the Emperor Frederick belonged, at any rate physically, doubtless quite as much in other ways as well. It is happily still to be met with fairly often in North Germany, though by no means characteristic of the present generation in Prussia, descended rather from that 'vieille Allemagne' which has already passed away, to the infinite loss and lamentation of sister countries. It was easy to laugh at Pumpernickel, but it was, when all is said, a cheap laughter. What does the world not owe to some of those little courts, which were so often the centre of a splendid intellectual life, the safe harbour of refuge of the great spirits who would otherwise have had to grind their hearts out in unrecognised squalor to earn a scanty subsistence?

The company of this gentle giant, so sage and so simple, the man of learning with the child's heart, not only undazzled but absolutely disturbed and distressed by all material pomp and circumstance in daily life, was an encouraging reminder that the spirit of that 'vieille Allemagne' is after all not crushed out either by Prussian militarism or by the rapid growth of wealthy materialism in North Germany as in other countries. Rather it is the vital, unquenchable spirit which still gives its own special greatness to the German race. The dust of the show, the braying of trumpets, all the clamour of the circus folk may fill the foreground, but behind all one may still perceive the everlasting service of the altar, that great-hearted selfless devotion to the things of the mind, that carelessness of the things of the world, which strike one as the real inspiration of Germany from generation to generation.

Pursuing our leisurely way on the less crowded side of the great avenue, there flashed towards us, with a sudden clash and clatter of accoutrements and a vision of gorgeous uniforms, a group of splendid riders on horses befitting them, a gorgeous note of colour and self-assertion against the grey sky of the dull autumn day. How could the Anglo-Saxon stranger, unused to such spectacles, fail to be impressed and to say so?

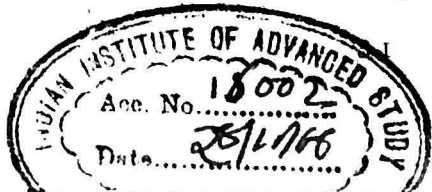
'A fine sight?' repeated the giant in a genial, reflective growl. 'Well, well, it may be so perhaps. But I tell you what I call one fine sight, one real fine sight. It was a King who did come to visit us in Germany, in a tweed travelling suit and a felt hat; no guards, no arms, no uniforms for him, no parade at all; just a simple traveller from England, he came to us in a plain suit like any other man. "There," we said, "is one who knows his people well, and they know him.'

He understands what they want, their needs, their troubles, so he can help them.' That, I tell you, was a fine sight for us, and it is one we shall not forget.' He swept off his hat as he spoke to salute the remembrance of that plain suit which stood for so fair a symbol in his mind. It was a tribute almost childish in its outspoken simplicity, but none the less worthy of a Caesar in its profound sincerity.

That night the English travellers were entertained again by hospitable German friends and met with still further surprises. For how many years have we not meekly bowed our heads at home while the wholesale superiority of all Teutonic educational systems has been dinned into our ears in stormy chorus by many leaders, or shall we say followers, of modern pedagogy? What awe-inspiring names from German shrines have been thundered at us when we have ventured to suggest a haunting doubt as to the results of a system with compartments of machine-made exactness, into which the innocents are to be fitted almost as soon as they draw breath in a troublesome world, in order that they may all be drilled after one model, in a round of appallingly well-organised pursuits, too often miscalled by the hallowed name of play! It was left, however, to our German friends to give utterance in good set terms to revolutionary sentiments on the subject such as we had barely ventured to harbour in our own hearts, and indeed they carried them a great deal further along the line of later development and secondary education. The party, though small, was quite a representative one of the upper professional class. All were men of the world in the best and widest sense; all themselves highly educated, one or two of exceptional experience in commercial or other large affairs of national importance, men marked out for honour in their own country, and acquainted with ours. One indeed had travelled widely in our Empire also, and had been a welcome guest at many Indian regimental messes as well as at official and private houses, both there and in South Africa and other colonies. He sighed as he spoke of changes in his career which must now put an end to these excursions and replace them with a laborious sedentary life in Berlin.

Of course the question of education in the two countries soon arose, not solely on account of the presence of English guests perhaps; one quickly becomes aware that the number of political or social subjects which can be comfortably discussed in general society in the Emperor William's capital is limited by considerations it is difficult for us to realise at home in the present century. Our travelled friend listened in grave silence for a time to sincere English tributes to various features of German secondary education, then, to the petrified astonishment of the foreign visitors he remarked quietly:

'When my sons are old enough I shall send them to an English public school.'



'And I too,' echoed after a moment's pause, as if gathering up his courage, one of his friends who is an authority on many public questions in Germany.

'I also,' said a third, while their wives smiled their acquiescence from opposite sides of the table.

This was indeed astonishing; we had to take breath before our curiosity found voice.

'Tell us first,' said one of the speakers, 'why you are so surprised.'

'What will our boys learn at Eton or Harrow or another of your great schools?' demanded somebody else.

To answer these conundrums on the spur of the moment to an eager and highly critical German audience with the proper combination of truth and patriotism was no slight undertaking, but it had to be attempted, however haltingly.

'Out of books little, as compared with the boys in our gymnasia; yes, that we understand, but there are other things. What about those other things? Please to con-tin-ue.'

So it was necessary simply to take the plunge boldly, even if with some misgivings as to possible consequences; yet there was obviously no real danger of giving offence to people so open-minded, so genial, so much in earnest. A chorus of acclamations in fact greeted a co-operative effort to sum up the principal characteristics of that public school life of ours which has been so scathingly denounced of late years by many educational enthusiasts at home.

'Ach, yes! But that is just what we want, what we cannot get for our sons here. That they shall learn to be men, to rely on themselves, to keep order for themselves, to govern for themselves, to speak the truth always and take the consequences, to, how you call it, 'play the game'; all that is so good, so admirable, and that is what we look for in vain here. It is character-building—and the greatest of all things is character-building!'

Oh! shades of the prophets; oh! sacred shrine at Gotha; oh! vision of long lines of German learned sages, what rank heresy has broken out amongst you now! The amazement of the foreign visitors broke forth again.

'No, no!' said our hosts, 'that is not what our boys are taught. They come home to us from school stuffed with learning if you like, but so stuffed, so overworked, that they forget it quickly, while they are over-disciplined, over-trained, watched over and arranged for until they cannot stand alone or take responsibility for themselves. There is the military service as you say, to follow, yes certainly, but that means more discipline, more obedience, no greater expansion for personality. We want personalities; we want a governing class with public school traditions for our colonies, if our colonies are to be any use to us at all.'

'Yes, it is all true,' chimed in the other father of boys. 'What



Germany needs and must have if she is to have a real colonial empire, is the class of administrators trained in the playing fields such as are turned out in numbers year by year from your public schools. Such young fellows as I have met everywhere carrying on the work of your colonies, sturdy and self-reliant without arrogance, for their school-fellows have seen to that; ruling well almost by instinct; apparently unconscious of their crushing responsibilities in solitary, uncivilised countries, for they are able to govern coloured races, even when mere savages, and to win their confidence and even affection at the same time. Never doubting themselves of the possibility of such achievement, not even thinking about it, not thinking much at all, perhaps, but quite often succeeding, seldom not succeeding, in fact. Such a ruling class we must have, if we are to keep over-seas colonies, and we think that only by the same sort of character-building can we raise one like yours—for, again, the greatest of all things is character-building.'

Another day, however, showed a different aspect of German life, with little enough here, alas! to flatter our national complacency. This visit to Berlin formed part of a tour of inspection by the official members of the party of certain great industrial workshops, owned and directed by English enterprise in various North German and other continental towns. In the neighbourhood of Berlin these works are of immense extent, and many thousands of artisans, both skilled and unskilled, are employed on them.—A visit there soon aroused comparisons melancholy indeed to those who may chance to have some acquaintance with the life of the English industrial worker. It was impossible to walk about the great 'shops' (I use the word, of course, in its technical sense) filled with the busy throngs of men intent on their daily toil, and not to be struck first of all with their great superiority in physique and bearing to any similar collection of indoor workers at home. It did not lie only in the straight, up-standing figures, the finely developed chests and the well-carried heads which bore their obvious testimony to the results of military training. There was something more than this, a difference difficult to define exactly, but one which gradually impressed itself forcibly upon the observer standing apart and watching closely for a time. It lay perhaps in the impression of definite purpose conveyed by all their movements, in the well-directed, intelligent energy which went to all their actions, in the absence of slouching and of all that unnecessary and aimless casting about of uncertain limbs and persons which is so commonly to be seen in the shiftless, undrilled majority of youths belonging to the same class at home. The difference between movements habitually trained to carry out definite purposes and those untrained is greater than one can realise without the opportunity of watching results in workers of both systems, or rather in those of system and of absence of system.

It was impossible not to think with a pang of those groups of weakly, narrow-chested youths at home who hang about the streets after working hours are over and move with slouching gait, ungainly and aimless in their movements, whether at work or at ease, and of their round-shouldered, stooping elders who form so sadly large a proportion of any industrial crowd in our country. Even their clothes showed a far higher standard of neatness and that attention to the person in small things which means so much, a truism too often ostentatiously neglected by others as well as by working men in England. In German workshops, as indeed in most continental countries, the men wear long washing blouses or overalls to cover their neat garments during working hours; they are removed at closing time, and the wearers are thus able to walk away from the works with their clothes free from all signs of soil or dust, while each man, be it noted, wore a white collar and looked as neat and trim as his English comrades appear on Sundays and holidays. Moreover, every workman on the place is compelled to take a daily bath before he leaves in the admirable bathrooms lavishly provided; imagine such an institution as a compulsory bath anywhere but in the workhouses of our own free and enlightened country!

The burning question of universal military training for our own people does not lie within the scope of such stray and amateur observations as these, but it was impossible to pass from one of these German workshops to another and not to feel many a sad qualm instead of any sense of pride in the comparison perpetually forced upon one between the physique and bearing of the products of two systems. The thought of those whom one cannot help coming to look upon as the victims of immunity in our own country was melancholy and even humiliating here. No abstract views on the sin of militarism or the desirability of disarmament can alter the tangible results in development so plainly to be seen. The best friends and well-wishers of our own working youths must desire for them that healthy muscular expansion together with the bracing of the moral fibre obtained by the discipline of control which alone can set them free to fulfil any useful purpose in life.

It may be of interest to mention here the conclusion arrived at by the authorities of the immense industrial enterprise to which I refer in this article. It has been in existence for over eighty years, and the number of hands employed in different continental countries is continually increasing as its boundaries are ever enlarging. Over and over again their reports show that the amount of work performed and the individual efficiency of the workman vary in each State exactly in proportion to the stringency of its laws for the enforcement of military service. Thus the German is more competent and does a better day's work than the Belgian worker, whose service is more often evaded, and is in any case less thorough, and so the scale varies in the

different countries of Western Europe. Such is the tale told by the labour managers' report sheets.

To return, however, to our own glimpses of work-a-day life in North Germany—a country of our kinsmen after all—the last impression was by no means the least pleasant of our stay. In nothing perhaps, does the standard of civilisation show itself more plainly than in the commissariat of the working classes. In the works we were visiting, a co-operative kitchen had been arranged which provided dinner daily for the hands at the cost of sixpence a head. We gladly accepted an invitation to visit the scene of operations as the hour drew near. In the large, bare dining-hall long tables were neatly laid out with all the necessary array of bright cutlery and glass. There were no tablecloths, but dainty cleanliness and order prevailed everywhere, while the most appetising odours from the adjoining kitchen penetrated through the open doors. We found it small, but as spotlessly clean and neat as though the campaign of its daily labours were not even then at its full height. A thick soup was giving out a most savoury invitation from large cauldrons on one side, while some species of solid-looking ragout was competing with it in its own stewing-pans on the other. It was presently transferred to the great white dishes, and most attractively served up with a generous garnish of neatly arranged vegetables and a separate salad. The coffee which was to follow bubbled pleasantly in the great cans. How many of our workers sit down daily to a meal so abundant, well cooked and well served as this sixpenny dinner? For this visit fell upon an ordinary day of the common round, in no way distinguished from any other, the dinner absolutely *à la fortune du pot*. Remembering the prices quoted in Berlin for all articles of food, and more especially the enormous cost of butcher's meat, the results achieved before our eyes seemed to be nothing less than a miracle, even for the powers of the gifted German *Hausfrau*. Suddenly recollections of certain constituents which we have all heard of as figuring not seldom in the fleshly part of a German workman's *menu* rose, not without unpleasing sensations, to a prejudiced insular mind. On closer inspection it was seen that what looked like solid joints were really formed of finely minced meat. Now, of what might this sausage-like substance really be composed? Artful questions addressed to the two smiling and competent women presiding over the kitchen and its cauldrons produced cheery answers, still more artful in their evasiveness. Curiosity outran discretion in conversation with our guide, but he, whether from subtlety or ignorance, left it unsated and only shook his head, with:

'Ah! the cooks have their secrets. We must not inquire into them,' but there was a twinkle in his eye which was by no means satisfying.

Well, whatever its component parts, that stew, judging by its

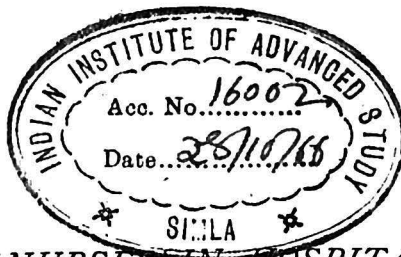
smell and appearance, was above criticism, and when a stampede across the yard announced the host of diners, it became evident that their appreciation was tempered by no misgivings, while their looks carried conviction that good digestion, which alas! does not always wait on appetite, was the common lot of the clients for whom those excellent women catered with mysterious but successful art.

With wages at about the same rate as our own, with rents as high as in any of our large cities, with provisions considerably dearer, how is it that the average German workman can lead a life so much higher in the scale of comfort and civilisation than is found in the corresponding English home? Of course I do not refer to the fortunately large number of exceptions amongst our own ranks, to those admirable wives who have attained to the secret of making much out of little, who are imbued with that respect for small details the lack of which wrecks so many English enterprises, large and small, and none more than the great industry of home-making. But who is not aware of the higger-mugger discomfort which too often prevails amongst our English industrial workers, of that carelessness about small, insidious matters which may appear unimportant and are certainly troublesome, but which count for so terribly much in maintaining the standard of self-respect and of respect for others in the home they share? Those who could speak with the authority of knowledge assured us that only in exceptional cases in Germany do the working men's wives at home show less capacity and skill in all domestic arts than our friends the cooks who provided such admirable, cheap dinners for an army of hungry toilers every day from that small clean kitchen in the M— works near Berlin.

Why should so different a state of things prevail with us? The dreary question is always being asked: let us hope the conundrum will some day be happily answered. To muddle along and to muddle through is the tradition sanctified by use so far in our country, and will doubtless continue to be so until the day when the trumpet awakens the sleepers who lie about the heart of our Empire and lay their heavy weight on its circulation. But it was certainly cheering to be told that in most of the great works belonging to the Association I refer to, the managers and engineers appointed are often English, as it is found that they can generally manage the workmen with considerably less friction than is the case with their own fellow-countrymen. For Germany, like other continental countries, has troubles enough of her own, dark and menacing too. What do we know here of those bitter and deadly class hatreds with their violences of assertion met with violences of repression, to speak of which is far beyond the scope of the amateur observer? Thoughtful men, as has been seen, are searching eagerly, almost desperately, for the right means of raising the administrative class they lack, men trained to rule, endowed with that talent for authority which it seems is a special

heritage of the English race. The recent visit of Herr Dernberg to inquire into our colonial methods shows that the need is felt in high quarters to be a pressing one. Let us, whatever our national deficiencies, continue to be thankful that year by year numbers, often little more than boys, can still step out of the ranks to seize the torch as it is handed on at the outposts of civilisation and maintain the tradition of white justice and mercy and good rule. Their very names are often unknown beyond the immediate sphere of their activities and their official superiors. Yet it is they who are quietly carrying the burden of Empire, whether in the heart of India or in remote African swamps, the friends as well as the rulers of the coloured races, the wonder-workers who bring prosperity to crops, and save lives without number from destruction, even if their strange decrees against the time-honoured vengeance of the chiefs and the tribes are past comprehension. Most English homes have their share in the muster-roll, and for those who compose it we lay our gifts of thankfulness upon the altar, praying that the number of them may not fail in our country, in spite of all the powers at present fighting against them at home. For while we have them the day of Ragnarök is surely still a distant one, so let us pray for peace—and keep our powder dry.

MABEL C. BIRCHENOUGH.



### NURSES IN HOSPITALS

It is admitted generally, and by medical men as freely as anybody, that the nursing of a patient is often only a little less important than the medical treatment. In certain cases nursing may be given even the first place among the agencies employed to restore the sufferer to health.

Of how great moment therefore is it not only that the nurses should go through the full course of training now recognised as indispensable, but that the women who enter upon the work should be of the right sort. That nursing threatened at one time to become a fashionable pursuit was a pure misfortune, and, although much good has come of the entry into the nursing ranks of a superior and educated class of women, certain inconveniences and some positive evils have followed the injudicious exaltation of nurses and nursing, and a consequent encouragement of small feminine vanities which are strangely out of place when allied to a calling concerned with issues so grave. Some men who contrive to make themselves heard of in connection with the art of nursing appear unable to treat the subject seriously. Jocularities, not without its uses upon occasion, can be better employed than in treating matters intimately associated with human suffering, and to many whose business it is to be acquainted with the painful details of a sick-room and the offices demanded of a nurse the facetious attitude so frequently struck by speakers and their light references to 'pretty nurses' are little short of nauseous.

It is quite true that appearances have their importance and should be taken into consideration with other qualifications. We may safely assume that no matron would choose her probationers from applicants with marked physical blemishes, and while absolutely discarding 'prettiness' as a recommendation she would wisely give preference to those who were personally pleasing. A somewhat amusing illustration of the opposite view was afforded by a lady desirous to introduce a probationer, who, after recounting the several virtues of her nominee, added, as a final and convincing utterance, 'and she is exactly the sort of woman for the work, because she is positively ugly.'

