

BOOK OF THE WEEK.

"THE GOLDEN MOMENT."*

It requires some temerity to write at this time a romance of a German Princess, more especially as her lover was an Englishman. At the close of 1915 A.D., the very suggestion makes our gorge rise.

The authoress has, of course, written other books with Germany for its centre—"Memories of the Kaiser's Court," and "Daphne in the Fatherland."

We do not for a moment suggest that the story in question is pro-German. It is so detached in its attitude that one is inclined to think that it must have been conceived and written before the fatal August of 1914.

Apart from its environment, which sticks, it really earns the title of a romance, and we can at least enjoy the sly digs at the German temperament.

It was at the funeral of her father, the old Grand Duke Karl of Rehstein, that Rupert Worthington first saw his daughter, the Princess Antoinette. "For some reason, the procession made a short pause, and at the window of the carriage immediately following the funeral car a face appeared and a pair of violet eyes with a world of agonised appeal in their depths looked directly into Rupert's."

Rupert being a young man of powerful personality immediately determines that, come what may, he will get an introduction to the lady. It was from a woman in the crowd that he learned who she was, and further particulars were supplied by an English groom in her late father's stables who was in attendance with his charger at his funeral.

"The music they've bin playin' all the time's enough ter give an 'orse the bloomin' 'ump, ain't it?" grumbled the man.

"You belong, I suppose, to the stables of the Schloss," said Rupert.

His name was William Watson, he said, and he was as nearly as possible, "fed up" with stable existence as lived in Germany.

A little more conversation and the gift of some English cigarettes, and Rupert succeeds in getting a note conveyed to the Princess.

In spite of the town being full for the funeral, Rupert found a vacant room at the hotel.

"It is a splendid room and belonged to my grandmother; the bed is wonderful."

"The dining room of the 'Golden Eagle,' though very comfortable, was highly respectable. One could feel assured that drunkenness would have been as little tolerated there as in a missionary meeting."

It was after that he had retired to the ancestral couch; in fact, when he awoke on the June morning, that he perceived an envelope "that

had been obviously pushed under the door, perhaps by the postman who invades the sanctity of the German dwelling places at his own sweet will."

This was, of course, a reply from the Princess and enclosed the key of her private grounds. From this, it will be seen that we are in for a real romance, only, unfortunately, it is a German one, which spoils the flavour.

Fräulein von Bernhoff, her chaperone, is typical of her nation. She spent most of her time doing impossible water-colour sketches, and her clouds were like the pink wool crochet-slippers she wore.

Tante Lilli was another. "She had a way of rounding her eyes. It had been considered rather an attractive habit when she was a little girl, and poor Tante Lilli had never realised that the small mannerisms of youth are rarely becoming to the middle-aged, so she still continued the round-eyed wonder which her parents had thought so fascinating years ago, not knowing that it was the last absurd touch to her assertive rotundity."

Of course, Rupert being what he was, carries off and marries his Princess. But he first has an interview with no less a person than the Kaiser, who treats his suit as an absurdity not to be contemplated.

The *mésalliance* was, of course, the other way about. In former days this romance might have been quite popular, but we suggest that it has been published eighteen months too late.

H. H.

COMING EVENTS.

January 5th.—Child Study Association. Lecture in the Jehangier Hall, University of London, South Kensington, by Dr. C. W. Saleeby, F.R.S. (Edin.), on "Saving the Future." Chairman, the Hon. Sir John A. Cockburn, K.C.M.G. 5.30 p.m.

January 6th.—Nurses' Annual Re-union, Kensington Infirmary, 3 p.m. Guests are invited to stay all the evening.

January 20th.—Central Midwives Board. Monthly meeting. Board Room, Caxton House, S.W. 3.30 p.m.

January 21st.—Central Midwives Board. Penal Cases. Board Room, Caxton House, S.W. 11 a.m.

January 22nd.—League of St. Bartholomew's Hospital Nurses. The Winter General Meeting, Clinical Theatre, Medical School, 3 p.m. Social Gathering, Nurses' Sitting Room, Nurses' Home.

WORD FOR THE WEEK.

Be inspired with the belief that life is a great and noble calling, not a mean and grovelling thing that we are to shuffle through as we can, but an elevating and lofty destiny.

—W. E. Gladstone.

* By Annie Topham. Andrew Melrose, Ltd., London.

Take care of others, and leave yourself to the care of God.

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