

MONARCHS IN DEBT

MANY OF THE MODERN RULERS OF EUROPE HAVE FELT THE PINCH OF POVERTY. HOW SOME HAVE MANAGED TO GET OUT OF DEBT AND OTHERS TO BECOME HOPELESSLY INVOLVED.

By WYCOLLAR HALL

ROYALTY suggests wealth, and kings and emperors are usually supposed to be rolling in riches, since the very fact that they make their homes in magnificent palaces implies affluence, just as a workman's cottage indicates straitened circumstances. Yet many of the monarchs of the Old World in modern times have known the pinch of poverty. The debts of nations are often supplemented by infinitely more pressing liabilities of a personal character, in connection with which princes and kings are compelled to submit to all sorts of humiliations.

Among the least bitter of these is the recourse to the pawnshop, and long is the list of the anointed of the Lord who have at one time or another been forced to seek the costly assistance of that avuncular relative who has adopted for his heraldic device the old Lombard banking emblem of the three gilded balls. Thus, the last king of Naples on several occasions

PAWNEED ALL HIS SILVER PLATE IN LONDON.

King Milan, while still on the throne of Serbia, repeatedly deposited the various jewelled insignia of his sovereignty at the Monte de Piété in Vienna, in order to obtain the money necessary for the settlement of his "debts of honour"—that is to say, his losses at cards in the Austrian capital, and on two occasions they were, for political reasons, quietly redeemed by Emperor Francis Joseph.

Probably no sovereign has suffered more acutely from the lack of funds than King Edward VII., and it may therefore be of interest to know that, for the

in 1863 under many disadvantages. In the first place he had been brought up with such extreme strictness that when he first attained his freedom he was naturally disposed to extravagance of conduct, speech, and expenditure—in a word, he had to sow his wild oats; and when a prince of the blood, and particularly the heir to a great throne, engages in agricultural pursuits of this kind there are always plenty of men and women eager to propitiate the rising sun by abetting his follies. Then, too, the prince

three million dollars which she received from the civil list for the purpose, whereas their revenues at the time were less than four hundred thousand dollars a year; that is to say, inferior to those of many of the great nobles, such as the Dukes of Devonshire, Bedford, Westminster, Sutherland, Buccleuch, and Northumberland, the Earls of Derby, Dudley, etc. The result of this condition of affairs was that

THE PRINCE OF WALES SOON GOT HEAVILY IN DEBT.

and the time came when even the Rothschilds, whose position in English society he had firmly established, intimated to him that it was impossible for them to make any further advances. It is reported that on one or two occasions the queen, prompted by her ministers, and confronted by them with the alternative of their appealing to Parliament for a grant in behalf of the prince, reluctantly came to his rescue, and relieved him of some of his most pressing liabilities. But, inasmuch as no means was devised for the liquidation of all his debts, and for the prevention of their recurrence, it was not long before his troubles became once more acute.

It was then that the so-called "Benefactors" appeared upon the scene. "Benefactors" are persons of great wealth, who, from motives of patriotism and social ambition, esteem it a privilege to be permitted to place their well-stocked purses at the disposal of royalty. Such a one was Sir James Mackenzie. He had made the greater part of his money in India, originally as a hatter, and after as an indigo-planter, and was a kind-hearted, withal somewhat vulgar, man, whose main occupation during the latter part of his existence was to find means of

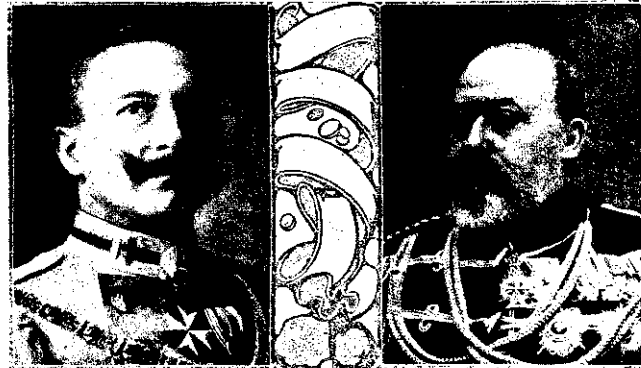
had always been very fond of the Prince, despite the dissimilarity of their tastes, and who, during his long wait for the Crown, had been subjected to very much the same pecuniary disadvantages as Queen Victoria's first-born, redhly acceded to his request, and is understood to have loaned him a large sum of money for his most pressing needs. This kindly act met with so much disapproval on the part of the leading dignitaries at the Imperial court at Berlin, that Prince Stollberg actually insisted upon resigning then and there his post as Minister and Grand Master of the Royal House, rather than participate in any such transaction as the loaning of money belonging to the Hohenzollern family to a foreign prince. On Emperor Frederick's death, not long afterward, and the accession of Emperor William, steps were taken to recover the money, and the unpleasantness in connection therewith was the cause of much of the bitterness which marked the relations of the Kaiser and his uncle during the early years of the former's reign. It is said that King Edward was enabled to liquidate his debt to the treasury of the Hohenzollern family by means of the timely help of Baron Hirsch, but that he has never wholly forgotten or forgiven the treatment to which he was subjected in the matter by his nephew and the authorities at Berlin.

Baron Hirsch, it may be remembered, died very suddenly, without coming to any arrangement about the liabilities of the Prince toward his estate; and it was then that

CECIL RHODES AND HIS FRIENDS

are reported to have appeared upon the scene as benefactors, and rendered possible the publication of a solemn yet significant assurance that England's future King was not in any way indebted to the estate of Baron Hirsch. To what extent the Prince by fortunate investments, suggested by the South African colossus, and his business associates including the Duke of Fife, who is the King's son-in-law, and the Duke of Abercorn, who was the Chief of his Household, it is impossible to say. But the fact remains that when Edward VII. succeeded to the Throne he found himself still burdened with such a heavy load of debt that everyone was prepared for an application to Parliament by the Crown for the settlement of the liabilities which he had incurred as heir apparent.

While a demand of this kind might have given rise to some discussion, there is no doubt that it would have been granted by an overwhelming majority, and would have met with the approval of the people at large, since a very general impression existed to the effect that the King had not been altogether fairly treated in a financial sense, while Prince of Wales. Realising, however, that such an appeal would weaken his position both at home and abroad, and would



EMPEROR WILLIAM II. OF GERMANY.

KING EDWARD VII. OF ENGLAND.

was, thanks to a piece of disgraceful jollery on the part of those concerned, saddled with the estate of Sandringham, the purchase of which had absorbed most of the accumulations of the revenues of his duchy of Cornwall, which he would otherwise have had at his disposal on attaining his majority—an estate that was not only productive of no income whatsoever, but which has involved the expenditure of vast sums for maintenance, and in order to render it habitable and comfortable.

Moreover, the recent death of the Prince Consort, and the withdrawal of the widowed Queen from public and social life, led to the Prince and Princess of Wales being saddled at the time of their marriage with all those representative duties of royalty which ordinarily fall to the share of the sovereign. Upon them fell

THE BURDEN OF ENTERTAINING MEMBERS OF FOREIGN REIGNING HOUSES,

who visited England, and of dispensing hospitality to the aristocracy, the dignitaries of state, and those people of light and leading who from motives of policy must be kept in touch with the dynasty. Finally, they were required, by reason of the queen's retirement, to surround themselves with a far larger court of lords and ladies and gentlemen in waiting than would have been necessary under other circumstances. In fact, the obligations of which they relieved the queen involved the expenditure of an income almost as large as the

HELPING ALONG HIS FUTURE KING IN A FINANCIAL WAY.

Among other things, he was in the habit of leasing each year one of the most costly and magnificent country seats in the neighbourhood of Windsor, solely for the purpose of being able to place it at the disposal of his illustrious friend for Ascot week, Queen Victoria having saddled so many restrictions upon the use of Windsor Castle during the races by her eldest son, that he was unable to make use of that magnificent and historic palace. When Sir James, who purchased one of the finest estates in the neighbourhood of Balmoral, died very suddenly, his executors called upon the prince to repay at once loans to the extent of considerably over £250,000; and, as they were compelled by their legal obligations to take steps to secure the recovery of the money, they would probably have been obliged in self-defence to institute legal proceedings against the heir apparent, had not Baron Hirsch come to his assistance.

If court gossip in England and on the Continent is to be believed, it was not the first time that the great Jewish philanthropist had shown himself

A FRIEND IN NEED TO THE FUTURE KING

of England. The latter, in 1888, had found himself involved in such terrible financial embarrassments that he appealed to his favourite brother-in-law, Emperor Frederick, who had just succeeded to the Throne. Frederick, who



COUNT DOUGLAS,

who was the Emperor of Germany's benefactor before he came to the Throne,

always be cast in his teeth by the foes of the dynasty, he took counsel of his most trusted advisers, and placed himself unreservedly in their hands. These advisers consisted of the great Anglo-German financier, Sir Ernest Cassel, of Nile Dam fame, Lord Paquhar, for many years the managing director of one of the leading banks in London, and Lord Esler, who is generally understood



KING LEOPOLD II. OF BELGIUM.

first time since his marriage, more than two score years ago, he is now entirely free from debt of every kind. It is this that accounts for the phenomenal and altogether unexpected improvement in his spirits and in his general health. I have said that the King is now out of debt, I mean this only in a financial sense. For he owes a deep debt of gratitude to Lord Farquhar, Lord Esler, and Sir Ernest Cassel for his liberation from all monetary embarrassments. The story of his rescue by this trio of devoted friends and able business men is an interesting one, and worth relating.

Edward VII. began his married life