

**GONE ASTRAY;  
SOME LEAVES FROM  
AN EMPEROR'S DIARY**

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Gone Astray; Some Leaves from an Emperor's Diary by Anonymous

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**ANONYMOUS**

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# GONE ASTRAY

*SOME LEAVES  
FROM AN EMPEROR'S DIARY*

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## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The manuscript of this volume was brought to the publishers by a person well known to them. Whilst it does not purport to be an actual transcription of the Kaiser's diary, it sufficiently reveals his extraordinary character to render it a valuable psychological study, setting forth, as it does, his ideas and opinions regarding personal, domestic and political matters, from the days of his boyhood to the present hour. Whether viewed from the standpoint of a personal document or the result of a life-long study by a marvellously gifted student of character, the volume will undoubtedly prove interesting and enlightening to every reader.

**GONE ASTRAY**

## GONE ASTRAY

*January 27th, 1869.*

This is the first great day of my life. I am ten years old, and begin my political and military career. It is indeed a solemn occasion for me, and I feel deeply the responsibilities which have become mine. I mean to live up to the standard of my glorious ancestors, to be, like them, a good soldier, and if possible to add some lustre to our Crown. And I mean also to make good resolutions and to abide by them: I mean to keep myself and my temper under control as far as I can, and I intend to do what my grandfather and father do, and what all the Princes of our House have always done. I intend to write a diary in which I shall record all my thoughts, and note what takes place around me. My father tells me that it is a good habit, because it allows us to see later on our mistakes, and to notice the changes that take place in our opinions. I suppose that my father is right, though I never like to have before my eyes the story of my past faults and failures.



This, however, is wrong, and I am quite aware of it. I must try to cure myself of this feeling. To-day I have ceased to be a baby; I have begun my real existence and I want it to be a serious one. I know very well that I am not like other people, that I am placed far above the rest of mankind, and that I must never forget the privileges of my position as a Prince of one of the oldest reigning Houses in Germany. I like to think that such is the case, though my mother tells me that I ought not to attach so much importance to that fact, that the only thing I must strive for is to be a good man like her own father. Probably what she says is true, but I have never felt quite at my ease with my mother. She does not seem to understand me, and sometimes I think that I bore her with my questions. It is different with my grandfather. He loves me I think more than my mother does. She never takes me on her knees as I have seen other mothers do with boys of my age; nor hugs me as my Aunt Louise hugs my Cousin Fritz. She is good to me, but she seems to be always thinking of what I must do when I am older, of what I ought to learn, and I feel that she would like me to be different from my relatives, though in what way, she does not say. With grandfather it is not so. He tells me stories when he has a spare moment. He relates

to me tales of his youth, he speaks to me of the days when as a young man he entered Paris with his father, King Frederick William III., and of all the great generals who fought at that time, and who at last beat Napoleon, Blücher, Yorcke, Stein and others. I like to hear about them. I like to think that in her hours of adversity our country remained true to itself. I like to believe that one day I may also be a great warrior. My father says that this is an unhealthy ambition, and I cannot understand why he thinks such a thing, he who showed himself such an excellent general during the last war. I wish I were older. Perhaps I would then understand my parents better. And yet it seems to me that I shall always cling to my grandfather, because I know that he loves me so well. This morning he had tears in his eyes when he spoke to me, and I nearly cried also, but my tutor was there, and I felt afraid he would say I was too big to weep. Yet it was such an impressive ceremony, and even my mother looked moved when I was dressed in my uniform of the First Regiment of Foot Guards, with my yellow ribbon of the order of the Black Eagle, and when my tutor brought me into the room where my grandfather and grandmother were already awaiting me. I had been several times in that room, which is one

of the handsomest apartments of our Royal Castle, but it never appeared so imposing to me as it did this morning. My grandfather took me by the hand, and told me that I was never to forget this day when for the first time I put on a uniform and was promoted to an officer's rank in the army. He spoke to me of my duties, told me that later on they would be heavy and responsible, that I must never forget that I was a Prussian Prince and a Hohenzollern, and that I must model my conduct on that of my great ancestors, our old Fritz, and the Great Elector, any many others. I was particularly moved when the King told me that in all probability I shall find myself one day in the place which he now occupies, and that under those circumstances I must never lose sight of the principles which have made our House so great. "We were never a rich nation, my boy," he told me, "but we have always succeeded in fighting our way against our rivals and competitors, because we have always known how to lean on our army, and it is this army that has always in the hours of danger proved the salvation of our dynasty and of our people. You are an officer to-day, William, and you must bear in mind that it is a great honour, especially to be a Prussian officer."

I kissed the King's hand, and it was then that