

**BUILDER AND BLUNDERER:
A STUDY OF EMPEROR
WILLIAM'S CHARACTER
AND FOREIGN POLICY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649405879

Builder and Blunderer: A Study of Emperor William's Character and Foreign Policy by George Saunders

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

GEORGE SAUNDERS

**BUILDER AND BLUNDERER:
A STUDY OF EMPEROR
WILLIAM'S CHARACTER
AND FOREIGN POLICY**

BUILDER AND BLUNDERER

A STUDY OF EMPEROR WILLIAM'S
CHARACTER AND FOREIGN
POLICY

BY

GEORGE SAUNDERS, B.A., LL.D.

"MORNING POST" CORRESPONDENT IN BERLIN, 1888-1897

"TIMES" CORRESPONDENT IN BERLIN, 1897-1908

"TIMES" CORRESPONDENT IN PARIS, 1908-1914

Univ. of
California

NEW YORK
E. P. DUTTON & COMPANY
OCT. 1914

1-F

PREFACE

WILLIAM II., German Emperor and King of Prussia, has loomed large in the eye of the European public throughout the period of his reign, or for close upon twenty-seven years. He has alternately commanded admiration and inspired mistrust or hostility. The view of his policy, its motives and its methods, which has been generally taken in Great Britain, has not, until quite recently—perhaps not until the outbreak of the Great War—approximated to that which is developed in the following pages. The writer's view was formed in all essentials about the time of Count Caprivi's fall, in 1894, and it was confirmed, he felt, by

PREFACE

close observation of the Emperor's words and actions during long residence in Berlin. Twenty years' study of the subject in that capital convinced him that his conception of the Emperor's policy and methods was shared in many respects by a good number of the more impartial of the Emperor's own subjects. Many of the manifestations of the Emperor's personality and of his aims have seemed to the writer, as to not a few Germans, to be a constant menace to the peace of the world. Ideas which might have been comparatively harmless when expressed by German professors, historians, and essayists, were perilously brought into the arena of international politics when enunciated by the head of the German Empire and the Commander-in-Chief of its armies. Nor did the Imperial exponent of these ideas ever seem adequately to realize the truth and wisdom of the German poet's words:

PREFACE

*Leicht bei einander wohnen die Gedanken,
Doch hart im Räume stossen sich die Sachen.*

(Ideas side by side are easy house-mates,
Realities in this world are wont to clash.)

Or, as Burns puts it, more concisely than
Schiller:

Facts are chieils that winna ding.

G. S.

October, 1914.



CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I.—GERMANY AT THE EMPEROR'S ACCESSION	1
II.—ACCESSION OF WILLIAM II.	30
III.—WILLIAM II. AND FOREIGN POLICY	65
IV.—WILLIAM II. AND GERMAN WORLD-POLICY	106
V.—WILLIAM II. AND WORLD-POLICY: CHECKS AND DISASTERS	136
VI.—THE LAST STAGE	174

