DENMARK.

The Legend of the Appearance of "Skjold."

Some Gossip About the Present Royal Family.

King Christian IX., His Wife, and His Six Children.

The King of Greece, Princess of Wales, and Empress of Russia.

Special Correspondence of The Chicago Tribune.

COPENHAGEN, Denmark, Nov. 20.—In visiting the salesrooms of the Danish porcelain factory in Copenhagen, one cannot fail to observe and admire a dainty bit of work representing a naked child who lies upon his shield, his head supported by a sheaf of grain—the iron couch as well as the rustic pillow being softened by a shaggy bearskin, beneath whose edges peep out the point and handle of the youthful warrior's sword. The position of the sleeper is most easy and graceful. It is a copy of a work created by the Danish sculptor Stein, and purchased by the late King Frederick VII., and it embodies a beautiful Danish legend.

The early inhabitants of the Island of Zealand, who lived on the picturesque shores of the fiord whose waves, running far inland, lave the foot of the venerable Town of Roeskilde, were astonished, one bright morning toward the close of summer, to see floating on the peaceful surface of the flood-tide a huge shield that bore the naked form of a beautiful infant, whose bearskin mantle served as the drapery of his couch, and but partially concealed the mighty sword which his baby hands had already learned to wield. The wondering natives hastened to bring him ashore and learn whence he came. His bearing was so regal, and so manly a head sat upon his infantile shoulders, that the people soon came to reverence him as from another sphere, and made him to reign over them as their King. In those days names were of simple origin, and so this boy-King was called

"SKJOLD,"

which means shield, in allusion to his mode of coming to their shores. When, after a long and successful reign, he came to die, "Skjold" commanded his subjects not to bury him in the ground, as that was not the custom in the land whence he came, but to place his body upon a ship, and then give it over to the guidance of the winds and waves, which would bear him back to the shores of his birth. The sorrowing people did as they were bid, and hence no one knows to this day where lies the body of "Skjold." But his name and fame continued to live in the mouths of his subjects, and his descendants were known as "Skjoldyunge," or children of "Skjold."

Although the present Royal family of Denmark does not, in fact or fiction, belong to the progeny of that mythical King of the Shield, its history is nevertheless interesting; and, if the anecdotes narrated of its individual members illustrate their character and habits, the other Royal houses of Europe would profit as much by imitating them as by having allied themselves to the family through marriage. The long and distinguished line of Oldenburg, which began its reign with Christian I. in 1448, perished, so far as direct descendants were concerned, in 1863, with the death of Frederick VII. But there was a poor Duke of the house of Glucksburg, a descendant of Christian II. of the Oldenburg dynasty through a collateral branch, who was chosen, or rather adopted, by Frederick VII. to succeed him on the throne which his family had occupied in almost unbroken succession for more than 400 years. Accordingly

CHRISTIAN IX.

came to the crown in 1863. The first years of his reign were characterized by the loss of the Province of Schleswig, which was robbed from little Denmark by the insatiable Prussia, assisted by Austria. Otherwise the internal and domestic welfare of his Kingdom has been signally flourishing, until today the Danes are one of the most contented and prosperous nations on the face of the globe. The private fortunes of the King's family have been materially altered for the better, and, from being insignificant and poor, his children have been raised to the best thrones in Europe. His second son, George, has been made King of Greece, and wedded a daughter of the Romanoffs; his eldest daughter, Alexandra, is Princess of Wales; her sister, Dagmar, is the surely unenvied Empress of All the Russias; Thyra, the youngest daughter, is the Duchess of Cumberland, and would be Queen of Hanover were it not for Prussia again; the eldest son is Frederick, Crown-Prince of Denmark; and the third son is an officer in the Danish Navy, and, in case of the death of his brother George and heirs, will become King of Greece. Surely, that is a fine showing from a worldly point of view!

OF THE KING'S AMIABILITY AND KINDLINESS

the most pleasing stories are told by his subjects, to whom his traits have greatly endeared him, overcoming the prejudices at first entertained against his succession because of his German proclivities and speech. He walks out daily as simply as any citizen, his only retinue of attendants being his stick and faithful dog. He returns the salutations of all he meets with a punctiliousness worthy of the Crown Prince himself, but even neglectful that of the dirtiest pagamullin, and often stopping to pat some upturned curly-head and ask questions as to home and parents. Such is his appreciation of his subjects' devotion that he never suffers its slightest expression to pass unnoticed. One old peasant woman, living on his estate of Friedensborg, presented his Majesty with a hideous thing of her own handiwork. Notwithstanding its ugliness, the King had it placed beneath his writing-desk in his study, which he occupies whenever he visits that summer-palace—thus no doubt, at the expense of violating his artistic sense, preserving the kindly-intentioned old creature from disappointment and mortification. Once each week the King holds a special audience for all of his subjects. The poorest and humblest in the realm are admitted to his presence and there, surrounded by no guard, but trusting to the good-will of the people, he listens to their complaints, and, so far as possible, grants their appeals. The story is told of

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as follows:

A poor girl, sickly and lame, and compelled to wear upon her leg heavy iron braces that made her movements awkward and painful, had a victim of some kind which she had long tried in vain to get presented. At last, driven to desperation, she resolved to visit the King in person, and accordingly presented herself at the hour appointed before the portal of the palace, and was ushered into the anteroom, which she found already filled by similar petitioners. Her heart was filled with dread, and, when it came her turn to enter the King's presence, her courage failed her utterly, and, her crippled legs refusing to support her body, she sank to the floor in a paroxysm of tears. The monarch, perceiving some new commotion without, inquired its meaning, and learned the cause; whereupon he commanded the poor girl to be brought in, and the next moment the pitiable object, half-unconscious with fright and pain, hobbled into the room. Unable to stand alone she tottered toward a table for support; but the kind King, observing her weakness, quickly placed a chair beside her, with the request that she should seat herself. Then, standing beside her, and placing his hand upon her head gently, he said, tenderly, "My child, you seem very weak and frightened; compose yourself, dry your tears, and tell me what you want; you have nothing to fear." In this way he aided the girl in calming her emotion, and then listened to her pathetic story, promising to give the matter his personal attention and to grant her claim. It is not necessary to add that this noble King held his word sacred to her.

I am sure that these two incidents alone are enough to prove that Christian IX. of Denmark is not only a Christian in name, but in deed. And it were well if some of the other sovereigns of Europe would turn and do likewise, instead of slaughtering their subjects in the art of killing and getting killed.

ABOUT THE QUEEN LOUISE,

daughter of the late Landgrave of Hessen-Cassel, I have not been able in an hour very much of special note, except that she is not as popular as the King because of her extreme preference for the land of her birth (Germany), of her desire at first to make German the language of the Court, and because she is said to be rather formal and stiff, but she is very charitable, I understand, and really desirous for the welfare of her people. The Danes have no affinity for the Germans, who robbed them of their provinces; and it is no wonder that they looked with great distrust upon any attempt to introduce Teutonic usages or customs into the atmosphere of their Court. But the King and Crown-Prince have so closely united and identified themselves with their folk as to have completely lulled all suspicion to rest.

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has inherited all the amiable traits of his father, and likewise wins the hearts of his people by his friendliness, for he is not fond of display. One day he was taking a walk in plain citizen's dress, when two Corporals passed him, only one of them giving him the military salute. The Prince, surprised by this conduct on the part of one of his sold ers, turned quickly upon the audacious son of Mars, and asked his name, regiment, etc., and then appointed an hour on which he should visit the Prince on the morrow. Of course the Corporal did not pass a very easy night, but awaited the coming interview with great trepidation. When the dreaded hour arrived his Highness facetiously him almost-

antly, bade him be seated, and conversed with him most affably upon matters pertaining to the army. At length, however, the Prince arose and with great dignity addressed the delinquent as follows: "On the street yesterday, when I was in civilian attire, you failed to recognize me. Now, I have summoned you here today in order that you may become so well acquainted with me as hereafter to recognize me in whatever guise I may appear. It is my desire to be personally known to every officer of my army. This will do for today! Adieu!" With such a happy manner of winning respect and confidence, Prince Frederick cannot fail to make a wise and beloved ruler.

As I have before said, his brother George is

KING OF GREECE,

and is proving himself a very popular sovereign. His Queen-consort is Olga, the daughter of the Grand-Duke Constantine. At first, as is said of almost every royal pair, they were reported not to have lived very happily. The Queen was said to be severe and cold, the Russian court-life, and pined for her Northern home, in the land to which she felt as if exiled. But, during one of her visits to Denmark with her husband, he was taken dangerously ill. This seemed to call into blossom, as it were, all the love which had lain, not dead, but obscured and overshadowed by earlier affections; and from that time to the present the King and Queen of Greece have been most devoted and happy. Their children often visit their royal grandparents, and often meet there their royal English cousins, with whom they romp in high glee on the shores of "Karen See," within the park limits of Friedensborg—the picturesque costume of the young Greeks contrasting prettily with the more sombre garb of their British playmates. The first Christmas that young King George passed among his strange subjects his parents and sisters celebrated by decorating a huge Christmas-tree, which they then sent, all hung with gifts, to the absent and it is to be presumed homesick King. Everything one hears of their royal family leaves more distinctly the impression that its members are extremely affectionate and devotedly attached to each other.

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ALEXANDRA, PRINCESS OF WALES,

which have not only endeared her to the British nation at large, but have exercised a wholesome influence upon the Prince, her husband. The Danes hever tire of dwelling upon her loveliness, and of narrating how in early days, which her father is wont to term "the only \$1,500 a year, but was her own seamstress and milliner; how she had but two pairs of kid-gloves, and used to wear the older pair when on the way to make a call, replacing them by the better ones just before entering the house; and, when she was confirmed, her scanty wardrobe could with difficulty furnish the one white dress required for the occasion.

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present Empress of Russia, is a nature of far more severity than the Princess of Wales; and my informant said that it is the belief among the Danes that she is much more unyielding in her attitude of antagonism toward reform in Russia than is her consort, the Czar. Everybody has their something of the story of her love, I presume; but it may be that the particulars are not well known, and hence they will bear repetition. Dagmar was at first deeply in love with the present Czar's elder brother, to whom she had been betrothed. But he was seized with an illness that resulted fatally. Upon his deathbed he expressed the desire that his brother Alexander, who was to inherit the crown, should likewise succeed to his right as lover, and should marry his betrothed. Accordingly, in due course of time a bugaboo was announced and married to the brother. It was known that she had mourned for her lost lover; but no one realized how keen had been and still continued to be her grief, until the following circumstance suddenly revealed it: After her marriage, and while her feelings were still undergoing the severe strain of thus having the remembrance of the past stirred to its depths, she visited the famous Winter Palace in St. Petersburg, where still clustered many sad associations. In passing through the apartments, leaning on the arm of her husband, and surrounded by the rest of the family and courtiers, she suddenly and unexpectedly came upon a lifelike portrait of her dead lover. Such was the shock that her overwrought feelings sought immediate relief in a burst of wild grief. Her husband appeared to pay no special attention to her emotion; but some time later, when Dagmar had grown calm, he alluded to it tenderly, saying he fully appreciated her grief, and understood how deeply attached she had been to his brother, whose qualities rendered him so lovable and such a profound loss to family, friends, and nation; but he hoped that, as the past and present were irrevocable, she would direct her deepest sorrow, and bestow loyalty in the love which he would lavish upon her. He then departed to one of his hunting-lodges, and thus left her alone for several weeks, so that she might have time and leisure to adjust herself to her new surroundings. His kind treatment, together with her own good sense and strong will, had the desired result, and Dagmar never again displayed an emotion connected with the past. It is to be hoped that now, as wife and mother, she is not by her unbending hostility to inevitable reform laying up for herself a store of woe, in comparison to which her early grief will be as nothing.

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This last member of this trio of Royal Graces, as they deserve to be styled, was a great favorit of the old and deaf Queen-Dowager Amalie, whom she used to visit regularly; and who used to playfully ask her when *she* was going to get married, to which she invariably answered that she believed her heart and fancies, as she always protested that *she* did not intend to marry, but should stay to comfort her parents and her old friend the Queen-Dowager. However, it came to pass one fine day that lovely Thyra fell a victim to Cupid's sins, and was betrothed to the Duke of Cumberland, who will no doubt be an affable and attractive as well as rich, but whose broken nose and nasal voice do not enhance his charms. But Thyra loved, and, as Horace sings, "love makes blind, you know!" so, beaming with joy, she hastened to impart her tidings to her aged friend, who listened to her recital gravely, and then, while a roguish smile hovered about her lips, said, "But how is this, Thyra? I thought you were never going to get married!" "Oh!" replied the gushing girl, "But I had never seen *him* then!" Wealthy as the Duke is, it is likely that he will fall heir to the \$20,000,000 sovereign property of the old Duke of Brunswick and last of the "Guelphs," whose 70-and-odd years are not likely to afford him many more years for profligate self-indulgence.

In ages gone by, the black-raven banner of the Danish Vikings brought terror to many a distant shore; but, as it was replaced by the "Dannebrog"—a white cross upon a crimson field—which was believed to have fallen from Heaven in order to cheer the fainting troops when yielding before their foes at the battle of Revel in 1219, and led them on to victory, so the rude and warlike deeds of the "Skjoldjunge" have given way to the mild sway and peaceful policy of the present Royal family of Denmark. Although no longer a nation of terrifying pirates, the Danish Kingdom yet exercises no mean influence upon Europe, but it is more potent and humbler in the realm are admitted to his presence and there, surrounded by no guard, but trusting to the good-will of the people, he listens to their complaints, and, so far as possible, grants their appeals. The story is told of

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