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MEDICAL MALPRACTICE

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We are now approaching the mid-point of the last decade of the 20th century, and as we progress to the end of the century, we will undoubtedly be bombarded with articles, books, news specials and other reflections on this remarkable period of time. Certainly this has been a time of great creativity, technically, socially, and artistically, but I think that most of us would agree that the overriding characteristic of the 20th century has been that it has been a time of unprecedented violence. There have obviously always been wars and other violent conflicts, but the 20th century's wars, genocides, and other savage conflicts have exceeded all others in their sheer scope and magnitude.

If one concedes the point that the 20th century has been indeed the century of violence, then I think it is safe to say that World War I can be viewed as the beginning of the century. George F. Kennan wrote that the more he studied World War I, the more came to see it as "the great seminal catastrophe of this century." World War I gave the 20th century its baptism of fire, and the consequences of the conflict are still being felt today. The war virtually destroyed an entire generation of young European men. The British historian Lyn MacDonald, who has written a marvelously readable series of books on the war, wrote, from the British perspective, "By the end of the War there was hardly a family in the land which, in its inner or outer circle, had not suffered bereavement and hardly a young man

who was lucky enough to return who would not be affected to the end of his life by his experience of that War to end Wars, and who would not see the world through new eyes because of it." The same statement could undoubtedly be made about any of the other European belligerents. Indeed, my own keen interest in World War I was kindled by a visit to the tiny British village of Tintagel on the north Corwall coast. In the cemetery of the village church stands a monument to the village's fallen sons of both the World Wars. I was amazed to see that Tintagel's combat deaths from the first War exceeded those of the second by a ratio of 10 to 1. Since then, I have made a point of examining the war memorials of the small British and French towns that I have visited, and without exception I have noticed the same phenomenon.

Although statistics can be cold and unfeeling, it is revealing to consider the raw numbers involved in World War I. In the month of August, 1914, the French alone lost 300,000 men. On a single day, in the battle of the Somme, the British sustained 60,000 casualties. The Encyclopedia Britannica lists the total casualties of the war as 37,468,904.

World War I led directly to the end of three European royal dynasties - the Romanovs of Russia, the Hohenzollerns of Germany, and the Hapsburgs of Austria-Hungary. Without World War I and the vindictive peace treaty of Versailles, there probably would have been no Hitler, or at least no

significant following for his message of hate. The war led directly to the rise of Lenin and his successor Stalin, with all the well-documented infamies which he performed. Certainly the war led inexorably to the Second World War, which ended in the nuclear clouds over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, thus leading to the post war Cold War and the nuclear arms race.

Numerous volumes have been written about the causes of this storied conflict, and it is beyond the scope of this paper to study or even enumerate them. However, one person who certainly bears a large share of the responsibility has to be the German Kaiser, William II. This proud, humorless, and impetuous ruler started Germany on the road to conflict with Great Britain and Russia, with whom Germany had previously had no war, and his lack of tact, as well as his poorly conceived policies played a large role in the genesis of the Great War. Unlike most European sovereigns of his generation, he was no mere figurehead. His imprint on imperial Germany and indeed on all of Europe was profound.

William's biographer, Lamar Cecil, a history professor at Washington and Lee University, has described William as "an exceedingly foolish man" and "singuarly unsuited for the great role he was to play". It was said of him by one of his early tutors that he was ever ready to air his own views but unwilling to listen to anyone else's. Again quoting Cecil, "In his mid-twenties [William] was already in every respect exactly the man he would later be as Kaiser ---

rankly opinionated, blind to his errors, and utterly self-centered." General Leo von Caprivi, who interestingly was William's choice to succed the Iron Chancellor Bismarck as chancellor, said of William: "---he thinks he understands _everything_ ... he's as obstinate as a mule."

William II as Kaiser vigorously asserted Germany's might through an aggressive colonial policy, a naval arms race with Great Britain, and a trumpeting of Germany's place in the sun. His assertive and self glorifying personality transfered these qualities to Germany's foreign policy and unsettled the delicate balance of power in Europe. His very large role in bringing about World War I is extremely well documented in Robert K. Massie's epic and readable book _Dreadnought_. It was this book that first introduced me to the subject of this paper, and for those who are interested in World War I and its origins, I highly recommend it.

Perhaps it was inevitable that William was to reign over the German Empire during this pivotal period of history, but perhaps not. My paper deals with the intersection of two lives in what has been called "A Victorian Tragedy" and considers the always interesting topic of what might have been. The two men are Morell Mackenzie, a prominent English physician, and the German Emperor Frederick III, the father of and predecessor to William II.

Morell Mackenzie was sitting at his desk in his office on London's Harley Street on the night of May 18th, 1887.

He was considering an urgent call from abroad to see a patient whom he could not refuse, when there came an insistent knock at his door. Dr. James Reid, who was resident physician to Queen Victoria, entered and apologized for disturbing him at such a late hour. However, he explained, he came at the special request of the Queen, who had received an unsettling telegram from her daughter, begging her to send Dr. Morell Mackenzie at once to Germany for a consultation. The subject of both of these requests was the Queen's son-in-law, the Crown Prince of Germany, Frederick William. Mackenzie showed Reid the cable he had already received from the Crown Prince's German doctors requesting the same thing, and he assured Reid that he would leave early in the morning. Thus began the fateful journey that would end in tragedy for prince and physician alike.

Well, who was Morell Mackenzie, and why was he being urgently requested to travel to Berlin to see such an eminent patient. To answer that question, it is necessary to digress and consider the man and his character and reputation.

Born on July 8, 1838, Morell Mackenzie was the eldest of 8 children of Stephen Mackenzie, M.D., who was a general practioner in Essex - six miles northeast of London. Dr. Mackenzie was killed in a fall from a carriage sustained while he was making house calls. Morell was 14 years old, and although his widowed mother worked to provide for her

children, her oldest son left school at age 16 to become a clerk in an insurance office.

However, he had always wanted to follow in his father's footsteps and become a physician, and with the financial help of his mother's sister, he left his job and began the study of medicine. In 1858 the Medical Act, which for the first time attempted to organize and license the practice of Medicine in England, was passed. In that same year, young MacKenzie passed his examinations and became qualified to practice medicine. He became a member of the Royal College of Surgeons, and a licentiate of the Society of Apothecary.

At that time, the best medical training was felt to be on the continent, and, again through the benevolence of his aunt, he studied for a year in Paris and for another year in Vienna and Budapest, together with brief visits to Berlin and Italy. His original interest was in general medicine, but he found his true love and his destiny in Budapest. It was there that he encountered Professor Johann Czermak and the newly invented laryngoscope, the seemimgly magical set of mirrors which, for the first time, allowed direct visualization of the living, moving human vocal cords. Interestingly, the first laryngoscope, which we would now call a laryngeal mirror, was invented, not by a physician, but by Manuel Garcia, a Spanish singing teacher who lived and taught in London. Garcia's work on the laryngoscope began in 1854, but by 1857, it had caught the attention of continental physicians, particularly Ludwig Turck of Vienna

and Johann Czermak of Budapest, who was primarily responsible for making it a useful instrument and who, as we have noted, first introduced Mackenzie to it.

Mackenzie returned to London with his new found instrument, and he received his Bachelor of Medicine degree in 1861 and his Doctorate of Medicine in 1862, at which time he began the private practice of medicine. Almost immediately, he began to specialize in diseases of the throat, and in 1863, he founded a throat dispensary, which he called the "Metropolitan Free Dispensary for Diseases of the Throat and Loss of Voice." In some ways he was ahead of his time, for he widely advertised his interest and expertise in this brand new specialty. Many traditional physicians ridiculed him and his new instrument, which they considered to be nothing more than a toy. In fact, when he first projected a Hospital for Diseases ot the Throat, Sir James Paget, whose fame lives on today in the two illnesses that are named after him, told him that he might as well found a Hospital for Diseases of the Great Toe.

1863 was an important year in Mackenzie's life in other regards as well, for it was then that he married Miss Margaret Bousch, the daughter of a prosperous merchant. He was also awarded the Jacksonian Prize of the Royal College of Surgeons for his essay entitled:"On the Pathology and Treatment of Diseases of the Larynx."

In spite of the sometimes not so subtle opposition of some of London's older and more traditional physicians,

Mackenzie's practice and reputation fluorished. He was a prolific author of books and articles on the subject of diseases of the throat. Furthermore, he was a skillful operator, and he acquired great dexterity with the laryngeal forceps and other instruments used in endoscopic proceedures on the larynx. A couple of technical points are worth noting at this point. The first is that he did not perform any external operations on the larynx; those proceedures were done by general surgeons. The other is that throat diseases were very different from what they are now. Syphilis and tuberculosis were very common, and they were often confused with cancer. Furthermore, there were at that time no bacteriologic tests available to help in differential diagnosis.

In 1865, Mackenzie moved his hospital to larger quarters, and he renamed it the Hospital for Diseases of the Throat. It was the first hospital of its kind in the world, and as its reputation grew, so did Mackenzie's. By 1873, he was not only professionally prominent, but he was also socially prominent. He and his wife were frequent entertainers at lavish dinner parties.

By 1878, his hospital was a widely recognized teaching center for laryngology, and his reputation as the leading practitioner of his specialty was secure. In 1884, he was elected president of the Section of Laryngology at the International Congress of Medicine at Copenhagen, Denmark.

Although by this time he was an internationally renowned throat specialist, he was not uniformly admired. Some physicians were offended because, although he was a consultant and therfore required by medical ettiquette to see patients only on referral from other physicians, he had no qualms in treating the numerous patients who came to him directly. Furthermore, he was vain of his unequalled skill and knowledge in diseases of the throat, and he was contemptuous of the ignorance of his professional colleagues. He had a reputation for charging high fees, although he did take care of many indigent patients at no charge. In short, he was a prosperous and highly respected physician who led a full personal and professional life.

So, we have come to know the man who was summoned to the prince's bedside in 1887, but who was his patient, and what kind of man was he?

Prince Frederick William of Germany, who was the patient, was, in 1887, the crown prince and heir apparent to the Imperial Throne of the German Empire. He was born in Potsdam on October 18th, 1831. Although he was the eldest son of Prince William of Prussia, he was initially not expected to occupy the throne, because his father's brother, Frederick William IV was the King of Prussia. However, Frederick William IV died in 1861 without an heir, and he was succeeded by William I, Prince Frederick William's father. Suddenly, the prince became the Crown Prince, and it was widely believed that his father, who was 63 years old

and in poor health, would not reign long, although, in fact, he would rule for 27 years and die at the age of 90 as, not the King of Prussia, but the Emperor of the German Empire. As we shall see, throughout most of his father's reign, the Crown Prince was believed to be the hope of the political liberals of Germany, and it was hoped by the liberals, as well as feared by the conservatives, that his accession to the throne was imminent.

He was known to his family as "Fritz", and I shall frequently refer to him by that name throughout this paper. Fritz was strongly influenced by his liberal mother, and he was the first Prussian prince to attend a university, although he received a thorough military education as well. Probably the strongest influence in his life, however, was his wife, and I believe that in order to really understand him, one must understand her and their relationship.

Fritz's wife was the oldest child of Queen Victoria of England and her husband, the Prince Consort, Albert. Albert himself was a German, being from the minor duchy of Saxe-Coburg, and although he was married to the English Queen, one of his fondest dreams was that of German unity under Prussian leadership. He was considered by many of the Queen's subjects to be more foreign than English, and, in fact, he himself felt that he only became an Englishman after the birth of his first child, the Princess Royal, on November 21, 1840. As a consequence, he enjoyed an affinity with her which he never had with any of his other children.

She was christened Victoria Adelaide Mary Louise, but she has always been known to her family and to history as "Vicky".

After Vicky's birth, her mother, the Queen, was somewhat distant and uninvolved in her care, but she delighted her father's heart instantly, and he became an adoring parent. Like many new parents, he doted on his child and worried constantly about her health. Gradually, Queen Victoria came to share her husband's enthusiam for their oldest child, and in this charmed circle, Vicky grew apace, lapping up adulation as her right. She was happy, loved and secure, as well as precocious and intelligent. Her parents had eight more children, but as the family grew, Vicky's place as her father's favorite continued.

Prince Albert, although he was married to the Queen of England, never stopped planning and scheming for Germany. His fond hope was that all the German states would someday be united in a liberal constitutional monarchy under Prussian leadership. Fritz first began to figure in Albert's plans in 1851, when Vicky was only 11 years old. Fritz's father had sought temporary refuge in England in 1848, when revolution broke out in Germany, as it did in many European states during that year. At that time, Albert had talked at length with William about German unity and constitutional monarchy in Germany, and William had listened without comment, a silence which Albert mistakenly took for

agreement. However, William had referred more than once to his own advancing years and had said gloomily that his reign was bound to be short. The future undoubtedly lay with his son Fritz, who would rule for a very long time.

Fritz's mother was an ardent liberal, and she had told Albert of his many virtues, as well as his liberalism. Suddenly, Albert saw in this boy the doorkeeper of German unity which he had been seeking, and he schemed to get him to England to meet his daughter. Finally, it was decided to invite the entire Prussian royal family to England in 1851 for the opening of Albert's great Exhibition. They came, and although Vicky was only 11 years old, and there was 10 years difference in their ages, Fritz and Vicky spent a considerable amount of time together. Fritz was somewhat shy, and Vicky was exactly the opposite. With her and her cheerful unselfconscious siblings he did not feel awkward or uncomfortable.

At the same time, Fritz fell under Albert's spell, and he became interested in the Prince Consort's liberal ideas for the unification and governing of Germany. When he left England after a four weeks visit, he corresponded regulary with both Vicky and her father. Albert and Fritz's mother, Princess Augusta, came together slowly to the realization that a marriage between their two children would advance both of their plans. Finally, in 1855, when Vicky was still but 14 years old, Fritz came to the royal castle at Balmoral in Scotland, for the purpose of proposing to Vicky. She had

developed into a strikingly attractive young woman, and Fritz was enamored. Furthermore, the Queen was struck by the change in Fritz - he was now a mature, attractive, charming young man. In short, it was love, and when Fritz proposed, Vicky, to the approval of her parents, accepted.

The engagement was kept secret until the princess was sixteen, when it was announced that the wedding would take place in nine months' time on January 25th, 1858, two months after her seventeenth birthday. Prince Albert seized the opportunity to instruct the young lovers for their new life together. He kept two hours free each evening to teach Vicky about history and politics, and he corresponded regularly by mail with Fritz in a largely successful effort to influence his political ideas. Meanwhile, Queen Victoria fell into a sentimentality that threatened to engulf all around her. Everything took on the tragedy of a "last time", and the Queen constantly lamented the fate of "poor, poor Vicky". "After all," she sobbed, "it is like taking a poor Lamb to be sacrificed." As if that was not enough, the Prussian and English courts fell into an unseemly wrangling over various points of ettiquette that culminated when the Prussians requested that the wedding take place in Berlin, since the bridegroom was the heir to the Prussian throne. In no mood for compromise, Victoria reacted strongly: "The Queen <u>never</u> could consent to it, and the assumption of its being <u>too much</u> for a Prince Royal of Prussia to <u>come</u> over to marry the <u>Princess Royal of Great</u>

Britain IN England is too absurd, to say the least ... Whatever may be the usual practice of Prussian Princes, it is not every day that one marries the eldest daughter of the Queen of England. The question therefore must be considered as settled and closed." Closed it was, and the marriage took place as scheduled in the Chapel royal of St. James's Palace.

One sign that all might not bode well with the newlyweds was the opinion of Otto von Bismarck, who was not yet the power he was to become. He was gloomy about the prospects which did not suit his own view of Prussian politics. "If our future Queen," he wrote, "remains even only partly English, I can see our Court in danger of being surrounded by English influence." He saw the arrival of Queen Victoria's daughter as the intrusion of something dangerous and alien into Prussia, and he never really lost this feeling. Bismarck's thoughts about Fritz and Vicky were to have a profound influence on their lives.

When the newlyweds moved to Berlin after a short honeymoon at Windsor Castle, every liberal in Prussia looked to the marriage as a bulwark to the cause of freedom and national union. The Crown Prince and Princess became a rallying-point for the Liberal movement, and they would remain so for the for the rest of the Prince's life.

Fritz was first of all, as all Hohenzollern princes, a soldier, and he spent many hours a day with his regiment - an arrangement which upset Prince Albert, who felt that he

should instead be given state papers to study and should help to take the burden of governing off his sick and ageing uncle's shoulders - a task for which both Albert and Vicky felt he was much better equipped mentally and physically than Prince William, Fritz's father. Vicky, at her father's urging spoke to her father-in-law about this subject, but to no avail. This type of activity on her part increased the suspicions of both Bismarck and William, and certainly did nothing to endear her to them.

In October, 1858, Fritz's father became Regent and King of Prussia in all but name, because of his brother's advancing senility, and as his power grew, so did his dependence on Bismarck, who became more and more suspicious of Fritz and Vicky, who, he rightly supposed, had a different vision for Prussia than he did. After Prince William became King William I in 1861, Bismarck devoted more and more of his energies to excluding Fritz and Vicky from any meaningful role in the governing of Prussia, a situation which they, as well as Victoria and Albert, found to be frustrating.

Although their public lives were difficult, and Vicky found it a struggle to exist in the cold, stern Prussian court, Fritz and Vicky's private life together was much better. They were truly in love, and would remain so throughout their entire marriage. Like her mother, Vicky soon became pregnant, and her first child, Prince William, later William II, was born on January 27, 1859. Because of

subsequent events, it is important to talk a little about the Prince's birth. The pregnancy had not gone well, and when Vicky gave birth, she had a long and dangerous labor. The German Dr. Wegner seemed unable to cope with the situation, and it appeared that both mother and child would die, when the English Dr. Martin, who had been sent to Berlin by Queen Victoria to help with the birth, finally appeared on the scene and, according to eyewitness accounts, saved the day with his skill and determination. The only long term untoward result of this difficult labor and delivery was that the Prince was born with a paralyzed left arm, which would remain so for the rest of his life. This entire episode left Vicky with a certain doubt as to the skill and qualifications of German doctors, although she was to give birth seven more times without any particular problems.

1861 was a pivotal year for Vicky and Fritz, for it was in that year that Fritz's uncle died and his father became King of Prussia, and it was also the year of the death of Vicky's father, Prince Albert. Albert's death was a key event, for he had been a rock of stability for both Queen Victoria and her daughter. He was a man of stiff reserve who lacked flair and a sense of humor. Nevertheless, he was a great idealist, as well as a man with an ability to realistically appraise difficult situations, and his steadying advice would be sorely missed in the years to come.

Soon after Prince Albert's death, King William of Prussia, by now strongly under the influence of Fritz's enemy Bismarck, had a conflict with his own parliament, and he offered to abdicate the throne in favor of his son. Vicky and Fritz were stunned by this sudden opportunity, and they delayed a decision as to whether to accept the King's offer, although Vicky encouraged her husband to accept it. While they were debating between themselves, William, at the urging of Bismarck, who did not want Fritz on the throne, changed his mind. Thus was lost what turned out to be Fritz's last, best chance to rule Prussia. From that point on, Bismarck and the Crown Prince and Princess were enemies, and Bismarck did all that he could do to ostracize the Crown Prince from any significant role in the government.

In spite of his opposition to Bismarck, Fritz remained the dutiful son of his father and a loyal Prussian. He was also an excellent soldier and leader of men, and, in fact, was a hero in both the Austro-Prussian War of 1866 and the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71, which finally led to the complete unification of Germany and the creation of the German Empire in the Hall of Mirrors at the Palace of Versailles on January 18, 1871. Thus King William of Prussia became Emperor William I of the German Empire. The irony is that Fritz, in spite of his opposition to Bismarck and his policy of blood and iron, was instrumental in the success of the policy and the cementing of Bismarck's position as Chancellor and chief advisor to the Emperor. In

many ways, Bismarck was de facto ruler of Germany and remained so for the remainder of William's long reign.

As the years passed and William's seemingly interminable rule continued, the difficult relationship between Bismarck and the Crown Prince continued. On the one hand, Bismarck feared Fritz's liberal tendencies, but on the other, he knew that some day Fritz would be Emperor and that he would be forced to accomodate him in some way. Fritz was sincere in his liberal convictions, but Bismarck felt that the real danger was in Vicky, not Fritz, and he worked hard to isolate her. Although she was in fact sincerely pro-German in her outlook, there is no doubt that the Germany she envisioned was much more in line with her father's ideals than Bismarck's. In the meantime, Fritz was torn between his love for his wife - as well as their common devotion to liberal policies - and his devotion to duty and his father. As the years passed, the entire relationship became complicated by the development of young Prince William into the vain, opinionated, bellicose young man that he was for his entire life. His relationship with his parents, particularly his mother, was strained, and this breach in family ties was encouraged by Bismarck, because he knew that it undermined the Crown Prince and his position with the Emperor.

As he grew older and patiently waited for the throne, Fritz found it increasingly difficult to find a position for himself. He busied himself with plans for his eventual

reign, and his mind was full of liberal ideas, many of them planted there by his wife. Nevertheless, Bismarck became increasingly powerful, and Fritz began to wonder if he could rule, at least initially, without the help of Bismarck. In 1885, when it appeared that the Emperor would at last die, Fritz summoned Bismarck and asked if he would remain in office in case of a change in the throne. Bismarck agreed if 2 conditions would be met - first that there would be no parliamentary government and second that there would be no foreign influence in German policy, the latter being not so subtly directed toward Vicky. Fritz agreed to both conditions, but his father miraculously regained his health, and Fritz found himself still waiting.

By January, 1887, Crown Prince Frederick William of Germany was now 55 years old, and he was seemingly in excellent health. His father was approaching 90 years of age, and it seemed inevitable that he would soon ascend to the throne. At this time, he began to complain of a slight, but persistent hoarseness. He was initially thought to have nothing more than a bad cold, but the hoarseness persisted, and although he had no other symptoms, he consulted his physician Dr. Wegner, the same Dr. Wegner who had had such difficulty with Vicky's delivery of the young Prince William. Wegner called into consultation Dr. Gerhardt , who was Professor of Clinical Medicine at the University of Berlin and also a well-known authority on diseases of the throat. Gerhardt noted that the left vocal cord had an

uneven pale nodule, and that the vocal cord had completely normal movement. Gerhardt made two attempts to remove the nodule laryngoscopically, but he failed. He then tried to burn the lesion away with electrocautery, using the aid of local anesthesia with cocaine. However, the surface of the vocal cord did not heal, so Gerhardt began to have a vague suspicion that the lesion might be cancer, although at this point the vocal cord was still mobile.

The Crown Prince then spent two weeks at the spa at Ems for voice rest and inhalation therapy for the nose and throat. Although Fritz improved symptomatically, when he returned to Berlin on May 15th and was re-examined, Gerhardt saw no real signs of improvement. In fact, the hoarseness was more pronounced than before and movement of the left vocal cord was more sluggish than that of the right. Furthermore, the surface of the tumor was still not healed. Although the Crown Prince requested another cautery treatment, Wegner consulted Dr. von Bergmann, a surgeon, who recommended an operation because of the presumptive diagnosis of cancer. Professor von Bergmann was an eminent surgeon, but he was no laryngologist, and he was unable to use the laryngoscope. Therefore, he must have accepted the diagnosis of cancer entirely on the authority of Gerhardt. In fact, von Bergmann made the statement: "Gerhardt makes the diagnosis; I am only the operator." In any event, the diagnosis of cancer had been made, and surgery had been chosen as the treatment. Surgery was scheduled for May 21,

1887, but, amazingly enough, the Prince himself was not notified, nor was his father, the Emperor. At this point, the whole situation becomes somewhat confused, but it appears that Bismarck was informed of the situation and he became involved. Bismarck was distressed and annoyed by the news of the proposed surgery. He felt, not unreasonably, that at the least the Crown Prince should be fully informed of the the situation and the proposed treatement. Furthermore, neither he nor the Emperor had been informed of the proposed operation, and he intended to stop it. Therefore, he called for a second opinion, and he forbade the operation without the specific consent of the Crown Prince and the Emperor. Also, Vicky, the patient's wife, was distraut with concern for her husband's health, and although she did not specifically ask for another opinion, she was grateful when Bismarck intervened.

After Bismarck's intervention, Professor Tobold, a senior Berlin laryngologist, and Dr. von Lauer, Physician-in-Ordinary to the Emperor, were called. Tobold examined the Crown Prince's throat, and he diagnosed cancer. Thus far, all the German doctors agreed in the diagnosis and recommended surgery. Nevertheless, Bismarck insisted that yet another opinion be obtained, and after some discussion, all the German doctors agreed that Morell Mackenzie should be called into consultation. He was the logical choice, inasmuch as he was the recognized international authority on throat diseases. Furthermore, he was fluent in German and

would therefore be able to communicate with his patient and his doctors. Although it has often been asserted that Vicky was responsible for the calling of Dr. Mackenzie, the truth appears to be that she had never heard of him until the German doctors had called him into the case. It was at that point that she asked for her mother's help in calling him to her husband's bedside.

Having received the double call, Mackenzie cancelled all of his appointments and left immediately for Berlin, where he arrived on May 20th, 1887. He immediately interviewed the Crown Prince and noticed that his voice was little more than a whisper. After consultation with the German physicians, Mackenzie examined the patient. He found a growth in the posterior part of the vocal cord which extended subglotically. The vocal cord was mobile, although sluggish. Mackenzie then consulted with the German physicians, all of whom felt that the lesion was cancer and that immediate surgery was indicated. Mackenzie, however, felt that there was insufficient evidence for cancer, and he recommended a biopsy, which, at that time, was not standard proceedure. Incredibly, Mackenzie had not brought his own instruments from London, but he nevertheless performed the biopsy and sent the specimen to the eminent pathologist, Rudolph Virchow. Virchow is a name that is familiar to all modern physicians, but he was also a prominent person in his own day. Not only was he the father of cellular pathology, but he was also a Liberal member of the German parliament

and a political opponent of Bismarck. Ultimately, Mackenzie was to perform four biopsies on the Crown Prince, none of which would be reported as cancer. It is interesting to read Virchow's reports, because they are masterpieces of equivocation, but the final analysis is that they were not reported as showing cancer. As it was, Mackenzie stated that the Crown Prince did not have cancer, and that he could treat and cure him without surgery. Vicky, her mother, and the Prince himself were profoundly grateful to Mackenzie, not only for his diagnosis, but also for preventing what appeared to be an unneccssary operation.

Following the negative biopsy and the consultation between Mackenzie and the German doctors, it was unanimously agreed that Fritz should be placed under the care of Mackenzie, who would be solely responsible for his treatment. Vicky was pleased with this decision, for Mackenzie was tall, suave, good-looking, and a man of the world - in short the type of man with whom Vicky felt at ease. Furthermore, his self-confidence was infectious, and Vicky felt for the first time since her husband's illness that he was in "safe hands".

Mackenzie then embarked on a series of endolaryngological cauterizations of the lesion as the primary form of treatment, and for a time, the Crown Prince appeared to respond. His voice returned to normal, and once again he appeared to be the picture of health. However, he again began to experience hoarseness, and Mackenzie

performed yet another biopsy, which was again reported by Virchow as showing no evidence of cancer.

In June, 1887, Fritz and Vicky, accompanied by Mackenzie, went to England for Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee as the official representatives of the German Empire. At this time, Queen Victoria, at the request of her grateful daughter and son-in-law, knighted Morell Mackenzie, who was henceforth known as Sir Morell. The royal couple stayed for an extended period of time in the British Isles, and his condition gradually deteriorated to the point where Mackenzie recommended to his patient that he should go to the Italian Riveria for the winter, rather than return to the cold, bitter Berlin climate. Therefore, Fritz and Vicky rented a villa in San Remo, Italy, where they moved in November, 1887. Shortly thereafter, the Prince's condition worsened, and Mackenzie was called there for an urgent consultation. After he was examined by the recently knighted Sir Morell, Fritz asked: "Is it cancer?" Mackenzie replied: "I am sorry to say, sir, it looks very much like it, but it is impossible to be certain." After a moment of silence, the Crown Prince shook Mackenzie's hand and said, with a sad smile: "I have lately been fearing something of this sort. I thank you, Sir Morell, for being so frank with me." Thus the correct diagnosis was at last confirmed by Mackenzie, 8 months after the German doctors had originally made it. Additional consultants from Vienna and Berlin were called, and all concured in the diagnosis of cancer. At

this point, an operation was again recommended, but this time the much more radical procedure of total laryngectomy was advised, a procedure which at that time had a very high mortality rate. After being advised of the doctors' recommendations, Fritz declined to have the laryngectomy, thus ending any remote chance he might have had to be cured.

From this point on, MacKenzie devoted virtually all of his professional time to the care of his august patient and to making him comfortable. Fritz and Vicky stayed on in San Remo, in spite of strong pressure from the German court on them to return to Berlin, as the Emperor's health was slipping. It was also at this time that criticism of MacKenzie's care of Fritz by German and other physicians began to creep into print. This soon degenerated into a full scale public debate in the lay press concerning the care which had been provided to the Crown Prince, a debate that was to continue long after his death. Fritz's health continued to deteriorate, and on January 9th, 1888, a tracheostomy was performed to enable him to continue breathing.

Finally,on March 9th, 1888, Emperor William I died at the age of 90, and his son assumed the throne as Emperor Frederick III. In spite of his terminal illness, he was determined to reign, and against the advice of MacKenzie, he travelled to Berlin in the harsh winter to assume the throne and to attend his father's funeral. So at last, Fritz became Emperor, but he was a sick man who could not speak,

and he would reign for a brief ninety-nine days. His first act was to request of Bismarck that he remain as chancellor, an ironic act in light of the way Bismarck had treated him for all of the years of his father's reign, but one that was really inevitable because of his own poor health. Fritz's reign was essentially a caretaker regime from which nothing was expected, and from which nothing was obtained. Sir Morell Mackenzie remained in Berlin to attend his patient, but there was nothing he could do, and on June 15th, 1888, Emperor Frederick III died, with both Vicky and Sir Morell at his bedside. With him died the final hope for a liberal German regime that perhaps might not have embarked on the course that led to the Great War.

Unfortunately for Morell Mackenzie, the drama was not over. An autopsy was performed on the late Emperor by Virchow, and this procedure confirmed that he had indeed, died of cancer of the larynx. Almost immediately, the German press published scurilous attacks on Mackenzie which, in effect, accused him of not diagnosing Fritz's cancer, even though he knew that he did have cancer. On July 11, 1888, the Imperial Palace issued a black bordered pamphlet authored by the German doctors. This pamphlet, entitled _Die Krankheit Kaiser Frierich des Dritten_, accused Mackenzie of entirely unwarranted optimism about his diagnosis and treatment, as well as the raising of false hopes that led to the cancellation of an operation which could have cured the disease. Conveniently, the authors played down the

seriousness of the operation and the fact that the patient could have died as a result of it.

Foolishly, Mackenzie wrote a rebuttal to this attack - a 244 page book which was titled (incredibly) <u>The Fatal Illness of Frederick the Noble</u>. The book was injudicious, to say the least, and even Mackenzie recognized that, for he apologized for the tone of the book in its preface. Nevertheless, he used every literary weapon at his disposal in his defense, and the terms in which he referred to some of the leading physicians and surgeons in Germany shocked his readers, most of whom were ignorant of the vilification and vituperation that had already been heaped upon him by those same physicians and surgeons.

For the rest of his life, Mackenzie struggled to preserve his reputation and defend his management of his famous patient's illness, but with little or no success. In fact, the controversy generated by his book resulted in his expulsion from the Royal College of Physicians. The entire episode took a terrible toll on him, and he was never the same confident physician again. He died a beaten, broken man 3&1/2 years after the death of the Emperor, on February 3rd, 1892. He was 54 years old.

For her part, Vicky never again played a major political role after the death of her husband. She and her son, the new Emperor, did not get along, probably because they were too much alike in personality, and he ushered her into retirement to a country estate far from Berlin, and she

herself died of cancer at the age of 61 in 1901. Bismarck had never trusted her, because he never considered her a true Prussian, and in a sense, he was right. She was loyal to a fault, but she was loyal to her mother and her husband, two people in two different nations. Both her pride and misfortune was to be the eldest daughter of Queen Victoria. She could never forget it, nor could Bismarck.

Morell Mackenzie is little more than a footnote in history now, but if he is remembered, he is remembered as the man whose mismanagement of an important patient helped lead the world down the path to World War I. In fact, when I first read an account of this tragic story, that was my reaction. But I think that in fairness, we need to examine that conclusion.

First of all, it is important to remember that Mackenzie did what he did when he did it - in 1887 and 1888- and not in 1994. As advanced as he was in his day, he still did not have anything like the diagnostic and therapeutic tools that would be available today. Secondly, one must ask the question: "What operation did the German doctors advise?" It appears that they were recommending what they called a thyrotomy, which today we would call a partial or hemi-laryngectomy- that is a removal of the affected vocal cord, while leaving the other in place. Could this operation have saved the patient? To answer that question, I have consulted my ENT colleagues in Lynchburg, and they all agree that as the affected vocal cord was mobile when

the diagnosis was first made, a partial laryngectomy could have, in fact, cured the cancer. Could the patient have survived the operation? That is a much more problematic question, because again we must remember that these events took place in 1887, before there were antibiotics and before there was a good understanding of the aseptic principles of surgery. There was a very high mortality rate from open laryngeal surgery then, and therefore, there is a good possibility that Fritz might not have survived. Nevertheless, I am led to the inescapable conclusion that he <u>might</u> have survived the operation and been cured by it.

The tragedy for history is that if he had reigned for several years, he might well have altered the course that Germany took and averted the events that led to World War I. Part of the problem certainly lay with Morell Mackenzie, but probably a bigger factor was that Fritz's father unexpectedly lived for so long - long enough not only to almost outlive his son, but also to have a profound and unhealthy influence on his grandson, William I. One can only speculate on the different course history might have taken, had only Frederick III lived and reigned for many years.