

Chapter 34 : Princess Louise of the Netherlands (1828-1871).

After completing his university studies, Prince Charles was to marry. In the spring of 1846, a large number of letters and notes were exchanged between the Swedish and Prussian courts and it was agreed on that King Frederick III of Prussia's 17-year-old niece Princess Marie Louise Anna (1829-1901) was a fitting bride. The marriage suited Swedish foreign policy because Emperor Nicholas I was married to Frederick III's sister Charlotte. At the beginning of July, Charles, his mother and sister Eugenie met King Frederick III and members of his family to inspect Charles as a fitting husband, negotiate terms and even allow the intended to meet. This meeting took place in the residence town & seaside resort Putbus on the island of Rügen, where Frederick had a small summer castle. There are no details, but Charles & the Princess had four days July 2-5 to get to know each other.¹

What subsequently happened is unclear. The princess was a cute and charming person. The mood on Rügen had been so positive that everyone assumed that the rest of the engagement was a formality. Charles returned to Sweden. The Princess and her family disappeared to Italy. At the end of September, Charles met King Frederick III, who accepted the engagement. Meanwhile, the princess had contracted some unspecified illness but recovered. She remained weak, however, and Charles had to go home without seeing her. Then everything came to a standstill. The princess was sometimes declared healthy, sometimes ill, and so it lasted for a whole year. The diagnosis was first typhoid fever, then swelling, congestion, dizziness & nervous disorders. Oscar I's doctor Magnus Huss stated that the troubles could well be life long.² There was a lot of speculation about what was going on. One explanation was that in the meantime the princess had been informed about Charles's private life and regretted her decision. Charles' own (?) explanation was that once the princess recovered, Prussia's participation in the Schleswig-Holstein War of 1848-1851 made the marriage politically impossible.³ A third explanation was more cryptic. According to a Prussian lady-in-waiting who knew her, her parents had tried to raise her "auf eine Höhe des Gefühls- und Geistes-Lebens ... der sie wohl nicht gewachsen war" (to an emotional and intellectual level that she probably couldn't cope with).⁴ Which I interpret as she not thinking she could handle being queen, and had a mental breakdown to avoid it. Later there was a fourth explanation, that Charles had taken aversion to her, and which is understandable in the context.

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The next candidate had to wait until the summer of 1849. King Frederick III of Prussia's youngest daughter Louise was married to Prince Frederick of the Netherlands and the couple had a marriageable daughter, Princess Vilhelmina Fredrika Alexandra Anna Louise of the Netherlands (1828-1871). Her uncle King William II of the Netherlands was married to Tsar Nicholas I's sister Anna. So also this marriage was politically appropriate. There was no information available about her person, for some reason not even a portrait & there was a rumour circulating that she was harelipped. In late May 1849, cabinet secretary Ludvig Manderström was sent to The Hague to form an opinion. What he reported was positive enough for the process to get under way:

¹ Aftonbladet, 1846-07-10, s. 2; 07-11, s 2; Hellberg 1870: del 2, s. 173; Knagg 1932: ss. 64-74.

² Rangström 2010: s. 320.

³ Aftonbladet, 1846-09-26, s1; 10-26, s 2; 12-14, s 1; Hallendorff 1924: ss. 23-24; Koht 1936: s. 215; Eriksson 1954: ss. 131-136.

⁴ Hallendorff 1924: s. 24; Knagg 1932: ss. 75-83.

H. K. H. Princess Louise is rather tall, well formed and strongly built without being fat. She seems in the best of health: with round cheeks, her skin particularly white and beautiful. Her blue eyes are not very large, but have a mildly benign expression, as well as all her essence. Although the princess is short-sighted, the eyes suggest a lively interest in what is going on. Her hair is a beautiful ash-blonde colour. Her mouth may be too big... but her teeth are small white and regular; her lips unusually red, and healthy, the arms beautiful and the hands, as far as I could see, well manicured. The neck may be a little short, but the head is firmly attached. At first sight, the princess does not make a great impression, but the more one looks at her, the more one finds a good-natured, innocent and artless being, who will last longer than beauty.⁵

The first meeting was coordinated with an official tour so that Charles could withdraw without it ending up in the newspapers. After the fiasco with the German princess, Charles' expectations were low. There are two letters: "On the 19th of August [August 1849] I started for the Netherlands, leaving these beautiful mountains [he was in Norway] and hastening to once again enter life's lottery. With an anxious mind I look forward to The Hague, where I will experience happiness or misfortune as the Gods see fit." - "I hardly travel like a king, more like a soldier of fortune, hoping for luck, auprès des belles!"⁶

Charles arrived in The Hague on August 26, met with Louise several times, and Manderstam could on September 1 report that "Virtue, an even temperament, joie de vivre and simplicity seem to be the most notable qualities of this young Princess, and for every time the Prince visits her, his decision to choose her has seemingly become ever firmer." Viz. Charles hesitated and so did the bride & her parents. Prince Frederick and his brother the King postponed the decision until New Year, when the Dutch court informed the Swedish court that in case a request for marriage was submitted, it would be considered. Charles & Louise do not appear to have exchanged letters. It is also not clear whether they ever spoke in private during Charles' visits, but she is said to have been attracted to his appearance, and he discouraged by her plain looks. Judging by contemporary drawings & paintings, however, all this talk about her appearance is greatly exaggerated. One expected a teenager & got a woman. At the wedding, Marshal of the Court Erik af Edholm's spontaneous comment was "she's got sex appeal and I like her smile."⁷

On January 7, Oscar signed the proposal. This was accepted. Shortly after, Louise's Swedish teacher Emanuel Olde arrived (1802-1885). Negotiations on the details of the marriage contract started quickly but dragged on, April 30 the couple exchanged rings in The Hague - almost a civil wedding, on June 19 they were married in Storkyrkan & August they travelled in Norway.⁸

Charles had expected a proper dowry - the father-in-law was rumoured to be very wealthy - but was disappointed. The official explanation was that his father-in-law's finances were in such disarray that he dared not promise more than he could keep. The 10-fold dowry had been adequate, but Swedish protests would have caused scandal. The only thing the Swedes had to oppose him was not to complete the marriage. However, there are reports that Louise later

⁵ Eriksson 1954: s. 156; Elgklou 1978: s. 60; Ulfsäter-Troell 1996: s. 158. [Brev från Ludvig Manderström till Oscar I, maj 1849.]

⁶ Eriksson 1954: s. 146.

⁷ af Edholm 1944: del 1, s. 162.

⁸ Hellberg 1870: del 4, s. 198-210; Eriksson 1954: ss. 145-149.

inherited a significant amount.⁹ The unofficial explanation was that the Swedes because of the earlier fiasco had been too eager this time around and that the father-in-law used it as a bargain chip.

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The information about Louise's upbringing is virtually non-existent. I have scraped together what there is, what is implied and what can be inferred. The information about Louise's time in Sweden is somewhat more abundant but comes from outside observers, all with their prejudices. Louise seems to have been as difficult for the Swedes to understand as Josephine before her.

There is a longer romanticized biography (Lundebeck 1947), two fact-based ditto (Rogberg 1873; Ulfsäter-Troell 1996: ss. 153-218), 18 short biographies (Carlsson 1871; Starbäck & Bäckström 1885: del 11, ss. 111-112; SBHL 1906; NFB 1912; Almén 1893: ss. 180-190; Lande & Gran 1945: ss. 242-243; Nerman et al. 1952: ss. 355-357; Ohlmarks 1973: ss. 143-144; Elgklou 1978: ss. 60..98; Lagerqvist 1979: ss. 54-67; Holm 1982; Heymovski 1995: s. 40; Sundberg 2004: ss. 226-229; Lindqvist 2006: ss. 420-435; Bloom 2009: ss. 98-101; Bratberg 2005 & 2009; Norlin 2015: ss. 83-86) & some special studies (Memory 1860; Knagg 1932: pp. 64-93; Grundberg 1999: ss. 127-128; Dahlström 2006: ss. 70-76; Rangström 2010: pp. 316-333).

Louise also appears as a secondary character in the Charles XV biographies (Bååth-Holmberg 1891; Thyselius 1910; Hallendorff 1924; Eriksson 1954), in the queen biographies (Braun 1950; Riiber 1959) & in the memories (Dietrichson 1901; Edholm 1906; Dardel 1911; Edholm 1919; Wrangel 1924; Edholm 1944; Michanek 1995).

Louise's archive was burned April 10, 1871: "Right now they are burning Queen Louise's left-over papers, which occupy two entire cabinets. The deceased kept all that she received, and also wrote a lot of notes."¹⁰ - In the Bernadotte Archives there remains a single volume: "This is unusually little. This single volume has been collected from different places in BFA."¹¹ Perhaps the world missed something, but probably not.

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Princess Vilhelmina Fredrika Alexandra Anna Louise of the Netherlands was born in The Hague on August 5, 1828, to Prince Frederick of the Netherlands (1797-1881) & Louise of Prussia (1808-1870). Louise received the standard education for German princesses at this time, with emphasis on language, performance, obedience & the practical. In addition to Dutch, she learned French, German, English, Italian & some Russian. Later, Swedish & some Norwegian. She also received instructions in handicraft, playing piano, painting and used to spend time in the kitchen & at the dairies of the estate even though her knowledge of this is unknown. She had a circle of friends, possibly her classmates. Her parents spent much time at the Russian and Prussian courts, and during these visits she was taught by her governess Victoire Wauthier. Incidentally, she was amused by history, collected ceramics & followed the daily events. She was religious, but not to excess.

⁹ Dardell 1911: del 4, s. 3-4; Eriksson 1954: s. 150.

¹⁰ Dardel 1911: del 4, s. 24.

¹¹ Carlsson 1995: s. 67.

In the summer of 1845, she was confirmed in front of the Royal Family and a large number of visitors. It was her first "public" appearance. She was nervous but managed well. When Charles 1849 arrived to court her she had just turned 21. Several suitors had already backed out and there was a risk that she would end up a spinster.

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As Crown Princess Louise followed Charles on his tours, familiarized herself with her duties and appeared by his side. She did not have any representation of her own. On October 31, 1851, she gave birth to a daughter, Louise (1851-1926). On December 14, 1852, she gave birth to a son, Carl Oscar (1852-1854). After giving birth in 1852, she was reported to have had a vaginal infection and a miscarriage. On March 13, 1854, the son died of pneumonia. There is an unconfirmed fact that she or her parents offered Charles a divorce to marry someone who could give the country a heir, but that Charles refused.¹² Louise also had recurring fainting spells, convulsions and nerve attacks. As the medical records have been culled, there is only fragmentary information about what took place, but at its worst, she supposedly had them several times a month, but in between behaved normally:

September 5, 1852 [Bernard von] Beskow wrote in his diary: "Gösta Rosen, that Faral [Charles] danced (?) so with L. that fainting occurs daily..." March 6, 1853, is mentioned: "Gösta Rosen, that Faral held after Josephine S., so that L. fainted." Aug. 15, 1854: Gösta Rosen, that Faral cried, when Schossan went to her parents in the country side, and L. fainted; that she did it almost daily last year, and at one time fell downhill, and the child was injured..." April 16, 1856: "Lov. smashed some panes because of her cramps."¹³ [Josephine Sparre aka Schossan was lady-in-waiting to Louise.]

The attacks then seem gradually to have subsided. At the end, they appeared at most a few times a year. Dardel does not comment on them until 1869/71, and then with the explanation that they were caused by Charles's adultery with the actress Hanna Styrell-Stjernblad, who even was allowed a house at Ulriksdal to be close.

Eriksson speculates that the fainting spells were due to an epilepsy or psychogenic, i.e. caused by hysterical seizures. The two witnesses, Charles's adjutant Fritz von Dardel and his chief of staff Gustaf von Rosen believed that the attacks were triggered by strong emotions such as rage, jealousy or fear. The trivial explanation for Louise fainting is probably her overly hard lacing. The fact that women "swooned" and had to be awakened with olfactory salt was not at all unusual this time. According to Charles' personal physician Edvard Edholm, she would also have suffered from "rheumatism", a catch-all for mental problems. There are scattered comments about her self-control so that even when the daughter was close to dying of a serious illness, she did not show any emotions. Such self-denial is probably costly.

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¹² Bååth-Holmström 1891: s. 632; Eriksson 1954: s. 169. [Uppgiften skall (enligt Eriksson) komma från en oidentifierad person Lilly Nordström.]

¹³ Eriksson 1954: ss. 169-170.

On September 25, 1857, Louise became acting Queen. On May 3 and August 5, 1860, she was crowned. Louise's legacy as Queen is divisive. She is said to have been a good housfrau and loyal wife, but too passive in her role. Her only public appearance seems to have been the opening of the Stockholm Exhibition in 1866, when she replaced Charles, who was bedridden in tonsillitis. Louise hated the vulgar atmosphere of the court under Oscar I and convinced her friend Countess Wilhelmina "Mina" Bonde (1817-1899) to become her chief maid. Minas' duties included employment, morals & etiquette. The conversation & socializing became more socially acceptable under her aegis and the etiquette was formalized in the continental manner. Charles' ambition after the constitutional reform to simplify the etiquette & admit the bourgeoisie led, however, to such conflicts that Mina quit.

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I quote five contemporaries on Louise: Chamberlain & assistant Christina Rogberg (1832-1907; employed 1857-1871). Charles' teacher and political confidant Fredrik Ferdinand Carlsson (1811-1887). Art historian & Princess Louise's teacher in Danish literature & history Lorentz Dietrichson (1834-1917; employed 1868/69). Adjutant, art curator etc. Fritz von Dardel (1817-1901; employed 1850-1901). The son of her lady-in-waiting Baronesse Ulrika Sprengporten, the historian etc. Count Fredrik Ulrik Wrangel (1853-1929).

- Rogberg summarized his experiences in 1862-1871 as Louise being an extraordinarily divided person:

[It was] not easy to in a short time to find out, what amused Queen Louise or not. She appeared, on superficial acquaintance, as a reserved, not very independent character, and when one first experienced her conduct and unusual shyness, one almost felt compassion for her being forced into such a distinguished position. But no longer subject to the eyes and ears of her surroundings, the Queen became herself: not this weak willed spirit, but a person with clear judgment and warm feelings, well aware both of her qualities and of her faults. But the fact that her will during childhood and adolescence had been very much curtailed was evident. In addition to her innate shyness was an intangible fear that appeared every time she by a statement or an act would make her own power prevail. And yet by nature she had a strong will, which did not like resistance, and which never allowed her to be completely dominated by anyone but her royal consort; for to his will she gladly subordinated her own, making herself humble and submissive.¹⁴

My assessment of The Queen as a person was eventually formed, and I found more and more, that it was precisely from that side that Queen Louise should be regarded. During our conversations on general topics I discovered her divers knowledge and in her daily activities her unusual ability to use it. She was learned, as a woman should be, thoroughly, but not ostentatiously. She hated the superficial spirit of her time, but often observed it in silence, which many interpreted as consent, when she should have refuted it.¹⁵

¹⁴ Rogberg 1873: s. 27.

¹⁵ Rogberg 1873: s. 30.

Queen Louise was not in the habit of speaking of her thoughts and feelings; she preferred keeping them to herself - and as little as she in others tolerated superficial emotions, such as sighs and tears, did she allow herself such, even when in consequence she was regarded as cold and emotionless.¹⁶

- F. F. Carlsson was by no means Louise's confidant but had met her on official business, and had views on her role as Queen:

Being so close to the centre of events and yet not revealing the slightest desire to intervene in them, has always been regarded as the most difficult task of a queen - and the most beautiful task, the undivided devotion to a beloved husband, be it with trepidation or with pride. The king's prosperity, honour and happiness - was the queen's sole objective. To dispel his worries, to soothe his pain – the queen perceived as her *raison d'être*, and gave him her all.

The queen basks in her husband's glory, her own glory is hidden from view. The history of kings is their government. But a queen's deeds live in silence. She cares for the king, for his children, for their health and their souls. To suffer hardship and indifference is her life and her glory. At the Queen's core was simplicity, modesty and truth. By these she conquered. Often without realizing it. Humility was her strength.¹⁷

[According to other information, Louise at least had views about Charles' aggressive hatred of the Russian. "Her protests, however, went unheard; Charles always asserted - it was a reference to the relationship between the parents - that he never intended to let a woman influence him,"¹⁸]

- Dietrichson had met Louise in 1868/69 when he prior to the marriage was teaching the daughter Danish literature and history. He had a positive impression:

[Holberg] sat well with her, her clear head easily grasped what was strange, and at the end of the lesson - when D. had read and commented on "Erasmus Montanus" - she would deliver her own version of Holberg, including D's efforts at acting, but without malice and from the heart.¹⁹

Professor Dietrichson tells us the following from the year, he as Princess Louise's teacher, resided near Ulriksdal and often invited into the family circle. It was summer and court etiquette was banished:

"At such occasions king Charles showed his warm heart, showering his angel with attention, who blossomed. The mostly quiet and earnest Queen would then show here talent of, sometimes mercilessly, imitating the quirks of her surroundings. When the king was in a particularly good mood he improvised poetry, or the circle wrote suggestions that were put in a hat for everybody to try his or her luck. The resulting doggerel was sometimes hilarious, to put it mildly. The Queen preferred French bouts rimées [the rhymes were given, but not the subject] in which she showed talent. She also

¹⁶ Rogberg 1873: s. 70.

¹⁷ Carlsson 1871.

¹⁸ Eriksson 1954: s. 244.

¹⁹ Dietrichson, Lorentz. (1871.) *Minnesord om drottning Lovisa*. I: Thyselius 1910: ss. 726-727.

loved complicated logogriphs [word riddles] and charades; which she often put together herself.”²⁰

Queen Louise was a rare woman, an ornament for the throne and well suited as wife to King Charles, which was not an easy task, although - or perhaps just because - she was his absolute opposite in almost everything and therefore complemented him so excellently. If he was male, she was female; if he was handsome, she was unremarkable – just kindness and good will; he shallow and two-timing, she serious and true; if he possessed lyrical pathos, she was impish; if he was wasteful, she was economical, which could well be needed. Only in one thing did they agree, in the love of their only child, whom they had entrusted me to introduce into her exalted calling.²¹

- Fritz von Dardel was at times, as Charles' adjutant, constantly present:

Summer 1857. After the tea, she [the Crown Princess] herself decided to demonstrate her musical talent. She played with great taste and emotion several pieces, whose performance testified to more softness than power, a trait that also shines from her blue, slightly veiled and phlegmatic eyes. Her conduct is simple and pleasant, and she radiates calm and a moderation, in stark contrast to her husband's way of being. ...

As face to face with the crown prince, he is unassuming and natural; he acknowledges his errors with extraordinary complacency and shows the greatest kindness towards his intimate friends, who then have the right to say whatever is on their mind. If, however, he is in large company or with strangers, his behaviour immediately changes. He becomes an all around Gascon [a complete windbag in the manner of Charles John], boasting of everything he has done and not done, anxious to show off his strength, dexterity and wisdom, not suffering being bested by anyone. He sometimes becomes unbearable, as when he makes impossible and ridiculous claims against the validity of which he does not admit any objection. His conversations with ladies are almost exclusively about himself. So yesterday we had to sit for two hours in the salon and hear long-winded stories from his youth, one more incredible than the other. His wife always listens with interest and constantly encourages him to continue.

Although knowledgeable, the Crown Princess lacks the ability to conduct a conversation, also the most insignificant things seem to amuse her. The more you are able to ridicule someone or something, the more attention you get. A more gracious and talented woman would have nothing of such, which would also benefit the Crown Prince, who is easily swayed by the attention of others, especially woman. Although righteous, loyal and honest, the Crown Princess is rather narrow-minded. She is a good housewife but thinks almost exclusively of her husband, herself and her closest and does not exercise the beneficial influence on the Crown Prince, to which her excellent character entitles her. As a result of her innate shyness, she also dares not interfere in his doing, and her only striving is to gain his love. A Queen is not a political non-entity, and can

²⁰ Bååth-Holmberg 1891: ss. 644-645. [Brev från Dietrichson till Bååth-Holmberg. Omkring 1890.]

²¹ Dietrichson 1901: del 2, s. 40.

not act as if she were. Nevertheless, she has many good sides. She is sincere and natural to her subordinates and does not wish to inflict any evil, except when she is occasionally desires to make fun of somebody; on such occasions she by various means indicates to her suite the object of her amusement, usually one of the guests, and proceeds.²²

June 10, 1861. When this princess is left to herself, i.e. when the spouses are separated, and she is not dominated or magnetized by her husband and the great influence he has gained over her, she is much more to her advantage; She speaks with unerring judgment of the king's qualities without overlooking his weaknesses. However, this is done with the greatest sensitivity and only when she has full confidence in whom she speaks to. Otherwise, her conversation is strikingly superficial, and she carefully avoids sharing her innermost thought. Seemingly, she has no other opinion than her lord and husband.²³

February 22, 1869. At the Innocence ball the day before yesterday, the Queen experienced a fierce nerve attack, because her royal consort was inclined to remain at the ball with his future son-in-law, even after the ladies of the court had left. It is Her Majesties way, formerly very often used, when not everything goes according to her desire; lately, however, the Queen has proved more prudent, which is why I believed her cured.²⁴

June 11, 1869. However, the King continued to Ulriksdal and after dinner suggested the Queen they take the boat to Brunnsviken. It went well, until they came to Ålkistan, where Captain Schyberg, who helmed the steamer, was ignorant of the shallows. The result was that he got stuck in the mud and had to wait for a tug. Queen Louise, already nauseous and nervous, now had a nerve attack, during which she with the parasol struck blows to the right and left and happened to hit her chamberlain M. Wrangel and also [Countess] Hedvig Bråkenhielm. The king managed to calm his consort, who then did not appear for several days. Wrangel took it as a personal insult and was all worked up. It was only with much effort that we were able to convince him that the cause of the unpleasant event was a nervous crisis, and that the blows were not aimed at anyone in particular. I really thought that this unfortunate disease of the Queen, whose outburst I have witnessed many times before, was now completely gone. The above episode was then for many days a conversation piece at Ulriksdal.²⁵

March 27, 1871. Queen Louise has been a model of domestic virtue and has distinguished herself for her irreproachable conduct. She has had the good sense never to take part in political intrigue, and her influence has never harmed anyone; also she is sincerely missed by all those, who do not judge solely by the surface. Since she kept her opinions to herself, never tried to please others than her consort, and in addition lacked charm, one must have seen this woman at close quarters in order to be able to do full justice to her solid qualities and the inexhaustible love, whereby she managed to preserve her volatile consort's esteem and affection.

²² Dardel 1911, del 1, ss. 141-142.

²³ Dardel 1911, del 1, s. 198.

²⁴ Dardel 1911: del 3, s. 93.

²⁵ Dardel 1911: del 3, ss. 114-115.

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Queen Louise may be more honoured than loved. Her inclination to make fun of people, even guest, ridiculing them behind their backs, must have made her court aware that soon it would be their turn.²⁶

May 26, 1871. Although the Queen suffered much from the flings of her inconstant consort, which could not possibly be unknown to her, she never made any reference to this; only the nerve crises, when she was wronged, revealed her feelings. However, the tender care, the monarch on these occasions showed her, always soon restored her balance.²⁷ [I have assisted many times in these convulsive attacks, during which she shouted and threw herself on the ground and was horrible to behold. You may put the blame on her upbringing. Many children who do not get their way have behaved in the same way.²⁸]

- Finally, Fredrik Ulrik Wrangel was often a guest at princess Louise's children's parties:

[Queen Louise] was quite tall, had irregular features, a large mouth and small squinting eyes, usually she used lorgnette. Her facial expression was on the occasions I had seen her friendly and cheerful. ... By nature, the Queen was actually shy and almost "gauche" [brusque] in her conduct, not without humour, at ease with close acquaintances. She is said to have a temper, which neither my sister nor I have seen, although we often visited. King Charles' warm heart and fiery soul did neither understand the Queen nor the princess, and although life at court was cheerful at that time, each lived his or her own life, except at Ulriksdal or Bäckaskog, where everything was quite rural. The Queen was very interested in genealogy and heraldry and collected a precious library on these subjects, in which her knowledge far exceeded that of an amateur. [She spoke idiomatic Swedish, but with a foreign accent.]²⁹

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Louise never interfered in politics, but in the manner of Desirée had opinions. Best known is her 1865 opinion on the representation reform: "Adam [Lewenhaupt] informed me of this bolt from heaven! I could hardly utter a word! I was petrified! - shaken to the core. I trust in God, it's our only consolation in this matter!"³⁰ Whatever her low profile Louise had a reputation - unclear about what. Maybe it was about her low profile, but I would rather put money on her bad-mouthing people. Dietrichson reports an anecdote in which Charles refused to hand out the Order of Vasa to someone who spoke ill of her.³¹

Louise's legacy is meagre. She had an extensive correspondence that is now burned. Her library has been scattered, but according to contemporaries she read a lot of history and biographies. She had a large household. She travelled a lot. After the death of her son in 1854, she devoted herself to charity. But above all she cared for her husband during his illness and

²⁶ Dardel 1911: del 4, s. 21.

²⁷ Dardel 1911: del 4, ss. 44-45.

²⁸ Dardel. I: Michanek 1990: s. 16. [Avsnittet censurerat i originalupplagan.]

²⁹ Wrangel 1924: ss. 183-186.

³⁰ Ahnlund, Nils. När representationsreformen beslöts. Historisk tidskrift, 1940: s. 308.

³¹ Dietrichson 1901: del 2, s. 25.

played with, socialized, supervised and raised her daughter who in 1869 was married off with the Danish heir to the throne, Frederick (VIII). Swedish biographical dictionary gives (according to F.F. Carlsson) a misleading picture of her importance by only describing her official activities:

As Queen, L fulfilled his representative duties conscientiously but without pleasure. She wanted to live a quiet family life and act through charity. L contributed to and supported several charities and institutions; She particularly cared for sickly and deaf-mute children. For example, The Crown Princess Louise's nursing home, The Silent School, The "Fivepenny Association" for the establishment of orphanages in Lapland and Queen Louise's support association, which was tasked with collecting funds to support various charitable causes. L, who was warmly religious, translated a couple of English and Dutch edifying books into the Swedish language.³²

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In the spring of 1871, Louise suffered from pneumonia. Also Charles was seriously ill at the time but let himself be carried to her bed. Louise, who felt death approaching, apologized for all the times she had failed him. Charles accused himself of the same thing. Everybody present was upset & mother Josephine is alleged to have fainted. With her last effort, she professed her Christian faith. She died on March 30, 1871, at 11.20.

In the days following her death, eleven obituaries were published. Most of these were about her descent and last illness, but she was praised for not attempting to exert political influence or flaunt with clothes & court etiquette but understood that woman's place was at home.

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After Louise's death, Charles decided to remarry. He entered into negotiations with the Polish-Italian Countess Graciosa Krasinska (1854-1884), but these were not completed before his death. The idea was that she would be adopted by King Victor Emanuel, thereby fulfilling the succession requirements of royal birth. These plans were opposed both by the government and by Charles' own family.³³

³² Holm 1982.

³³ Wieckowska 1927: ss. 191-199.