

counted with a bright smile to the marquis that he intended to work most industriously, that he would certainly write a history of this war which he had just closed, and that he intended always to live at Sans-Souci, as its quiet and repose seemed more agreeable to him than the noise and turmoil of the great city. He then dismissed the marquis for a short time, that he might rest before going to the table.

But the king did not rest. Too many and too powerful thoughts were surging in his breast. Leaning back in his arm-chair, he thought of the future. He recalled his own life and arranged his future course. After sitting thus for a long time, he suddenly arose, his countenance bright with a firm and energetic expression.

"Yes, thus it shall be," he said aloud. "I will be the father of my people. I will live for them, forgetting the wickedness of men, or only avenging myself on them by the prickings of a needle. I have no family, therefore my people shall be my family. I have no children, therefore every one who needs my aid shall become my child, and for them I will do the duties of a father. My country bleeds from a thousand wounds—to heal these wounds shall be the task of my life."

True to this resolution, the king called together his ministers the next day, and commanded them to obtain exact accounts of the condition of his provinces; to inform him of the wants and necessities of the people; and to assist him in relieving them. True to this resolution, the king was untiring in his work for the good of his people. He wished to see all, to prove all. He desired to be the source from which his subjects received all their strength and power. Therefore he must know all their griefs—he must lend an open ear to all their demands.

His first command was, that any one who asked for an interview should be admitted. And when one of his ministers dared to express his astonishment at this order, "It is the duty of a king," said Frederick, "to listen to the request of the most insignificant of his subjects. I am a regent for the purpose of making my people happy. I do not dare close my ears to their complaints." And he listened sympathizingly to the sorrows of his people, and his whole mind and thoughts were given to obtain their alleviation. He was always willing to aid with his counsel and his strength. Untiring in the work, he read every letter, every petition, and examined every answer which was written by his cabinet council. He and he alone, was the soul of his government.

A new life began to reign in this land, of which he was the soul. He worked more than all of his ministers or servants, and music and science were his only pleasure and recreation. He was a hero

in peace as well as in war. He did not require, as others do, the distraction of gay pleasures. Study was his chief recreation—conversation with his friends was his greatest pleasure. Even the hunt, the so-called "knightly pleasure," had no charms for him.

"Hunting," said the king, "is one of the senseless pleasures which excites the body but leaves the mind unemployed. We are more cruel than the wild beasts themselves. He who can murder an innocent animal in cold blood, would find it impossible to show mercy to his fellow-man. Is hunting a proper employment for a thinking creature? A gentleman who hunts can only be forgiven if he does so rarely, and then to distract his thoughts from sad and earnest business matters. It would be wrong to deny sovereigns all relaxation, but is there a greater pleasure for a monarch than to rule well, to enrich his state, and to advance all useful sciences and arts? He who requires other enjoyments is to be pitied."

## CHAPTER V.

## THE ENGRAVED CUP.

PRINCESS AMELIA was alone in her boudoir—she was ever alone. She lay upon the sofa, gazed at the ceiling, and in utter despair reflected upon her miserable fate. For years she had looked anxiously forward to the conclusion of this unhappy war in which Austria and Prussia were so fiercely opposed. So long as they were active enemies, Trenck must remain a prisoner. But she had said to herself, "When peace is declared, the prisoners of war will be released, and Maria Theresa will demand that her captain, Frederick von Trenck, be set at liberty."

Peace had been declared four months, and Trenck still lay in his subterranean cell at Magdeburg. All Europe was freed from the fetters of war. Trenck alone was unpardoned and forgotten. This thought made Amelia sad unto death, banished sleep from her couch, and made her a restless, despairing wanderer during the day.

Amelia had no longer an object—the last ray of hope was extinguished. Peace had been concluded and Trenck was forgotten! God had denied her the happiness of obtaining Trenck's freedom; He would not even grant her the consolation of seeing him released through others. For nine years Trenck had languished in prison—for nine years Amelia's only thought, only desire, was to enable him to escape. Her life was consecrated to this one object. She thought not of the gold she had sacrificed—she had offered up not only her entire private fortune, but had made debts which her in-

come was utterly inadequate to meet. Money had no value except as it was consecrated to her one great aim. She felt now that her heart had been crushed and broken in her useless efforts—that her hopes were trampled in the dust, and her existence worthless. Peace had visited all hearts but hers with new assurance of hope. It brought to her nothing but despair and desolation. While all others seemed to recommence life with fresh courage and confidence, Amelia withdrew to her apartments, brooding in dark discontent—hating all those who laughed and were glad—spurning from her with angry jealousy the contented and happy. The world was to her a vast tomb, and she despised all those who had the mad and blasphemous courage to dance on its brink.

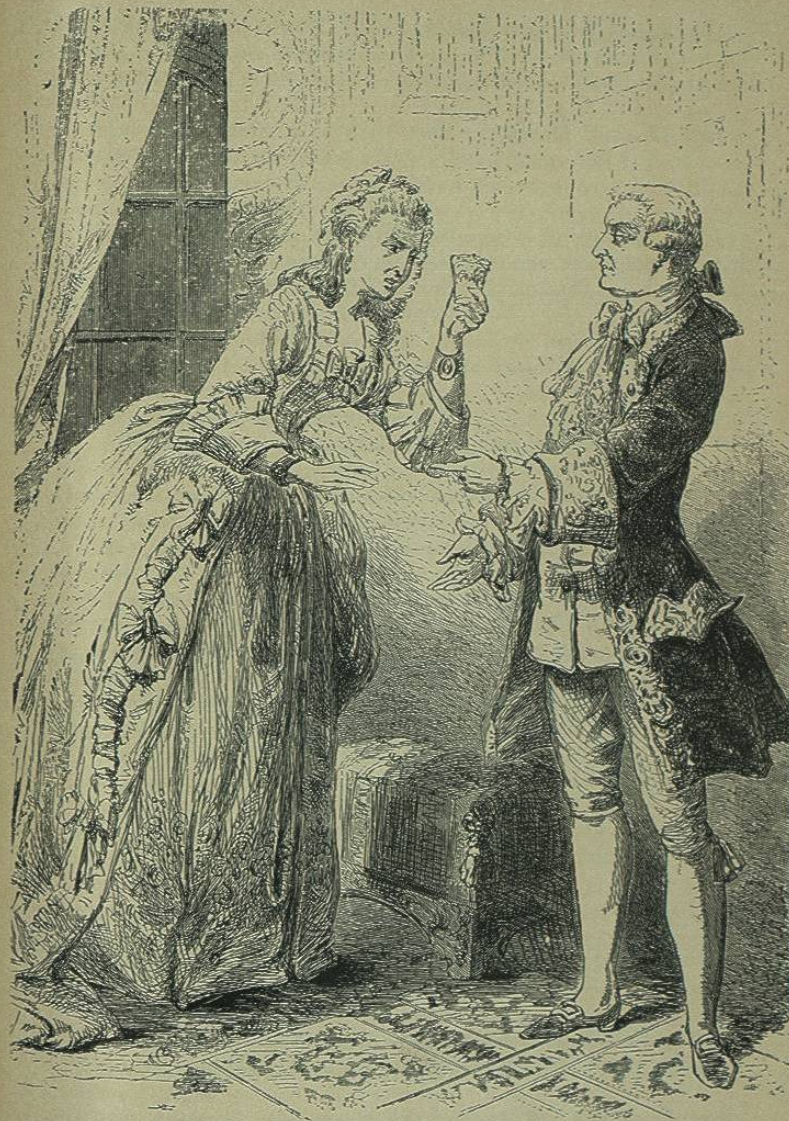
Amelia avenged herself on those who avoided her, by pursuing them with spiteful jests and bitter sarcasm, hoping in this way to be relieved wholly from their presence. She wished to be alone and always alone. Her soul within her was desolate, and the outward world should take the same dark hue. She lived like a prisoner secluded in her own apartments; and when some great court festival compelled her to appear in public, she revenged herself by wounding all who approached her. The sufferings of others were a balsam to her heart, and she convinced herself that the pain she inflicted assuaged her own torments.

Amelia was alone; her maid of honor had just read aloud one of Molière's biting, satirical comedies, and received leave of absence for a few hours. The princess had also dismissed her chamberlain till dinner, and he had left the castle; only two pages waited in the anteroom, which was separated by two chambers from the boudoir. Amelia had the happy consciousness of being alone in her grief, and, fearing no disturbance, she could sigh and lament aloud. She dared give words to her rage and her despair; there were no other listeners than these dead, voiceless walls—they had been long her only confidants. The stillness was suddenly broken by a gentle knock at the door, and one of the pages entered.

With a frightened look, and begging earnestly to be pardoned for having dared to disturb the princess, he informed her that a stranger was without, who pleaded eagerly to be admitted.

"What does he wish?" said Amelia, roughly. "I have neither office nor dignity to bestow, and, at present, I have no money! Tell him this, and he will go away cheerfully."

"The stranger says he is a jeweller, your highness," said the page. "It is of great importance to him that you should look at his collection of gems; and if you will have the goodness to purchase a few trifles, you will make them the fashion in Berlin, and thus make his fortune."



THE JEWELER AND PRINCESS AMELIE.

"Tell him he is a fool!" said Amelia, with a coarse laugh; "I have no desire to see his jewels! Dismiss him, and do not dare disturb me again. Well, why do you hesitate? Why are you still here?"

"Ah, princess, the poor man begs so earnestly for admittance; he says your highness knew him at Magdeburg, and that the governor, the Landgrave of Hesse, expressly charged him to show the jewels to your highness."

These magical words aroused Amelia from her apathy. With a quick movement she arose from the sofa; she was endowed with new energy and vitality; she advanced toward the door, then paused, and looked silent and thoughtful.

"Admit the stranger!" said she, "I will see his treasures."

The page left the room, and Amelia gazed after him breathlessly, and with a loudly-beating heart. It seemed to her an eternity before the stranger entered.

A tall, slender man, in simple but elegant costume, approached. He stood at the door, and bowed profoundly to the princess. Amelia looked at him steadily, and sighed deeply; she did not know this man. Again her hopes had deceived her.

"You said the Landgrave of Hesse sent you to me?" said she, roughly.

"Yes, princess," said the man; "he commanded me to seek your highness as soon as I arrived in Berlin, and show you my collection, in order that you might have the privilege of selecting before all others."

Amelia looked once more questioningly and fiercely upon the stranger, but he remained cold and indifferent.

"Well, sir, show me your gems!"

He placed a large casket upon a table in the middle of the room; he then unlocked it, and threw back the lid. In the different compartments, splendid jewels of wondrous beauty were to be seen—rings, pins, bracelets, and necklaces of rare workmanship and design.

"Diamonds," cried Amelia, contemptuously; "nothing but diamonds!"

"But diamonds of a strange fire and wondrous design," said the strange jeweller. "Will not your highness graciously draw nearer, and observe them?"

"I have no use for them; I wear no diamonds!" said Amelia: "if you have nothing else to show me, close the casket; I shall make no purchase."

"I have, indeed, other and rarer treasures; some beautiful carved work, by Cellini, some ivory carving of the middle ages, and a few

rare and costly cameos. Perhaps these may please the taste of your highness?"

The jeweller raised the first compartment, and taking out a number of beautiful and costly articles, he laid them upon the table, explained the workmanship and design of each piece, and called the attention of the princess to their wondrous beauty.

Amelia listened carelessly to his words. These things had no interest for her; she looked only at one object—a round packet, rolled in paper, which the stranger had taken with the other articles from the casket; this must be something particularly costly. It was carefully wrapped in silk paper, while every thing else lay confusedly together, and yet this seemed the only treasure which the jeweller did not seem disposed to exhibit. Amelia, however, remarked that he raised this mysterious packet several times, as if it was in his way; changed its place, but every time brought it nearer to her. It now lay immediately in front of her.

"What does that paper contain?" said she.

"Oh, that has no interest for your royal highness; that is a worthless object! Will you have the goodness to examine this seal? It represents the holy Saint Michael, treading the dragon under his feet, and it is one of the most successful and beautiful works of Benvenuto Cellini."

Amelia did not look at the seal; she stretched out her hand toward the mysterious packet, and giving a searching look at the jeweller, she raised and opened it.

"A cup! a tin cup!" she exclaimed, in astonishment.

"As I remarked to your highness, a worthless object; unless the rare beauty of the workmanship should give it some value. The carving is indeed beautiful and most wonderful, when you know that it was done with a common nail, and not even in daylight, but in the gloom and darkness of a subterranean cell."

Amelia trembled so violently, that the cup almost fell from her hand. The stranger did not remark her emotion, but went on quietly.

"Observe, your highness, how finely and correctly the outlines are drawn; it is as artistically executed as the copperplate of a splendid engraving. It is greatly to be regretted that we cannot take impressions from this tin cup; they would make charming pictures. The sketches are not only well executed, but they are thoughtfully and pathetically conceived and illustrated with beautiful verses, which are worthy of a place in any album. If your highness takes any interest in such trifles, I beg you will take this to the light and examine it closely."

The princess did not answer: she stepped to the window, and turning her back to the jeweller, looked eagerly at the cup.

It was, indeed, a masterpiece of art and industry. The surface was divided by small and graceful arabesques into ten departments, each one of which contained an enchanting and finely-executed picture. No chisel could have drawn the lines more correctly or artistically, or produced a finer effect of light and shade. Under each picture there was a little verse engraved in such fine characters, that they could only be deciphered with difficulty.

Amelia's eyes seemed to have recovered the strength and power of earlier days. A youthful, vigorous soul lay in the glance which was fixed upon this cup; she understood every thing.

There was a cage with an imprisoned bird; beneath this a verse:

"Ce n'est pas un moineau,  
Gardé dans cette cage,  
C'est un de ces oiseaux,  
Qui chantent dans l'orage.  
Ouvrez, amis des sages,  
Brisez fers et verroux;  
Les chants dans vos bocages,  
Rejailliront pour vous."\*

In the next compartment was again a cage, containing a bird, and on the branch of a tree under which the cage was placed, perched another bird, with fluttering wings and open beak; underneath was written—

"Le rossignol chante, voici la raison,  
Pourquoi il est pris pour chanter en prison;  
Voyez le moineau qui fait tant de dommage,  
Jouir de la vie sans craindre la cage.  
Voilà un portrait,  
Qui montre l'effet  
Du bonheur des fripons du désastre des sages."\*

Amelia could not control herself; she could look no longer. She rarely wept, but now her eyes were filled with tears. They fell upon the cup, as if to kiss the letters which had recalled so many touching and sad remembrances. But she had no time for tears, she must read on! With an involuntary movement, she dashed the tears from her eyes, and fixed them steadily upon the cup.

Here was another picture. In a cell lay a skeleton form, the hands and the feet bound with heavy chains. The figure had raised itself slightly from the straw bed and gazed with an agonized expression at the grating in the wall, behind which the grim-bearded face of a soldier was seen, who, with wide-open mouth seemed to

\* See note, page 572.

be calling angrily to the prisoner. Beneath this stood some verses in German.\*

"Oh fearful! most fearful!" sobbed Amelia; and, completely overcome, her head sank upon her breast. She cared not that the strange jeweller saw her tears and heard the despairing cry of her heart; she had nothing to fear; she had no more to lose. The assembled world might bear and see her great grief. But no, no; this must not be. His agony, his tortures, might perhaps be increased to punish her through him! She must not weep; she must not complain. Trenck lived; although in prison and in chains, he still lived; so long as he lived, she must conquer the despair of her heart.

As she thought thus, she dried her tears, and raised her head with proud resolve. She would be calm and self-possessed; perhaps this man, sent to her by the landgrave, had something still to say to her. She half turned her head toward him; he appeared not to be thinking of her, but was quietly engaged placing his treasures again in his casket.

"Can you tell me who engraved this cup?"

"Certainly, your royal highness. A poor prisoner, who has been confined for nine years in a subterranean cell in the fortress of Magdeburg, engraved it. He is called Frederick von Trenck. Your highness has perhaps never heard the name, but in Magdeburg every child knows it, and speaks it with wonder and admiration! No one has seen him, but every one knows of his daring, his heroism, his unflinching courage, and endurance, his herculean strength, and his many and marvellous attempts to escape. Trenck is the hero of the nursery as well as the saloon. No lady in Magdeburg is acquainted with him, but all are enthusiastic in his praise, and all the officers who know him love and pity him. Many are ready to risk their lives for him!"

The princess sighed deeply, and a ray of joy and hope lighted up her countenance. She listened with suppressed breath to the jeweller's words—they sounded like far-off music, pleasant but mournful to the soul.

The stranger continued: "Some time since, in order to dispel the tediousness of his prison-life, he began to engrave poems and figures upon his tin cup with a nail which he had found in the earth while making his last attempt to undermine the floor of his cell. During one of his visits of observation, the commandant discovered

\* See memoirs of Trenck, Thiébauld, in which Trenck describes one of these cups and the fate which befell it. One of them was engraved for the Landgrave of Hesse, and in this way fell into the hands of the Emperor Joseph the Second, who kept it in his art cabinet. Another, which had been once in possession of the wife of Frederick the Great, Trenck afterward recovered in Paris. Some of these cups are still to be seen in art collections in Germany, and some are in the museum in Berlin.

this cup; he was delighted with the engravings, took the cup and sent Trenck another, hoping he would continue the exercise of his art. Trenck seized the occasion joyfully, and since then he has been constantly occupied as an engraver. Every officer desires to have a cup engraved by him, as a souvenir. Every lady in Magdeburg longs for one, and prefers it to the most costly jewel. These cups are now the *mode*—indeed, they have become an important article in trade. If one of the officers can be induced to sell his cup, it will cost twenty louis d'or. Trenck gets no money for his work, but he has gained far greater advantages. These cups give him the opportunity of making known to the world the cruel tortures to which he is subject; they have given him speech, and replaced the writing materials of which they have deprived him. They have answered even a better and holier purpose than this," said the jeweller, in a low voice, "they have procured him light and air. In order to give him sufficient light for his work, the officers open the doors into the first corridor, in which there is a large window; one of the upper panes of this window is open every morning. As the days are short in the casemates, the commandant looks through his fingers, when the officers bring lights to the poor prisoner. Trenck feels as if his wretched prison-cell was now changed into the *atelier* of an artist."

Amelia was silent and pressed the cup tenderly to her lips; the stranger did not regard her, but continued his recital quietly.

"An officer of the garrison told me all this, your highness, when he sold me this cup. They make no secret of their admiration and affection for Trenck; they know they would be severely punished if the higher authorities discovered that they allowed Trenck any privileges or alleviations, but they boast of it and consider it a humane action."

"May God reward them for it!" sighed Amelia. "I will buy this cup, sir. I do not wish to be behind the ladies of Magdeburg, and as it is the *mode* to possess a cup engraved by Trenck, I will take this. Name your price."

The jeweller was silent for a moment, then said:

"Pardon me, your highness, I dare not sell you this cup, or rather I implore your highness not to desire it. If possible, I will make it an instrument for Trenck's release."

"How can this be done?" said Amelia, breathlessly.

"I will take this cup to General Riedt, the Austrian ambassador in Berlin. As all the world is interesting itself for Trenck, I do not see why I should not do the same, and endeavor to obtain his release. I shall therefore go to General Riedt with this cup. I am told he is a noble gentleman and a distant relation of Trenck; he cannot fail to sympathize with his unfortunate cousin. When

he hears of his cruel sufferings he will certainly strive to deliver him. General Riedt is exactly the man to effect this great object; he is thoroughly acquainted with all the by-ways and intrigues of the court of Vienna. Maria Theresa classes him among her most trusted confidants and friends. Whoever desires to free Trenck must consult with General Riedt and win him."

Amelia raised her head and looked up quickly at the stranger; his eyes were fixed upon her with a searching and significant expression; their glances met and were steadily fixed for one moment, then a scarcely perceptible smile flitted over the face of the jeweller, and the princess nodded her head. Each felt that they were understood.

"Have you nothing more to say?" said Amelia.

"No, your highness, I have only to beg you will pardon me for not selling you this cup. I must take it to General Riedt."

"Leave it with me," said Amelia, after a few moments' reflection. "I myself will show it to him and seek to interest him in the fate of his unhappy relative. If I succeed, the cup is mine, and you will not wish to sell it to General Riedt. Do you agree to this? Go, then, and return to me at this hour to-morrow, when I will either pay you the price of the cup, or return it to you, if I am so unhappy as to fail."

The jeweller bowed profoundly. "I will punctually obey your highness's commands. To-morrow at this hour I will be here."

The stranger took his casket and left the room. The princess gazed after him till the door closed.

"That man is silent and discreet, I believe he can be trusted," she murmured. "I will write at once, and desire an interview with General Riedt."

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE PRINCESS AND THE DIPLOMAT.

AN hour later the page of the princess announced General von Riedt, Austrian ambassador at the court of Berlin. Amelia advanced to meet him, and gazed with a sharp, piercing glance at the general, who bowed respectfully before her.

"I have sent for you, general," said the princess, "to repair an injury. You have been announced twice, and both times I declined receiving you."

"That was no injury, your royal highness," said the general,

smiling. "I ventured to call on you because etiquette demands that a new ambassador should introduce himself to every member of the royal house. Your royal highness declined to receive me, it was not agreeable, and you were perfectly justifiable in closing your doors against me."

"And now you must wonder why I have sent for you?"

"I never allow myself to wonder. Your order for me to come has made me happy—that is sufficient."

"You have no suspicion why I sent for you?"

"Your royal highness has just informed me you kindly wished to indemnify me for my two former visits."

"You are a good diplomatist; you turn quickly about, are as smooth as an eel, cannot be taken hold of, but slip through one's fingers. I am accustomed to go at once to the point—I cannot diplomatize. See here, why I wished to see you—I wished to show you this cup."

She took the cup hastily from the table, and gave it to the ambassador. He gazed at it long and earnestly; he turned it around, looking at every picture, reading every verse. Amelia watched him keenly, but his countenance betrayed nothing. He was as smiling, as unembarrassed as before. When he had looked at it attentively, he placed it on the table.

"Well, what do you think of the workmanship?" said Amelia.

"It is wonderful, worthy of an artist, your royal highness."

"And do you know by what artist it was made?"

"I suspect it, your royal highness."

"Give me his name?"

"I think he is called Frederick von Trenck."

"It is so, and if I do not err, he is your relative?"

"My distant relative—yes, your royal highness."

"And can you bear to have your relative in chains? Does not your heart bleed for his sufferings?"

"He suffers justly, I presume, or he would not have been condemned."

"Were he the greatest criminal that lived, it would still be a crime to make him suffer perpetually. A man's sleep is sacred, be he a criminal or a murderer. Let them kill the criminal, but they should not murder sleep. Look at this picture, general; look at this prisoner lying upon the hard floor; he has been torn from his dreams of freedom and happiness by the rough voice of the soldier standing at his door. Read the verse beneath it—is not every word of it bathed in tears? Breathes there not a cry of terror throughout so fearful, so unheard-of, that it must resound in every breast? And you, his relative, you will not hear him? You will do nothing