

country which was his, and in his packs of hounds giving tongue through the forest. Much of his income went to the upkeep of his stables and kennels, especially his kennels. So great was his affection for his dogs that, like Frederick the Great—but like him in this point alone!—the Duke never went out without an escort of them, while in his study the best places on the chairs and couches were always occupied by his four-footed friends. He even gravely insisted that dogs had souls, and that their knowledge of mankind was far superior to ours. When, therefore, a new-comer found himself ill-received by the dogs of Possenhofen, he need not try to make a second appearance there. The dogs of the house, by barking at him, had put him in the Duke's bad books. And this was the meaning of the warning which the Princess Sophia had given her Imperial cousin.

If the young girl, as she lay back in her chair, with her brows somewhat knitted, looked as though she were reflecting on her conversation with Francis-Joseph, it must be confessed that his thoughts were not in the slightest degree concerned about it. He made his way through the wood with light and easy gait, rejoicing in the few minutes of solitude stolen from both State and family affairs.

But State and family affairs, nevertheless, threatened to intertwine themselves in the closest manner. Francis-Joseph was on Possenhofen soil that day at the instigation of his mother, who had concerted the meeting with her sister, the Princess Ludovica, and with a very clear eye to a betrothal; and the proposed bride—so much more interested in the affair than was Francis-Joseph—was none other than the poor Princess Sophia, who was so disturbed over the quarrel between her cousin and bad-tempered little Black.