

## SIDELIGHTS ON NOTABLE PEOPLE BY THE MARQUISE DE FONTENAY

Count Gustav Von Der Trenck, whose death has just taken place at the advanced age of 85, at his country place of Schakaulack, in east Prussia, is the last survivor of the family which furnished one of the most sensational romances of the eighteenth century, its hero being Baron von der Trenck, who incurred the enmity of Frederick the Great by his love affair with the latter's sister, Princess Amelia of Prussia. For this he was thrown into prison at Spandau, and afterward in the fortress at Glatz. Managing to effect his escape by means of the most marvelous ingenuity and daring, he made his way to Russia, where he won the favor of Empress Elizabeth.

He was heard of next at Vienna, where his cousin, Francis von der Trenck, with whom he is often confounded, was a general in the Austrian service, who had the most extraordinary career and who, having at the battle of Sorau actually succeeded in penetrating to the headquarters of Frederick the Great, allowed the latter to escape while he and his troops devoted themselves to looting the valuables of the fugitive monarch and of the princes and generals of his suite. Francis was accused of having been bribed by King Frederick to permit the latter to escape.

After several years spent in prison he succeeded in recovering his liberty, through the assistance of a beautiful woman, a Baroness Lestock, with whom he fled to the Netherlands. Recaptured there, he was brought back to Vienna and consigned to perpetual imprisonment in the Spielberg, where, finding escape impossible, he poisoned himself.

At his death it was found that he had bequeathed all his fortune to his cousin, Baron Frederick von der Trenck. For a time Frederick remained in prison and even served from the rank of colonel in an army.

Having received a message from his mother to the effect that she was anxious to see him before her death, he ventured into Prussia, where he was promptly seized by Frederick the Great and closely imprisoned in the fortress of Magdeburg, where his efforts to escape secured him the honor of a specially constructed cell, exceptionally heavy chains and manacles, and not doubt but treble sentries.

There he remained for ten years, and, in spite of all the precautions adopted by the authorities, managed once more

to effect his escape, withdrawing this time to England.

There he occupied himself by writing a bitter attack on Frederick the Great as the "Macedonian hero," and also compiled his famous autobiography.

Not until after the death of King Frederick in 1786 was he able to return to Prussia, where he is stated to have had a most affecting interview with Princess Amelia a few days before her demise.

In 1789 the publication of his memoirs in French gave him a wide notoriety at Paris, where the Bastille had just been stormed by the populace and its prisoners set at liberty.

His fate was compared with theirs, and for a time the boulevard abounded with exhibitions of his waxes effigy, and down with chains in a counterpart of the terrible dungeon in which he had been confined for so many years at Magdeburg.

Encouraged by this, Baron Frederick von der Trenck set out in 1791 for Paris, proclaiming his enthusiastic adherence to the doctrines of the French revolution.

Instead, however, of being received as he had expected, with open arms, he was arrested on his arrival in the French capital as a secret emissary of the Prussian Government, and after confinement in his prison of St. Lazare was dragged to the guillotine, where his execution on July 25, 1794, was marked by more than ordinary cruelty, since instead of being strapped to the board face downward he was fastened to it flat on his back and kept for fully ten minutes in that position, gazing upon the knife before it was allowed to descend upon his throat.

His fate in Paris served to recall at Berlin the story of his romance with Princess Amelia of Prussia and of the cruel sufferings which he had undergone at the hands of Frederick the Great, for no other reason than that he had ventured to raise his eyes to a lady of the house of Hohenzollern and to win her heart; and King Frederick William II, taking the ground that he owed some compensation to the Von der Trenck family, advanced it from the rank of baron to that of count.

The old count, whose death has just taken place, was the grandnephew of the famous prisoner of Frederick the Great.

There remains of the family at the present moment only a daughter, Eva by name, who is married to a Marquis of the name of Moschke, who has been settled for years at Pietermaritzburg in the Transvaal.

Whatever else may be urged against the peerage as a useless and anachronistic institution, there is one thing to be said in its favor—namely, that it has furnished a considerable quota to the romance, and I might add to the melodrama, of each of the nations of Europe, and in particular to those of Great Britain.

Especially is this the case in Scotland, where the hereditary feuds between rival clans and the fighting and plotting in behalf of the Stuarts and against them have involved almost every family of any note.

The lords of Belhaven and of Stenton have furnished their fair share to the material for novelists such as Sir Walter Scott, and it is but seldom that this barony, created by Charles I. in favor of his devoted retainer, Sir John Hamilton, son of an illegitimate brother of the first Earl of Arran, has passed from one holder to another without sensational lawsuits, which have eaten up most of the property that originally belonged to the dignity.

I am led to make this remark by the rejoicings which have just taken place at Wishaw House in Lanarkshire in honor of the homecoming of the master of Belhaven and of his bride, Lady Grizel Hamilton, daughter of Lord and Lady Dundonald, for the first time

since their marriage, and since the coming of age of the master.

"Master" is a title always given in Scotland to the eldest son of a peer of the rank of baron or viscount.

The standard "peerages" give Lord Belhaven as having established his claim to the peerage in 1824. But this is scarcely correct. For Lord Belhaven has merely chosen to have himself served heir to the Belhaven estates at Wishaw, and has refrained from taking any steps to establish his claim to the peerage before the committee of privileges of the House of Lords. It would have been his duty to do before voting at Holyrood at the election of delegates to represent the Scotch peerage in the House of Lords at Westminster.

The attitude of the crown, which is invariably advised by the committee of privileges of the House of Lords in such matters, is best shown by the fact that, although Belhaven's sisters have applied for a patent of precedence to take rank as if their father had succeeded to the peerage, and which would have had the effect of enabling them to prefix the predicate of "honorable" to their name, the application has not been granted. This is owing to the fact that the crown is in doubt as to whether Lord Belhaven is really entitled to the honor, which he has assumed.

The trouble in Lord Belhaven's case is his failure to prove the absolute extinction of male issue of Capt. Francis Hamilton, younger brother of the father of the ninth Lord Belhaven, who died in December, 1869, leaving issue.

Should the sons of this Capt. Francis Hamilton, who belonged to the Ninety-fourth regiment, appear upon the scene, they would undoubtedly have rights to the barony of Belhaven and to the Wishaw estates, prior to those of the present lord, who has to go back to the middle of the seventeenth century in order to prove his relationship to the ninth lord.

I may add that there was no doubt whatsoever as to the right of the ninth lord to the title, as this was established on the death of the eighth lord, after long and careful investigation by the committee of privileges of the House of Lords.

One of the provisions of the will of Harriot, Duchess of St. Albans and widow of a previous marriage of Thomas Coutts, has been violated by selling the house on the corner of Stratton street and Piccadilly, which was for nearly four score years the home of the late Lady Burdett-Coutts.

The house, which has been settled for years at Pietermaritzburg in the Transvaal.

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royal cause during the civil war, he on May 17 of that year formed the pick of them into a corps, which he named "His Majesty's Guards." To the command of this noble band, all of whom were men of gentle birth, he appointed Charles, Lord Gerard, of Brandon, afterwards Earl of Macclesfield.

In course of time, the single corps of life guards was developed into three regiments, known respectively as the First and Second Life Guards and the Royal Horse Guards, and for more than a century they were recruited exclusively from men of birth and education, and were officially described as the "Gentlemen of the Life Guards." Nowadays the rank and file is composed of men taken from the humble classes of life, although frequently a young fellow of birth who has come to grief financially enlists in these splendid regiments, every man of which is a six-footer, the chargers being in keeping with the stature of their riders.

The colonels in chief of these three regiments, who are each of them distinguished generals or field marshals, take it in turn to officiate as gold sticks in waiting to the sovereign. Their former duties are now to a great extent assumed by the equerries, in waiting. But, still, as I have pointed out, their office, though for the great part ornamental and confined to ceremonial, courts, and military functions, entails a good deal of hard work, and, with regard to Field Marshal Sir Evelyn Wood, it is reported that he will now be raised to the peerage. He is a brother-in-law of the late Charles Stewart Parnell, the great Irish leader, a cousin of Mrs. Annie Besant, of Theosophist fame, and a grandson of Sir Matthew Wood, the famous lord mayor of London, who braved the enmity of George IV. by befriending Queen Caroline. Sir Matthew furnished her with the funds needed for a lawsuit, the life of the duke of Devonshire brought against her in the House of Lords, offered her a home at his house in London while the trial was in progress, and furnished the money necessary for the conveyance of her corpse from England to Brunswick, where she is entombed.

King Edward has quite a number of thrones. There is one at Buckingham Palace and another in St. James' Palace. There is a third at Windsor—a beautiful affair of carved ivory, adorned with all sorts of gems, especially emeralds, and was presented to the late Queen Victoria by the maharajah of Travancore. It stands at the farther end of the chief audience chamber after leaving St. George's Hall, and rests upon a dais.

Then, of course, there is the throne occupied by King Edward in the House of Lords when he opens Parliament, and which is familiar to every one of my readers who has visited the Palace of Westminster.

Finally, there is the throne of Edward the Confessor, in which every sovereign who has reigned over England during the last thousand years has been crowned.

The gem of the coronation of Queen Victoria, no sovereign has occupied it more than once, namely, on the occasion of the coronation. Queen Victoria sat in it twice—first, when she was crowned, and then on the occasion of the coronation of her son, King Edward VII. in celebration of her golden jubilee.

Talking of thrones reminds me that several royal crowns are about to come into the market. They are not continental crowns, but bona fide insignia of British royalty, and are the identical crowns which were used for the coronations of King Charles II., of King James II., of King George IV., and of Queen Adelaide, the consort of William IV.

I must add that the crowns are merely frames of silver gilt, from which the velvet and ermine lining and the precious stones with which they were adorned have been removed.

The gems that formerly adorned the two crowns used for the coronation of the last two Stuart kings and of George IV. are included among the crown jewels of England.

But those that adorned the crown of Queen Adelaide were removed from the setting immediately after her coronation, and were at her death distributed by her wish, among her German relatives, only a few of them being left to her niece, Queen Victoria.

For a long time these three crowns were in the possession of Lord Amherst, of Hackney; but when the latter was subjected to such terribly heavy financial losses by the dishonesty of the old firm of family lawyers to which he had confided the administration of his estate, he was compelled to dispose of his most precious belongings, including his celebrated library.

The three crowns have now also come into the market, and it would be going to the market for them, or to the Government to buy them, in order to preserve them from such a fate as that which overtook the Silver Baron's coronet worn by the poet Lord Byron at the coronation of George IV., which, turned upside down, and with a spirit lamp inserted in the center, figured when last heard of as a "rechaud" for keeping hot dishes of potatoes and other vegetables, on the hospitable table of a now defunct philanthropist of the Quaker City.

It is generally reported in South Africa that the De Beers Mining Company at Kimberley has discharged 500 men in order to reduce their output for a time until the surplus stock of stones on hand is disposed of and to stones of the price of diamonds. The diamond mines of this colony are not such a valuable asset, except for the labor they employ, as would seem. Seven-eighths of the dividends of the principal mines are payable outside the Cape Colony, and it is estimated that \$4,000,000 is spent yearly in wages in Holland preparing South African diamonds for other markets.

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## MONARCHS WHO ARE IN EXILE

FRENCH KINGS IN ENGLAND—  
COURT OF DON CARLOS IN  
VENICE.

England has always been the haven of political refugees and royal pretenders, and as a rule they have shown their appreciation of the country's hospitality by refraining from criticising their hosts or saying anything that might jeopardize their position as mere tolerated outsiders. But the Duke of Orleans overstepped the bounds some years ago and made a violent and uncalculated attack on the late Queen Victoria. In the end, writes the London correspondent of Town and Country, he was obliged to leave the country, and did not return until he made a most abject apology.

This little incident has not endeared him to the British people, who look upon him as a person of no account. But since his return he has behaved very well, and has lived the life of an ordinary country gentleman, amusing himself intermittently with the issue of a pronouncement to "his people," or a little North Pole trip.

His father, when in exile here, was more popular. So was Louis Philippe after the coup d'état. So was Louis Napoleon, who lived in London in many social phases, once as a waiter and again as a highly-appreciated member of the best society of the west end.

He never forgot the kindnesses that were extended to him during his stay here, and when he became Emperor of the French his first wish was to come over with the Empress Eugénie and look up his old friends, which he found it difficult to do in the manner he liked, for when he came here to Windsor he was fairly tied up with court etiquette, from which it was impossible to escape.

I have recently seen a letter from Louis Napoleon to an old London friend from Windsor, in which he said: "I would much sooner run down to you and have an evening at —, where we could smoke and chat and talk over the times when you and I were sworn in as special policemen."

Napoleon III. came into his empire. I doubt if the Duke of Orleans will ever do so. One cannot always tell.

I used to know Peter Karageorgievitch in the days when he was a simple, unassuming exile in Switzerland. He would talk occasionally of Serbia as a place where he might with God's will have ruled, but he never expressed the slightest idea that he had an opportunity of ousting the Obrenovitch dynasty.

Suddenly Alexander was murdered, and Peter went in triumph in a special train direct from Geneva to Belgrade, and there he is now, a king, covered with medals, recognized by the powers, and wondering how long it will be before he exchanges his uniform for a frock coat and the Konak for his old villa at Geneva.

Truly, the life of a royal exile is not an enviable one. I have often seen and pined Don Carlos, the Spanish pretender, who lives in Venice, and may be seen there any day in the week, either dashing up and down the Grand Canal in a motor launch from which flies the Spanish royal flag, or walking up and down the Piazzetta when the band plays of an evening.

He is invariably accompanied by a magnificent bear hound, and very often by his wife. He maintains a strict little court in his modest house on the canal, and there is something about him that arrests attention, for he seems to carry kingship with him at every step—a tall, handsome, dignified man, serious, stern and direct, with a kindly eye and a strong chin, a man whom the novelists would describe as "every inch a king."

Dual efforts have been resumed for the improvement of the great semi-wilderness which lies between Newark and Jersey City. The chief of the bureau of irrigation and drainage of the department of Agriculture has been looking the ground over with a view to reclaiming it for agricultural purposes. Also an engineer of the war department has been considering the question of constructing a ship canal from Newark to New York Bay, which would make Newark a deep-water port. Each plan has its advocates.

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