

South Omaha

Received 1,010,815 Cattle during the year 1902. Packers and Feeders bought 961,324 Cattle. 96 per cent of all the Cattle received were sold here.

SOUTH OMAHA received 2,247,428 Hogs during the year 1902. Packers bought 2,241,421 Hogs. 100 per cent of all Hogs received were sold here.

SOUTH OMAHA received 1,742,539 Sheep during the year 1902. Packers and Feeders bought 1,607,986 Sheep. 92½ per cent of all the sheep received were sold here.

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sure that they have printed Judica's picture, and every lady at court as well as every maid servant will have made her remarks about my darling's face.

How many who look at that angelic countenance will say: "And he does it all for that? For that? He could have had that more easily."

I wonder what the Countess Thyra has to say. Probably the same as the rest: "For that?" What would she say if she knew that "for that" I am to renounce the throne! To renounce a Royal throne for the sake of a girl, for the sake of two blue eyes! How she would despise me, she with her sovereign strength! How she must despise me even now!

I must make up my mind, must come to a decision. If I do not sign and renounce, I sign my moral death sentence and renounce my happiness.

On the one side love, lowliness, happiness, purity, peace, perhaps recovery and escape from something horrible—on the other side constant secret expectation, secret hopes, secret torture, secret sin, and the whole chaos of the splendid nothingness of that world that once seemed to me to be the greatest happiness.

And since I would only be a misfortune for the land, would it not be better, more noble, more proud, if I were to do the land this loving service with a few pen strokes and make myself harmless? But I would then give them my own declaration that I am unworthy of the throne.

And that is not true! May I libel and deny myself?

I may not renounce. I cannot for my own sake. But it is not for me. It is for the sake of the country.

Tonight I will climb the rocky path that I climbed with my father and that became his path to death. Perhaps heaven will give me a sign. I wish that a hurricane would arise, that storms would try to beat me down in the abyss. I would cling as my father did. And if my arms should be strong enough to cling, to hold me betwixt heaven and chasm, then—I would not sign. I would not renounce, knowing that a Royal crown hangs over my head, that it must sink on my brows.

It was a cloudless, starry night. There was no breath of air.

I climbed higher and higher, till the day dawned. The peak of the White Emperor glowed like a crown of red gold. A shimmer of it reached my head.

I need no other splendor for my brow.

Above me the shining sky, dark mists below. I will walk in the light.

I commanded the Count to telegraph. The Minister of State shall come. I will sign, renounce. In me there is solemn peace.

CHAPTER XVII.

Yesterday I was on the Alpine farm for the first time to announce that everything is "in order." I dared not let them suspect that it had cost a battle, and what a battle. I was a little afraid of the wise, clear eyes of Miss Fritz.

However, the visit passed better than I had expected. I had not gone through the course at Court entirely without profit. Though I am not at all a good scholar, I still am a master in the art of lying and hypocrisy, in comparison with the good people on the farm.

The Count helped me well. Since the great moment when I signed the secret document—even his Excellency the Minister of State seemed to be moved—he displays another manner toward me. He is more unembarrassed, more free, as if liberated from an invisible, heavy burden. His fine eyes rest on me with an expression of softness, almost tenderness.

No doubt his beautiful sister would view me with other eyes—with scornful ones! I know it as well as if she stood before me in her majestic beauty and looked at me.

But I wished to tell of the Alpine farm; of Miss Fritz, who allowed herself to be deceived; of Judica, who does not imagine that any one could deceive her.

We found Judica with her aunt in the linen room. It was filled with the scent of dried herbs, rosemary and lavender, and the treasures of the housewife, piled high in antique closets, gleamed like snow.

The girl seemed to have grown during my absence. Certainly she had become even more lovely. And how she held her little head! From whom had she learned that, and so soon? It was as if my little Judica wore a crown. Well, yes! That wreath of anemones still lay, invisible, upon her head. I would have liked to show my bride to all the monarchs of Europe, asking them if this was not a young Queen by God's Grace.

She seemed never to have ceased smiling since the day I saw her last. We held each other almost the moment we met. I kissed her and she permitted it without embarrassment and returned my kiss in the same sweetly innocent way.

Miss Fritz, however, made a solemn face, but Gebhardt came to the rescue and led

her away, talking industriously to her. I had begged him to give her no chance for questions, but to tell her at once that everything had been settled, if not in the quickest, yet in the best manner; that the King had given his permission for the marriage and was most friendly toward us, as Judica should learn very soon.

I was thankful to my friend that he took on himself the labor of making these explanations. My masterly hypocrisy might have gone for naught after all before the clear eyes of the mistress of the Alpine farm. And of this I was certain—did she learn of my grim battle with myself, had I betrayed to her what they had demanded of me and that I had renounced my chances to the throne for Judica's sake, she would have refused to let me have the child.

Happily she remained unconscious and while Gebhardt did me service we two stood cozily among the snowy linens. I reported to my little bride that she would be the Countess of Sarns. At first she looked at me with great eyes, half frightened. That was on account of the Countess. But when I laughed at her because she was afraid of the great lady she began at last to laugh herself.

But I am sorry to say that despite this she seemed to remain under the influence of the noble lady all the time that we were together. I caught her several times whispering the name to herself, as if she had to learn it by heart. She did it with a face as if she could not remember it and feared to be scolded for her stupidity. Even Miss Fritz, to whom I had to introduce the Countess of Sarns later, showed resentment against the person, so that the noble female made a decided fiasco on the Alpine farm.

Then the table was decked by the child. I like best to call Judica by that most beautiful of all names, most beautiful because it describes the most innocent, most pure, most lovely that humanity possesses.

The child was wonderfully busy. She slipped in and out like a bird, fetched and carried, talked, laughed, and was so altogether sweet to look at that I whispered to Gebhardt:

"Is that not worth a Kingdom?"

He replied:

"She is worth the best man, worthy to be carried on his hands her whole life long and to be cherished as a precious object."

He said it with so sober an expression of solemnity and melan-holy that I felt hurt. He spoke as if I, who had paid the highest price for the precious object, did

not appreciate its full worth.

"After the meal, when the coffee stood before us, we four sat down to talk over—what? If anyone had told me a year ago that I would talk over my marriage like a simple human man and without the aid of a Court Marshal! There we sat, in an ordinary farm house room, at an ordinary farmer's table, and considered when and how the wedding should be.

I was in never-ending joy, never-ending surprise. Miss Fritz insisted on arranging the wedding, of course, on the farm, "even though her dear child was a veritable Countess and her husband a real Royal Highness!" In spite of both noble personages it should be a true peasant wedding. And it suited me.

My bride was to have a trousseau from Miss Fritz like a "real Princess." That made us all laugh, as if it was the most wonderful witticism ever uttered.

At last I, too, began to boast, becoming jealous of the treasures of the bride. I told of our summer and winter palaces and begged to inquire where my Madam Wife would like to reside. But my two palaces did not impress them at all. They were laughed at until I became indignant and declared that, after all, perhaps it might be best to let the Lord Marshal arrange the whole ceremony.

Then they became still, like bad children whom the nurse threatens with the "black man." Then I had my triumph.

Soon thereafter we were driven away by the strict Miss Fritz, who said that it was growing late and that we had a long way to go. She had seen through my attempt to linger until it would be too late to go. So nothing helped us and we had to depart. Miss Fritz and Judica gave us their company for a part of the way and the household cheered behind us.

Today I will write down what it was that Gebhardt said to me when I told him that I intended to marry Judica. I have the courage to do it today. The Count said to my face:

"Your Royal Highness is about to commit a wrong that will avenge itself, not on Your Royal Highness, but on the pure, sweet girl."

Turning my back on the speaker I had to think: "A sacrifice! A sacrifice!"

Gebhardt had said the same thing, only in other words.

CHAPTER XVIII.

On the Sea-Alp.

Today we celebrated our engagement officially on my Sea-Alp.

All the fishermen and boatmen, all the woodmen and foresters, all the mountain