

LIFE IN THE TUILERIES UNDER THE SECOND EMPIRE.

BY AN INMATE OF THE PALACE.



IN December, 1852, Napoleon III. was proclaimed Emperor. A month later, in January, 1853, the announcement of his marriage to Eugénie de Montijo astonished the world, and none more than his most faithful and devoted adherents, among whom were the whole family de Tascher de la Pagerie, his oldest friends and relatives.

The Comte de Tascher de la Pagerie, first cousin to the Empress Josephine, had been called to the court of Napoleon I. when scarcely more than a boy in years, and soon became a great favorite, not only of Josephine, but also of the great Emperor himself, whom he followed in his campaigns, though more especially under the command of his cousin, Prince Eugène de Beauharnais, son of Josephine by her first marriage with the Comte de Beauharnais, who was guillotined in the Revolution.

The affection of both Napoleon and Josephine for the spirited and chivalrous young officer survived their divorce, and at the time of Napoleon's marriage with Marie Louise the young Comte de Tascher de la Pagerie was betrothed, with the Emperor's approval, to the Princess Amélie von der Leyen, daughter of the mediatized¹ Prince von der Leyen. The marriage took place, but under particularly disastrous circumstances.

It may be remembered that the ball given by the Austrian ambassador, Prince Schwarzenberg, in honor of the imperial nuptials, was the scene of a frightful catastrophe. The hangings of the ball-room having caught fire, the flames spread to the whole building, and many victims perished, among whom were the Princess Schwarzenberg herself and the Princess von der Leyen, both in the attempt to save their daughters. The Princess Amélie was dancing with her future husband when the fire broke out. He at once placed her in safety, returning to seek her mother, who, meanwhile, had been taken away from the ball-room, but, like the Princess Schwarzenberg, rushed back into the flames to find her daughter. A burning beam had fallen on her, and when found

her condition was absolutely hopeless. She was extricated with the greatest difficulty; the heat around her had been so intense that the silver setting of her diamonds had melted into the burned flesh! Strange to say, a few flowers of a wreath she wore had escaped the flames, and the writer of these pages has often seen them, set in a frame under a portrait of the unfortunate princess, in the bedchamber of her daughter. She lived two or three days in fearful suffering, but insisted on the marriage ceremony taking place at once: and in the presence of the dying mother, who had sacrificed her life for her daughter's safety, was Amélie von der Leyen united to Louis de Tascher de la Pagerie.

The fall of the First Empire destroyed the brilliant prospects of the young pair. Louis XVIII. offered an important post at his court to the Comte de Tascher de la Pagerie; but imbued with the principle expressed in his family motto, "Honoris fidelis," he rejected all advances, even from those who, as legitimate possessors, filled the throne of the Emperor to whom he had sworn allegiance, and chose to follow his cousin Prince Eugène de Beauharnais, who, having married a princess of Bavaria, had elected Munich as his residence in exile. The sister of Prince Eugène, Hortense (who was separated from her husband Louis Bonaparte, King of Holland), had accepted the title of Duchesse de Saint-Leu, and wandered from one place of residence to another with her two sons, the younger of whom was afterward known as Napoleon III.

Louis de Tascher remained on terms of the greatest affection and intimacy with the ex-queen, and after the death of her brother Prince Eugène he became her most trusted friend and counselor. His sons and daughters, who were often invited to stay at Arenenberg on the Lake of Constance, where she finally resided most habitually, were the playfellows of her sons in their childhood, and the friends of Louis Napoleon when, by the death of his elder brother, he became the head of the Bonaparte family, and the representative of what they held to be their rights. The light-hearted girls and merry boys of the de Tascher family brought some

¹ The mediatized princes of the Holy Roman Empire had yielded their petty states by the Rhine treaties,

but retained the social rank and privileges of independent sovereigns.

life to the too quiet home of Queen Hortense, where the future Emperor, always absorbed in thought, was then, as in after life, a gentle dreamer, scarcely roused to a smile by the vivacious ways and lively jests of his young cousins; who, as they afterward acknowledged, could not help even then feeling inwardly a sort of awe in his presence, as in that of a superior being.

When the end of Queen Hortense drew near, she summoned the Comte de Tascher to her bedside to receive her last instructions and hear her last wishes. He it was who attended to all that was needful after her death, who obtained from the government of Louis Philippe the requisite permission to bring back the remains of the exiled queen to her native land, and who followed them to their last resting-place at Reuil, near Paris. There was, consequently, a strong tie of affection, confidence, and respect between Prince Louis Napoleon and his mother's trusted friend and counselor. When his strangely varied fortunes brought him to that supreme position which he had always anticipated in what seemed idle dreams, he immediately called the Comte de Tascher and his surviving son to his bachelor court at the Elysée, the ladies of the family remaining temporarily at Munich.

The Comte de Tascher had always felt the importance of a suitable marriage for Prince Louis Napoleon, and had greatly exerted himself to negotiate several which he approved, and which had been nearly concluded. One, in the early youth of the prince, with the Princess Mathilde, his cousin, sister of Prince (Jerome) Napoleon, had been settled by family arrangements, but was broken off after the failure of the Strasburg conspiracy. Other negotiations undertaken by the Comte de Tascher personally, in the hope of obtaining the hand of several German princesses, had fallen through in consequence of the ill will of their respective courts.

The Comte de Tascher still hoped, nevertheless, that the rising fortunes of the prince, now President of the French Republic, would finally conquer all difficulties; but the mere idea that, as Emperor (a destiny which all foresaw), he would marry the beautiful Spanish girl with whom, as President, he flirted at Compiègne never seriously dwelt in the mind of the devoted friend of early days. When, immediately after the proclamation of the Empire, the intentions of the new Emperor were communicated to the Comte de Tascher and his son, they were so painfully astonished that they warmly remonstrated as to the complications which would be added to his already difficult position by the act of raising to the throne of France a private gentlewoman, however attractive she might be, without consulting the will of the nation. They

even declared that, if he did so, they would leave him and return to Germany.

The Emperor would listen to no expostulations, and made a strong appeal to their feelings of old friendship and personal attachment, to induce them not only to welcome his bride, but to accept the two most important posts in her future court. The General, Comte de Tascher de la Pagerie, was appointed "Grand Master of the Empress's Household," and his son, then called Count Charles, "First Chamberlain."

The Empress was fully aware of their conscientious opposition to her marriage, which, naturally, caused some constraint at first; but her own sincere nature soon appreciated the noble and chivalrous character of the old count, and the honest devotedness of his son, when once they had given their allegiance. The ladies of the family then came to the Tuileries, where apartments were provided for them, and where the Emperor received them on their arrival with the most unaffected kindness, recalling heartily old times and bygone memories.

The Comte Charles de Tascher de la Pagerie had already inherited the title of duke through his German mother, from her uncle the Duke of Dalberg, Prince-Primate of Germany; but his deep respect for his father had prevented him from taking precedence as duke till, at a later period, the count himself insisted on his doing so — when a decree, signed by the Emperor, authorized the Comte Charles de Tascher de la Pagerie to bear henceforward the title of duke.

To prevent confusion I shall at once use the title, although, chronologically, it was not yet adopted. Three years had elapsed since the arrival of the family at the Tuileries, when I was informed that the future Duchesse de Tascher de la Pagerie wished to meet with a lady, accustomed to good society, who would be capable of entirely filling her place by her daughters, and who would constantly be their friend and guide. She would be governess only in the court sense of the function, not as teacher, but as governing their education, superintending their studies, directing their reading, and accompanying them wherever they went. The German lady who had begun their education was about to be married, and the elder daughter being now sixteen, it was thought desirable to make a new choice, with a few modifications as to requirements. Some of my friends had thought of proposing me to fill this exceptional post. The circumstance that members of my family were intimate with cousins of the de Tascher family would, it was considered, facilitate an introduction.

Finally, after much discussion, I was taken to the Tuileries, and presented to the duchess. The sentinels — the servants in imperial liv-

ery — had made me feel sufficiently nervous, but when I entered the private apartments occupied by the family, and, after passing through lugubrious dark passages with lamps in midday, suddenly found myself in broad daylight, and within the rooms which, I was informed, would be mine if matters were favorably settled, my alarm increased to a painful degree. I felt that a new life, quite unknown, was opening before me; and its very brilliancy was startling to one who had always lived in retirement. My future pupils came forward to meet me; the elder, a blooming girl of sixteen, as fresh as a rose, but more womanly in appearance than I had expected, and with the graceful ease of manner which indicates the habit of general society; the younger, a pretty child of eleven, shyer than her sister. The rooms, plainly furnished in bright chintz, looked comfortable and homelike.

After a few minutes of general conversation, the door suddenly opened, and the duchess came in quickly,—a tall, graceful figure, very commanding in appearance,—the court lady from head to foot, very beautiful, and most elegantly dressed. Being very near-sighted, she drew close to me, with half-shut eyes, and peered down very much as if she were trying to find a fly on the carpet; but in the conversation that followed after we had resumed our seats her manner was most courteous, and even a little embarrassed through the evident fear of giving offense by expressing her wishes too plainly. Altogether, she left upon me the full impression of that considerate good-breeding which is generally, but not always, the characteristic of distinguished rank. I remained, however, some days in doubt as to my final acceptance, being told by my friends that, although everything had been found very satisfactory, there was some hesitation on account of my youth, the position being one of absolute trust, which was thought to require the experience of riper years. However, other applicants, although older than I, seemed to present fewer guarantees. I was, therefore, finally engaged; and I hope I may be permitted to add that the decision never caused any regret.

It was late in the afternoon when, on the appointed day, I entered the palace where I was fated to reside for nine years — during the most prosperous time of the Second Empire. As yet all was unknown, therefore necessarily uncertain, and the nervous anxiety that I could not repress, though only natural under the circumstances, was a very disagreeable beginning. Some married daughters of the Comte de Tascher, with their children, were on a visit to their father, and the whole party came to my apartments soon after my arrival, escorted

by the duchess, who introduced me. They encouraged me with so much unaffected good-nature and friendliness that I felt somewhat comforted, but fully recognized the truth of their parting remark, as they went off laughingly: "You will feel happier a week hence." As they left me, I was told to dress quickly, as "mon père" had military habits, and was mercilessly punctual; so, giving my keys to the confidential maid sent to assist me, I begged her to select what I ought to wear, hastily changing my attire according to her instructions. A fresh ordeal now awaited me—presentation to the Comtesse de Tascher, Princesse Amélie von der Leyen, the *Durchlaucht*, or Serene Highness, as the German servants always called her. My pupils came to fetch me, leading the way down a dark, narrow, winding staircase, then through a wide passage paved in white and black marble, and through folding-doors, which my elder pupil opened, drawing back courteously, to leave me full precedence. I then entered a large, handsome room, hung with pictures and richly furnished, where stood a group of ladies elegantly dressed; one of whom, the duchess, came forward immediately and led me to a dignified elderly lady, seated in a deep window, whose features at once reminded me vividly of all the historical portraits of German princesses I had seen in picture-galleries. Next I made my obeisance to her husband, the General, Comte de Tascher de la Pagerie, one of the most distinguished men in appearance that I had ever seen, whose eagle eye and aquiline profile recalled the Duke of Wellington. There was no time for conversation, the folding-doors being thrown open and dinner announced.

The large, handsome dining-room where the numerous members of the family took their seats, the servants in and out of livery, the display of plate, and all the ceremony of a formal dinner-party, although no strangers were present, made me feel more than ever like a poor little sparrow which had strayed alone into an aviary of tropical birds. Conversation was general and very animated; I was seated next to the (Princesse) Comtesse de Tascher, who from time to time spoke to me kindly, and urged me to partake of the dishes handed about. When the dinner was concluded, all rose and moved to the door, where they stood in two lines while the *Durchlaucht* passed out first, the others following her in couples, my pupils coming last. I was then allowed to retire, for this first evening, and was thankful to do so after taking leave of the visitors, who were returning to Germany by the night train.

The next morning, of course, I found the family much reduced in number, when I went down to the *déjeuner*, or luncheon, and al-

though the same stateliness was observed in the arrangements, everything looked less formidable. The countess asked me kindly, "Are you less afraid of us now?" and the count, with smiling benevolence, inquired if my first night at the Tuileries had brought pleasant dreams. The duke was *de service*, or "in waiting," so I scarcely saw him, but he too welcomed me cordially, telling me "not to spoil his girls."

After luncheon my two pupils and their brother, then a schoolboy of fifteen,¹ led me through the various rooms, pointing out the historical portraits of the Bonapartes and the Beauharnais: those of the princes and princesses allied to their family; the portrait of their great-grandmother the unfortunate Princess von der Leyen, and the flowers which she had worn at the fatal ball; also the portrait of the Prince-Primate of Germany, Duke von Dalberg, from whom their father inherited his title, and proudly explained the privilege of the Dalbergs to be knighted at the coronation of the Emperors of Germany, where the herald called three times, "Ist kein Dalberg da?"²

Then they showed me many treasures kept in handsome cabinets. One interested me particularly — a large, plain gold ring containing the hair of Marie Antoinette, a thick lock of lovely golden hair, braided into a close plait, not the rich auburn hue of the Empress Eugénie's, but a sweeter, paler color, usually seen only in childhood.

We then returned to our apartments, where the day was spent in putting all that I had brought with me in due order, and the evening at the opera, where I accompanied the Comtesse Stéphanie, an unmarried sister of the duke, who lived at the Tuileries. We went in one of the Emperor's carriages, with a coachman and groom in imperial livery, for which the police made room when needful. "Livrée de l'Empereur!" — this sufficed to cut through all files of carriages, and to pass everywhere, when proclaimed by the coachman in sonorous tones. We were conducted to the box called *de service*, devoted to the household, passing before bowing officials, and much stared at by spectators.

The next day was Sunday, with mass in the imperial chapel; but on Monday I began fully the duties of my position, which I soon found was no sinecure, though made as pleasant as possible by the friendly kindness and courtesy of all about me. But from the moment when I was awakened in the morning till a late hour at night there was not an interval of time to spare. The two girls being of to-

tally different ages, the professors, classes, lectures, etc., were also totally different; so my days were spent in rushing out with one, and then rushing back to take the other somewhere else. I was on foot in all kinds of weather, which the duchess considered necessary for the health of my pupils; but as I had two journeys to make the fatigue was doubled. During these lectures, etc., I had to take notes incessantly, and to prepare the work of the girls. Often I was obliged to dress in ten minutes for a dinner-party, because some professor had unduly prolonged his lesson. The constant mental strain, added to the physical fatigue, was almost more than I could endure, and my health suffered so severely that I greatly feared the impossibility of continuing such an arduous task. In the evening there were dancing-lessons three times a week; one at the English Embassy, from which we returned at a late hour, and two others at the Tuileries in the apartments of the Duchesse de Bassano, our next neighbor. On the remaining evenings I frequently accompanied the (Princess) Countess or the Comtesse Stéphanie to theaters or operas, which, though very agreeable, added considerably to the overwhelming fatigue of the day. As to my own private correspondence, I was obliged to write necessary letters often very late at night, to the great indignation of the duchess, who rightly declared that I was wearing myself out; but I had no other resource. But as time went on matters happily became easier; and after the marriage of my elder pupil to Prince Maximilian von Thurn und Taxis, my task was considerably diminished. The work of the first year, however, was absolutely crushing.

I had seen the Empress Eugénie pass by in her carriage more than once before I entered the Tuileries, and although I could not but think her beautiful, still, like most of those who saw her only under such circumstances, I had no idea of her real attractions. A few days after my arrival at the palace, as I was crossing the large courtyard with the future Princess von Thurn und Taxis, I suddenly saw her stop short and perform the court courtesy, — a downward plunge instead of the usual bend, — while the sentinel presented arms as she hastily whispered; "L'Impératrice!"

There was the Empress, standing before us at a large window on the ground floor, a vision robed in pale blue silk; the sun, forming a sort of halo around her, rested on her hair, which seemed all molten gold. I was absolutely startled, and my impression was that I had never before seen such a beautiful creature. I fully understood at that moment the enthusiasm which I had supposed to be exaggerated. Her face was beaming with smiles as she recognized

¹ Now Duc de Tascher de la Pagerie, and head of the family.

² "Is there no Dalberg here?"



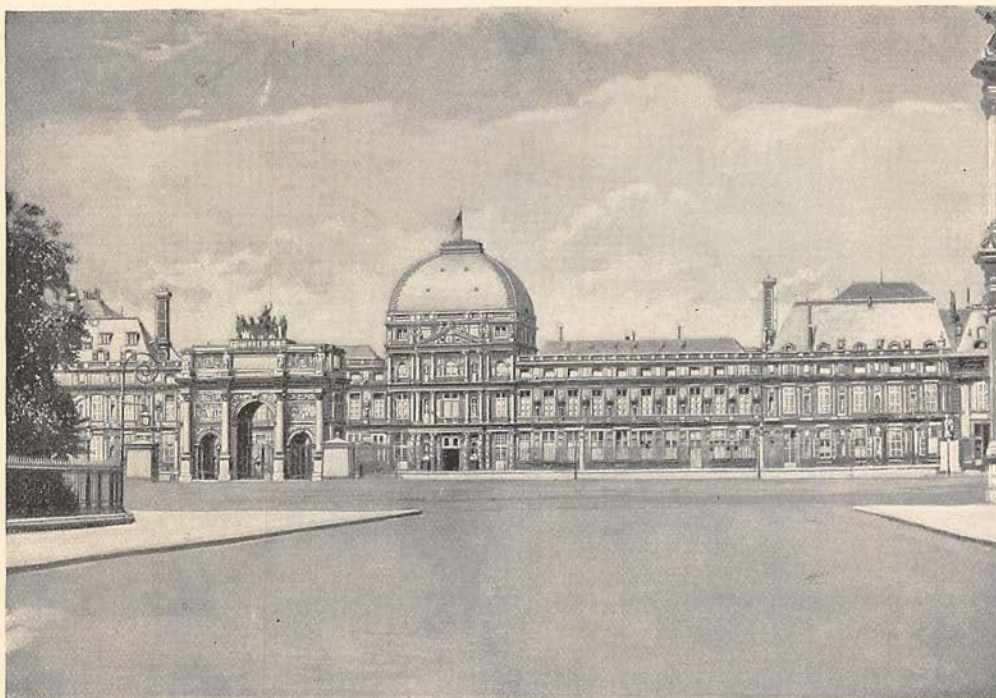
ENGRAVED BY R. G. TIETZE, FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO.
EMPERESS EUGÉNIE IN SPANISH MANTILLA.

my pupil, to whom she nodded with the most unpretending good-nature. I remarked, after we had passed on, that I had supposed her hair to be of a darker hue, whereupon I was told not to judge till I had seen her in the shade instead of the sun.

I soon had an opportunity of seeing her in the chapel, as she passed before me on her way to the imperial gallery, bareheaded, as was her custom when not in the lower part of the building, where she condescended to wear a bonnet; and now her hair looked a dark, rich chestnut color, instead of the golden shade, like ripe wheat, which I had seen before. The habit which the Empress had adopted of wear-

ing no covering on her head during the Sunday high mass was a sore grievance to the clergy, who in vain quoted the instructions of St. Paul addressed to women. But she listened to no remonstrance; as, indeed, was usually the case when anything suited her fancy or her convenience.

The opportunities of seeing the Empress were of almost daily occurrence when she was at the Tuileries; for although we inhabited another part of the palace, she passed before our windows in her carriage when she went out for her usual drives, and in the lower part of the chapel we were placed very near to her seat. The unfortunate Archbishop of



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

THE TUILERIES FROM THE PLACE DU CARROUSEL.

Paris, who was shot during the Commune, usually attended the imperial mass, and was so near to me that the golden tassels of his vestment rested upon the desk of the pew where I knelt with my pupils and Mesdemoiselles de Bassano. The Empress, who was just before us with the Emperor (and at a later period with the Prince Imperial), never forgot, as she rose from her knees to go down the aisle, to turn toward our group with a gracious smile and bend; the deep courtesy in reply was not easy to perform in the narrow space allotted to us.

The first time that I was able to see the Empress in private life was at St. Cloud, where the de Tascher family occupied a villa adjoining the palace, with an entrance to the private grounds, of which we had a key.

One evening I had taken a drive with the duchess, and on our return she had gone into the garden with her elder daughter to enjoy the fresh air, requesting me to order the lamps for the drawing-room. I had just laid my hand on the bell when I heard a voice asking for the duchess, and, the door suddenly opening, I saw a lady standing in the entrance. Supposing her to be a visitor from Paris, I immediately went toward her, begging her to come in while I called the duchess, who was in the garden; but I saw some hesitation, and although the room was nearly dark a ray of moonlight resting on her face revealed the

Empress Eugénie. I was startled, and hardly knew what I ought to do, so paused for a moment; whereupon she hastily took flight, closing the door. I ran to the duchess, saying: "Madame! The Empress is here!" She hastily came forward, when the door opened again, and the Empress, accompanied by the Duc de Tascher and a numerous suite, came in quickly, with extended hands, which the duchess kissed. She had previously run on alone, leaving the others behind her, and in the anteroom had asked the servant on duty if the duchess was at home, wishing to surprise her. The man, who was half asleep, sprang to his feet with evident trepidation; on seeing which she exclaimed, "Do you know me?" "Certainly. I have the honor of knowing Your Majesty." "Oh! how tiresome!" she cried ("*Comme c'est ennuyeux!*"); "everybody knows me!" She then hastily opened the door before her, and saw that I too recognized her, on which she flew to the duke, saying: "Tascher! Tascher! I cannot go in — there is a strange lady!" He answered, laughing, that he thought he knew who that strange lady must be, and that Her Majesty need not be alarmed; on which she consented to return. As the duchess welcomed her warmly, she said that she had felt quite shy (*intimidée*) when she saw "madame," with a smiling bend toward me, on which I was presented in due form to her very gracious Majesty. The whole party then went on the



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY LEVITSKY.
COMTE DE TASCHER DE LA PAGERIE.



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY LEVITSKY.
PRINCESS AMÉLIE VON DER LEVEN, COMTESSE DE TASCHER
DE LA PAGERIE.

terrace before the house, and after assisting in providing seats I withdrew, fearing to intrude on their privacy. But in a few minutes one of my pupils came running in; the Empress had asked why I had retired, and had expressed a particular wish that I should join them. It was rather an ordeal to go through, when I found myself standing at the top of a flight of steps, which I had to descend in full view of the large court circle before me; the more so as there was bright moonlight, and I knew that I must remain standing till permission was given to sit down. But the Empress saw me immediately, and with her usual grace of manner desired me to be seated, using her usual polite circumlocution — “Will you not sit down?” I obeyed, with the requisite low courtesy, and a most pleasant evening followed, the Empress chatting gaily and familiarly, as she energetically dug up the gravel at her feet with a tall walking-

stick that she held in her hand, repeatedly addressing me personally, with marked courtesy. When an opportunity occurred, she called me to her side, and gave me a chair with her own hand. In short, it was impossible to show more kindness and consideration than I noticed toward every one present and experienced personally. She spoke French with a marked Spanish accent, and, to my surprise, her voice had the harsh guttural sounds so frequent among Castilians, but which seemed strangely foreign to that sweet face, so delicate in its loveliness.

My feminine readers will perhaps wish to know how she was dressed on this occasion, and I can only answer, as simply as possible. She wore a dress of a soft gray summer stuff over a striped blue and white silk underskirt; a loose mantle of the same pale gray was thrown over all. She held a tall walking-stick in her hand, and wore a straw



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO.
DUC DE TASCHER DE LA PAGERIE.



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY LADREY-DISDERI.
NAPOLEON III., EMPRESS EUGÉNIE, AND PRINCE IMPERIAL.

hat of the Tyrolese shape, with a Tyrolese plume of black and white feathers.

The duchess offered tea, which was accepted, and the whole party adjourned to the villa, where it was immediately served. The Empress was in high spirits, laughing and talking merrily, and seeming thoroughly to enjoy her escape from her usual trammels, when, to the consternation of her hostess, and her own very evident annoyance, the door opened, and a lady inhabiting a neighboring villa sailed in, followed by her daughter, both in full toilet. She held a high post at court, but nothing on this occasion called for her presence, which was flagrantly intrusive. She explained that she had heard the voices in the garden, and begged "to be allowed a share in the good fortune of her neighbors." A chill had fallen on the whole party; the Empress, suddenly silent and cold, played with her teaspoon, looking grave and displeased, while the intruder talked

of her "beautiful dahlias," which she wished so much to show to Her Majesty (at nearly eleven o'clock at night!). It was so near; would not Her Majesty stop on her way back to the palace and see the dahlias?

The Empress evidently wished particularly to be let alone, but at last she rose with an air of weary resignation, saying, "Well, let us go and see the dahlias!"

The pleasant evening was over, and the momentary freedom which had made it so agreeable was cut short merely because one court lady was determined to enjoy the same mark of favor that had been bestowed on another court lady. It is said that in the early years of her reign Queen Victoria exclaimed, "What is the use of being a queen if one cannot do as one likes?" She soon was obliged to learn that of all women queens are those who least do as they like. The Empress Eugénie had wished to enjoy royal honors, and she too had to learn that restraint for which she was ill prepared by a life of absolute liberty was necessary in her high position. Etiquette, though much modernized, and therefore made less irksome than it was in the days of poor Marie Antoinette, still stood in her way on every side. She could not risk giving offense, and she must court popularity. The bird which had always flown freely wherever the wish of

the hour guided its flight was now in a gilded cage, tied down by silken threads as difficult to break as iron chains.

She would have wished to walk about freely without state or ceremony, except on official occasions, when she did not dislike playing the part of Empress; but she could not leave the palace without a numerous suite, in a carriage and four with outriders; nor get rid of the necessity of incessantly bowing to the spectators, which she performed both graciously and gracefully, but with unavoidable weariness. She had twelve ladies-in-waiting, some of whom were her personal friends; others had been chosen for political reasons, and she did not particularly care for them; but she could show no preference. Two ladies at a time were in waiting: in Paris for a week, at the country residences for a month. Each lady in turn was *de grand service*, as it was called, or in full waiting; that is, she had a right to go with

the Empress in her carriage and take precedence on all occasions, while the other followed in the second carriage, with the chamberlain-in-waiting. The next day matters were reversed, and the other lady was de grand service, whether or not the Empress liked the change. The ladies did not sleep at the Tuileries when the court was in Paris, but were fetched in a carriage devoted to their use for their hours of duty, which began at two o'clock in the afternoon. They awaited Her Majesty's pleasure in a salon where the *service d'honneur* assembled, and where the ladies kept their books, writing materials, and needlework. After their usual drive with the Empress they were taken to their homes for their evening toilette, and returned to the palace in full dress for their dinner, which was served at half-past seven. The *déjeuner* was at half-past eleven; in Paris the Emperor and Empress partook of it alone till the Prince Imperial was old enough to join them; but at the country residences the *service d'honneur* were admitted to both meals, as were also the guests staying there on a visit. After the *déjeuner* the Emperor usually followed the Empress to her private room, where the little prince was brought, and where they enjoyed family life like ordinary mortals for a short respite. The Empress then admitted her private secretary, and examined with him the innumerable petitions received daily. Both the Emperor and Empress were generous in their charities, the Emperor even to excess. It has been stated that his various gifts and grants amounted to a daily sum of 10,000 francs.

When the time came for dinner, after the usual drive, the *service d'honneur* assembled in the Salon d'Apollon (where the evenings were habitually spent), to await the Emperor and Empress, who came in together, and took their seats side by side at the center of the dinner-table, when the silent bend of an official had announced that all was ready. The Emperor gave his arm to the Empress, and both walked out first, the others following according to rank and etiquette. The gentlemen wore either their uniforms or the court-dress, which differed but little from the ordinary evening coat, but with a lining of



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY LADREY-DISDERI.

PRINCESS CLOTILDE AND PRINCE NAPOLEON.

white moiré silk. The ladies wore low-made evening dress, but there was greater indulgence on the part of the kind imperial hosts than is usually found in courts; if really needful, in consequence of indisposition, a pelerine of white quilted satin, and sleeves of the same, were tolerated as a protection for the shoulders and arms. The Empress usually wore velvet of rich, dark colors, which were particularly becoming to her exquisitely fair complexion. The Emperor liked to see her richly dressed, and often objected to the extreme simplicity of her morning attire, which, it must be acknowledged, was often too fanciful to be appropriate to her high position. Everything she wore was well made and perfectly neat; her hair was beautifully dressed: but she liked the comfort of loose garibaldi bodices of red flannel with a plain black silk skirt over a red flannel underskirt, all of which was concealed when she went out by



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY LADREY-DISDERI.
PRINCESS MATHILDE.

a handsome cloak and the fur coverings of the open carriage. I have seen her wear, within the palace, a tight jacket of knitted black wool, with a gray border, over the silk and crape dress which she wore as second mourning for her sister, the Duchess of Alva. It was a sort of wrap which one would expect to see on the shoulders of some old crone bending over her fire rather than on the graceful figure of the beautiful Empress of the French. I might quote other instances: such as a loose jacket of a small black and white check bordered with red flannel, etc.

After dinner the court adjourned to the splendid room called Salon d'Apollon, where coffee was handed about; the Emperor took his cup standing, with cigarettes, which it was his habit to smoke incessantly. The ladies present remained standing till they were requested to sit down, but the Emperor's courtesy did not allow them to wait long before receiving the requisite authorization. The gentlemen, however, stood upright during the whole evening, and many found this a trial. In general the evenings were very heavy, a fact which those admitted to them did not attempt to conceal.

In the time of Louis Philippe, Queen Marie Amélie and the princesses, her daughters-in-law, sat round a table with needlework, which at least provided occupation; but during the Empire conversation was the principal resource, and this often flagged. The Emperor was benevolent, but silent; the Empress tried

to talk incessantly, with real or feigned vivacity; sometimes in the young days of the Empire she proposed dancing, and one of the gentlemen present turned the handle of a mechanical piano, which played dance music. I remember that one evening, shortly after my arrival at the palace, we were all seated quietly in the salon of the duke's mother Comtesse de Tascher, after dinner, when suddenly the chamberlain-in-waiting appeared. The Empress wished to dance the lancers, in vogue that winter, and nobody present knew the figures. It had been suggested that Mlle. de Tascher, who habitually attended the dancing-lessons at the British Embassy, was probably initiated in the mysteries of the new dance, and she must come immediately to teach everybody. The duchess, who was going to a private ball, protested vehemently that her daughter was a mere schoolgirl, not yet introduced into society; she was not dressed appropriately for such an unexpected honor; she could not go without her mother, etc. The chamberlain, with languid good-breeding and perfect indifference, coolly answered: "All I know is that she is to come immediately, and must not stop to dress. I suppose you may come, too, if you like, but you must not keep Her Majesty waiting." So the duchess and her daughter followed the chamberlain—Mlle. de Tascher considerably vexed at having no time to change her dark green silk dress for more becoming attire; but



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY LADREY-DISDERI.
PRINCE JEROME.



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY LADREY-DISDERI.
MARSHAL MACMAHON.

there was no help for it, and she had to obey. She was warmly received by the Empress (dressed in crimson velvet and diamonds), gave the required lesson in the lancers, danced with the Emperor, who broke her fan, and apologized, while she, though a schoolgirl, replied, in courtier-like phrase, that she was "too happy to have such a remembrance of His Majesty," who, unfortunately, forgot all about it the next day, and thus omitted to send her a more pleasant remembrance. At ten o'clock, according to the usual custom, a tea-table was brought in, with a tray of cool drinks for those who preferred them. The Empress, in high spirits, made the tea herself, instead of leaving the matter to her ladies, and my schoolgirl greatly enjoyed the whole adventure.

The Empress would have liked to spend the evening sometimes with the de Tascher family, whose cheerfulness, as she said once in my presence, "would cure the jaundice"; but the question of petty court jealousies again stood in her way. She visited them at long intervals, but only when some apparent reason justified the exception. Usually, after taking tea, the Emperor retired, "to transact business with his private secretary," as was stated; what that business was, on too frequent occasions, had better not be too closely examined. The Empress usually remained till about half-past eleven, when she disappeared, and as the last fold of her train left the doorway, all the men present, who had been standing

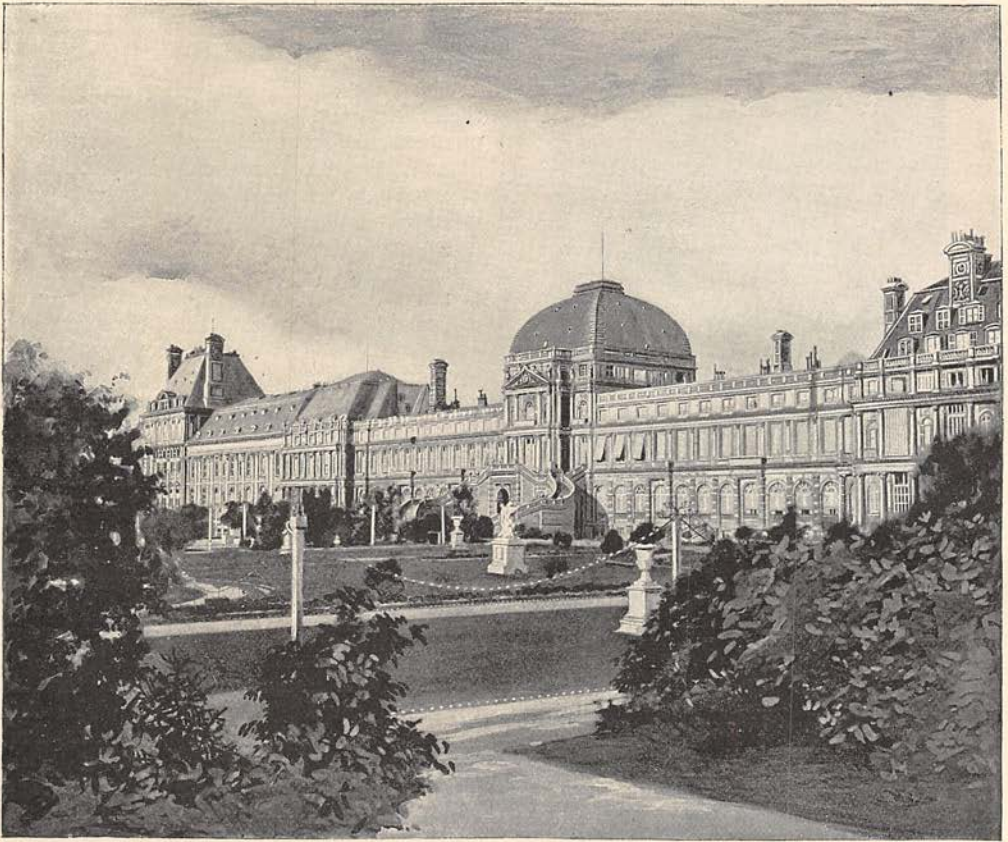
the whole evening, uttered a sigh of relief, as they threw themselves on the sofas with undisguised satisfaction.

The Duc de Tascher, who suffered from rheumatic gout, found this obligation of etiquette particularly trying, and, being privileged in many respects, he frequently slipped into the next room, where he could sit down and even indulge in a momentary doze with impunity. Often, on returning from some theater with one of the ladies of the family, I would meet him coming wearily from the imperial quarters, and, as he said "Good night," he would add with a groan, "There is no way of inducing the Empress to go to bed!" Her personal attendants could say much more on the subject, for even after retiring to her private apartments she often lingered till the small hours of the night.

One evening, as the duke afterward told me, he had escaped to the neighboring room, where he habitually took refuge, and was seated, writing a letter, when the Emperor suddenly came in. Of course the duke sprang to his feet, but the Emperor good-humoredly desired him not to disturb himself, but to go on with his letter. On such occasions the rule is to obey without any objection, the sovereign's will being considered paramount. The duke consequently sat down and quietly continued his letter, though much discomfited by the presence of the Emperor, who paced the room to and fro, smoking his cigarette and humming a tune. The duke, however, leisurely finished



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY LADREY-DISDERI.
MARSHAL CANROBERT.



GARDEN FRONT OF THE TUILERIES.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

and folded his letter, sealing it deliberately with the large official seal in red wax, and carefully adding the stamp of the household. The Emperor then drew near:

"Have you finished, Tascher?"

"Yes, Sire."

"Quite finished?"

"Yes, Sire."

"Then—I may take the inkstand?"

The good-natured simplicity of the act was extremely characteristic. There never was a more amiable man in private life than the Emperor Napoleon III., or one more absolutely unpretending. His constant gentleness, his unvarying, patient kindness, were only too much preyed upon by many of those about him; but he was certainly deeply loved by all who were in habitual personal contact with him—more loved than was the Empress Eugénie, notwithstanding her personal charms. She was extremely good-natured, thoroughly natural, and devoid of haughtiness (a great merit in such a position), but impulsive and hot-tempered, too sincere and straightforward to conceal her varying impressions, and withal fanciful and tenacious in her fancies, which

often irritated those who had to yield to her wishes despite difficulties and inconvenience. "One of the Empress's whims!" was often the comment of her attendants down to the domestic servants of the palace. The Emperor, always quiet and even apathetic, disturbed no one; but if an appeal was made to his feelings he could not resist. There was a sort of tender-hearted, sentimental softness in his nature which recalled the "sensibility" of bygone days, probably inherited from his mother, Queen Hortense. This often led him astray, and is the real explanation of many errors. He was far from being deliberately false, as has so often been asserted; but unfortunately he was more a man of feeling than a man of principle. This led to weakness and vacillation, though, like many others whose natures are too yielding, when he had finally taken a decision he was firm even to obstinacy. Any one more unlike the bloodthirsty tyrant depicted by Victor Hugo and other political adversaries could scarcely be imagined. The sight of the battle-field of Solferino had left on his mind such an impression of horror as to destroy all dreams of military glory, and it

was with the greatest unwillingness that he was drawn into the wars that followed, principally, alas! through the pertinacious influence of the Empress Eugénie, who had not seen a battle-field, and who knew only the conventional pictures of glory and heroism, without their fearful cost.

The Empress was extremely agreeable and good-natured, but there was no softness in her character. Even with regard to those dearest to her,—the Emperor and her son,—she was influenced more by a chivalrous, romantic ideal than by any natural tenderness. Her aim was to show herself a Roman wife and mother, and this led her on many occasions to a sort of apparent harshness which caused her to be misjudged.

The little prince was spoiled to excess by his father; his mother naturally wished to counterbalance the latter's over-indulgence, but she was not always judicious in her energetic interference. One instance may be quoted among many. The very first time that the little prince, a mere baby between three and four years old, was seated on a pony, the equerry, M. Bâchon, was carefully holding him and leading the pony step by step, when suddenly the Empress came up, indignantly declaring that she would not have such absurd petting, and concluding by giving a cut of her whip to the pony, which started off. Bâchon, terrified, uttered an energetic expletive, succeeded in stopping the pony, and brought back the child unhurt; but he was too angry to remember official decorum, and expressed his feelings with an amount of vigor very unusual in courts, while the English nurse indulged in more respectful lamentations: "Oh, Your Majesty! You should n't, Your Majesty! You've only *one*, you know!"

It is evident that the Empress in no way intended to risk the life of her child; but she was herself fearless to excess, and often thoughtless in the presence of danger. She was determined that her son should not be a milksop, and she did not stop to examine the "fitness of things."

The Emperor, on the other hand, shrank from giving him pain to an almost absurd degree. The child was once playing with a small mandarin orange, which he tried to get into his mouth. The Emperor, alarmed, cried: "Take it from him! He will choke himself!" The Duc de Tascher took the orange forcibly from the child, not without resistance on his part, and laughingly rallied the Emperor on his not having done so himself. "I *could* not," the Emperor exclaimed; "he would not love me!"

When the time came for putting him under the care of a tutor, one of the ladies de Tas-

cher said to the child, "Ah, Monseigneur, now you will have to be obedient, and to work hard at your lessons."

He gravely answered: "That is not so sure. Mama always says no, but then papa always says yes, and I have my own will besides — that makes three."

The tutor had no very easy task before him, and the Empress exclaimed in despair, "It is impossible to bring up that child properly!" Happily for the little prince, the policy which required that his education should have a military stamp caused him at a later period to be placed under the supreme command of General Frossard, who was appointed "Governor of the Prince Imperial," and who treated him according to military discipline, without allowing any one to interfere.

The Emperor was wise enough to feel the necessity of this firmness, and was not sorry to hand over to another the control which might make his son "love him" less. His over-tender feelings were, however, often tried severely. The young prince was heard to say on some festive occasion: "I should *so* like to stay! *He* won't let me!" The Emperor, with his usual indulgence, answered: "Give me your cap; I will put it in my pocket. You can't go without it, and that will cause some delay." The prince then said ruefully: "It is of no use. I have tried that before. He has got another ready." And the terrible *he*—General Frossard—marched off his imperial charge under the care of his tutor.

The Prince Imperial was, however, a very amiable and interesting child, showing a good deal of his mother's spirit, with the affectionate nature and feeling heart of his father, whom he almost worshiped and always preferred to his mother, who from first to last was too sternly a disciplinarian. To the end of his short life there was never a perfect understanding between the mother and son; the painful situation which resulted from this had certainly a great influence over his fatal determination to seek distant adventures.

But all this belongs to a much later period. As years went by the duties of my situation at the palace, though still arduous, became gradually lighter, while the kindness always shown to me from the beginning of my residence there ripened into intimacy and confidential friendship. My elder pupil, being fully introduced into society, took up less and less of my time as she shared more completely her mother's occupations and social duties, while the routine of my daily life was as agreeably diversified as possible. On innumerable occasions I shared the privileges of the household—private views of various sights or exhibitions, reserved seats at the Emperor's reviews, the

Emperor's boxes at the various operas or theaters, where I accompanied the ladies of the family once or twice every week, with all the advantages of the imperial carriage, and comfortable seats in boxes like small boudoirs. Occasionally, when some other engagement had prior claims, the entrance-ticket was handed over to me, and the private family carriage placed at my disposal, so that I could take friends with me and go independently.

When the Emperor returned from Italy, I accompanied the duchess and her elder daughter to see the great review of the victorious troops in the Place Vendôme—a splendid sight, which left a lasting impression on my mind and memory. We had seats in the space reserved for the household, next to the crimson velvet awning prepared for the Empress and her suite, opposite to the spot where the Emperor was stationed on horseback, beneath the column and the statue of the first Emperor. The whole of the Place Vendôme was filled with tiers of seats, rising one above another to the first floors of the houses, and formed a complete arena where the troops, arriving by the Rue de la Paix, turned round the column and passed before the Emperor and Empress. Scarcely had we taken our seats when the Duc de Tascher came to us, sent by the Empress to fetch his wife and daughter, whom she wished to have with her. I remained therefore under the care of the duke's son, Comte Robert de Tascher. The heat was so intense that I felt inclined to envy the shade of the awning which protected the imperial party. The Emperor was before us, however, motionless on his horse in the glaring sun, of which we had as little as possible, though still too much.

The whole scene was rather theatrical, but stirring and impressive in the greatest degree. As the regiments passed us, amid the shouts of the spectators, the vacant places were left in the lines, showing the losses sustained—a sad sight. But the excitement was so great that everything was forgotten in the enthusiasm of the present hour, as each regiment was greeted by name with loud cries and applause. As the flags passed, burned and pierced by the shots received, every one felt electrified.

Suddenly a shout arose: "Canrobert! Canrobert!" and the marshal appeared on a prancing horse, waving his sword with his usual rather theatrical air, while the cries of "Vive Canrobert!" rose louder and louder as he passed before the Emperor, and a profusion of flowers fell around him.

"MacMahon! MacMahon!" The hero of Magenta rode quietly forward, a perfect gentleman and a perfect horseman, shown even by the manner in which he held his bridle,

the hand seemed so sure, so firm, and steady. He was evidently vexed and disconcerted by the commotion which his appearance caused, and persistently looked down without seeming to accept the popular enthusiasm as addressed to himself personally. A wreath was thrown, which fell over his head down to his shoulders. He seemed to feel that he was being made ridiculous, and tore it off, hastily putting it over his horse's neck before him. MacMahon was by nature shy and unpretending; on this occasion he was evidently very anxious to get over the ordeal of the honors showered upon him.

"Les Zouaves! Les Zouaves!" There was a thundering shout, and the Zouaves, who had scaled the seemingly inaccessible heights of Solferino, thereby deciding the fate of the battle, came proudly forward, bearing high their flag, a mere remnant clinging to the staff, proving through what a struggle the glorious emblem had been carried on to victory. The whole regiment having deserved the reward of the Legion of Honor, the flag bore the red ribbon and cross. But, alas! how few followed it to share the hard-won glory! Nevertheless, the sight was not to be forgotten, and no one could help feeling the general enthusiasm.

The old Comte de Tascher, however, who had seen the victories of the first Napoleon, looked grave and anxious. The countess, in answer to my warm congratulations, said:

"The Emperor is wonderfully fortunate in all he undertakes—too fortunate. A day must come when all this will be reversed."

Happily neither saw that fatal day when it came, as they predicted.

The apartments of the palace were connected by long passages with doors of communication, so that it was possible to go all round the Tuileries and the Louvre without leaving the buildings, which led to much pleasant intercourse with our next neighbors on each side—the Archbishop of Bourges and the family of the Duc and Duchesse de Bassano, whose daughters were the intimate friends and constant companions of my younger pupil, who was of about the same age. The Archbishop held an ecclesiastical post of honor in the household, which called for his presence during a portion of the winter season; he was an intimate friend of the de Tascher family and an almost daily visitor. He was passionately fond of the game of chess, and delighted in playing with me or with one of my pupils, to whom I had taught the game; but he was so unhappy when checkmated that, according to the laughing suggestion of the old count, I habitually allowed him to get the best of the game, which, however, nothing could induce my young pupil to do. So the good Archbishop used to say ruefully, but in good faith,

that he could beat "Albion," but could not manage "little Hortense!"

Every winter fancy costume balls (particularly liked by the Emperor and Empress) were given by the Duchesse de Tascher and the Duchesse de Bassano, or by the ministers at their various official residences. I always attended these balls, accompanying the Comtesse de Tascher, wearing myself the convenient disguise of the domino. At the court official balls of the same kind I was admitted (by a special and very exceptional permission of the Empress) to the gallery surrounding the splendid "Salle des Maréchaux," where the imperial family were seated in state. I was generally there alone, or with my younger pupil, and greatly enjoyed the magnificent sight. From this gallery I also witnessed the state banquet on the marriage of the Princess Clotilde, daughter of the king of Italy, to Prince Napoleon, and the fancy costume ball which soon followed, where the young princess was dressed in a costume taken from a historical portrait in the Louvre gallery, more artistic than suitable to her girlish figure and youthful appearance. She wore such a farthingale that her ladies were obliged to spread the crimson velvet robe over three chairs. The Emperor tried to dance with her, but it was noticed by the superstitious, as an unfavorable omen with regard to the Italian alliance, that he was repeatedly obliged to stop, because the velvet folds wound round him so as to paralyze his movements, until at last he was obliged to give up the attempt in despair, and take her back to her seat with a bow and a smile. The princess was too much like her father to possess beauty, but her royal bearing and graceful figure were greatly admired. Unfortunately, the latter did not long retain the elegance of its lines.

The Palais Royal, where always resided the younger branch of the reigning family, had at all times been a focus of opposition, and although the princes who lived there during the Empire owed everything to Napoleon III., the old traditions were in this respect thoroughly revived. The poor Emperor, always kind, always gentle, always generous, was overpowered by the unpleasant relatives coming to him from his great predecessor; so that he might well answer, as he did on one occasion, when reproached by the aged Prince Jerome,¹ with having "nothing" of his brother the great Emperor, "I have his family!" Not one of that uncomfortable family but

caused him trouble in some way, while all clung to him, with the cry of the leech, "Give! give!" And he gave, never refusing, even when he knew that he was favoring his enemies. Prince Jerome himself, and his son, Prince Napoleon, were never satisfied; then came Pierre Bonaparte,² whose low tastes and low habits were a constant source of annoyance; always in difficulties of some kind, requiring the Emperor's help. He married a woman of very inferior position, and was never received at the court. His adventure with Victor Noir is well-known: here he seems to have really acted in self-defense, but unfortunately it was not the first affair of the kind. Then came Letitia Bonaparte,³ always in debt, and always applying to the Emperor to pay her liabilities—with threats of coming out as an actress if he refused to do so. Her daughter married, first, a Hebrew banker named Solms; thenceforward she entitled herself the "Princess Solms"; then she married the Italian demagogue, Ratazzi, always engaged in conspiracies against the Emperor; finally, M. de Rute.

Prince Jerome, though far from cordial or even grateful, was, however, too insignificant to be dangerous. I remember him only as a courteous old man, very like his illustrious brother, with old-fashioned manners; holding ladies at arm's length by the tips of their fingers, and always most careful to address the Comtesse de Tascher as "Your Serene Highness." He had been king of Westphalia under the first Empire, and some people still spoke to him as "Sire" and "Your Majesty"; but he was usually addressed as "Monseigneur" and "Your Imperial Highness."

His son, Prince Napoleon, was a more formidable opponent, although heartily disliked and despised by all classes and all political opinions outside a small circle of private friends. He possessed, however, brilliant talents, which, had he chosen to develop them, might have recalled something of the Napoleonic genius; whereas, in fact, he only caricatured the worst points of the Corsican adventurer, without showing any of the grand redeeming gifts of the great Emperor.

The physical likeness was wonderful, but the expression was totally different. In the good portraits of Napoleon I. the clear eyes have a singularly piercing glance, at once conveying the idea of a commanding genius. With the same cast of features, there was something peculiarly low and thoroughly bad in the face of Prince Napoleon, which recalled, in a striking manner the stamp of the worst Cæsars. His will was despotic, his temper violent and brutal, his tastes were cynically gross, and his language was coarse beyond what could

¹ The youngest brother of the great Napoleon, father of the prince known by that name, and of the Princess Mathilde.

² A son of Lucien.

³ A daughter of Napoleon's brother Lucien.

be imagined. While affecting tendencies of the most revolutionary and radical type, he was essentially a tyrant, and could brook no opposition to his will, always brutally expressed. He was jealous of the Emperor's preëminent position, as of something stolen from himself; but though in a state of chronic rebellion, he never hesitated to accept all the worldly advantages which the title of "cousin" could obtain for him.

The Emperor felt a sort of indulgent affection for Prince Napoleon, and had the latter chosen to make use of his undeniable talents, in accordance with the duties of the position which he had accepted, he might, during the Empire, have played an important political part, and have gathered the Emperor's inheritance at the death of the Prince Imperial.

But never were natural gifts so misapplied or so wasted. He could bear no restraint, no interruption in his life of sensual pleasures, and he never persevered in anything that he undertook when any personal sacrifice was required to carry it out. Everything that he attempted bore the stamp of sudden impulse, never followed up. He seemed to delight in outraging public opinion, and so constantly played the proverbial part of "the bull in the china shop" that the Emperor was kept in a state of constant anxiety as to what "Napoléon" would choose to do next.

His refusal to drink to the health of the Empress — in her presence — on her birthday¹ is one of the many instances of his utter disregard of the manners and habits of a gentleman, while his real feeling toward the Emperor was betrayed on more than one occasion. After the Pianori attempt on the Emperor's life, when Prince Napoleon came to present his official congratulations, his face was so eloquent of what lay below that the Empress, turning to one of her ladies, whispered (in English), "Look at the Prince Napoleon!"

After his famous revolutionary speech in the Senate, which brought down upon him the withering response of the Duc d'Aumale ("Letter on the History of France"), the Emperor sent for him, roused to such a pitch of indignation that his voice, usually so peculiarly soft and low, was heard, raised in anger, even in the distant waiting-room of the attendants; for he well knew what the effect would be on the Conservative Imperialists. There was a violent scene, and when Prince Napoleon returned to the Palais Royal he vented his fury on a magnificent vase of Sèvres porcelain, which he dashed to pieces. Yet I remember hearing

the Duc de Tascher (who had said to me that he "had rather serve the King of Dahomey than such a man") still acknowledge, with unwilling admiration: "But what an orator! He looked as handsome as Lucifer himself."

The opinion of his own personal friends as to what his future rule was likely to be may be gathered from the answer of one belonging to his most intimate circle,² to whom (after the fall of the Empire) Prince Napoleon said, "If ever I am emperor, you shall have an important post." "Monseigneur," was the comment, in the laughing tone needful for the acceptance of a bold remark, "if ever you should be at the head of public affairs I would take to my heels the very next day, for you would not be easy to deal with."

He was not offended at the blunt frankness of the speaker; for he was acute enough to despise sycophants, and to appreciate independence, even in those who made him understand that they would not endure his unmannerly ways. On such occasions he has been known to say by way of apology: "Oh, my dear —, excuse me; I am ill bred" ("*Je suis mal élevé*").

With his democratic opinions and plebeian tastes, he was, in strange contrast, extremely proud — the pride of birth, inherited from his German mother, the Princess Catherine of Würtemberg. He had royal blood in his veins, and was as determined to carry out equal-birth requirements as any prince of the German confederation.

He looked down loftily on the Emperor as the son of a private gentlewoman³ and the husband of another, chosen voluntarily. "I am of too great lineage for that," was a saying of his; and his ambition was finally gratified by obtaining the hand of a king's daughter, the descendant of an ancient royal line.

Prince Napoleon's sister, the Princess Mathilde, was not likely to be a congenial friend to the young and innocent bride. With the same striking Bonaparte cast of features as her brother, she was, like him, "ill bred." In fact, the Corsican semi-barbarian, such as the great Emperor himself, has been revealed to us by contemporary memoirs. She had possessed great beauty, and in her youth was betrothed to Prince Louis Napoleon, afterward Napoleon III. She hated the Empress Eugénie, of whom she spoke in coarsely offensive terms. As years went by, though still retaining the classical lines of her characteristic features, she had become as coarse in her personal appearance as in her language and manners. She was clever,

¹ The Emperor had desired him to propose the health of the Empress; he persistently "begged to be excused," notwithstanding the indignant expostulations of the Emperor. (See Mérimée's "Letters to Piazzi.")

² The late Maxime du Camps, of the Académie Française, a personal friend of the writer.

³ Hortense de Beauharnais, daughter of Josephine by her first husband, married to Louis Bonaparte, King of Holland.

artistically gifted, principally surrounded by men belonging to literary and artistic sets. She was very good-natured to all about her, and a kind, sympathizing friend in need.

I had an opportunity of particularly remarking the strange contrast between the two sisters-in-law at a ball which was an event in the fashionable world about a year after the marriage of Prince Napoleon.

The Empress had built a very beautiful residence for the use of her sister, the Duchess of Alva, on her visits to Paris. This villa, or hôtel as it is called in French, with its garden had been decorated and adorned with unsparing expense, under the superintendence of the Duc de Tascher, whose artistic taste gave a character to the whole far superior to the mere upholstery prettiness which the Empress favored in her usual arrangements.

When all was ready, the Empress, by way of inauguration, chose to give a fancy ball outside of the court, "as a private individual," where only those whom she was pleased to have, would be invited. She made out the lists herself, but notwithstanding all her restrictions, the unavoidable number admitted was so considerable that it became necessary to build out into the garden a temporary room for the supper-tables. This beautiful banqueting hall was arranged by the Duc de Tascher in imitation of the great picture by Paul Veronese, "The Marriage at Cana" (in the Louvre Gallery), with most effective results. A curtain concealed the entrance till it was drawn at a given signal, when the orchestra played the march from Meyerbeer's "Prophète," while the guests descended the steps of a magnificent staircase, on which mediæval pages, dressed in the Guzman-Montijo colors, as motionless as statues, stood holding gilt candelabra.

An amusing incident occurred while the pages were rehearsing the part they had to play in these festivities. They were chosen from among the diminutive grooms in the Emperor's stables, and when the costume was ready, a pretty boy, who seemed about twelve years of age, was brought to the Empress for her examination and approval. The dress pleased her, and she turned the boy round to inspect him fully, setting his velvet cap jauntily on his curls, which she arranged to her satisfaction, adjusting his ruff, etc. Then, kindly patting his cheek, she inquired:

"How old are you, my little friend?"

"*Twenty*, madame!"

The scream of dismay which followed, and the amusement of the bystanders, may be imagined.

With her usual kindness, and happily in this instance with less compromising results, the Empress sent me, by the Duc de Tascher,

but from her own hand, a card of invitation to this ball, with a message that it would be worth seeing, and that she particularly wished me to be present. The (Princesse) Comtesse de Tascher immediately said that I should go with her, and that she would be glad to have my arm, while of course I was equally pleased to have her protection and chaperonage.

Accordingly, when the great day came, we went together early in the imperial carriage, for which every one made way; and wearing masks and dominoes, we took our seats near the entrance,—where the Duc and Duchesse de Tascher, representing the Empress, received the guests,—so as to watch all the arrivals. After some time we heard peals of laughter coming from the opposite end of the gallery where we were seated, and, turning to look, we saw a woman of bold appearance and manners.

"That woman must have had a card given her by some one," remarked the Comtesse de Tascher, adding, "I hope she will be turned out—her style is dreadful."

Presently the noisy group came toward us. The countess started.

"Oh, my dear! Look! It is the Princess Mathilde!"

She came close to us, and there she was undoubtedly; but not immediately recognizable, because her skin was dyed brown. She wore the costume of an Egyptian fellah woman; very artistic, certainly, but more suitable for an artist's model than for a civilized member of society. As she stood with her circle of men around her, talking and laughing noisily,—while the dominoes, ever privileged for impertinence, pursued her unfortunate lady-in-waiting, pertinaciously inquiring, "Did *you* paint your princess?"—the Comtesse de Tascher touched my arm. I turned, and there, opposite to her sister-in-law, near an open doorway, stood the Princess Clotilde, with an expression of dismayed amazement on her grave young face. She was very simply dressed in pink and white silk as a conventional shepherdess, the only remarkable detail of her costume being a wreath of pink roses, separated by large diamonds, worn as a necklace close round her throat. No contrast could be more striking than was there presented between the gipsy woman and the fair young creature, all innocence and purity in her simple girlish attire, yet so unmistakably royal in her bearing and demeanor. She stood motionless and silent as if petrified, without any attempt at recognition from the strange group before her, and after a pause turned and walked away gravely. But the Princess Clotilde never again went to a fancy ball, and quietly expressed her determination, which was irrevocable. "No; I will go to ordinary balls, but not to costume balls." "But why, Mad-

ame?" "I will not go." This was all, and she vouchsafed no explanation. But what I had seen gave me the key to a resolution which caused general surprise.

The Empress had intended to appear as a conventional Louis Quinze Diana, with powdered hair and a profusion of diamonds; but there had been much discussion as to whether she ought to wear this dress. There was no impropriety in the arrangement of the costume itself, which I saw on another occasion worn by the young and very pretty Princess Anna Murat,¹ to whom the Empress had given it after being reluctantly persuaded that it was unsuitable to the dignity of her position. It was not easy to make the Empress understand that she could not do what other people did, and that many things must be abstained from,

¹A descendant of the marshal, who was for some time king of Naples, and of his wife, Caroline Bonaparte, one of the first Emperor's sisters.

though unobjectionable for others. On this occasion the dress was prepared and laid out in the room reserved for her use; and while still undecided as to whether or not she would appear as Diana, she examined what was in readiness for a fancy quadrille, in which some of the dancers were to figure with the paste-board horses seen in a circus, where the apparent rider moves inside the trappings. This took her fancy, and she immediately made the trial of one herself; but once inside, she could not get out again, and none of her ladies knew how to extricate her. Finally Comte Robert de Tascher was called to the rescue, and succeeded in removing the inconvenient appendage, while the Empress was much amused by the adventure. He came to tell us of it in the ball-room, adding the information that she had decided not to wear the Diana dress, and would be present concealed in a domino.

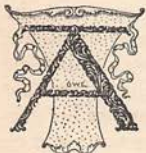
(Conclusion next month.)

Anna L. Bicknell.



AQUATIC GARDENING.

WATER-PLANT CULTURE FOR THE ESTATE, THE GARDEN, AND THE HOUSE.



NOVEL and charming feature of some of the most elaborate dinner entertainments at Newport during recent summers has been the employment of night-blooming water-lilies for table decoration. Their exquisite beauty, varied and delightful fragrance, and great diversity in size, form, and color, were virtually a new revelation to many admiring guests; indeed, it was a surprise to learn that so many of the Nymphaea belonged in the night-blooming class. If these beautiful flowers could be supplied in winter at any price they would no doubt be fashion's favorites in New York. Now, one might as well seek roc's eggs in our markets as water-lilies in any but the summer months. In two or three years, however, it is not at all improbable that they may grace our Christmas tables, though necessarily at such cost as will always prevent their becoming common. For their cultivation specially constructed hot-houses would be requisite, with tanks instead of benches, taking up many times as much

space as the growth of an equal number of roses would require; and the adequate heating of such establishments would be a serious matter. It might also be found necessary, during cloudy weather and the dark days of December and January, to supply electric illumination to take the place of sunlight; and that would be by no means inexpensive. Beyond mere considerations of cost there would probably be no more difficulty in forcing water-lilies than any other flowers.

Aquatic gardening in general is very much better understood in this country now than it was a few years ago. For a long time it was here a neglected branch of horticulture, practised only by a few, and in such ways as evoked more curious surprise than emulation among the many. As early as 1839, Mr. R. Buist of Philadelphia grew nelumbiums (both *speciosum* and *album*); and in 1851, only two years after its discovery, that grandest of all water-lilies, the *Victoria regia*, was flowered by another Philadelphian—Mr. Caleb Cope. But ignorance of the culture of aquatic plants inspired the pop-

LIFE IN THE TUILERIES UNDER THE SECOND EMPIRE.¹

BY AN INMATE OF THE PALACE.



NE of the most remarkable men of the court of Napoleon III. was the Duc de Morny, who was known to be a son of the Emperor's mother, Queen Hortense: a very questionable honor, which, however, he put forward on every possible occasion in a manner showing a complete absence of all innate delicacy of feeling. His gentlemanlike demeanor and perfect courtly grace were unsurpassed; but nevertheless he placed significantly on the panels of his carriage the flower of the hydrangea, called by the French "Hortensia," and in general omitted nothing that could recall his birth.

After his special embassy to Russia, on the occasion of the coronation of Alexander II., he married a young Princess Troubetskoi, to whom public rumor ascribed an origin of the same kind as his own (attributed to the Emperor Nicholas); on which Morny said cynically: "I am the son of a queen, the brother of an emperor, the son-in-law of an emperor—*et c'est tout naturel.*"

Even at the court of Napoleon III., where there was not much austerity of principle, the effrontery of this speech caused disgust. Morny was very like Napoleon III., but much better looking, of taller and finer figure, with more elegance and charm of manner. He was guided only by self-interest, and was esteemed by no one, but his natural cleverness, his determined spirit, and his wonderful power of attracting the most unwilling, made him a valuable auxiliary to the Emperor, to whom his loss was an irreparable misfortune.

His wife was one of those strange beings — of whom there were several in the society of that day — whose tempers, whims, and caprices would have required energetic repression in the case of children of six years old, and were absolutely astonishing in women supposed to have reached years of discretion. Mme. de Morny was very pretty, but her figure was little, fragile, and thin. Her features were delicate, and her pale complexion was of dazzling fairness; her tiny nose was sharp, and her dark eyes had a fierce expression, the reverse of attractive, and were in startling contrast to

her flaxen hair, so light as to be almost silvery — so that she was called "La Souris Blanche" (the white mouse).

At the Empress's fancy ball she figured in a dance of sixteen ladies representing the four elements, and of course was one of those personifying air, being dressed with floating streamers of gauzy blue and white. When the dance was over, it was followed by another representing the characters of the fairy-tales of our childhood, and Mme. de Morny sat down by the Comtesse de Tascher and myself to see the dance. But the Duc de Dino, who had chosen the extraordinary disguise of the "stump of a tree," swathed like a mummy in bands of dark-brown linen, with all the supposed young shoots standing out like a bush round his head, brought his unwelcome figure just before us, and, being a small man, was just on our level, his bushy head forming a complete screen. We were all annoyed, though naturally silent; but Mme. de Morny, addressing him in a haughty, imperious tone, cried, "Ôtez-vous de là!" (Go away from here!) He turned, looked at her from head to foot with ineffable disdain, and did not move. She uttered a fierce growl, and, like a small tigress, flew at him, seizing him by the branches about his head, and trying to pull him forcibly aside. He took no notice, and, failing in her attempt, she was forced to sit down, in a state of fury.

Such an exhibition of temper in a court ball-room may give some idea of the home delights which she provided for her husband. I remember a large official dinner-party where the de Tascher family were among the guests, and where the Duc de Morny was obliged to do the honors alone, because in a fit of temper and caprice his wife refused to appear. He was quite equal to the occasion, and to others of the same kind, playing his part of host with his usual charming grace and apparently unruffled equanimity.

A great contrast to Morny was found in Comte Walewski, another of the celebrated men who figured at the court and councils of Napoleon III. Here, too, was a "bend sinister," sufficiently revealed by his striking likeness to Napoleon I., but a more agreeable version of the well-known face than that of Prince Napoleon. The Comte de Tascher

¹ See THE CENTURY for September, page 709.

had, among many others, a small portrait of the great Emperor which, he told me, was the best likeness he had seen. This portrait seemed reproduced in Comte Walewski: the features, the peculiar pallor, the shade of the gray-blue eyes, and their expression, were strikingly similar. But, unlike Morny, he had the good taste to keep the explanation in the background. At a court reception he happened to hear a lady say to another, "How wonderfully like his father!" He turned, and with that stiff, rather haughty demeanor which made him in some degree unpopular, gravely remarked: "I was not aware, madame, that Comte Walewski had the honor of being personally known to you."

He was not considered agreeable, showing too much of the statesman even in private life; but he was a gentleman and more esteemed than Morny, although not so much liked. His wife, however, by her particularly graceful and amiable manners, greatly assisted him in retaining some popularity. Every one was attracted by the Comtesse Walewska, who never lost an opportunity of doing a kind act, or of obliging others in those small things of daily life which are so pleasing and so valuable. She was also quiet and ladylike. Her beauty was much extolled; but this seemed more due to a general impression of a very charming and most agreeable woman than to beauty taken in a literal sense.

The Princesse Clotilde, whom every one watched with pitying interest, had now settled down into her regular life, and it soon became evident to all that it would have been impossible to choose anywhere a wife more utterly uncongenial to Prince Napoleon. She was, and is still, a princess of medieval times, a Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, neither very highly educated nor very clever, caring only for her religious practices and her works of charity. She soon ceased to pay much attention to her toilet, reaching even the point of carelessness, which greatly annoyed her husband. It must be acknowledged that the devotion of the Princesse Clotilde went perhaps beyond what was quite judicious, but no one had any influence over her, and what she considered her duty was performed with a sort of gentle, placid stubbornness which allowed of no expostulation.

At first she showed particular graciousness to my elder pupil, the future Princess Thurn und Taxis, who was about her own age, and whose manners evidently pleased her. Had this first sympathetic intercourse been encouraged, they might have reached friendly intimacy, but the de Tascher de la Pageries, being on the Beauharnais side of the imperial family, were never on very cordial terms with the

Bonapartes, and the Princes Napoleon and Jerome were particularly disliked by the Duc de Tascher; consequently the intercourse with the Palais Royal was limited to strict courtly etiquette and politeness.

The ladies who had been first appointed to attend the Princesse Clotilde were treated with such rudeness by Prince Napoleon that one after another sent in her resignation, so that finally the princess had about her only ladies chosen out of the circle composed of his friends and their wives, whose ways and opinions were in opposition to all her own. The style and language of her sister-in-law, the Princesse Mathilde, could only shock her feelings, and she was not attracted by the gay doings of the imperial court, where she appeared only on necessary occasions. Being accustomed to traditional etiquette, she combined the pride of rank, which she considered proper dignity, with Christian humility. "She is a true princess," was commonly said of her. At the present time she attends the poor, like a hospital sister, wearing a hospital apron, and shrinking from no act of charity, however repulsive; and although upon rising, she dresses without assistance, her attendants are required to be within reach and in readiness to give their services, because it is proper that such should be the case. No usage of etiquette is overlooked, because it is right that she should be treated as a royal princess.

During the Empire, even in her early youth, no one dared to show the least familiarity in the presence of the Princesse Clotilde; but the stiff decorum of her circle did not make home life agreeable. During the day her ladies accompanied her to the churches, where they unwillingly awaited her pleasure for hours. In the evening they were seated about a table with their work, while the princess herself diligently plied her needle, speaking very little, and not encouraging any one else to talk. Some ladies, accustomed more to the "brusque" ways of the master of the house than to the tact required in the presence of a king's daughter, tried to speak of public affairs, wondering, for instance, how matters would end between Victor Emmanuel and Pope Pius IX., which must evidently have been most displeasing to the Princesse Clotilde. Scarcely looking up, she replied very gently, but so as to silence effectually the indiscreet talkers: "The intentions are good; matters are in God's hands, and what is his will must happen." But never to any one did she express her private opinions, or utter anything more definite than such truisms. She lived alone, and had no confidential friends. That such a home should have been unutterably wearisome to Prince Napoleon is not surprising, though it is doubtful

whether any wife, however gifted, could have retained a hold upon his affections.

At the time of the marriage the Empress Eugénie had hoped to find a friend in the young and interesting bride; but she soon discovered that intimacy would be impossible. The princess was cold, dignified, and not devoid of a perceptible shade of haughtiness, and withal intensely devout; while the Empress, notwithstanding all that has been said of her "clerical" tendencies, was at that time only moderately religious, a victim to ennui, and ready for anything that could diversify the monotony of her life.

One of the chamberlains told me that as he preceded the Emperor and Empress on one occasion he heard the Emperor remonstrating on her love of pleasure, and the fatigue which it often caused her. She answered that she could not help it, as she was dying of ennui, and concluded with an earnest entreaty to be taken with him to the camp at Châlons. The Emperor strongly objected: a camp of soldiery would be no place for her, and she would be very uncomfortable; besides, what possible attraction could she find there?

As usual, the Empress had her own way. She went to the camp, and slept in a tent with an umbrella over her bed because the rain came through; she walked about among the troops with mud up to her ankles, protected by gaiters, and was delighted. Anything for a change. But such a proceeding had no precedent in former reigns, and was much criticized. The lofty enmity of the aristocrats of the Faubourg St. Germain, who looked down contemptuously upon everything said or done by "Mlle. de Montijo" (for they did not even vouchsafe to call her "Mme. Bonaparte"), especially stung her to the quick; and after shrinking at first from their criticism, she became irritated even to recklessness. "Those people all seem to despise me, and to look down upon me as an inferior," she said bitterly; "and yet surely the 'blue blood' of Spain is worth something!"

"High life below stairs!" was the remark made to me, in English, by a leader of fashion in the dreaded Faubourg, where I had retained friends and family connections, many of whom would not at first visit me in my new abode at the Tuileries. "Why do you keep bad company?" was their answer when I expostulated.

The arrival of ambassadors extraordinary from Oriental lands brought some diversion to the monotony of the imperial court, which the Empress welcomed with delight. In those days a sultan or a shah did not show his sacred person in *giaour* regions, and but little was known of their distant countries, which seemed to belong to the world of the "Arabian Nights."

When the arrival of an ambassador from Persia was officially announced the Empress Eugénie had but one thought — that of dazzling his Oriental mind by a wonderful display of European magnificence. Usually a queen-consort never appeared officially on such occasions; but the Empress decided that she would be present in state, with all her ladies about her in full court dress, which she herself would also wear, with a profusion of jewels. Everything was settled according to her wishes: she was present at the reception of the embassy, seated in imperial state, and looking very beautiful. When the Persian ambassador retired, one of the French gentlemen who had escorted him into the imperial presence asked what he thought of the Empress.

"The Empress!" he exclaimed, with contemptuous astonishment. "I did not look at her. It is beneath my dignity to look at a woman. I saw only the Emperor."

This result of so much trouble was rather disconcerting for those concerned, and there was a good deal of suppressed laughter among the officials who had witnessed the ceremony.

Next came the embassy of Siam, described to us by the Bavarian minister as "a set of fellows in long silk dressing-gowns, looking as if they had been molded in greenish chocolate," and who were to bring to the Emperor the presents sent by the King of Siam, which they were to offer on their hands and knees. The Emperor, who had decided to receive them in the gallery of Henry II. at the palace of Fontainebleau, earnestly wished to dispense with this part of the ceremony; but he was told that he would only lose all majesty in their appreciation, and all claim to their respect.

The Empress was also present in full imperial state, with her ladies about her. The latter had been particularly requested not to yield to any temptation to laugh during the performance; indeed, the sight of human beings crawling on the floor like animals was so painful that no one felt any inclination even to smile. The unfortunate ambassador carried above his head a large gold cup or bowl containing the presents, and was consequently obliged to use his elbows to work his way forward on his knees. When he reached the throne, panting and gasping, the Emperor could bear the sight no longer, and stepped down to save him the ascent, taking the presents from him, and raising him to his feet.

I remember seeing the Siamese, who were the great "lions" of the day, at the opera, and thinking the description of the Bavarian minister graphic and accurate. The opera represented was Félicien David's "Herculaneum," and the alarm of the Siamese at the final conflagration was amusing to witness. They were,

not unnaturally, convinced that the theater was on fire, and insisted on leaving the building, pointing to the stage with the greatest terror, rushing to the door of the box, and most reluctantly returning with the French who escorted them. They were evidently much relieved when the curtain fell and they were allowed to retire.

On official occasions, such as the preceding and others, an important part in the preparations fell to the share of a functionary who, though unnoticed, was not unknown—the hair-dresser of the Empress, named Leroy. Of course all fashionable ladies wished to have their hair dressed by Leroy; but on great occasions only those of high rank or prominent positions could aspire to the care of the great man himself. All others had to be satisfied with the skill of his assistants. He was a stout, middle-aged man, who came in his carriage at the hour he pleased, and who rushed in like a conqueror, waving his comb, dressed in a brown linen over-suit, ordering the servants about, and desiring the presence of their mistress immediately, for he could not be kept waiting. Duchesses and princesses who had spent the day in white wrappers to be ready for his offices then flew to their dressing-rooms with all due submission and alacrity. In two minutes their hair was disheveled on their shoulders, and with marvelous rapidity gathered up and arranged according to his taste and fancy, while he talked incessantly, principally of the Empress, lauding her to the skies; then, reverting to Marie Antoinette and *her* hair-dresser, he would say that if *he* had filled that post she would never have been guillotined. Oh, no; he would have found means to prevent that! He would guarantee that nothing could happen to the Empress Eugénie!—and so forth. Meanwhile the hair in his hands would become really beautifully adorned, and as he put in the jewels he would say proudly: “No fear of their coming out. No lady ever lost a diamond that *I* had fastened!”

And truly they were wonderfully secure. The result of his rapid manipulation was always perfect, but it was dearly paid for by hours of waiting. I have seen the Duchesse de Tascher with her hair dressed for a ball at eleven o'clock in the morning, and sitting motionless during the whole day that nothing should be disturbed in her head-dress.

When the King of Prussia¹ visited Napoleon III. at Compiègne, the Empress of course considered the presence of Leroy indispensable, and he was summoned to Compiègne for the whole of the king's visit. But it so happened that some important wedding festivities at Ber-

lin had caused lucrative offers to be addressed to Leroy, who explained the case to the Empress, imploring her to dispense with his services. Too kind to refuse, yet considerably vexed, and engrossed by that one thought, the Empress came to the Emperor's private room, where he was deeply engaged in political cogitations, caused by the visit of the king and the matters to be discussed.

“Can you imagine anything more tiresome?” she said to the Emperor. “Here is Leroy, who has been apologizing and entreating my forgiveness because he has been summoned to Berlin and must go immediately!”

The Emperor, to whom the sound “Leroy” could mean only *‘le roi’* (the king), and who thought only of the King of Prussia, exclaimed in great alarm: “Le roi summoned to Berlin! But this is most serious! How is it that I have not been informed? You say he is going immediately! What can have happened?”

The Empress, surprised at the extreme interest shown by the Emperor in the proceedings of Leroy, continued her lamentations till at last the Emperor discovered that the important departure was that—of her hair-dresser!

The fourth year of my residence at the palace was marked by a family event—the “golden wedding,” or fiftieth anniversary of the marriage of the Comte and Comtesse de Tascher de la Pagerie, which was celebrated at Baden-Baden in the presence of all their children and grandchildren.

A curious circumstance occurred on this occasion which is worthy of mention. The (Princesse) Comtesse de Tascher had lost, many years before, her wedding-ring, to her great distress, and it had never been found. Shortly before the festivities of the golden wedding, the Duchess of Hamilton, on looking over the jewels left by her mother, the Grand Duchess of Baden, whose death had occurred during the preceding winter, found a small packet labeled, “The wedding-ring of Amélie von der Leyen, sold by a Jew peddler as having belonged to the Empress Josephine. To be returned.” It was evident that the grand duchess, who was the most forgetful of women, had put this away carefully and entirely forgotten it. The Duchess of Hamilton, seeing the inscription engraved inside, “Louis de Tascher de la Pagerie—Amélie von der Leyen,” with the date of their marriage, sent it to the count with the above explanation. He kept the matter secret till the “golden wedding,” when the ring which had been lost for so long was again placed on the finger of the Princess Amélie von der Leyen on the fiftieth anniversary of the marriage which had taken place under the sad circumstances already related.²

¹ Afterward William I., Emperor of Germany.

² See THE CENTURY for September, page 709.

I was much moved on this occasion by the kindness of the old count, who called me to him, saying, "My dear, in commemoration of my fiftieth wedding-day I have had rings made for all my children, and here is yours." I have always worn it since as a precious memorial.

The golden wedding was closely followed by the marriage of my elder pupil, Eugénie de Tascher de la Pagerie, to Prince Maximilian von Thurn und Taxis; and, alas! a few months later, by the death of her grand-father, for whom I mourned as if I had indeed been one of his children.

The Emperor and Empress visited him constantly during his illness, the Empress herself undertaking various small cares of the sick-room, as a daughter might have done. The Emperor was deeply moved when he saw that the end was at hand; the tears, which he could not repress, were running down his face as he stood by the bed of his old and faithful friend. I was much struck by the gentleness of his manner and the softness of his voice, in great contrast with the somewhat harsh tones of the Empress. Napoleon III. retained his hat, according to royal privilege, but it seemed strange under such circumstances; the Empress Eugénie wore nothing on her hair, and was in home toilet of mourning for her sister, the Duchess of Alva.

The death of the venerable Comte de Tascher de la Pagerie was that of a sincere and fervent Christian, leaving memories of peace and religious hope to all who were present. The duke, his son, replaced him in his court duties, but his title of "grand master" remained in abeyance.

The Emperor and Empress came together to visit his widow, and here a painful scene took place. The body of the count was laid out in state, and, according to German custom, all visitors were at once shown into his room. This was quite unexpected by the Empress, who was so startled and shocked that she fell into violent hysterics. She was carried immediately into a room belonging to one of the ladies of the family, who hastened to offer their assistance, while the Emperor stood by helpless, like most men on such occasions, repeating, "My poor Eugénie!" in tones of consternation. But the annoyance caused by the consequences of such an unfortunate mistake left a painful impression on the mind of the Empress, and in some measure chilled her kind sympathy.

The death of her sister, the Duchess of Alva, had thrown the Empress into a very nervous and excitable state. At the same time she had serious domestic sorrows, into the cause of which the world was only too completely initiated, but which she could not discuss with her ladies, while her sister was a natural confidante

in the terrible moral isolation of her high position. The Duchess of Alva, calmer, perhaps more reasonable, than the Empress Eugénie, had a soothing influence over her violent feelings and impulsive resolutions, to which she yielded without resistance after the death of her sister. Every one knew that her violent grief, her incessant weeping, had other causes besides her recent loss, although officially it was supposed to be the only one. The Emperor was as gentle and kind as ever in his intercourse with her, but never seemed to understand the real motive of her persistent affliction, to which he attached no importance. He loved the wife he had chosen in spite of all the opposition shown by his best friends; but he was attentive to others, and very unscrupulously indulged his many fancies, as all knew; and to this his wife could never be resigned. She had not to endure the public insults which his predecessors inflicted on their consorts, but what took place in private was not the less known by the world, for monarchs live in a glass case, observed by all.

At this time the Empress began to take an interest in political matters, and it was thought advisable to humor her in this new fancy as a means of diverting her mind from other problems of a more inconvenient kind. She had held the nominal office of regent during the Italian war of 1859, and as she might be called upon to do so again, she was now allowed to be present at the councils, and she began to interfere in matters concerning affairs of state. This again was most unwelcome to the nation, always averse to female influence, and by no means willing to be governed by "Mlle. de Montijo." The nature of the Empress was particularly unfitted for political interference. She was essentially impulsive, vehement in the expression of her preferences or views, and easily worked upon by those who contrived to win her confidence. She was too sincere and straightforward to understand diplomatic intrigues or to suspect secret motives, and thus she was unknowingly induced to favor the various private interests of those by whom France and Napoleon III. were drawn into the Mexican war, with its miserable results—the beginning of the Emperor's downward career. Unhappily, the Empress Eugénie continued to interfere in political questions, and ended by taking a passionate interest in public affairs. She was surrounded by flatterers, who made her their tool for the advantage of their own views, while she mistook her own high spirit and her visions of romantic heroism for the genius of a Maria Theresa or a Catherine. At first the Emperor resisted, and while assisted by his first supporters—Morny, Walewski, even Persigny,

who, though erratic, was at least energetic and devoted — he had his own way in what was essential; but as these counselors died off, and his own health became seriously affected, he yielded more and more to an ever-increasing yearning for domestic peace.

After the Italian war there were necessarily diplomatic changes, and Baron von Hübner, best known to the general public by his interesting travels, which show great acuteness of observation, was replaced by Prince Richard Metternich. A great name is often an inconvenient inheritance, and the agreeable, well-bred Austrian gentleman who bore this one at the court of Napoleon III. was scarcely equal to the expectations which it awakened. His wife, who was in every respect too young for such a position as that of ambassadress, soon attracted much notice of an unfavorable kind by her strange ways and fancies, which at first astonished Parisian society, and then provoked severe criticism, but finally produced bad results in the court circle.

She was merely a wayward, spoiled child, who imagined that her high rank authorized her to defy all rules of decorum, and that, so long as she abstained from what was absolutely wicked, she could do anything she pleased.

At that time there was a sort of intoxication in the very atmosphere of Paris—a fever of enjoyment, a passion for constant amusement, for constant excitement, and, among women, for extravagance of dress. This was encouraged by the court, with the intention of giving an impetus to trade and of gaining popularity by favoring constant festivities, and consequently constant expense. In the days of Louis Philippe there had been great moderation in all matters of luxury. The king and queen were aged, sensible, and economical; the princesses were kept within rigid bounds by the example above them. But when the Emperor came to the throne, after a period of revolution and consequent commercial stagnation, he wished to revive trade and also to give the prestige of splendor to a court which so many did not seem to take in earnest. His beautiful wife, suddenly raised to a supreme position for which nothing in her previous life had prepared her, finding what seemed unlimited means within her reach, keenly enjoyed the possibility of procuring everything that pleased her, and enhanced her remarkable personal attractions by all the advantages of exquisite "toilette," without consideration of cost. Everything that she wore suited her admirably; others tried to imitate her, and the general tone was raised. She had the art of constantly choosing something new and unusual which attracted attention, so that, instead of being satisfied with conventional types of silks

and satins, which formerly had been considered sufficient for all occasions, every one tried to invent something different from others, and to improve upon what had been seen before. Consequently, in all matters of taste and luxury there was an eager struggle to outvie others, to reach a higher degree of splendor, and extravagance became universal. Paris was a sort of fairyland where every one lived only for amusement, and where every one seemed rich and happy. What lay underneath all this would not bear close examination — the dishonorable acts of all kinds which too often were needed to produce the glamour deceiving superficial observers.

Into this hotbed of "poms and vanities" came the young and thoughtless Princess Metternich, with all the pride characterizing the high aristocracy of her native land, and fully disposed both to enjoy and to despise what awaited her. She had been accustomed to the restricted society of Vienna, composed of distinct circles, wheels within wheels, according to rank and social privileges; each circle keeping aloof from all others, marrying only among their equals, and associating exclusively together. As a natural consequence the quintessence of the aristocracy, forming the most limited among these circles, becomes a sort of large family: all are more or less related to one another, all are intimate from childhood. In such society the hoidenish ways of "Pauline" were only smiled at, and were not of much consequence. But when she came to a cosmopolitan city like Paris, full of observant enemies who did not care in the least for her quarterings or her faultless pedigree, and did not admit any superiority, the case was very different. Her husband ought to have understood this, and to have interposed his authority; but he was indolently indifferent, and when his wife exceeded all social limits the strongest reproof was a languid "Aber, Pauline!" which in no way acted as a check.

In the Princess Metternich was an inexplicable mixture of innate high breeding and acquired tastes of lower degree. When she appeared in society, at her very entrance there could be no mistake: from head to foot she was the high-born lady — the "grande dame." Yet she had an extraordinary inclination for walking on the edges of moral quagmires, and peeping into them, with a proud conviction that her foot could never slip. There are stories of her imprudent adventures; but she escaped unscathed, and had no other motive in seeking them than curiosity — foolish, morbid curiosity — as to people and matters which should never have been even mentioned in her presence. She acted with a degree of rashness and folly which would have ruined most women,



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY GEORGE SPINGLER.

EMPERESS EUGÉNIE IN 1863.

yet no one ever really attacked her reputation: all allowed that, according to the expression of a lady of the court, "she had never crossed the Rubicon."

Notwithstanding all her follies, the Princess Metternich was far from being silly; on the contrary, she had considerable wit and great sharpness of repartee. As she did not care for anything she said, her retorts were often very clever and amusing, but too free to be easily repeated. She delighted in singing songs from music-halls and inferior theaters. Haughty as she was, she invited to her dinner-table a singer of equivocal celebrity at that time, whom no one else would have dared to receive; and even took lessons from her, so as to sing her songs with duly pointed emphasis.

The mischief done by the example of the

Princess Metternich is indescribable. She threw down the barrier which hitherto had separated respectable women from those who were not, and led the way to a liberty of speech and liberty of action which were unknown before. She was much attached to her husband, and, in essentials, was a good wife; others less favorably situated may not have escaped as she did from the natural consequences of looking too closely over the frontier of the Debatable Land. It is not unlikely that the excessive pride of the Princess Metternich may have led her to imagine that in Paris she might do anything without compromising her dignity. For instance, she was intimate with a lady who, although received everywhere in Parisian society, did not seem to be sufficiently her equal in rank to become her friend. To a remark on the subject she carelessly answered: "Oh, it is all very well here; of course I could not see her in Vienna."

She is reported to have made a more impertinent speech while on a visit at Compiègne. The short, looped-up skirts were just beginning to be worn; the Empress had not yet adopted them, and the Princess Metternich had been urging her to do so, against the opinion of her ladies. When the Empress left the room one of the ladies in waiting said to the princess, "Would you give the same advice to *your* Empress?"

"Oh, no," replied the princess; "but the case is quite different—the Empress Elizabeth is a *real* Empress."

I have no positive information as to the absolute reliability of this report; but it is not unlike the style of the Princess Metternich, and was currently repeated.

On another occasion at Compiègne, in the presence of the Empress, on a rainy day which had brought some dullness into the circle, the Princess Metternich, by way of diversion, suddenly seized one of the ladies in waiting, tripped her up in school-boy fashion, and laid her flat on her back, prostrate on the floor. This was told to me by an eye-witness of the scene, which shocked every one present, and the more so because the victim chosen (the Comtesse de M——) was particularly ladylike, quiet, and unoffending.

The Empress, however, liked the Princess Metternich, whose oddities amused her, and



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN CLÉMENT & CO.

DUC DE MORNAY.

whose talents were of great resource in all the entertainments prepared by the court. She sang and acted cleverly, she danced as if she had been trained for the ballet, she arranged charades, plays, tableaux vivants,—in short, anything that was required,—with a spirit and animation which never flagged, but with a degree of freedom which produced a bad effect and a bad influence as regards conventional propriety. Besides, matters did not always go on smoothly, and then she became much excited. On one occasion of this kind there was a memorable dispute with Mme. de Persigny, wife of the well-known statesman, who was equally well known for her caprices of temper. Though by no means sufficiently witty to be a match for the sharp tongue of the Princess Metternich, she was quite able by her unreasoning obstinacy to destroy the effect of all the arrangements planned by her opponent. The princess, though by nature far more good-humored, at last, having completely lost patience, appealed to the Empress, who, much annoyed at the dispute, was trying in vain to restore peace.

“Pray, pray, my dear princess, let the matter rest. Spare her—remember that her mother is mad.”

“So her mother is mad? Well, madame, my father is mad, so why should I give in to her?”

The argument was irresistible, and the Empress could not help laughing; but the man-

ner in which the princess had honored her father's peculiarities was received in general with more amusement than approbation.

Count Sandor, the father of the Princess Metternich, was noted for his eccentricities and wonderful adventures. He was a remarkable horseman, and performed all sorts of seemingly impossible feats on horseback, risking his life at each one, and escaping by what seemed a miracle, or rather a succession of miracles, though not without serious injuries, some of which, according to public rumor, had affected his brain.

A collection of drawings representing these strange performances had been engraved, and bound in a volume. I had an opportunity of examining this series of crack-brained exploits and hair-breadth escapes. One of the most amusing, though really the most pitiable, represented his housekeeper, a fat old woman, with an agonized expression of fright on her upturned face, held horizontally by two men, while her master leaped his horse backward and forward over her. The poor creature was evidently terrified out of her senses, and no wonder!

The Princess Metternich had no beauty; her face was absolutely of simian type, but redeemed by fine, intelligent eyes. Even her figure was more than slender, and devoid of all beauty of form; but owing to her remarkably high-bred elegance of demeanor, her richly fashionable dress, and her animated expres-



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY LADREY-DISDERI.

DUCHESS DE MORNAY.



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY LADREY-DISDERI.
COMTE DE WALEWSKI.

sion, she was considered attractive notwithstanding her physical disadvantages.

She was passionately fond of dress, and led the fashions regardless of expense. At the Austrian Embassy her rooms, her receptions, her carriages, her horses, were surpassed only by the Emperor's, and her example had a pernicious influence on the general mania for extravagance of all kinds, both at the court and in general society.

The "turnout" of the court carriages, horses, and liveries under the direction of General Fleury, who was more remarkable in this respect than as a military commander, was unsurpassed in Europe. In fact, Fleury would probably never have reached such high promotion had he not been the friend of the Emperor, and his auxiliary in the *coup d'état* when he was only Captain Fleury at the Elysée. He was neither liked nor esteemed in general, but he certainly performed admirably his duties as "Grand Écuyer," or what at the English court would be termed "Master of the Horse."

Nothing could be more magnificent than the appearance of everything appertaining to the court on all public occasions. The balls, especially, in the various splendid rooms, particularly in the immense "Salle des Maréchaux," were a sight not to be forgotten, from the first entrance, and ascent by the great staircase, adorned with flowers and shrubs, where on each step stood two of the "Cent-gardes" (the Emperor's body-guard) as motionless as

statues. Nothing was more remarkable than the drill which enabled these men, on all occasions when on duty at the palace, to remain without moving a muscle. The fatigue of this immobility is said to be so great that it could not be endured beyond a certain time; but it was so complete, that to come suddenly on one of these guards in the palace was positively startling. It was scarcely possible to believe that they were alive. They were all remarkably fine men, sub-officers chosen out of various regiments; and when the war came they proved that they were not merely parade soldiers, for they figured among the best and bravest troops.

One day the little prince, when a young child, in the hope of making the sentinel move, poured a whole bag of sweets into his boot, but without eliciting any sign of life from the military statue before him. This play of the child being mentioned in the presence of Colonel Verly, who commanded the regiment, he declared that nothing could make one of his men move when on duty. The Empress would not believe this assertion, and finally laid a wager that she would contrive to make one of the guards move. Colonel Verly having accepted the wager, the Empress went with him into the neighboring gallery, where they walked backward and forward before the sentinel, the Empress trying by every means to attract his attention. The guard stood as if turned into stone. Colonel Verly



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY LADREY-DISDERI.
PRINCE NAPOLEON.



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

RUINS OF THE TUILERIES. THE HALL OF THE MARSHALS (SALLE DES MARÉCHAUX).

(THE CARYATIDES OF THE THRONE ARE SEEN ON THE RIGHT.)



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN CLÉMENT & CO.
DUC DE MALAKOFF.

smiled. The Empress, with her characteristic impetuosity, then went straight up to the soldier, and, according to familiar speech, "boxed his ears." Not a muscle moved. The Empress then acknowledged that Colonel Verly had won the day, and sent a handsome compensation to the soldier, who proudly refused it, saying that he was sufficiently compensated by having had his sovereign lady's hand on his cheek!

After the death of the Comte de Tascher, and the period of mourning which followed, the family resumed with some modifications the life previously described. The (princess) countess, however, now left social duties more exclusively to her daughter-in-law, the duchess, and went out only to the theaters and operas, still her favorite diversion, where I usually accompanied her. On other evenings visitors came: about nine o'clock a tea-table was brought in, at which I presided, assisted by Mlle. de Tascher de la Pagerie, and often by Mlles. de Bassano, who handed the cups with the sugar-basin and cream-jug—a graceful French

¹ Aimable- (or Amable-) Jean-Jacques Pélissier was born in November, 1794, and died in May, 1864. He was the son of a family of peasants in comparatively comfortable circumstances; was brought up at the preparatory military school of La Flèche; then went to St. Cyr; and served afterward as sub-lieutenant in the Artillery of the Guard under Louis XVIII. He served in Algeria, and as lieutenant-colonel distinguished himself by his determined intrepidity; he became colonel in 1842, and performed an exploit in 1845 which

custom modified only for large parties, when servants perform the offices usually left to the daughters of the house and their young friends. These quiet evenings were made particularly agreeable by the animated conversation of the distinguished visitors, the *causerie* in which the French excel, and which here had full play. Once a week the duchess held a large reception, to which all the fashionable society of the Empire came, and where first-rate amateurs and budding artistic celebrities played and sang without the formality of a regular concert. These evenings were much enjoyed, for liberty reigned supreme. As several rooms were thrown open, the guests could walk about and converse freely, no one who did not care for it being obliged to listen to the music.

Among the "heroes of the Crimea" who attracted great attention in the society of the court, the most prominent were Pélissier¹ and Canrobert, both marshals of France, both having had supreme command during the war, and each one having his own zealous partisans. Those of Pélissier extolled his energy



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY LADREY-DISDERI.
DUCHESS DE MALAKOFF.

caused great indignation in the civilized world—the well-known affair of Ouled Rhia, where the Arabs, having taken refuge in caves, were suffocated with smoke from fires at the entrance, so that they all perished. He was promoted to the rank of general of brigade in 1848, and general of division in 1850; he approved and supported the coup d'état, was sent to the Crimea to supersede Canrobert, and was made marshal of France and Duc de Malakoff after the taking of Sebastopol.



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY LADREY-DISDERI.
DUCHESS OF ALVA.

and military spirit, criticizing the slowness and indecision of Canrobert; the admirers of the latter dwelt on the inhumanity of Pélissier, and his reckless sacrifice of life to reach his end, attributing the indecision of Canrobert to his repugnance for unnecessary bloodshed. However, as his personal bravery was well known, all acknowledged that Canrobert had behaved nobly, and in a true soldierly spirit, when he was called upon to resign his command into the hands of Pélissier, which he did without showing a thought of selfishness or the least hesitation in his obedience; while the reckless brutality of Pélissier could not be denied, although his military energy was successful.

When the marriage of this rough soldier of fortune was officially announced, every one was astonished; for the bride was a young and beautiful Spaniard, Mlle. Sofia Valera de la Pañega, a distant relative of the Empress Eugénie, under whose patronage this ill-assorted union had been arranged. The Empress was fond of match-making, but she was not usually fortunate in the results of those which she suggested, for her impetuous nature did not allow her to examine both sides of the question, or to weigh objections. In this case, Mlle. de la Pañega was a poor relative who lived with the Comtesse de Montijo as a protégée. By marrying Pélissier she would become a *maréchale*, and Duchesse de Malakoff. What could be better? As to the life which she would lead

when married to a man whose ways and manners were those of a common soldier,—with, besides, a violent temper,—no one stopped to consider. And so poor Mlle. de la Pañega, gentle, submissive, and fearing to offend, became the wife of Pélissier. She complained to no one, and always behaved with great propriety and dignity; but her face was sufficiently eloquent, and when she became a widow—which occurred a few years after her marriage—every one felt inclined to congratulate rather than condole.

The characteristic behavior of Pélissier, notably on the very day of his wedding, as he left the church, cannot be related in these pages. One instance, however, I may mention, which, though trifling, will give some idea of his uncivilized ways and manners. The Countess B— related in my presence that while on a visit to her sister, the Duchess of Manchester, Pélissier, who was then ambassador in England, and among the guests, met her one day as she was going down-stairs.

“Stop, countess,” said Pélissier; “you have a black mark on your forehead.” Then, wetting his finger in his mouth, he obligingly rubbed the place, and removed the stain.

Canrobert was at that time a short, square-built man, with a large head out of proportion to his figure, proverbially ill-favored and un-gainly; but though rather predisposed to gasconading and flourish, he was of a quite different stamp and education from Pélissier.



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY LADREY-DISDERI.
MARSHAL CASTELLANE.



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

RUINS OF THE TUILERIES. THE GALLERY OF PEACE (GALERIE DE LA PAIX).

He married a very pretty and very distinguished Scotch lady,—a Miss Macdonald, of the great Scotch clan of that name,—whom he absolutely worshiped, and who was devoted to him, ill-assorted as they seemed to be. They were known in society as “Caliban and Ariel,” but they were a most united couple and very happy together. The poor old marshal was absolutely heartbroken when his wife was taken from him in 1890. He died in the beginning of the present year (1895), having reached a great age,¹ universally respected as a most honorable and excellent man, apart from his military talents, which were very remarkable.

Mme. Canrobert was as intelligent as she was elegant and refined; she had a perfect appreciation of the duties which her high position involved, and during the disastrous war, as during the Empire, she performed them admirably. Soon after their marriage the marshal held the important command of the army corps at Lyons, and his exaggerated view of what was due to her as his wife, with his tendency to ostentation, caused at first some ill feeling among the military aristocracy and their wives, which became so marked as to oblige

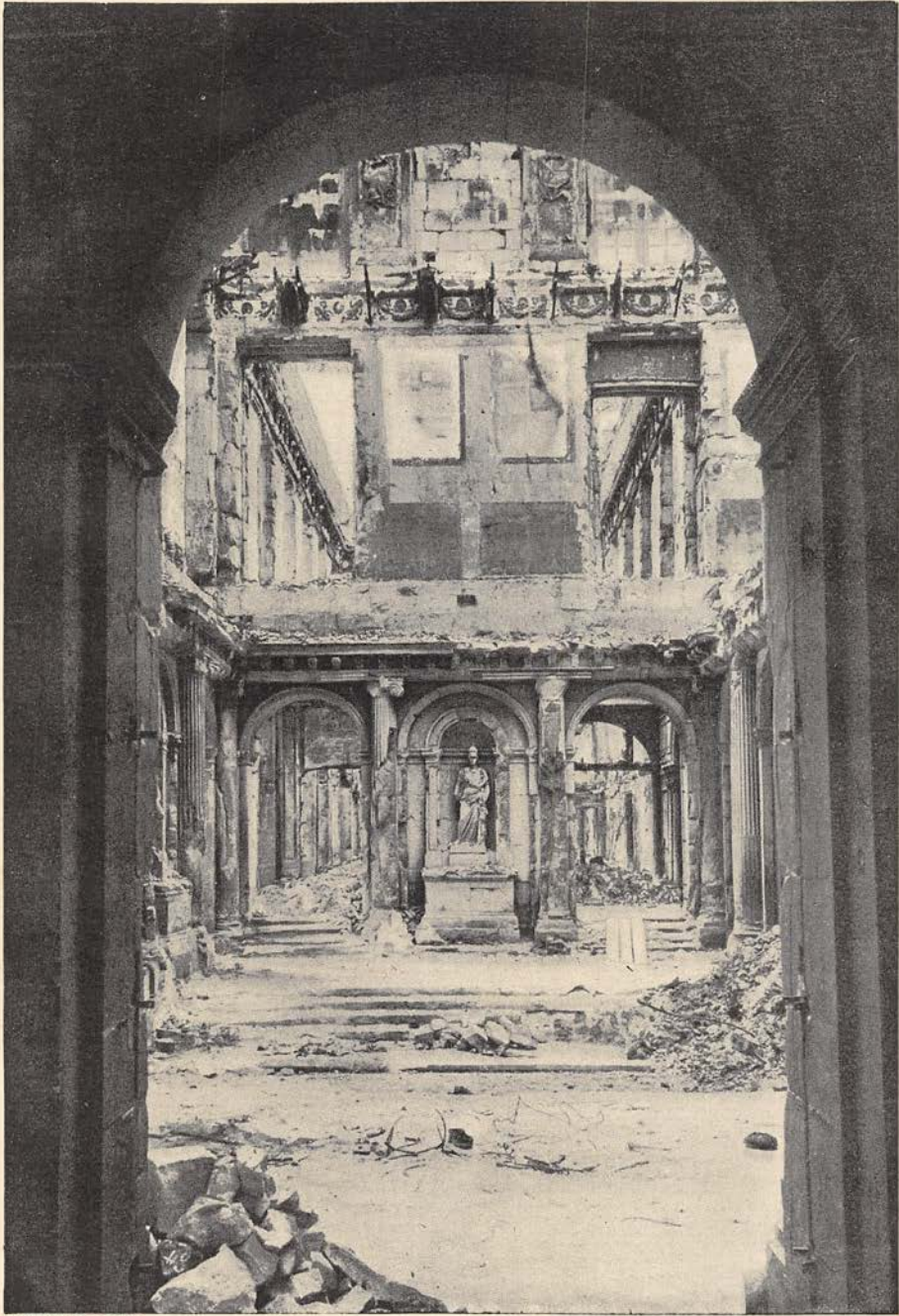
¹ Canrobert was born in 1809, and was the son of an officer of the “émigré” army of Condé. He was a pupil of the military school of St. Cyr; and was made colonel in 1849, general in 1853, and marshal of France in 1855. He and MacMahon were not friends.

the Emperor himself to limit the privileges which the marshal claimed for Mme. Canrobert, and which encroached too much on those reserved for the Empress.² But this was only a passing cloud.

MacMahon had not attracted much notice before the Italian war, although his noble conduct at the taking of the Malakoff tower at Sebastopol deserved more fame. He was loaded with honors after Magenta, but he was not much seen in the society of the court, as he belonged to the Faubourg St. Germain by his own family ties, and especially by those of his wife, a daughter of the Duc de Castries. MacMahon was in all things strictly honorable and faithful in his duty to the Emperor, but he did not seek to do more, and made no demonstrations.

The other marshals were remarkable only for their military achievements, except Castellane, a distinguished man in every respect, noted for his energy, his determination, and his high military spirit, who commanded at Lyons in almost viceregal fashion. His daughter, the Countess Hatzfeldt, had married the Prussian minister, and was extremely popular. She afterward married the Duc de Valençay, of the Talleyrand-Périgord family.

² Marshal Canrobert insisted on his wife having a military escort when she went out in her carriage, which the Empress did not have habitually, and he would not allow any one but himself to take her in to dinner.



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

RUINS OF THE VESTIBULE OF THE TUILERIES.

THE WALL BACK OF THE STATUE OF MINERVA BELONGED TO THE HALL OF THE MARSHALS.

Marshal Magnan had helped in the coup d'état, and was consequently much favored by the Emperor; but there was a strong feeling against him because he belonged to the Freemasons, and was antagonistic to the clergy.

Marshal Vaillant was a man of low origin, betrayed by his manners. He boasted of being the son of a cobbler. Such a rise in life is certainly very honorable, but it was unnecessary to prove the assertion so continually and so evidently. He was at the head of the household, which he governed officially, and had apartments in the palace next to those of the Comte de Tascher. He was a very ordinary-looking man, and enormously stout.

Marshal Randon was considered very estimable in private life, but he played only a secondary part. He was looked upon as rather too prudent in military tactics. There were many jests on the inappropriate Christian names of the three marshals — Canrobert, Randon, and Pélessier. The "prudent" Randon's name was "César"; Canrobert, noted for his indecision, was called "Certain"; and Pélessier, whose rough brutality was proverbial, was christened "Aimable."¹

M. Thouvenel, who was minister for foreign affairs after the Italian war, was an old and intimate friend of the de Tascher family, and I well remember his intense pride and delight when the great question of the annexation of Savoy and Nice was finally settled, and he had the satisfaction — which he desired beyond any other — of signing his name to the treaty which gave both to France.

"If I can only write 'Thouvenel' below that treaty, I shall die happy," he exclaimed in my presence.

When I first saw M. Thouvenel he was ambassador at Constantinople, and being in Paris on a diplomatic "congé," he came to dine at the Tuileries with the de Taschers. He had much to relate, for which we were in some degree prepared by the graphic account of a friend who had described a visit of M. Thouvenel to some aga or pasha, when, after having dined principally on a variety of luscious sweetmeats, he was obliged to spend the night in a magnificent apartment lighted brilliantly by an immense chandelier, with negro slaves lying before his door to guard his person, and snoring so loudly that sleep was impossible, while his rest was still further disturbed by the discomfort of his splendid bed, where white satin sheets set his teeth on edge, and a pillow covered with cloth-of-gold scratched his face and tore his hair.

My young charges had particularly enjoyed this picture of Oriental luxury, so that the presence of M. Thouvenel, with his animated con-

¹ These were their baptismal names.

versation and all that he had to relate, was extremely welcome. He was a tall, powerful man, with rather a pompous demeanor, but a great talker; and as he unbent with the de Taschers more than usual, he was really very agreeable. Every one was listening with great interest to his graphic descriptions when, to his own astonishment and the intense amusement of the younger members of the family, his eloquence was suddenly cut short by the energetic protestations of a favorite parrot, which, being disturbed in his slumbers, vociferated, "Tais-toi, Édouard!" (shut up, Edward!)

The Christian name of the narrator being Édouard, the remark was decidedly personal, and no one could help laughing; while M. Thouvenel, utterly amazed, repeated, "Why, he is actually attacking *me*!"

The parrot had been brought from Pernambuco by a Spanish priest as a present to the Empress Eugénie, and had been taught pretty speeches in her honor. The Empress, having no fondness for parrots, gave this one, a particularly fine specimen, to the Duc de Tascher. But the family being absent from home, the duke did not know what to do with it, and put it to board with an old woman at St. Cloud, who took great care of the bird, but established it on her window-sill, where the street gamins held conversations with her charge, by no means to the improvement of its vocabulary. When the family returned to the Tuileries the parrot had learned French, but swore in most disreputable fashion, and held such language that he was not considered fit to be introduced into society. Gradually, however, new words blotted out the old ones, and the duke's daughters then delighted in teaching him sentences, which he picked up with the greatest facility. Every morning he began the day with energetic protestations of "Vive l'Empereur!" at the same time drilling imaginary squads in sonorous, officer-like tones which were indescribably ludicrous. He was a great favorite in the family, but after his attack on M. Thouvenel was banished from the drawing-room in the evening.

When M. Thouvenel became minister of foreign affairs he took the anti-papal side so warmly that the de Tascher family no longer approved of him; for they were sincere Catholics, and consequently averse to the spoliation of the Pope, which the Emperor at that time sincerely wished to avoid, while the Empress, with her usual ardor, strongly opposed it. This was the origin of the so-called "clerical views" attributed to the Empress, which, in fact, were limited to this sole point.

Finally M. Thouvenel went so far beyond the Emperor, and displeased the Empress to such a degree, that he was forced to send in

his resignation, which, as he was an ambitious man, caused him great bitterness of spirit.

Shortly afterward the Emperor one morning was walking in the Bois de Boulogne with his aide-de-camp (*officier d'ordonnance*), when a young child ran his hoop against him. The Emperor caught the hoop and gave it back to the child, at the same time, with his usual kindness, stooping to kiss him. The boy pushed him away roughly, and the aide-de-camp exclaimed: "But the Emperor wishes to kiss you! You must kiss the Emperor!"

"No," cried the child; "I won't kiss him! He is a very bad man. My papa says so, and he hates him."

"What is your father's business?" asked the Emperor, quietly.

"Business! My papa has no business. He does nothing at all — he is a senator."

The senators being especially appointed by the Emperor himself from among those supposed to be most faithful to him, the revelation was startling. The aide-de-camp indignantly inquired:

"What is your father's name?" But the Emperor laid his hand on his arm:

"Hush! *La recherche de la paternité est interdite*" (Inquiry as to the father's name is forbidden). And he turned away without hearing the name so nearly betrayed.

But the story was repeated, and curiosity was awakened, the age of the child causing suspicion to point strongly toward Thouvenel, the senators being mostly old men. But the fact was never positively elucidated.

The generosity shown by the Emperor on this occasion was highly characteristic. I remember an instance of a different kind which came to my personal knowledge. A lady who was a friend of some of my cousins, having a favor to solicit, obtained a private audience of the Emperor. She was shown into his private cabinet, where he received her with the cold, calm courtesy which marked his habitual manner. She began with what seemed great boldness, but was in reality excellent diplomacy, by telling him that although she came to proffer a petition, she must first make a confession that all the members of her family were his political adversaries, being zealous Legitimists and devoted to that cause. The Emperor listened calmly, in silence. She then explained the favor that she had come to ask, and pleaded her cause. Still the Emperor listened with grave attention, asking a few questions, but without giving any indication of his feelings or of his decision. When she had finished her statement she looked anxiously toward him, but he simply made the usual motion indicating that she might retire. She moved toward the door, courteously followed by the Em-

peror, and then, suddenly turning to him, she said:

"Sire, may I take some hope with me?"

"Take certainty, madame," answered the Emperor, with that peculiarly charming smile which at rare intervals lighted up his grave face.

The appeal to the noble side of his nature was never made in vain. In general, it was said that when a favor was asked and the Emperor listened in silence, twirling his mustache, the petition might be looked upon as granted; but when he stroked his chin downward, and said seriously, "*C'est bien difficile*" (It is a difficult matter), then it was a case where hope must be given up.

Such were the variations of the court barometer, which everybody studied carefully.

My younger pupil, Hortense de Tascher de la Pagerie, was now gradually introduced into society, and finally, at the age of eighteen, she was admitted to the court balls and invited to the festivities of Compiègne and Fontainebleau — expensive and fatiguing pleasures, more dreaded than welcomed by those honored with invitations, the toilets being a formidable consideration. For a week's stay fifteen dresses were usually taken, and of these at least seven were evening toilets of the most expensive kind, the emulation among the visitors reaching the highest degree of extravagance.

The Emperor and Empress were exceedingly hospitable and kind hosts, anxious to amuse their guests; but for this purpose, unfortunately, romping games were often chosen, which, though certainly undignified and ill suited to those beyond school years, had not however, the character attributed to them by public report, nor the licentious freedom believed in by the Faubourg St. Germain, and contemptuously sneered at by its aristocratic inhabitants. The mistake lay in doing on a large scale what ought to be tolerated only among intimate friends and very young people. But the mean ingratitude of those who enjoyed all the generous kindness lavished on their guests by the imperial hosts, and then disfigured the truth to sneer at them with their enemies, was too contemptible to be even mentioned with patience.

I remained for two more years with my dear pupil Hortense de Tascher de la Pagerie, one of the sweetest beings I have ever met in the whole course of my life, to whom I was most deeply attached, and whose untimely death, which so soon followed her happy marriage with the Comte de l'Espine, was mourned as a sort of public calamity by all who knew her, even if only by name.¹

My own health had suffered severely from

¹ Her daughter is now the Princesse Louis de Croy.

the consequences of a very serious carriage accident, and at the time of the marriage I left the palace, where I had spent nine years, still remaining on terms of the closest intimacy with all the family, and their guest whenever I returned to Paris from the health resorts where I had been undergoing medical treatment. My last visit was in the spring of the fatal year 1870, and I was then told by the ladies of the family that the Emperor caused them the greatest anxiety; that he had sunk into a state of mental and physical exhaustion, causing a strange apathy from which it seemed impossible to rouse him, and which indicated serious evils.

I left the palace with sorrowful forebodings; a sort of threatening cloud seemed to hang over it — nay, over Paris itself. As I saw it recede in the distance, on the day of my departure, I thought of the doomed cities in Scripture, and even expressed my fears in a letter to a near relative in America, who was

greatly struck when events so terribly verified what now seem almost prophetic views.

The next time that I stood before the palace of the Tuileries it was in ruins. I could still discover the remains of my old apartments, which I longed to visit, but was told that the danger would be too great. I could discern what was left of the Salle des Maréchaux, where I had witnessed such splendid scenes of festivity. I could still see the place which had been my habitual seat in that chapel where my beloved Hortense had been married in the presence of Napoleon III. and the Empress. The Archbishop of Paris, who had officiated, had been foully murdered; the duke, her father, who had led her to the altar, was no more; the Emperor and Empress were exiles; the fair young bride was in her grave; and the very chapel where she had knelt at the altar was in ruins!

Who could wonder at the tears which I could not repress?

Anna L. Bicknell.

SONNY'S SCHOOLIN'.

A MONOLOGUE.



WELL, sir, we 're tryin' to edjercate him — good ez we can. Th' ain't never been a edjercational advantage come in reach of us but we 've give it to him. Of co'se he 's all we 've got, that one boy is, an' wife an' me, why, we feel the same way about it.

They 's three schools in the county, not countin' the niggers', an' we send him to all three.

Sir? Oh, yas, sir; he b'longs to all three schools — to fo', for that matter, countin' the home school.

You see, Sonny he 's purty ticklish to handle, an' a person has to know thess how to tackle him. Even wife an' me, that 's been knowin' him f'om the beginnin', not only knowin' his traits, but how he *come* by 'em, — though some is hard to trace to their so'ces, — why, sir, even we have to study sometimes to keep in with him, an' of co'se a teacher — why, it 's thess hit an' miss whether he 'll take the right tack with him or not; an' sometimes one teacher 'll strike it one day, an' another nex' day; so by payin' schoolin' for him right along in all three, why, of co'se, ef he don't feel like goin' to one, why, he 'll go to another.

Once-t in a while he 'll git out with the whole of 'em, an' that was how wife come to open the home school for him. She was determined his edjercation should n't be interrupted ef she could help it. She don't encour'ge him much to go to her school, though, 'cause it interrupts her in her housekeepin' consider'ble, an' she 's had extry quilt-patchin' on hand ever since he come. She 's patchin' him a set 'ginst the time he 'll marry.

An' then I reckon he frets her a good deal in school. Somehow, seems like he thess picks up enough in the other schools to be able to conterdic' her ways o' teachin'.

F' instance, in addin' up a colume o' figgers, ef she comes to a aught — which some calls 'em naughts — she 'll say, "Aught 's a aught," an' Sonny ain't been learned to say it that a-way; an' so maybe when she says, "Aught 's a aught," he 'll say, "Who said it was n't?" an' that puts her out in countin'.

He 's been learned to thess pass over aughts an' not call their names; and once-t or twice-t, when wife called 'em out that a-way, why, he got so fretted he thess gathered up his things an' went to another school. But seem like she 's added aughts that a-way so long she can't think to add 'em no other way.