

THE STORY OF A SHADOW.

*EUGÉNIE—DAUGHTER OF SPAIN; EMPRESS OF FRANCE;
EXILE IN ENGLAND.*

THE Senate opened its eyes in amazement; it listened courteously, and at first a trifle incredulously; then it punctuated the speaker's oration with applause—for Napoleon, the "Emperor of the French by the grace of God and

one who is unknown, and whose alliance would have advantages mingled with sacrifices." He had laid his heart and hand at the feet of some proud Princesses, but they had all turned their heads the other way, sceptical of the permanence of the position



THE EMPRESS EUGÉNIE WITH HER COURT AT THE HEIGHT OF HER POWER.
From the Painting by Winterhalter, now in the Empress's possession at Farnborough.

the will of the People," was on his feet, making a declaration of surrender to the young Spaniard, Señorita Eugenia de Guzman. "I come, gentlemen," he said, "to announce that I have preferred the woman whom I love, whom I respect, to

into which he had clambered. The Emperor was not in the least discomfited. On the contrary, here lay his hope of popularity in this throbbing new kingdom of his. "The alliance which I contract," said his Majesty, "is not in accordance with the

traditions of ancient policy—and therein lies its advantage." He frankly avowed himself a *parvenu*: he was even proud of the fact; and that went to the hearts of his faithful subjects who had been Citizens but yesterday, scornful of the baubles of a peerage. The Emperor felt encouraged by his reception, and he proceeded to paint the portrait of his best beloved—

She who has been the object of my preference is of princely descent. French in heart, by education, and the recollection of blood shed by her father in the cause of the Empire, she has, as a Spaniard, the advantage of not having in France a family to whom it might be necessary to give honours and fortune. Endowed with all the qualities of the mind, she will be the ornament of the throne. In the days of danger she would be one of its courageous supporters. A Catholic, she will address to Heaven the same prayers with me for the happiness of France. In fine, by her grace and goodness she will, I firmly hope, endeavour to revive in the same position the virtue of the Empress Josephine [his own grandmother]. On better knowing her whom I have chosen, you will agree that on this occasion, as on some others, I have been inspired by Providence.

This remarkable speech was delivered on

I call the career of Eugénie the Story of a Shadow from no caprice, for out of her seventy years of life she has lived only



Photo by Disdéri, Paris.

THE EMPRESS EUGÉNIE'S MOTHER
(NÉE MARIE KIRKPATRICK).



Photo by Levitsky, Paris.

THE EMPRESS IN 1856.

Jan. 22, 1853. That day week, Napoleon had made Eugénia de Guzman Empress of France.

seventeen (1853-70) as a potent entity. The day she went with Napoleon III. to Notre Dame meant the beginning of her public life. Until then she had been nobody but a very beautiful woman: the stormy day in 1870 that she crossed the Channel meant the end of her public career. Since then she has been a lonely exile among us, surrounded, it is too true, by a mimic Court, but taking no active share in our life or that of France. Indeed, the atmosphere of exile is strong in her blood. Her mother's father, William Kirkpatrick, who died the year that our Queen came to the throne, had had to leave his native Scotland for his creed. He was a cadet of an old family that had reigned at Closeburn, in Dumfriesshire, for three centuries. The Kirkpatricks had vigorously opposed the House of Hanover, and for following Prince Charlie one of them was beheaded (1747). This victim's grandson (the future Empress's grandfather) had consequently



NAPOLEON III. IN 1852.

From the Painting by Sir William Ross, R.A.

gone to Malaga, in Spain, where he could follow his religion with complete freedom. He applied his Scotch



Photo by Lecltsky, Paris.

THE PRINCE IMPERIAL AS A BOY.

prudence to building up an export wine and fruit business; he gratified his pride of birth by marrying the daughter of a nobleman (the Baron de Grivegnée). One of his daughters married the Count de Montijo. The Count himself, a representative of the great family of de Guzman, was (originally) a stranger in a strange country, for his ancestors had come from Genoa. The Count, who died in 1839, had fought against us in the Peninsular War, losing his eye at the battle of Salamanca. Thus, with a father and a grandfather strongly anti-English, it is a strange irony that has made the ex-Empress seek refuge on our shores; all the more so, in view of the fact that Sir John Burgoyne, who brought the fugitive Empress across the Channel in his yacht, had also fought against her father in the Peninsula.

Eugénie's early life is wrapped in mystery, which the fiction-mongers have fabled over. Born at Granada in 1829, she spent her childhood at Madrid, and was educated

at Toulouse. The Countess of Montijo and her two daughters (Eugénie and the future Duchess of Alba) seem to have led a wandering life. One thing is certain—Eugénie was wonderfully beautiful. Fragile and spirituelle, she has been described as having "the head of a princess, set on the shoulders of a goddess." Then her unforgettable violet eyes enchanted everybody. Indeed, there is a rumour of two French officers once having fought a duel over her when she was only fifteen. Certain it is that the day she met Louis Napoleon she absolutely captured him.

Born in 1808, the future Emperor was at once the nephew and the stepson of Napoleon I., for his father, Louis Napoleon, who had been given the kingdom of Holland, was the great Emperor's brother, and had married Hortense Beauharnais, the step-daughter of the Emperor, who stood sponsor to the infant Napoleon III. Before he met Eugénie the young Prince had seen life; he had taken part in the revolution of Italy (during which his brother died), and had had to fly to England. He then



Photo by Didier, Paris.

THE PRINCE IMPERIAL AS ONE OF THE GUARDS.

retired to the Castle of Ahrenenberg, in Thurgau, where he wrote three books between the years 1832 and 1835, including his *Manual on Artillery*. In 1836 he made

Napoléoniennes." But Letters did not suffice to absorb his resistless energy. In 1840 he landed at Boulogne with some followers, but was captured and sent to rot



THE EMPRESS EUGÉNIE.

From the Painting by Winterhalter.

an unsuccessful attempt to seize the fortress of Strasburg, and was banished to the United States. He ultimately found his way to London, where he published, just sixty years ago, his book "Idées

in the lonely prison of Ham, on the bleak moor ninety miles north-east of Paris. As everybody knows, he declined to die, for after six years of imprisonment he calmly walked out of the prison one May morning

(1846) in the garb of a joiner, with a plank on his shoulder, and in a few days he was back again, for the third time, in London.



Photo by Levitsky, Paris.

NAPOLÉON III.

The rest is familiar. He was in Paris again in 1848; he was soon President of the Republic that had risen on the ashes of Louis Philippism; and on Dec. 2, 1852, he was proclaimed "Emperor of the French, by the Grace of God and the Will of the People."

This was a daring record for a man little more than forty. His next step was even more wonderful; for, to the consternation of Europe, he married Eugenia de Guzman. Where and how they met remains a mystery. According to some it was at one of Lord Combermere's balls in London in the winter of 1847, when Napoleon was in hiding here. Madame Carette, the Empress's reader, assures us that it was at a ball at the Elysée in 1852, the Emperor giving her a simple gold ring when he asked her hand. He was on the eve of the great *coup d'état*, and assured the beautiful Spaniard—"Fortune will smile on me, because it will lead me to you." So she went back to Spain for a time, bearing as a talisman a pin mounted with

brilliant and emeralds, which she had won at a lottery organised by the Emperor at Compiègne, and which she always wore till the death of the Prince Imperial, when she gave it to the Duchess de Mouchy. Another legend tells that a Spanish gipsy had whispered to her, while she was yet a girl, that she would marry a monarch; and sure enough, at the age of four-and-twenty she became Empress of France.

The young Empress was a popular success from the first. What though the Princesses of the old reigning houses had sniffed at Napoleon? What though the wiseacre diplomats had shaken their heads? What if the old French aristocracy stood aloof? The "people," by whose "will" Napoleon had proclaimed himself Emperor, were mightily pleased; for there was a fine flavour of romance about the marriage, and she capped her capture by requesting the Municipality to devote to charity the £25,000 which it had meant to spend on a diamond for her, while out of the Emperor's gift of £10,000 she gave £4,000 for the endowment of a



Photo by Mathieu-Deuché.

THE EMPRESS EUGÉNIE CROWNED.

women's college. Then she began to make the rest of Europe accept her. In April 1855, as the guest of Queen Victoria, she made a triumphal entry into London, when Napoleon was presented with the Freedom of the City. Three times had the Emperor been in London—an exile. On this day (his fourth visit) he was proud in the possession of the Garter, our ally in the Crimea, the husband of the most beautiful woman in Europe. "We shall take back to France," said the Emperor on that occasion, "the lasting impression, made on minds thoroughly able to appreciate it, of the imposing spectacle which England presents, where Virtue on the Throne directs the destinies of a country under the empire of a liberty without danger to its grandeur." Virtue (and Victoria) still occupy that throne, increasing in real grandeur with the passing of the years; but what of the Empress of the French?

The great Exhibition held late in the same year formed the next point in her triumphant ascent, for she managed to get the Queen and Prince Consort to the capital. She ruled France as Regent during the absence of the Emperor in the Italian Expedition of 1859, and in the following year she made a triumphal progress through Central France and Savoy, visiting Algeria, on the northernmost rim of the great continent where her boy was to die for England just twenty years later. Finally, the French Empire under the new régime was recognised on every side by the year 1867, when the King of Prussia (who was yet to be crowned Emperor of

Germany at Versailles itself), the Emperor of Austria, and the Czar Alexander II., gladly became the guests of Napoleon III. and his superb consort. In 1869 the Empress added additional interest to the unveiling of the monument of Napoleon I. in Corsica, and in the autumn of the same year she was present at the opening of the Suez Canal, returning home through Egypt and Turkey, honoured on every hand.

Within a year, Eugénie had fallen as rapidly as she had risen. The Emperor had set out with her only child, the

Prince Imperial, to fight the Prussians.

"It is my war,"

said the Empress—at least,

some chroniclers will have it so—

as she watched the troops go off to the front, and she again assumed the

Regency in her husband's absence.

This time her cares were increased by the

absence of her boy, "le petit Prince,"

who had such a strange admixture of Italian,

French, Spanish, and Scotch blood

in his veins. From his father, the

silent dreamer, the lad had inherited

a meditative mind.

To his Spanish mother he was indebted for that impetuosity which sent him to Zululand.

The lad, brought up with Louis Conneau, the son of the doctor who had helped his

father to escape from Ham, had been nurtured on mimic militarism, for he

had had a cadet regiment of his own while a mere child. How proud his

mother was of him that August day in 1870 when she received the telegram

from the Emperor before Saarbrück—

Louis has received his baptism of fire. He showed admirable coolness. He kept a ball



THE PRINCE IMPERIAL IN 1876.

which fell quite near him [carving his initials on it on the spot]. Some of the soldiers wept on beholding him so courageous and calm.

The young Prince—he was just fourteen—also made a sketch of the battle during the action. Then came the quick succession of disasters, ending in Sedan, when the Emperor penned that famous letter to the victor—

Sir (my brother),—Not having been able to die in the midst of my troops, it only remains for me to place my sword in the hands of your Majesty. I am your Majesty's good brother.—NAPOLEON.

Napoleon was a prisoner (for the fourth time in his life); Paris was writhing in an agony of impotent rage; and the beautiful Regent was besieged in the Tuileries, with her ladies huddled round her in fright. At last, on Sunday afternoon (Sept. 4), as the Extreme Left went off to the Hôtel de Ville to bury the Empire and raise the Republic, Eugénie, on the advice of Prince Metternich, the Austrian Ambassador, resolved to bolt. At four o'clock in the afternoon she managed to slink out of the Palace by a wicket gate that led to the Place St. Germain Auxerrois, and, with no change of clothes, without money and without food, she was smuggled into a cab, accompanied by the faithful Madame le Breton. Only a street urchin had noticed her, but his cry "L'Impératrice!" passed unheeded. That was the last of the Tuileries that Eugénie saw as Empress of the French.

The next four days were spent in a wracking race for life or death. Her *cocher* took her to two houses in turn, only to find the owners away from home. Thus denied the assistance of her own subjects, the flying Empress turned for help to America, in the person of Dr. Evans, the famous dentist, who died recently. But his hospitality could prove of little avail ultimately, so the Empress had to be smuggled out of Paris altogether. After infinite trouble and a weary journey of two days and three nights, she managed to reach the coast, arriving at Deauville, near Trouville, in a Normandy peasant's cart, on Sept. 6. America had helped her so far; now she turned to the England on which her grandfather had turned his back a century before.

It so happened that Sir John Fox Burgoyne (whose statue you may know in a corner of Carlton House Terrace) was waiting at Deauville with his trim little yacht, the *Gazelle* (50 ft. long and of 40 tons burden), to convey his wife to England on her return journey from Switzerland. The fugitive Empress was introduced to Sir John, who had fought against her father sixty years before, and he agreed, as a gallant gentleman must have done, to take her across the Channel. That was on the afternoon of Sept. 6. As if aware of the momentous nature of the crisis, a wild hurricane swept the Channel that evening. England will never forget the storm, for in the early hours of the next morning (the 7th) H.M.S. *Captain* capsized in the Bay of Biscay, and with her went down Sir John Burgoyne's only son, Captain Burgoyne, V.C., the commander of Coles's ill-fated invention. Sir John was to save one life for the loss of another. Was ever such irony? He had crossed the path of the Bonapartes before, for he had represented England at the interment of Napoleon II. in the Invalides twelve years previously. He never recovered the loss of his son, dying thirteen months later, on Oct. 7, 1871.

Ignorant of the fate of the *Captain*, Sir John and his illustrious guest set sail four hours after the disaster—at seven o'clock on the morning of Sept. 7, when the storm had abated. Even then the gay *Gazelle* had a terrible passage, and it was not till half-past three on the following morning—after twelve hours on the passage—that the yacht reached Ryde. The Empress got a few hours' rest at the York Hotel there, and then took the train to Hastings, where her son had arrived with three officers from Ostend on the previous day. What a different landing in England from the one which the Empress had had fifteen years before, when she came as the guest of our Queen! Eugénie, in short, had once more become a Shadow; and since then she has been the guest—never the citizen—of England.

But Eugénie was only beginning her troubles; for though she was soon settled

at Camden Place, Chislehurst, where her husband joined her early in the new year (March 1871), and though the Queen befriended her immediately, she saw all her possessions slip from her one by one. In 1872 her precious jewels were scattered by the hammer for £50,000. Six months later (Jan. 9, 1873) her husband succumbed to the deadly disease which had cut off his father and

governess when he was a little boy, and he went to Woolwich (1872-4), where he took a high place as an artillery cadet. Out of a class of thirty-four, he came out seventh, topping the list for horsemanship. It is interesting to remember that when at Woolwich he saw a great deal of the Duke of Connaught, whose recent appearance at the French military manœuvres must have brought



THE PRINCE IMPERIAL LUNCHING THE "SOLDIERS" OF HIS MINIATURE REGIMENT
AFTER THE MANŒUVRES IN THE BOIS DE BOULOGNE, NOVEMBER 30, 1860.

Napoleon I.; and on June 1, 1879, her beloved son, the Prince Imperial, was butchered by the Zulus.

The career of the young Prince, born to such high hopes, was very melancholy. When his father died and was buried with such ceremony, the enthusiastic Frenchmen who came to the funeral had shouted as the youth passed, "Vive l'Empereur!" "Non, mes amis," said the boy sadly, "l'Empereur est mort. Vive la France!" And so he grew up quite English. He had had an English

back many memories of the young Bonaparte who might have become Napoleon IV. The Duke had been set up as his model, for when "le petit Prince" was born, Napoleon III. had written to our Queen: "All my hope is that my dear son may resemble dear little Prince Arthur. I hope my son will inherit my feelings of affectionate esteem for the great English nation." The Prince Imperial was not permitted to join the English Army, in view of the unpleasantness which might have been aroused in

France; but a lad of his temperament could not rest, and so he went out as a volunteer to Lord Chelmsford, "to see [wrote the Duke of Cambridge] as much as he can of the army camping in Zululand."

The rest is familiar history. On June 1 (1879) he was as dead as Napoleon I. Madame Carette has given us a pathetic account of how the news was conveyed to his mother. At eight o'clock on the morning of June 19 a messenger arrived from the Queen with the sad news, which had been whispered in the London clubs the night before, and it fell to the faithful Duc de Bassano, who had been Grand Chamberlain to Napoleon III., to tell the Empress. The Empress swooned away, and it was thought she was dying, so that her priest, the Abbé Goddard, was sent for. But she did not die. On returning to consciousness she said, "I cannot die. My life will be prolonged a hundred years!" Within a year she was off to South Africa, to see the spot where he fell; and by a curious irony she sailed (as the "Comtesse de Pierrefond") on board a steamer called the *German*. But for the German, her boy would never have been in Zululand at all. She was accompanied by the Marquis de Bassano (son of the Duke) and by the Prince's two English servants. On her way home she visited lonely St. Helena (July 12, 1880), where the greatest Napoleon of all had died fifty-nine years before—and died, too, like the Napoleon who might have been the Fourth, under the English flag. She brought away with her some cuttings from the willow that had waved over Bonaparte; and to-day they flourish at Farnborough, whither she went after leaving Chislehurst.

In St. George's Chapel, Windsor, itself, our Queen erected a white marble monument to the Prince, with the words—

The well-beloved youth, the comrade of our soldiers, slain in the African war, and thence carried to the tomb of his father, Queen Victoria embraceth

as her guest, in this holy domicile of Kings, represented in white marble as he is.

On one side of the tomb you read the following inscription (in French) from the Prince's will—

I shall die with a feeling of profound gratitude for Her Majesty the Queen of England, for all the Royal Family, and for the country in which during eight years I have received so cordial a hospitality.

At Farnborough the Empress has held her mimic Court with a fine stateliness which has ever reminded the world that, though an exile, she is really not one of ourselves. The days of her splendour are constantly recalled for her by Winterhalter's picture of the ladies of her Court. Here she has gathered together relics of the First Napoleon, and here she has built the gorgeous mausoleum in memory of her husband. What a satire, that the England which shivered at the name of Napoleon I. should shelter the remains of Napoleon III!

And so the Shadow lives on, perchance to the hundred years which she foresaw twenty years ago. It is a stately old lady, somewhat troubled by rheumatism, like the humblest of her old subjects; intensely lonely, intensely proud, with all the hauteur of a noble Spaniard; flitting from Farnborough to her beautiful villa at Cap Martin, and now, again, to Balmoral on a visit to the Queen, or to see her god-daughter Princess Victoria Eugénie of Battenberg, the youngest of the Queen's grandchildren. Of recent years the Empress has even been seen kneeling in Notre Dame, though *Le Figaro* no longer cares to chronicle the event. Her life has been full of little ironies; for it is strange to find this lonely old woman the devoted friend of Queen Victoria, who would never have come to the throne if William Kirkpatrick, her grandfather, had had his way. But that is so long, long ago; and these two Queens have forgotten everything in the fact that each of them has lost so much that she cherished. R. S. MICHEL.