
Louis Napoleon in London.

consent to dishonor myself, before I could be persuaded to quit France. It was also a matter of duty that I should exert all my powers to be able to console my father in his old age.

“Adieu, my dear M. de George. Although free, I feel myself to be most unhappy. Receive the assurance of my sincere friendship; and if you are able, endeavor to be useful to my kind Conneau.”

It was the latter part of May, 1846, that Louis Napoleon escaped from Ham. He repaired immediately to London. In accordance with his habits and his tastes, he continued to devote himself earnestly to his studies, still cherishing the unfaltering opinion that he was yet to be the Emperor of France. In London he was cordially welcomed by his old friends, Count d'Orsay and Lady Blessington. His cousin Maria of Baden, then Lady Douglass, subsequently the Duchess of Hamilton, was proud to receive him in her sumptuous abode, and to present him to her aristocratic friends. To her, it is said that he confided his projects and hopes more frankly than to any one else. In one of his notes he wrote,

“MY DEAR COUSIN,—I do not belong to

Overthrow of Louis Philippe.

myself, I belong to my name and my country. It is because my fortune has twice betrayed me, that my destiny is nearer its accomplishment. I bide my time.”

In the latter part of February, 1848, the throne of Philippe was overturned, and he fled from France. Louis Napoleon immediately returned to Paris after so many weary years of exile. This is not the place to describe the scenes which ensued. It is sufficient simply to state that, almost by acclamation, he was sent by the people of Paris to the Assembly, was there elected president of the Republic, and then, by nearly eight million of votes, the Empire was re-established and Louis Napoleon was placed upon the imperial throne.

As soon as Louis Napoleon was chosen president of the French Republic, Walter Savage Landor, a brilliant scholar, a profound, original thinker, and a highly independent and honorable man, wrote as follows to Lady Blessington, under date of January 9th, 1849:

“Possibly you may have never seen the two articles which I enclose. I inserted another in the ‘Examiner,’ deprecating the anxieties which a truly patriotic and, in my opinion, a singularly wise man, was about to encounter,

Walter Savage Landor.

in accepting the presidency of France. Necessity will compel him to assume the imperial power, to which the voice of the army and of the people will call him. You know, who know not merely my writings but my heart, how little I care for station. I may therefore tell you safely, that I feel a great interest, a great anxiety for the welfare of Louis Napoleon. I told him that if he were ever again in prison, I would visit him there, but never if he were upon a throne would I come near him. He is the only man living who would adorn one. But thrones are my aversion and abhorrence. France, I fear, can exist in no other condition. May God protect the virtuous Louis Napoleon, and prolong in happiness the days of my dear kind friend Lady Blessington.

“WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

“P.S.—I wrote a short letter to the President, and not of congratulation. May he find many friends as disinterested and sincere.”

Even the blunt Duke of Wellington wrote as follows to the Count d'Orsay under date of April 9, 1849: “I rejoice at the prosperity of France and of the success of the president of the Republic. Every thing tends towards the

Empress Eugénie.

permanent tranquillity of Europe,” which is necessary for the happiness of all.

If Hortense from the spirit-land can look down upon her son, her heart must be cheered in view of the honors which his native land, with such unprecedented unanimity, has conferred upon him. And still more must her heart be cheered in view of the many, many years of peace, prosperity, and happiness which France has enjoyed under his reign. Every well-informed man will admit that the kingdom of France has never, since its foundations were laid, enjoyed so many years of tranquillity, and of mental and material advancement at home, and also of respect and influence abroad, as during the reign of the son of Hortense.

The Emperor is eminently happy in his domestic relations. There are none who know the Empress Eugénie who do not revere and love her. She is the worthy successor of Josephine, upon the throne of the reinstated empire. The following beautiful tribute to her virtues comes from the lips of our former distinguished ambassador at the court of France, Hon. John A. Dix. They were uttered in a speech which he addressed to the American residents in Paris, upon the occasion of his

Testimony of General Dix.

surrendering the ambassadorial chair to his successor, Hon. Mr. Washburne. It was in June, 1869.

"Of her who is the sharer of the Emperor's honors and the companion of his toils—who in the hospital, at the altar, or on the throne is alike exemplary in the discharge of her varied duties, whether incident to her position, or voluntarily taken upon herself, it is difficult for me to speak without rising above the level of the common language of eulogism.

"But I am standing here to-day, as a citizen of the United States, without official relations to my own Government, or any other. I have taken my leave of the imperial family, and I know no reason why I may not freely speak what I honestly think; especially as I know I can say nothing which will not find a cordial response in your own breasts.

"As in the history of the ruder sex, great luminaries have from time to time risen high above the horizon, to break, and at the same time to illustrate, the monotony of the general movement,—so in the annals of hers, brilliant lights have at intervals shone forth, and shed their lustre upon the stately march of regal pomp and power.

Testimony of General Dix.

"When I have seen her taking part in the most imposing of all imperial pageants—the opening of the Legislative Chambers—standing amid the assembled magistracy of Paris, surrounded by the representatives of the talent, the genius, and the piety of this great empire; or amidst the resplendent scenes of the palace, moving about with a gracefulness all her own, and with a simplicity of manner which has a double charm when allied to exalted rank and station, I confess that I have more than once whispered to myself, and I believe not always inaudibly, the beautiful verse of the graceful and courtly Claudian, the last of the Roman poets,

“‘Divino semitu, gressu claruit;’

or, rendered in our own plain English, and stripped of its poetic hyperbole, ‘*The very path she treads is radiant with her unrivalled step.*’”

THE END.

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