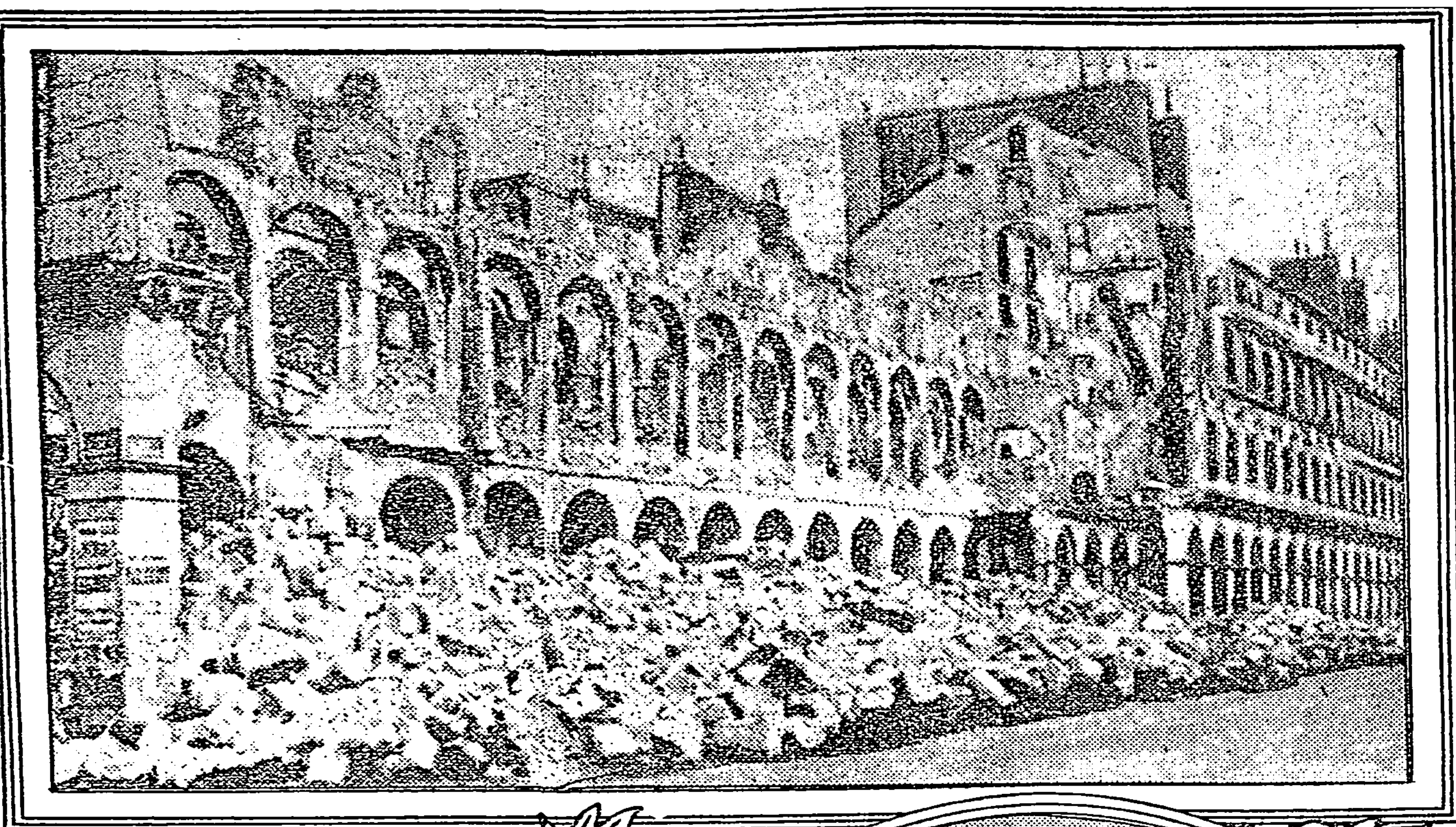


AMERICAN WOMAN'S CONQUEST OF COURT OF NAPOLEON III.



Rue de Rivoli, Where the Hotel Continental Stands.

CABLE dispatches have been frequent in recent years telling how this or that American has been entertained by royalty in Europe. Many of these dispatches have gone further, and have pointed out that some distinguished American man, residing temporarily abroad, has become a favorite at this or that Court. These favorites usually are persons in the diplomatic world, in the field of finance, of art, of music, of letters, or of exploration. All are persons of achievement.

Really it is nothing new or comparatively recent for Americans to shine at European Courts and become favorites and strong personal friends of monarchs. The latest revelation of the extent to which this has gone comes in a book entitled "In the Courts of Memory," (Harper & Brothers), by Mme. Lillie de Heggermann-Lindencrone, wife of the present Danish Minister to Germany. She was an American by birth, Lillie Greenough of Cambridge, Mass., a singer of National reputation, and for nine years, from 1831 to 1870, as the wife of Charles Moulton, son of a well-known American banker in Paris, she was a popular belle and a favorite at the Court of Napoleon III. and his Empress Eugenie. As a child Miss Greenough developed the remarkable voice, which later was to make her well known, and when only 15 years old her mother took her to London to study under Garcia. As Mme. Charles Moulton, only two years later, the charming American became an appreciated guest at the Court of Napoleon III. The Paris papers of the days of the Second Empire are filled with the praises of her personal attractions and delightful singing.

After nine years of gayety in the gayest city in the world came the war of 1870 and the Commune. Upon the fall of the Empire Mrs. Moulton returned to America, where Mr. Moulton died, and a few years afterward she married M. de Heggermann-Lindencrone, at that time Danish Minister to the United States, and later successively his country's representative at Stockholm, Rome, and Paris.

Few persons of her day have known so many of those whom the world has counted great. Among her friends have been not only the ruling monarchs of several countries, and the most distinguished men and women of their Courts, but almost all the really important figures in the world of music of the past half century, among them Wagner, Liszt, Auber, Gounod, and Rossini.

As Mrs. Moulton the gifted young American woman wrote constantly to her mother and an aunt in America, fascinating letters. These were never intended for publication. They related to the smallest details of her interesting career. A large part of them were about the imperial family of France. Now that no harm can come from publishing them Mme. de Heggermann-Lindencrone has consented to their publication.

Skating with Royalty.

Mrs. Moulton, as she was in Paris, became acquainted with both the Emperor and Empress in a most informal way. She tells of it in a letter to her mother written in January, 1863:

The ice on the little lake of Suresnes has frozen d'emble, and I was crazy to go there and skate. I drove out to the Bois with baby and his nomenclature, and to gain time put on my skates in the carriage, and when I arrived I walked down to the lake. I never saw such splendid ice. Imagine my surprise at not seeing a person on the ice; but there were masses of spectators gathered on the edge of the lake looking at it. The Emperor and the Empress were there. I knew them by sight; but the only one I knew personally was Prince Joachim Murat, our neighbor in the country.

Therefore I stood unknown and unnoticed. I ventured one foot on the ice, and the other followed. I felt the crowd gazed at me in amazement. I made the tour of the lake on my skates.

My experience of seven years on Fresh Pond did not fail me, and I skimmed over the flawless ice on the "outre" as they call it, with close fitting wind-suits. I felt like one. When I returned to the starting place I saw that no one had dared to follow my example, and as an act of (I hardly dare to write to) silly bravura I took baby out of the nurse's arms, and with him gurgling and chuckling with delight, his little head on my shoulder, I skated around with him. Only once! Don't scold me!

Prince Murat came up to speak to me. As we saw the Emperor, who was on skates, coming toward us, Prince Murat said, "Here comes the Emperor to speak to you." I felt dreadfully frightened, for I was not sure it being the first time I had ever spoken to a sovereign—what was the proper manner? To address him? I knew must say "Sire" and "votre Majesté," but when and how often I did not know. His Majesty held in his hand a short stick with



Empress Eugenie.

an iron point, such as are used in climbing the Alps, and managed to propel himself forward by little right-legged shunts, his left leg not daring to do anything but slide.

Prince Murat moved aside, and his Majesty looked at me, then at Prince Murat, who, in an introductory manner, said, "This is Mme. Moulton, your Majesty's daughter-in-law of our neighbor, whom you know."

"Ah!" said the Emperor, and, turning to me, he said, "How beautiful you skate! How beautiful it is wonderful to look at you!"

(I frightened out of my wits) murmured that I had skated since I was eight years old. "One can only skate like that when one learns young," the Emperor said. And while I was wondering when I should say "Votre Majesté," he said, "Oserai-je demander à une patineuse si parfaite de patiner avec un humble patineur (Dare I ask such a perfect skater as you to skate with so humble a skater as myself?)"

He was a humble skater indeed! I answered that it would be a great honor to me. He then stretched out his legs, and I took them very much as I would have taken any one else's hands, and we ambled forth, I supporting and upholding the tottering monarch of the French nation. I felt that the eye of the nation was on me, and, indeed, it was, as much of the nation as happened to be there; but, proud as I was, I wished that some one would relieve me of this responsibility. Suppose his Majesty should fall! Dreadful thought! The Emperor skated on silently, intent on balancing himself, and I, who may be sure, was intent on keeping him intent. He stumbled at every stroke; but as I was on his left side—the weak one was not along very nicely.

His hat fell off once, (he skated in a tall hat), and I had to pick it up for him while he clung to my hand and lifted his other hand to put the hat on his head. In our course we came upon the Empress, and she slowed down neatly. She was being supported by two very "trembling" chamberlains, who almost knocked us down in their efforts to keep their balance. When we had come to anchor the Emperor said to the Empress, "This is Mme. Moulton. Does she not skate beautifully?" I ought to have made a courtesy; but how could I—on skates?

The Empress, though, crinolined and high-heeled, had a short skirt. I had a short cloth dress bordered with fur and a little fur toque. The Empress looked very kindly at me and said something to the Emperor which escaped me. When—oh, when—should I say "Your Majesty"? But I forgot everything, gazing at the Empress. She appeared as a vision of beauty, with a bright color in her cheeks, her eyes sparkling with animation. The Emperor said to her, "How strange!" said her Majesty (you ought to skate with Madame), letting go my hands. With the sweetest smile she said to me, "Will you skate with me?" Of course, I was too enchanted. Could I uphold the throne in which her Majesty was strapped? I took her two hands, and we sped on our way as best we could. I had sometimes to dig my skates in the ice to prevent too much speed, and to keep us both on our legs, one pair of which were imperial. In a moment of breath-taking, "that I should have never seen you before, and yet, as the Emperor says, you live in Paris!"

replied: "Your Majesty (at last I said it), I spent last winter in the country taking care of my health, and last Sunday I was at Dinard." "Ah! he comprehends," with a lovely smile, "and now?"

"Now your Majesty (I was getting on nicely), I am going to be presented to society in due form by my mother-in-law."

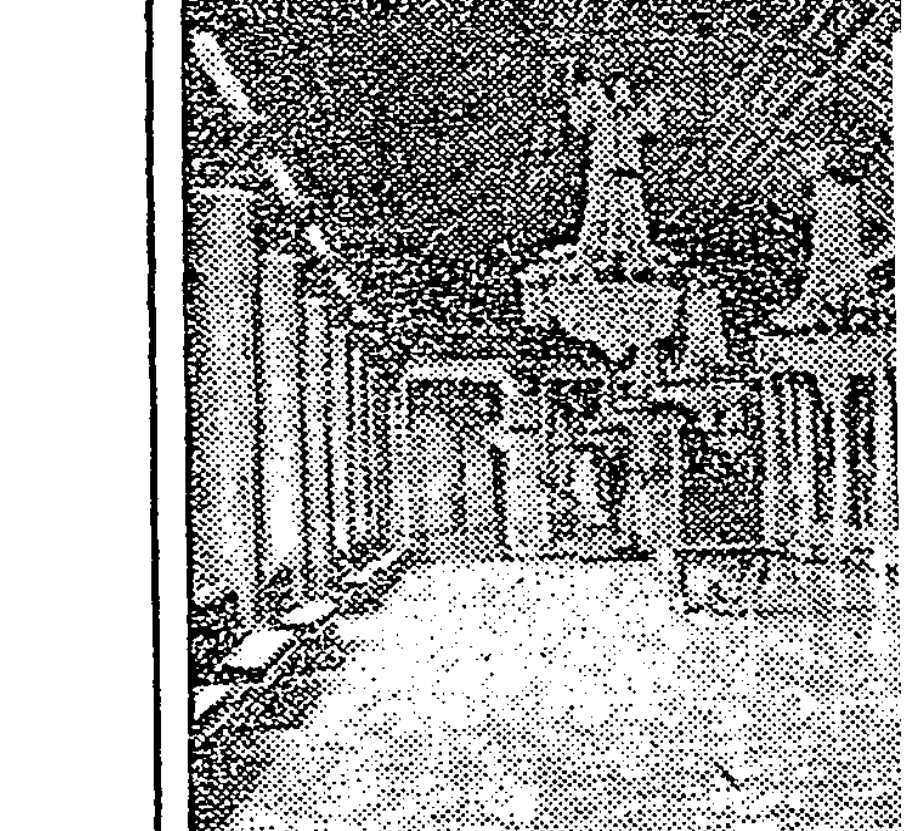
"You will then come to the Tuilleries?"

"Of course, your Majesty (now I had complete Court manners), I shall come there first. My mother-in-law will take the necessary steps."

"But you will not need to go through all those steps," she said, smilingly, "now that we know you," and added, most kindly, "To-morrow you must come and skate with us again."

Here ended the first chapter and my first appearance in Parisian society.

The formal presentation at Court



Chateau de Compiègne.

came in due time, and Mrs. Moulton was duly launched into imperial favor. In May, 1863, the Marquis Drouyn, Minister of Foreign Affairs, gave a costume ball which the Emperor and Empress attended. Mrs. Moulton was a guest. At 2 o'clock in the morning the especially selected were taken into a side salon to sup with their Majesties. Mrs. Moulton writes this account of it:

After supper the Empress came up to me and said, "Where can one buy such lovely curls as you have, chère Madame?" I understood the reason now for the notice I was attracting. They had thought that the curls were false. I answered, hoping it would sound amusing, "Au Magasin du Bon-Dieu."

The Empress smiled and replied: "Nous voudrions toutes acheter des curls, mais, tell me, are your curls real or false? You won't mind telling me, (and she hesitated a little.) Some people have made heads about it. How can we know?" she said, "unless you tell us?" "My hair is all my own, your Majesty, and if you wish to make sure, I am perfectly willing that you should cut it for yourself." And, removing my helmet, I took out the comb and let my hair down. Every one crowded around me, and felt and pulled my hair about until I had to beg for mercy. The Emperor, looking on, cried out, "Bravo, Madame! and, gazing some flowers off the table, handed them to me, saying: "Vos sucres tenait à un cheveu, n'est-ce pas?"

Supposing the curls had been false, how should I have felt!

I put on my head-dress again with the flowing tinsel threads, and, some one sending for a brush, I completed this exhibition by showing them how I curled my hair around my fingers and made this coiffure.

This episode attracted wide attention in the prints of Europe and America at the time.

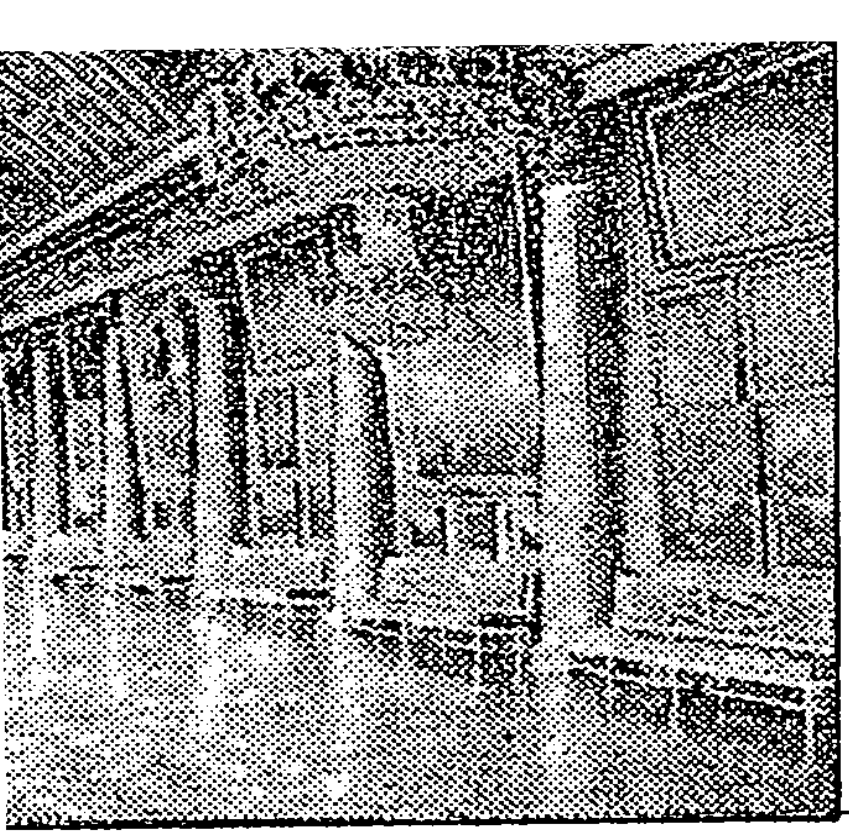
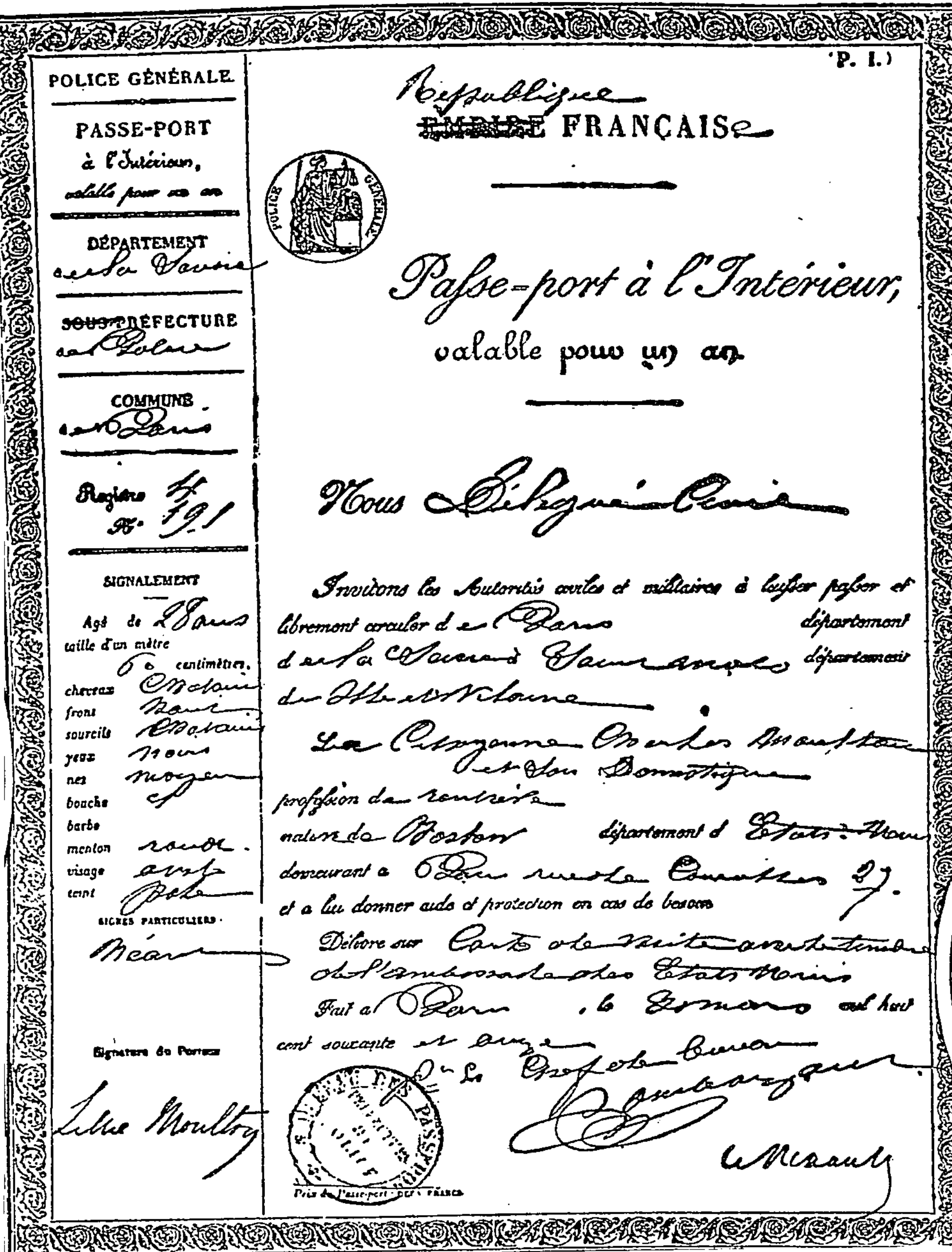
Royal House Party Incidents.

The Moultons were the guests several times of the imperial family for a house party of a week or more at the Chateau de Compiègne. The first time was in November, 1860. Mrs. Moulton writes at great length of her preparations, the journey to the chateau, the formal welcome in the evening by their Majesties to their guests at dinner. She sets forth this account of the dinner:

A rather amusing incident occurred at dinner. One of the Foreign Ministers, who is very vain of the smallness of his feet, had donned a pair of patent-leather shoes evidently much too tight for him. During the dinner he relieved his sufferings by slipping his aching toes out of them. All went well until his chair was suddenly drawn from underneath him, as their Majesties were about to pass. In utter despair he made the most frantic efforts to recover the wandering shoes from under the table; but, alas! he was obliged to trip across the room, and he was obliged to pass through all those steps," she said, smilingly, "now that we know you," and added, most kindly, "To-morrow you must come and skate with us again."

Here ended the first chapter and my first appearance in Parisian society.

Mme. de Heggermann-Lindencrone, Formerly Mrs. Charles Moulton, Writes of the Gayety of the French Court from 1861 to 1870, the Tragic Collapse and the Commune in Her "Courts of Memory."



Chateau de Compiègne.

to prevent her from seeing his little, white, shoeless feet.

American Songs at Court.

One evening at the party Mrs. Moulton sang for the company. She says the Emperor asked her to sing "Massa's in the Cold, Cold Ground," "Suwanee River," or "Nellie Bly," which "he remembered having heard in America." She writes:

I sat down at the piano and commenced with "Suwanee River." I fortunately knew the words of that. (Oh, Delia! what would you have said had you seen your pupil singing this clapping music before your sovereigns and their most distinguished guests?)

The Emperor says that one can force the tears into one's eyes, one can make one's lips tremble, one can express the most harrowing emotions in one's voice, and not sing more plain, with only Brussels lace flourishes; deep pink tulle, with satin ruffles, and a lovely sash of lilac, with green velvet twisted bows; light blue tulle with Valenciennes.

Afternoon Gowns.—Light green tulle, embroidered in silver, and for my locks, what they call une fantasia; white curls, combed with gold, light gray satin, quite plain, with only Brussels lace flourishes; deep pink tulle, with satin ruffles, and a lovely sash of lilac, with green velvet twisted bows; light blue tulle with Valenciennes.

Evening Dresses.—Light green tulle, embroidered in silver, and for my locks, what they call une fantasia; white curls, combed with gold, light gray satin, quite plain, with only Brussels lace flourishes; deep pink tulle, with satin ruffles, and a lovely sash of lilac, with green velvet twisted bows; light blue tulle with Valenciennes.

Virginia Reel a Failure.

This party was a good deal like the first one.

In 1870 came the war with Germany. Mr. and Mrs. Moulton were invited to St. Cloud one evening for dinner just before the storm broke. She came into town hurriedly. She writes:

We got back to town at 5:30, and I soon began dressing for the dinner. We drove out to St. Cloud, and arrived at the door of the chateau just before 6 o'clock. What was our astonishment at not seeing any of the numerous servants who generally were waiting in the vestibule. There was only one man to be seen.

I began taking off my mantle, still wondering, when Monsieur de Laferrère came quickly out from one of the salons, and said excitedly: "Did you not receive my letter countermanding the dinner?"

"Countermanding the dinner! What? Then there is no dinner?"

"No," he rejoined; "it has been countermanded."

As our carriage could not have got very far off, nothing was easier than to call it back and return to Paris. And I put on my wrap to depart, and stood there waiting for the coupé.

Passport Issued to Mme. Moulton During the Commune.

roundings, as dead silence reigned. The dinner was very simple. How different from the gorgeous repasts of Compiègne, and how different every one looked! I was glad when the signal for leaving the table was given and we re-entered the drawing room.

Coarse Leader of the Commune.

Mrs. Moulton passed through the rule of the commune for a time, protected by Elihu Washburn, the United States Minister to France. She secured a passport from Raoul Rigault, the leader, to leave, but did not go for some time. She gives this account of it:

When the guard opened the door he pointed to the table where Raoul Rigault was seated writing, (seemingly very absorbed.) He appeared to me to be a man of about 35 or 40 years old, short, thick set, with a full, round face, a bushy black beard, a sensuous mouth, and a cynical smile. He wore a turban-like headpiece, but these could not hide the wicked expression of his cunning eyes.

I looked about me and noticed that the room had very little furniture; there was only a table at which the Prefect sat and two or three plain chairs. Just such a chamber as Robespierre might have occupied during his République. There were two gendarmes standing behind Rigault's chair waiting for orders, and a man (whom I did not notice at first) in a military uniform, who was looking at the other end of the room.

I approached the table, waiting like a culprit for the all-powerful Rigault to look up and notice me.

But he did not; he continued to be occupied with what he was doing. So I ventured to break the ice by saying, "Monsieur, I have come to see you, and here is Mr. Washburn's card (the American Minister) to tell you who I am."

He took the card without condescending to look at it, and went on writing.

Getting impatient at his impertinence, I ventured again to attract his attention, and I said as politely as possible (and as Mademoiselle could have wished), "Will you not kindly give me this passport, as I must leave Paris as soon as possible."

Thereupon he took up the card, and affecting the Marat style, said: "Does the citoyenne wish to leave Paris? Pourquoi?"

I answered that I was obliged to leave Paris for different reasons.

He replied, with what he thought a seductive smile, and I thought I could have wished, "Will you not kindly give me this passport, as I must leave Paris as soon as possible."

How could I make him understand that I came for a passport and not for conversation?

"Monsieur," I began once more, "I am rather in haste, and therefore I thank you if you would give me my passport."

Upon which he took Mr. Washburn's so-much-loved-at-card, scrutinized it, and then scrutinized me. "Are you La Citoyenne Moulton?" I answered, "Yes."

"American?"

I replied I was, and in petto—might I was to be so.

"Why do you wish to deprive us of your presence in Paris?"

I repeated that my affairs required my presence elsewhere.

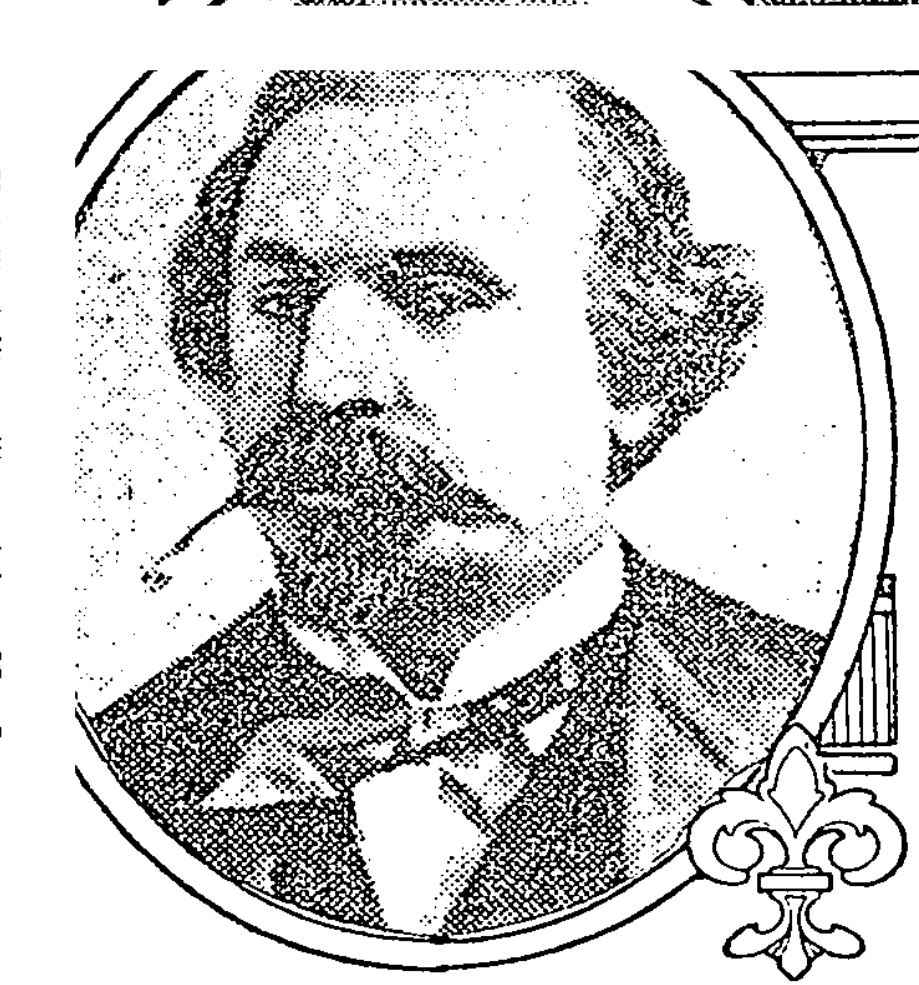
I saw he was taking no steps toward making out my passport, and I became more and more impatient. He said, "If it is impossible for you, Monsieur, to give me the passport, I will inform Mr. Washburn of the fact, and he will no doubt come to your rate."

Now followed the most hateful and trying quart d'heure I ever passed in my life. I felt agitated and uneasy, and I felt in the society of a lady (perhaps he had never seen one), and his innate coarseness seemed to make him gloat over the present situation, and as a true republican, whose motto is Egalité, Fraternité, Liberté, he flattered himself he was on an equality with me, therefore he could take any amount of liberty. He took advantage of the unavoidable questions that belong to the making out of a passport, and showed a pathological pleasure in tormenting la citoyenne who stood helplessly before him.

When it came to the description



Mme. Charles Moulton.



Napoleon III.

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When it came to the description

and the enumerating of my features, he was more obnoxious than I can express. He sat across the table to see whether my eyes were brown or black, or my hair black or brown, he never lost an opportunity to make a fawning remark before writing it down. He described my teint as pale, I felt pale, and think I must have looked very pale, for he said: "Vous êtes bien pâle, Madame. Voulez-vous quelque chose à boire?" Possibly he may have meant to be kind; but I saw Rigault written all over him. I refused his offer with effusion.

Turning to the man at the mantelpiece, he said, "Groussset, do you think we ought to allow the citoyenne to leave Paris?"

Groussset (the man addressed) stepped forward and looked at Mr. Washburn's card, saying something in an undertone to Rigault, which caused him instantly to change his manner toward me. (I don't know which was worse, his overbearing or his fawning manner.)

"You must forgive me," he said, "it I linger over your visit here, we don't often have such luck, do we, Groussset?"

I thought I should faint! Probably the man Groussset noticed my emotion, for he came to my rescue and said, politely, "Mme. Moulton, j'ai eu l'honneur de vous voir à un bal à l'Hôtel de Ville l'année dernière."

I looked up with surprise. He was a very handsome fellow, and I remembered quite well having seen him somewhere, but did not remember where. I was happy indeed to find any one who knew me and could vouch for me, and told him, smiling, "I venture to present myself to you, Madame. I am Pascal Groussset. Can I be of any service to you?"

Indeed you can," I answered eagerly. "Please tell Monsieur Rigault to give me my passport; it seems to have been a colossal undertaking to get it. I preferred the Pascal G. to the Rascal R."

Groussset and Rigault had a little conversation together, and presto! my longed-for passport lay before me to sign.

I signed my name quickly enough; Rigault put the official seal on it, rising from his chair, politely handed it to me.

Writing in later years from Cuba, Mrs. Moulton says this of Napoleon's death:

You can't tell how grieved I was to hear of the death of Emperor Napoleon's death. He was only sixty-five years old. I thought he was older. What an eventful life he had!—and then Emperor, he was a word. What did he not endure? When he was a child he was an exile, and since then, until he became first Emperor and then Emperor, he was knocking about the world, sometimes hidden and sometimes pursued. However, he had fifteen years of glory, for there was not a day in his life when he was not considered that he was, and he had until the last four years of his reign more prestige than any other sovereign. I think that the tragedy of Mexico his star began to pale.

The Emperor Napoleon was certainly the kindest-hearted and best-intentioned man in the world, so full of life, fun, and appreciation. I can see him now shaking with laughter when anything amused him, as was often the case at Compiègne.

All through Mme. de Heggermann-Lindencrone's book there are descriptions and anecdotes of Kings, Queens, Princes, diplomats, singers, composers, and artists. The great of the earth in the 1860-1870 cycle; she seemed to know them all intimately.

Here is a picture Mrs. Moulton gave in 1860 of Richard Wagner:

The Princess Metternich receives after midnight every evening. If one is in the theatre or at a soirée it is all right, but to sit up till 12 o'clock to go to her is very tiresome, though when you are once there you do not regret having gone. It is something to see her smoking her enormous cigars. The other night Richard Wagner, who had been to the theatre with the Metternichs, was there. I was glad to see him, though he is so dreadfully severe and unmerciful. He found fault with everything; he thought the theatres in Paris horribly dirty, mal soignés, bad style, had actors, orchestra, and singers worse, public ignorant, &c. He smiled once with such a conscious look and scanned people's faces, as if to say: "I, Richard Wagner, have smiled!" But he can very well put on airs, for he is a genius.

There are delightful stories of Liszt, Auber, Massenet, Jenny Lind, Delacroix, and the book is crowded with entertaining incidents, written most charmingly. Many lands are visited in these memoirs, with always something great, and entertaining of the good and great. The author has limited her published letters to the time that she was Mrs. Moulton. Over incidents since she became a Danish Minister's wife she draws the veil.