

THE FORTUNES OF FIFI

gloating over the prospect of her failure. Fifi caught Julie's eye—and she would much rather have been flayed alive than oblige Julie by making a *fiaseo*; so, instantly, Fifi recovered her composure and declared she never felt more at ease in her life, at which Julie Championet's spirits sensibly fell.

Meanwhile, everybody, from Moret, the leading man, down to the old woman who acted as candle-lighter, treated Cartouche as if he had been a hero. Moret, who had given himself great airs with Cartouche, embraced him and told him he would never be forgotten by the members of the company, for whom he had procured such an honor. Julie Championet would likewise have embraced him, if he had encouraged her, and did, in fact, come dangerously near kissing him on the sly, but Cartouche managed to escape at the critical moment. Duvernet oscillated between the stage and the theater, and made so much confusion that Cartouche requested him to keep away from the stage until his cue came.

In truth, but for Cartouche's self-possession, the Emperor's presence would have simply caused a terrible catastrophe at the Imperial Theater, and the