

THE FORTUNES OF FIFI

Duroc"—for Cartouche knew both of these well by sight—"why, I, Cartouche, as stage manager, can pass you in."

The Emperor threw back his head and laughed, and motioned to Berthier and Duroc standing behind him to come nearer to him.

"Listen," he said to them—and told them of Cartouche's invitation, and accepted it with great delight.

Marshal Berthier's homely face lighted up with a smile at the notion of attending a performance at the Imperial Theater in the street of the Black Cat. General Duroc, silent and stolid, followed the Emperor without a word, exactly as he would have marched into the bottomless pit at the Emperor's command.

"But not a word to the manager until we leave the house," said the Emperor.

Cartouche, walking with the Emperor, led the party a short distance up the street to where the gaudy red lamps showed the entrance to the Imperial Theater. Duvernet, the manager, in his shirt-sleeves, was engaged in lighting these lamps. He called out to the approaching Cartouche.