

A SCENE AT CHISELHURST.

On Monday, March 16, the nineteenth birthday of Prince Louis Napoleon was celebrated at Chiselhurst by a large concourse of French men and women.

Eighteen years ago Paris learned from the booming of the guns at the Invalides that an Imperial Prince had been born to France. Great was the excitement at the Tuileries, whither, in expectation of the event, had repaired the officers of the Household, the members of the Senate and Legislative Corps, and the great officers of the State.

The head nurse presented the infant Prince to the great Ministers of State assembled, and the Keeper of the Seals at once drew up an official document, to which were attached the signatures of functionaries of every grade. At twelve at noon—for the child had been born between three and four o'clock in the morning—the Prince Napoleon Eugène Louis Jean Joseph, heir to the throne of France and King of Algeria, received the solemn rites of preliminary baptism at the hands of the Emperor's First Almoner, who was supported by Cardinal Dupont, Archbishop of Bourges; Cardinal Gousset, of Rheims; Cardinal Doussat, of Bordeaux; Cardinal Morlot, of Tours, and the Bishop of Nancy. For godfather the Prince had none other than the Pope of Rome; for godmother the Queen of Sweden.

But to-day in the Catholic chapel at Chiselhurst where lately lay the coffin of Napoleon III. acolytes and vergers attired in white are stationed. The altar is resplendent in colours, tastefully blended; and a wondrously broadened altar cloth of gold, which, with its raised gold cross, glitters in the sunshine, combines with lighter tapers, choice flowers, the dark blue wings ornamented with golden fleur-de-lys, and the stained glass window above, to form a really brilliant *tout ensemble*. Even the little Gothic chapel which contains the sarcophagus of the Emperor is radiant and beautiful.

IN THE CHURCH.

At last eleven o'clock strikes, and the church is crowded to excess. Suddenly a loud shout is heard outside from the hundreds and thousands assembled around the churchyard. "Vive l'Empereur!" is ejaculated over and over again. Slowly they entered through the sacristy door, the Empress, habited in deep mourning, leaning on the arm of her son, and followed by Prince Lucien Bonaparte, Prince Lucier Murat, Prince Louis Murat, Prince Charles, and M. Jerome Bonaparte, M. Rouher, the Duc de Grammont, the Duc de Bassano, the Duc de Padone, M. Pietri, M. Fidon, Baron Corvisart, and Comte Clary. One lady alone attends the Empress, the stately Comtesse de la Poëze, who is well known as the kindest and most admired of all the noble ladies who met at St. Cloud or the Tuileries.

Now comes forward Father Goddard, the priest of St. Mary's habited in a magnificent gold chasuble, the gift of the Empress, attended by his acolytes, and accompanied by aged Abbé Freschin, and the strains of the Kyrie Eleison, to the music of Berghize, announce that the service, a "messe cantata," had begun. "The Creed, however, is omitted, and thus the time approaches at which Father Goddard, now clad in surplice and biretta, will deliver the promised oration. According to the pulpit, the reverend gentleman first of all states that the Prince Imperial and Empress will not carry out that part of the published programme in so far as sprinkling the tomb of Napoleon III. with holy water is concerned, but will leave by the

sacristy—begging the congregation, however, to perform the kindly act for the souls of the departed, and exhorting them there to with some little emphasis. Then, with an invocation, Father Goddard commences his address. It is in French, pronounced with a pure accent, and with admirable elocutionary power.

A DEMONSTRATION.

After this there is a general movement toward Camden Place, for there the demonstration which some seven thousand French men have assembled to assist at will take place.

One by one the members of the household arrive, and take up their appointed places upon or in the vicinity of the dais. There is Madame and Mlle. Rouher conversing with the Comtesse Fleury and the Maréchale Canrobert; here the Marquis de Bassano, Mlle. Pajot, and the Duc de Bassano are grouped; close by is the Comte Arjuzin, while in the front stands prominently forth M. Paul Cassagnac, of duelling and journalistic notoriety, apparently no worse for the scratch he received in Belgium. Round to the right are the Duchesse de Malakoff, the Marquise de Lavalotte, and the Comtesse de Casabianca, together with a posse of gentlemen, among whom are notable the Duc de Montmorency, the Prince de Wagram, M. Grandperret, M. Pierard, the Duc de Cambacerès, Comte Nieuwerkerque, the Comte Aguado, the Marquis de Leguna and the Comte de la Chapelle.

At this moment the sound of a band is heard, and there is a loud cheering without. An opening is made in the canvas, and amid deafening shouts, the Prince, leading the Empress, appears upon the platform, followed by the Princes of his family, who sat near him at the altar, together with M. Rouher, the Duc de Gramont, the Duc de Padone, and many others. One thing is noticeable—they all wear the broad ribbon of the Legion of Honor, so no of the party, the Prince included, having the star also affixed to the breast. Leaving the Prince Lucien to support the Empress, the Imperial youth now advances a step or two in front of those who accompany him, bowing repeatedly to the choirs, which continue so long that it is doubtful at times whether the delivery of any address will be possible.

The Duc de Padone, after the cheering has subsided, reads an address which he takes from his pocket.

THE PRINCE SPEECHES.

"MONSIEUR LE DUC, MESSIEURS: In meeting here to-day you have been actuated by a sentiment of fidelity toward the memory of the Emperor, and it is for that I wish first to thank you. The public conscience has avenged the calumnies of his great career, and sees the Emperor now in his true light. You who come from various parts of the country, you can bear this testimony. His reign was only a constant solicitude for the well-being of all; his last day on the soil of France was a day of heroism and abnegation of self. Your presence around me, the addresses which reach me in such great numbers, prove the inquietude of France as to her future destinies. Order is protected by the sword of the Duc de Magenta, the former companion of the glories and of the misfortunes of my father. His loyalty is a certain guarantee that he will not leave the trust he has received exposed to party attacks. But material order is not security. The future remains unknown; interests are alarmed at it, and passions may abuse the opportunity. From this is born the sentiment of which you bring me the echo, that

which draws opinion with an irresistible power toward a direct appeal to the nation to plant the foundations of a definitive Government.

"The plebiscite is the true salvation, and it is just—power rendered to authority and the era of long security reopened to the country—it is a grand national resource, without conquerors or conquered, raising itself above all, and bringing reconciliation. Will France freely consulted, turn her eyes to the son of Napoleon III? This thought awakens within me less of pride than of diffidence as to my power. The Emperor has taught me how heavily weighs the sovereign authority, even on stalwart shoulders, and how much self-reliance and the sentiment of duty are necessary to fulfil so high a mission. This faith makes up to me what is wanting in my youth. United to my brother by the most tender and most grateful ties of affection, I will work without ceasing to anticipate the progress of years. When the hour shall arrive, if another Government shall gain the suffrages of the majority, I will bow down with respect before the decision of the country. If the name of the Napoleons should for the eighth time emerge from the popular urns I am ready to accept the responsibility which will be imposed upon me by the vote of the nation. These are my thoughts; I thank you for having traversed a long distance and come to receive my expression of them. Carry my memory to those who are absent, and to France the prayers of one of her children; my courage and my life belong to her. May God watch over her prosperity and her greatness."

Pausing at the end of each period, he adroitly allows time for applause without breaking the continuity of his address. When he speaks of his youth and of his affection for his mother, the enthusiasm of the company rises to a tremendous pitch, the occupants of the dais and those who filled the marquee below cheering.

THE BANQUET.

After the Prince has withdrawn the throng turns to the great tents, where, at long tables covered with viands, refreshment of almost every kind is offered, and engages in the work of eating with an ardor only equalled by its determination to cheer on every available occasion. In this way the banqueting proceeds, one posse of visitors succeeding another, till in the course of two hours or so the viands which remain are deserted.

All this while there is a more select company taking lunch in the dining room of the house; while in the great drawing room, the Prince and the Empress, supported by their relatives and the leaders of the Imperialists, are engaged in receiving deputations. The scene here is a curious one. The hall in which receptions have hitherto been held is full of visitors, all having more or less claim to a personal introduction to the Prince, and determined to have that claim allowed. Occupying every available seat, they form picturesque groups. Now and then the Empress, leaving the side of her son, steps out of the drawing room into the hall, and coming up, addresses herself to one or other of the groups. Instantly the men rise and bow profoundly, while the ladies, falling on their knees, lovingly, and sometimes hysterically, kiss her proffered hand.

THE FOLLOWERS.

Of sixty-five perfects who served under the Emperor, fifty six are present to-day, the rest being dead; of the sous-perfects, thirty-