

Parliamentary Opposition were seized, at their own houses, and thrust into prison. Yet such was the hallucination of the people that within three weeks he was elected President for ten years, by a vote of over seven millions, against less than one million. Within ten months he was elected Emperor by a still greater majority. Soon, after the manner of usurpers, he plunged the nation into foreign wars: first the disastrous Crimean campaign, then an expedition against Cochin-China, then war against Austria for the "Unification of Italy." Having broken the power of Austria, at Magenta and Solferino, and secured Nice and Savoy for France, his zeal for Italian unity cooled. He was now at the height of his power. He reconstructed Paris and made it the pleasure city of Europe—of the world. At the great Exhibition of 1867, foreign potentates thronged the gay capital, and the star of Napoleon was at its zenith. Through the energy and genius of De Lesseps, the Suez Canal was completed, and the *fêtes* of Ismailia were celebrated, and French influence was paramount in Egypt.

Now his star of destiny began to decline. One great mistake of policy was the attempt to establish a European dynasty in Mexico—"to restore," to use his own words, "the influence of the Latin race in America." The unfortunate Maximilian, deserted by the power that had placed him on the throne, soon fell a victim to his misplaced ambition, and the ex-Empress Carlotta languishes in a retreat for the insane.

Other causes contributed to the eclipse of the Napoleonic star. The beautiful Empress Eugenie—the most beautiful woman, it was claimed, in Europe—the moulder of fashion, the "cynosure of every eye," was a bigoted Catholic—a true daughter of Spain and a thorough ultramontane. With no abilities above the choice of a bonnet, she attempted to play the part of an arbitress of the destinies of Europe. She urged on the Emperor in his support of the Pope, and in his antipathy to the Protestant states of Germany, whose unification was foreshadowed by the formation of the North-German Union, in 1867. By this movement twenty-two German States were merged into a nation having a common system of administration. Bismarck became the most powerful minister, and King William the most popular ruler in Christendom. French jealousy of the growing influence of Prussia was kindled to a fever heat. When a desire for a quarrel exists an occasion is not hard to find. A very trivial one in this case sufficed. The alleged Hohenzollern candidacy