

women, with pistols in their belts and rifles with fixed bayonets on their shoulders, the steel reflecting the terrific downpour of light with a steady and menacing glitter. These women wore gray uniforms and there were shining Prussian helmets on their heads.

In every window was a double row of women, armed; and the housetops were crowded with them. There were also machine guns on the roofs, pointing downward or toward the roof of the palace.

Mariette laughed. "Theatric enough to please even his majesty. Our last tribute. Let us hope he will enjoy it."

A moment later the expected happened. A window of the palace overlooking the great Schlossplatz opened and the Emperor stepped out into the narrow balcony. His uniform was caked with dust and mud and his face was drawn with a mortal fatigue; but as he stood there scowling haughtily down upon that upturned sea of woman's faces, the most singular vision that ever had greeted imperial eyes, he was an imposing