

THE FORTUNES OF FIFI

them, inscribed among some decaying plaster ornaments, ran the legend:

THE IMPERIAL THEATER.
DUVERNET, MANAGER.

Imperial was a great word in Paris in the month of November, 1804.

Across the way from the theater, at the corner where the tide of travel turns into the little street, stood Cartouche, general utility man in the largest sense of the Imperial Theater, and Mademoiselle Fifi, just promoted to be leading lady. The three glaring, swinging lamps enabled Cartouche to see Fifi's laughing face and soft shining eyes as he harangued her.

"Now, Fifi," Cartouche was saying sternly, "don't get it into your head, because you have become Duvernet's leading lady, with a salary of twenty-five francs the week, that you are Mademoiselle Mars at the House of Molière, with the Emperor waiting to see you as soon as the curtain goes down."

"No, I won't," promptly replied Fifi.