

admiringly picture that supposed bottle

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- *From:* order@xxxxxxxxxx (Professor Cyrus O. Woo)
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loved her as a father would have loved his child. I, who for years was a witness of her actions in the most private relations of life, I declare that I have never seen or heard the slightest circumstance that would tend to convict her of a criminal intimacy. One must consider this calumny as belonging to the category of those which malice so willingly circulates about those persons whose career has been brilliant, and which credulity and envy so willingly believe. I declare candidly that, if I entertained the slightest doubt with regard to this horrible calumny, I would say so. But Bonaparte is no more! Impartial history must not and shall not give countenance to this reproach; she should not make of a father and friend a libertine! Malicious and hostile authors have asserted, without, however, adducing any proof, that a criminal intimacy existed between Bonaparte and Hortense. A falsehood, an unworthy falsehood! And this report has been generally current, not only in France, but throughout all Europe. Alas! can it, then, be true that calumny exercises so mighty a charm that, when it has once taken possession of a man, he can never be freed from it again?"

CHAPTER V.

KING OR EMPEROR.

Josephine's entreaties had been fruitless, or Bonaparte had, at least, only yielded to them in their literal sense. She had said: "I entreat you, do not make yourself a king!" Bonaparte did not make himself king, he made himself emperor. He did not take up the crown that had fallen from the head of the Bourbons; he created a new one for himself—a crown which the French people and Senate had, however, offered him. The revolution still stood a threatening spectre behind the French people; its return was feared, and, since the discovery of the conspiracy of Georges, Moreau, and Pichegru, the people anxiously asked themselves what was to become of France if the conspirators should succeed in murdering Bonaparte; and when the republic should agai