

**A DAUGHTER OF NAPOLEON:
MEMOIRS OF EMILIE DE
PELLAPRA, COMTESSE DE
BRIGODE PRINCESS DE CHIMAY**

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A Daughter of Napoleon: Memoirs of Emilie de Pellapra, Comtesse de Brigode Princess de Chimay by Emilie de Pellapra & Princess Bibescu

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EMILIE DE PELLAPRA & PRINCESS BIBESCU

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A DAUGHTER OF NAPOLEON



PRINCESS DE CHIMAY, DAUGHTER OF MADAME DE PELLAPRA
By Winterhalter

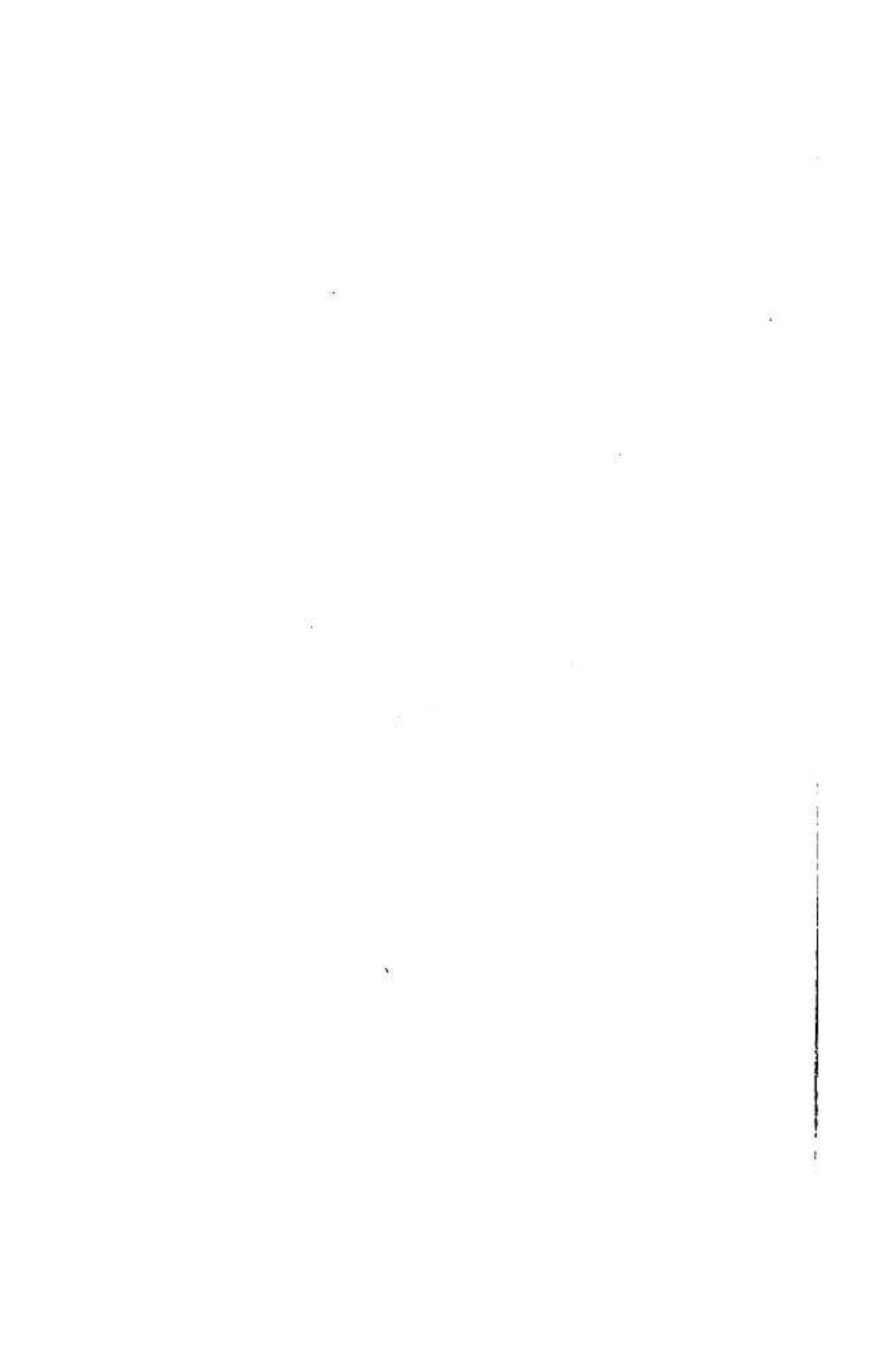
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PREFACE

PRINCESS BIBESCO, née Lahovary, has asked me to lay these brief memoirs before the public as the recollections of her husband's grandmother.

Her choice falls on me because in one of my books, "Napoleon and Women," there is an allusion to the heroine, or rather to her mother. I mentioned Mme. Pellapra, whose daughter, the subject of these memoirs, was first Comtesse de Brigode, and afterward Princess de Chimay; and without stating directly that Mme. Pellapra became a mother, I did observe that she had attracted the attention of Napoleon. If the information that I was able to gather were not so slight, I should now give some details as to this intimacy, for my intention is to speak only of events in which the Emperor took part. Near as we are now to the centenary of his death, the thought of him evokes a religious respect. Some one has recently dared to say that this last war has dimmed the brightness of his glory, but in spite of detractors, he remains the instructor of those whose achievements have value, whether as soldiers, jurists, administrators, or leaders of men. These all admit and proclaim, indeed, that without him and the impression received from his example, they would have been submerged in a colorless mass, and disappeared without honor or renown. During the century

just ended he has been the inspirer, and men have thought, struggled, and acted with mind and eyes fixed on him. Life goes on, but he stands like an old bridge under which flows the stream; for how many ages to come will men vanish beneath his arches? Can the face of such a man, so in harmony as it was with his mind, so expressive of human genius, be gone forever? Does nothing remain but the plaster mask which, even after decomposition set in, retained and multiplied the impression indefinitely? Napoleon did not pass away without leaving children who are known, whom he acknowledged, like Leon and Walewski—and there are others who are suspected and noticed, whose faces betray them, for besides the marble skin gilded with the sun of Attica, their features bear a majesty not to be mistaken. Sometimes this imperial greatness has a touch of grace, and, without falling into a sort of prettiness foreign to its character, broadens into full beauty, radiant and almost divine. With the passage of years this beauty may grow heavy, take on flesh, lose the harmonious slenderness which gave such incomparable elegance to his body, but besides the face which always remains, the shape lasts, and the extremities excel all statues by their perfection. The women who knew and conceived by such a lover, all had beauty, charm, or exquisite qualities in a superior degree, with the exception of one, for whose presence in this company it is difficult to account, and excepting also the wife whose defects were marks of race, rendering her therefore desirable only to the great ambition which embraced in her