

APPENDIX TO ANNUAL REPORT.

MEMOIRS.

CHARLES LOUIS NAPOLEON BONAPARTE, ex-Emperor of the French, was born in Paris on the 20th of April, 1808, and, after a career almost unexampled in its alternations between imperial splendour and nameless obscurity, died at Chislehurst on the 9th of January, 1873.

Of the eventful life which culminated in his grasping the sceptre of France, it is not necessary here to speak. It will suffice, in a few words, to state the grounds of his connection with this Institution. The late Emperor was, for some years—viz., from 1838 to 1840, and from 1846 to 1848—domiciled in London, and, as is well known, served as a special constable in King Street, St. James's, during the Chartist riots. During this time he frequently attended the meetings of the Institution, and on one occasion took part in the discussion arising out of Mr. Glynn's Paper "On the proposed Canal between the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans,"¹ his speech exhibiting considerable practical knowledge of the conditions necessary for the success of such an undertaking. But his chief claim for recognition among engineers was his knowledge of the science of artillery, the manufacture of which, on other principles than those of the rule of thumb, was at that time beginning to attract the attention of the profession. The associations thus engendered were not forgotten on the part of the Emperor; and after the lapse of more than twenty years, he was recommended for admission into the Institution "because of his scientific acquirements, his professional knowledge as an artillerist, and his enlightened support of public works in all parts of the world," and on the 23rd of March, 1869, was elected by acclamation an Honorary Member. It is usual in such cases for a deputation of the Council to wait upon the newly-admitted member to obtain his signature to the Register of the Corporation. In accordance with this custom, Mr. Gregory, the Pre-

¹ *Vide* Minutes of Proceedings, Inst. C.E., vol vi. p. 427.

sident, accompanied by Messrs. Bidder, McClean, Cubitt, Hemans, and Manby, proceeded to Paris to present the diploma of election. The Emperor received the deputation most graciously, and requested that his sincere thanks might be conveyed to the members of the Institution for the honour conferred, and expressed his gratification at being elected a member of such a body. The cordiality which marked the official reception, and the special and even friendly hospitality which followed it, showed that the compliment was warmly appreciated. But the connection so begun was not destined to last long, and the stirring events that speedily followed prevented the Emperor from taking any further part in the proceedings of the Society. At Chislehurst, towards the close of his life, he avoided intercourse with the outer world, and lived so much in seclusion that his doings had ceased to excite public attention, and it was only his death that for a time re-awakened the interest felt in his wonderful career. The news was officially communicated by the President to the members of the Institution at one of the weekly meetings, when it was resolved that an address of condolence should be sent to the Empress. This having been suitably engrossed, and the common seal of the corporation attached, was most graciously received, the Empress instructing her Secretary to say that she was deeply touched by the sympathy of the members.

The Emperor Napoleon was born seemingly to greatness, and seemingly it threatened to elude him. "He struggled after it in the face of adverse circumstances from the time he attained to years of discretion. He partly achieved it, partly had it thrust upon him, and, after a success which should have satisfied his wildest dreams, he ended his active life in exile, as he had begun it." The one great characteristic that influenced his whole life was his intense veneration for the founder of his dynasty. He had an almost superstitious faith in the name of Napoleon. But, unlike his uncle, he was not cast in the mould of heroic conquerors. He was cold, calculating, cautious even to the extreme of moral timidity, and it is possible that this excessive caution, though it served him well while biding his time for the assumption of imperial power, may have contributed in no small degree to his downfall. From beginning to end his action in the fatal struggle with Germany was marred by a want of confidence that too plainly showed itself in his communications with his government. The famous "all may be re-established," that followed the defeats of Wörth and Forbach, showed how conscious he was of moving in

the shadow of the approaching ruin. As might be imagined from the vicissitudes of his career, few men showed stranger or subtler contrasts in their nature. "He owed his rise to the unflinching resolution with which he pursued a fixed idea; yet he hesitated over each step he took." He possessed undoubted abilities and some extraordinary gifts, but he certainly owed much to fortune; and so great was his confidence in her favours that he drew recklessly on his prestige, instead of husbanding it against evil days. "Had he been born in a station beneath the influence of those ambitions that tempt men to become criminal, he would have lived distinguished and died esteemed."¹

MR. WILLIAM JOHN FORREST, the third son of Mr. John Forrest, of Annan, Dumfriesshire, was born on the 18th of July, 1828. He received his early education at Annan Academy, and attained considerable proficiency in classics and mathematics. He subsequently spent some time in perfecting himself in mathematics under private tuition, and early in the year 1846 was articled for five years to Messrs. McCallum and Dundas, Civil Engineers, of Edinburgh. Whilst with them he was employed on the surveys of the Ayrshire and Galloway railway, and on the construction of the Edinburgh branch of the Caledonian railway.

In January 1852 he was appointed one of the assistant engineers of the Great Western railway of Canada, then in course of construction under Mr. R. G. Benedict, of U.S., as Chief Engineer. In 1853 he became chief assistant to the late Mr. James C. Street, M. Inst. C.E., who superintended the construction of the Hamilton and Toronto railway as Engineer for the English contractor, Mr. George Wythes, Assoc. Inst. C.E.; the company's chief engineer being Mr. George Lowe Reid, M. Inst. C.E. On the completion, in 1856, of this line (for which Mr. Forrest had prepared all the working drawings), he was employed for upwards of two years as chief assistant on the surveys and plans of the projected Niagara and Detroit Rivers railway, of which Mr. Street was the chief engineer. Towards the end of 1859 he returned to England, and subsequently, in 1863, joined the firm of Messrs. Street and Marmont, MM. Inst. C.E., and remained with them as chief assistant until the death of Mr. Street, in April 1867. He then continued in practice on his own account till the summer of 1869, when he returned to Canada

¹ "The Times," Jan. 10, 1873.