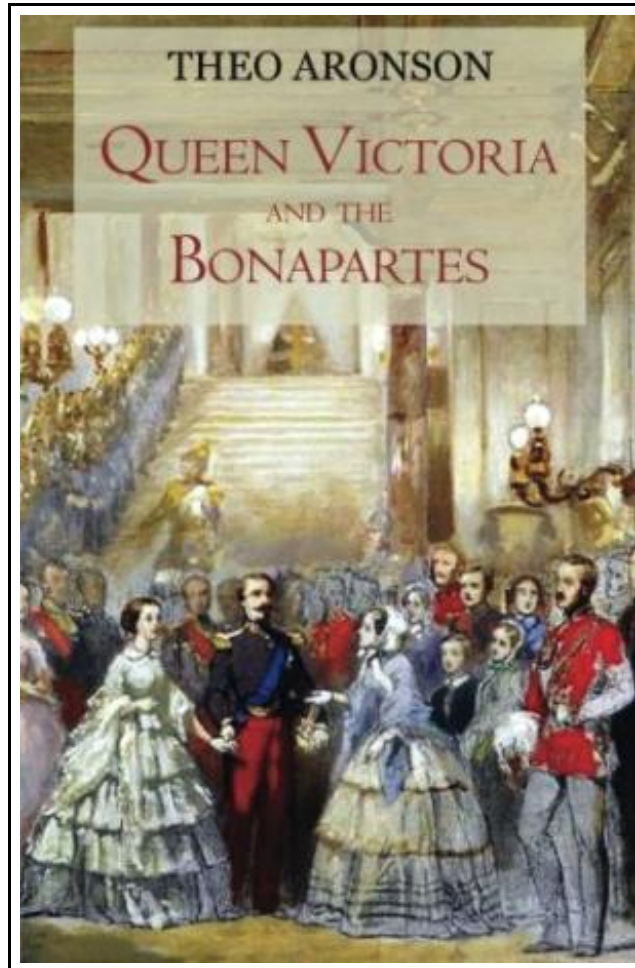


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Thistle Publishing, United States, 2015. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 198 x 129 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book \*\*\*\*\* Print on Demand \*\*\*\*\*. What do you say to the wonderful proceedings in Paris, which really seem like a story in a book or a play? wrote Queen Victoria to her uncle, King Leopold of the Belgians, in December 1851. Prince Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, nephew of the great Napoleon Bonaparte, had made himself dictator of France, stealing the limelight of the European stage to open the first act of a play that would last for more than thirty years-and in which Queen Victoria was herself to play a major role. Into the Queen's staid, predictable and circumscribed life, the Second Empire Bonapartes brought a breath of another world. Adventurers, parvenus, exotics, they radiated an aura of romanticism to which Victoria's ardent nature was quick to respond. Napoleon III, as he now styled himself, soon conquered where his uncle had failed: England, in the person of her Queen, was completely bowled over by his quiet charm and buccaneer looks. And his wife, the flamboyant Empress Eugenie, was able no less easily to overcome her less than immaculate origins and find a place in Victoria's heart. But in the second act came disenchantment: Napoleon's Italian war disgusted his former ally, and its end brought little improvement in the relations between the two countries. The Queen and her ministers suspected that Napoleon's former intention of avenging Waterloo had only lain dormant, and not died away. The Franco-Prussian war, however, brought a dramatic turn of fortune's wheel: in six short weeks the Empire had fallen and Napoleon had surrendered at the battle of Sedan. The Empress Eugenie fled to England, where her friendship with Victoria was renewed and...

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