

JEANNE LOUISE CAMPAN

MEMOIRS OF THE COURT
OF MARIE ANTOINETTE,
QUEEN OF FRANCE,
COMPLETE

Jeanne Louise Henriette Campan

**Memoirs of the Court of
Marie Antoinette, Queen
of France, Complete**

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Mme. Campan
Memoirs of the Court of Marie Antoinette,
Queen of France, Complete / Being the
Historic Memoirs of Madam Campan,
First Lady in Waiting to the Queen

PREFACE BY THE AUTHOR

Louis XVI. possessed an immense crowd of confidants, advisers, and guides; he selected them even from among the factions which attacked him. Never, perhaps, did he make a full disclosure to any one of them, and certainly he spoke with sincerity, to but very few. He invariably kept the reins of all secret intrigues in his own hand; and thence, doubtless, arose the want of cooperation and the weakness which were so conspicuous in his measures. From these causes considerable chasms will be found in the detailed history of the Revolution.

In order to become thoroughly acquainted with the latter years of the reign of Louis XV., memoirs written by the Duc de Choiseul, the Duc d'Aiguillon, the Marechal de Richelieu, and the Duc de La Vauguyon, should be before us.

[I heard Le Marechal de Richelieu desire M. Campan, who was librarian to the Queen, not to buy the Memoirs which would certainly be attributed to him after his death, declaring them false by anticipation; and adding that he was ignorant of orthography, and had never amused himself with writing. Shortly after the death of the Marshal, one Soulavie put forth Memoirs of the Marechal de Richelieu.]

To give us a faithful portrait of the unfortunate reign of Louis XVI., the Marechal du Muy, M. de Maurepas, M. de Vergennes, M. de Malesherbes, the Duc d'Orleans, M. de La Fayette, the Abbe de Vermond, the Abbe Montesquiou, Mirabeau, the Duchesse de Polignac, and the Duchesse de Luynes should have noted faithfully in writing all the transactions in which they took decided parts. The secret political history of a later period has been disseminated among a much greater number of persons; there are Ministers who have published memoirs, but only when they had their own measures to justify, and then they confined themselves to the vindication of their own characters, without which powerful motive they probably would have written nothing. In general, those nearest to the Sovereign, either by birth or by office, have left no memoirs; and in absolute monarchies the mainsprings of great events will be found in particulars which the most exalted persons alone could know. Those who have had but little under their charge find no subject in it for a book; and those who have long borne the burden of public business conceive themselves to be forbidden by duty, or by respect for authority, to disclose all they know. Others, again, preserve notes, with the intention of reducing them to order when they shall have reached the period of a happy leisure; vain illusion of the ambitious, which they cherish, for the most part, but as a veil to conceal from their sight the hateful image of their inevitable downfall! and when it does at length take place, despair or chagrin deprives them of fortitude to dwell upon the dazzling period which they never cease to regret.

Louis XVI. meant to write his own memoirs; the manner in which his private papers were arranged indicated this design. The Queen also had the same intention; she long preserved a large correspondence, and a great number of minute reports, made in the spirit and upon the event of the moment. But after the 20th of June, 1792, she was obliged to burn the larger portion of what she had so collected, and the remainder were conveyed out of France.

Considering the rank and situations of the persons I have named as capable of elucidating by their writings the history of our political storms, it will not be imagined that I aim at placing myself on a level with them; but I have spent half my life either with the daughters of Louis XV. or with Marie Antoinette. I knew the characters of those Princesses; I became privy to some extraordinary facts, the publication of which may be interesting, and the truth of the details will form the merit of my work.

I was very young when I was placed about the Princesses, the daughters of Louis XV., in the capacity of reader. I was acquainted with the Court of Versailles before the time of the marriage of Louis XVI. with the Archduchess Marie Antoinette.

My father, who was employed in the department of Foreign Affairs, enjoyed the reputation due to his talents and to his useful labours. He had travelled much. Frenchmen, on their return home from foreign countries, bring with them a love for their own, increased in warmth; and no man was more penetrated with this feeling, which ought to be the first virtue of every placeman, than my father. Men of high title, academicians, and learned men, both natives and foreigners, sought my father's acquaintance, and were gratified by being admitted into his house.

Twenty years before the Revolution I often heard it remarked that the imposing character of the power of Louis XIV. was no longer to be found in the Palace of Versailles; that the institutions of the ancient monarchy were rapidly sinking; and that the people, crushed beneath the weight of taxes, were miserable, though silent; but that they began to give ear to the bold speeches of the philosophers, who loudly proclaimed their sufferings and their rights; and, in short, that the age would not pass away without the occurrence of some great outburst, which would unsettle France, and change the course of its progress.

Those who thus spoke were almost all partisans of M. Turgot's system of administration: they were Mirabeau the father, Doctor Quesnay, Abbe Bandeau, and Abbe Nicoli, charge d'affaires to Leopold, Grand Duke of Tuscany, and as enthusiastic an admirer of the maxims of the innovators as his Sovereign.

My father sincerely respected the purity of intention of these politicians. With them he acknowledged many abuses in the Government; but he did not give these political sectarians credit for the talent necessary for conducting a judicious reform. He told them frankly that in the art of moving the great machine of Government, the wisest of them was inferior to a good magistrate; and that if ever the helm of affairs should be put into their hands, they would be speedily checked in the execution of their schemes by the immeasurable difference existing between the most brilliant theories and the simplest practice of administration.

Destiny having formerly placed me near crowned heads, I now amuse my solitude when in retirement with collecting a variety of facts which may prove interesting to my family when I shall be no more. The idea of collecting all the interesting materials which my memory affords occurred to me from reading the work entitled "Paris, Versailles, and the Provinces in the Eighteenth Century." That work, composed by a man accustomed to the best society, is full of piquant anecdotes, nearly all of which have been recognised as true by the contemporaries of the author. I have put together all that concerned the domestic life of an unfortunate Princess, whose reputation is not yet cleared of the stains it received from the attacks of calumny, and who justly merited a different lot in life, a different place in the opinion of mankind after her fall. These memoirs, which were finished ten years ago, have met with the approbation of some persons; and my son may, perhaps, think proper to print them after my decease.

J. L. H. C.

—When Madame Campan wrote these lines, she did not anticipate that the death of her son would precede her own.

HISTORI COURT MEMOIRS MARIE ANTOINETTE

MEMOIR OF MADAME CAMPAN

JEANNE LOUISE HENRIETTE GENET was born in Paris on the 6th of October, 1752. M. Genet, her father, had obtained, through his own merit and the influence of the Duc de Choiseul, the place of first clerk in the Foreign Office.

Literature, which he had cultivated in his youth, was often the solace of his leisure hours. Surrounded by a numerous family, he made the instruction of his children his chief recreation, and omitted nothing which was necessary to render them highly accomplished. His clever and precocious daughter Henriette was very early accustomed to enter society, and to take an intelligent interest in current topics and public events. Accordingly, many of her relations being connected with the Court or holding official positions, she amassed a fund of interesting recollections and characteristic anecdotes, some gathered from personal experience, others handed down by old friends of the family.

“The first event which made any impression on me in my childhood,” she says in her reminiscences, “was the attempt of Damiens to assassinate Louis XV. This occurrence struck me so forcibly that the most minute details relating to the confusion and grief which prevailed at Versailles on that day seem as present to my imagination as the most recent events. I had dined with my father and mother, in company with one of their friends. The drawing-room was lighted up with a number of candles, and four card-tables were already occupied, when a friend of the gentleman of the house came in, with a pale and terrified countenance, and said, in a voice scarcely audible, ‘I bring you terrible news. The King has been assassinated!’ Two ladies in the company fainted; a brigadier of the Body Guards threw down his cards and cried out, ‘I do not wonder at it; it is those rascally Jesuits.’—‘What are you saying, brother?’ cried a lady, flying to him; ‘would you get yourself arrested?’—‘Arrested! For what? For unmasking those wretches who want a bigot for a King?’ My father came in; he recommended circumspection, saying that the blow was not mortal, and that all meetings ought to be suspended at so critical a moment. He had brought the chaise for my mother, who placed me on her knees. We lived in the Avenue de Paris, and throughout our drive I heard incessant cries and sobs from the footpaths.

“At last I saw a man arrested; he was an usher of the King’s chamber, who had gone mad, and was crying out, ‘Yes, I know them; the wretches! the villains!’ Our chaise was stopped by this bustle. My mother recognised the unfortunate man who had been seized; she gave his name to the trooper who had stopped him. The poor usher was therefore merely conducted to the gens d’armes’ guardroom, which was then in the avenue.

“I have often heard M. de Landsmath, equerry and master of the hounds, who used to come frequently to my father’s, say that on the news of the attempt on the King’s life he instantly repaired to his Majesty. I cannot repeat the coarse expressions he made use of to encourage his Majesty; but his account of the affair, long afterwards, amused the parties in which he was prevailed on to relate it, when all apprehensions respecting the consequences of the event had subsided. This M. de Landsmath was an old soldier, who had given proofs of extraordinary valour; nothing had been able to soften his manners or subdue his excessive bluntness to the respectful customs of the Court. The King was very fond of him. He possessed prodigious strength, and had often contended with Marechal Saxe, renowned for his great bodily power, in trying the strength of their respective wrists.

[One day when the King was hunting in the forest of St. Germain, Landemath, riding before him, wanted a cart, filled with the slime of a pond that had just been

cleansed, to draw up out of the way. The carter resisted, and even answered with impertinence. Landsmath, without dismounting, seized him by the breast of his coat, lifted him up, and threw him into his cart.—MADAME CAMPAN.]

“M. de Landsmath had a thundering voice. When he came into the King’s apartment he found the Dauphin and Mesdames, his Majesty’s daughters, there; the Princesses, in tears, surrounded the King’s bed. Send out all these weeping women, Sire,’ said the old equerry; ‘I want to speak to you alone: The King made a sign to the Princesses to withdraw. ‘Come,’ said Landsmath, ‘your wound is nothing; you had plenty of waistcoats and flannels on.’ Then uncovering his breast, ‘Look here,’ said he, showing four or five great scars, ‘these are something like wounds; I received them thirty years ago; now cough as loud as you can.’ The King did so. “Tis nothing at all,’ said Landsmath; ‘you must laugh at it; we shall hunt a stag together in four days.’—‘But suppose the blade was poisoned,’ said the King. ‘Old grandams’ tales,’ replied Landsmath; ‘if it had been so, the waistcoats and flannels would have rubbed the poison off.’ The King was pacified, and passed a very good night.

“His Majesty one day asked M. de Landsmath how old he was. He was aged, and by no means fond of thinking of his age; he evaded the question. A fortnight later, Louis XV. took a paper out of his pocket and read aloud: ‘On such a day in the month of one thousand six hundred and eighty, was baptised by me, rector of —, the son of the high and mighty lord,’ etc. ‘What’s that?’ said Landsmath, angrily; ‘has your Majesty been procuring the certificate of my baptism?’—‘There it is, you see, Landsmath,’ said the King. ‘Well, Sire, hide it as fast as you can; a prince entrusted with the happiness of twenty-five millions of people ought not wilfully to hurt the feelings of a single individual.’

“The King learned that Landsmath had lost his confessor, a missionary priest of the parish of Notre-Dame. It was the custom of the Lazarists to expose their dead with the face uncovered. Louis XV. wished to try his equerry’s firmness. ‘You have lost your confessor, I hear,’ said the King. ‘Yes, Sire.’—‘He will be exposed with his face bare?’—‘Such is the custom.’—‘I command you to go and see him.’—‘Sire, my confessor was my friend; it would be very painful to me.’—‘No matter; I command you.’—‘Are you really in earnest, Sire?’—‘Quite so.’—‘It would be the first time in my life that I had disobeyed my sovereign’s order. I will go.’ The next day the King at his levee, as soon as he perceived Landsmath, said, ‘Have you done as I desired you, Landsmath?’—‘Undoubtedly, Sire.’—‘Well, what did you see?’—‘Faith, I saw that your Majesty and I are no great shakes!’

“At the death of Queen Maria Leczinska, M. Campan,—[Her father-in-law, afterwards secretary to Marie Antoinette.]—then an officer of the chamber, having performed several confidential duties, the King asked Madame Adelaide how he should reward him. She requested him to create an office in his household of master of the wardrobe, with a salary of a thousand crowns. ‘I will do so,’ said the King; ‘it will be an honourable title; but tell Campan not to add a single crown to his expenses, for you will see they will never pay him.’

“Louis XV., by his dignified carriage, and the amiable yet majestic expression of his features, was worthy to succeed to Louis the Great. But he too frequently indulged in secret pleasures, which at last were sure to become known. During several winters, he was passionately fond of ‘candles’ end balls’, as he called those parties amongst the very lowest classes of society. He got intelligence of the picnics given by the tradesmen, milliners, and sempstresses of Versailles, whither he repaired in a black domino, and masked, accompanied by the captain of his Guards, masked like himself. His great delight was to go ‘en brouette’—[In a kind of sedan-chair, running on two wheels, and drawn by a chairman.]—Care was always taken to give notice to five or six officers of the King’s or Queen’s chamber to be there, in order that his Majesty might be surrounded by people on whom he could depend, without finding it troublesome. Probably the captain of the Guards also took other precautions of this description on his part. My father-in-law, when the King and he were both young, has often made one amongst the servants desired to attend masked at these parties, assembled in some garret, or parlour of a public-house. In those times, during the carnival, masked companies had a right to join the citizens’ balls; it was sufficient that one of the party should unmask and name himself.

“These secret excursions, and his too habitual intercourse with ladies more distinguished for their personal charms than for the advantages of education, were no doubt the means by which the King acquired many vulgar expressions which otherwise would never have reached his ears.

“Yet amidst the most shameful excesses the King sometimes suddenly resumed the dignity of his rank in a very noble manner. The familiar courtiers of Louis XV. had one day abandoned themselves to the unrestrained gaiety, of a supper, after returning from the chase. Each boasted of and described the beauty of his mistress. Some of them amused themselves with giving a particular account of their wives’ personal defects. An imprudent word, addressed to Louis XV., and applicable only to the Queen, instantly dispelled all the mirth of the entertainment. The King assumed his regal air, and knocking with his knife on the table twice or thrice, ‘Gentlemen; said he, ‘here is the King!’

“Those men who are most completely abandoned to dissolute manners are not, on that account, insensible to virtue in women. The Comtesse de Perigord was as beautiful as virtuous. During some excursions she made to Choisy, whither she had been invited, she perceived that the King took great notice of her. Her demeanour of chilling respect, her cautious perseverance in shunning all serious conversation with the monarch, were insufficient to extinguish this rising flame, and he at length addressed a letter to her, worded in the most passionate terms. This excellent woman instantly formed her resolution: honour forbade her returning the King’s passion, whilst her profound respect for the sovereign made her unwilling to disturb his tranquillity. She therefore voluntarily banished herself to an estate she possessed called Chalais, near Barbezieux, the mansion of which had been uninhabited nearly a century; the porter’s lodge was the only place in a condition to receive her. From this seat she wrote to his Majesty, explaining her motives for leaving Court; and she remained there several years without visiting Paris. Louis XV. was speedily attracted by other objects, and regained the composure to which Madame de Perigord had thought it her duty to sacrifice so much. Some years after, Mesdames’ lady of honour died. Many great families solicited the place. The King, without answering any of their applications, wrote to the Comtesse de Perigord: ‘My daughters have just lost their lady of honour; this place, madame, is your due, as much on account of your personal qualities as of the illustrious name of your family.’

“Three young men of the college of St. Germain, who had just completed their course of studies, knowing no person about the Court, and having heard that strangers were always well treated there, resolved to dress themselves completely in the Armenian costume, and, thus clad, to present themselves to see the grand ceremony of the reception of several knights of the Order of the Holy Ghost. Their stratagem met with all the success with which they had flattered themselves. While the procession was passing through the long mirror gallery, the Swiss of the apartments placed them in the first row of spectators, recommending every one to pay all possible attention to the strangers. The latter, however, were imprudent enough to enter the ‘oeil-de-boeuf’ chamber, where, were Messieurs Cardonne and Ruffin, interpreters of Oriental languages, and the first clerk of the consul’s department, whose business it was to attend to everything which related to the natives of the East who were in France. The three scholars were immediately surrounded and questioned by these gentlemen, at first in modern Greek. Without being disconcerted, they made signs that they did not understand it. They were then addressed in Turkish and Arabic; at length one of the interpreters, losing all patience, exclaimed, ‘Gentlemen, you certainly must understand some of the languages in which you have been addressed. What country can you possibly come from then?’—‘From St. Germain-en-Laye, sir,’ replied the boldest among them; ‘this is the first time you have put the question to us in French.’ They then confessed the motive of their disguise; the eldest of them was not more than eighteen years of age. Louis XV. was informed of the affair. He laughed heartily, ordered them a few hours’ confinement and a good admonition, after which they were to be set at liberty.

“Louis XV. liked to talk about death, though he was extremely apprehensive of it; but his excellent health and his royal dignity probably made him imagine himself invulnerable. He often said to people who had very bad colds, ‘You’ve a churchyard cough there.’ Hunting one day in the forest

of Senard, in a year in which bread was extremely dear, he met a man on horseback carrying a coffin. 'Whither are you carrying that coffin?'—'To the village of —,' answered the peasant. 'Is it for a man or a woman?'—'For a man.'—'What did he die of?'—'Of hunger,' bluntly replied the villager. The King spurred on his horse, and asked no more questions.

"Weak as Louis XV. was, the Parliaments would never have obtained his consent to the convocation of the States General. I heard an anecdote on this subject from two officers attached to that Prince's household. It was at the period when the remonstrances of the Parliaments, and the refusals to register the decrees for levying taxes, produced alarm with respect to the state of the finances. This became the subject of conversation one evening at the coucher of Louis XV. 'You will see, Sire,' said a courtier, whose office placed him in close communication with the King, 'that all this will make it absolutely necessary to assemble the States General!'

"The King, roused by this speech from the habitual apathy of his character, seized the courtier by the arm, and said to him, in a passion, 'Never repeat, these words. I am not sanguinary; but had I a brother, and were he to dare to give me such advice, I would sacrifice him, within twenty-four hours, to the duration of the monarchy and the tranquillity of the kingdom.'

"Several years prior to his death the Dauphin, the father of Louis XVI., had confluent smallpox, which endangered his life; and after his convalescence he was long troubled with a malignant ulcer under the nose. He was injudiciously advised to get rid of it by the use of extract of lead, which proved effectual; but from that time the Dauphin, who was corpulent, insensibly grew thin, and a short, dry cough evinced that the humour, driven in, had fallen on the lungs. Some persons also suspected him of having taken acids in too great a quantity for the purpose of reducing his bulk. The state of his health was not, however, such as to excite alarm. At the camp at Compiègne, in July, 1764, the Dauphin reviewed the troops, and evinced much activity in the performance of his duties; it was even observed that he was seeking to gain the attachment of the army. He presented the Dauphiness to the soldiers, saying, with a simplicity which at that time made a great sensation, 'Mes enfans, here is my wife.' Returning late on horseback to Compiègne, he found he had taken a chill; the heat of the day had been excessive; the Prince's clothes had been wet with perspiration. An illness followed, in which the Prince began to spit blood. His principal physician wished to have him bled; the consulting physicians insisted on purgation, and their advice was followed. The pleurisy, being ill cured, assumed and retained all the symptoms of consumption; the Dauphin languished from that period until December, 1765, and died at Fontainebleau, where the Court, on account of his condition, had prolonged its stay, which usually ended on the 2d of November.

"The Dauphiness, his widow, was deeply afflicted; but the immoderate despair which characterised her grief induced many to suspect that the loss of the crown was an important part of the calamity she lamented. She long refused to eat enough to support life; she encouraged her tears to flow by placing portraits of the Dauphin in every retired part of her apartments. She had him represented pale, and ready to expire, in a picture placed at the foot of her bed, under draperies of gray cloth, with which the chambers of the Princesses were always hung in court mournings. Their grand cabinet was hung with black cloth, with an alcove, a canopy, and a throne, on which they received compliments of condolence after the first period of the deep mourning. The Dauphiness, some months before the end of her career, regretted her conduct in abridging it; but it was too late; the fatal blow had been struck. It may also be presumed that living with a consumptive, man had contributed to her complaint. This Princess had no opportunity of displaying her qualities; living in a Court in which she was eclipsed by the King and Queen, the only characteristics that could be remarked in her were her extreme attachment to her husband, and her great piety.

"The Dauphin was little known, and his character has been much mistaken. He himself, as he confessed to his intimate friends, sought to disguise it. He one day asked one of his most familiar servants, 'What do they say in Paris of that great fool of a Dauphin?' The person interrogated seeming

confused, the Dauphin urged him to express himself sincerely, saying, 'Speak freely; that is positively the idea which I wish people to form of me.'

"As he died of a disease which allows the last moment to be anticipated long beforehand, he wrote much, and transmitted his affections and his prejudices to his son by secret notes.

"Madame de Pompadour's brother received Letters of Nobility from his Majesty, and was appointed superintendent of the buildings and gardens. He often presented to her Majesty, through the medium of his sister, the rarest flowers, pineapples, and early vegetables from the gardens of Trianon and Choisy. One day, when the Marquise came into the Queen's apartments, carrying a large basket of flowers, which she held in her two beautiful arms, without gloves, as a mark of respect, the Queen loudly declared her admiration of her beauty; and seemed as if she wished to defend the King's choice, by praising her various charms in detail, in a manner that would have been as suitable to a production of the fine arts as to a living being. After applauding the complexion, eyes, and fine arms of the favourite, with that haughty condescension which renders approbation more offensive than flattering, the Queen at length requested her to sing, in the attitude in which she stood, being desirous of hearing the voice and musical talent by which the King's Court had been charmed in the performances of the private apartments, and thus combining the gratification of the ears with that of the eyes. The Marquise, who still held her enormous basket, was perfectly sensible of something offensive in this request, and tried to excuse herself from singing. The Queen at last commanded her; she then exerted her fine voice in the solo of Armida—'At length he is in my power.' The change in her Majesty's countenance was so obvious that the ladies present at this scene had the greatest difficulty to keep theirs.

"The Queen was affable and modest; but the more she was thankful in her heart to Heaven for having placed her on the first throne in Europe, the more unwilling she was to be reminded of her elevation. This sentiment induced her to insist on the observation of all the forms of respect due to royal birth; whereas in other princes the consciousness of that birth often induces them to disdain the ceremonies of etiquette, and to prefer habits of ease and simplicity. There was a striking contrast in this respect between Maria Leczinska and Marie Antoinette, as has been justly and generally observed. The latter unfortunate Queen, perhaps, carried her disregard of everything belonging to the strict forms of etiquette too far. One day, when the Marechale de Mouchy was teasing her with questions relative to the extent to which she would allow the ladies the option of taking off or wearing their cloaks, and of pinning up the lappets of their caps, or letting them hang down, the Queen replied to her, in my presence: 'Arrange all those matters, madame, just as you please; but do not imagine that a queen, born Archduchess of Austria, can attach that importance to them which might be felt by a Polish princess who had become Queen of France.'

"The virtues and information of the great are always evinced by their conduct; their accomplishments, coming within the scope of flattery, are difficult to be ascertained by any authentic proofs, and those who have lived near them may be excused for some degree of scepticism with regard to their attainments of this kind. If they draw or paint, there is always an able artist present, who, if he does not absolutely guide the pencil with his own hand, directs it by his advice. If a princess attempt a piece of embroidery in colours, of that description which ranks amongst the productions of the arts, a skilful embroidress is employed to undo and repair whatever has been spoilt. If the princess be a musician, there are no ears that will discover when she is out of tune; at least there is no tongue that will tell her so. This imperfection in the accomplishments of the great is but a slight misfortune. It is sufficiently meritorious in them to engage in such pursuits, even with indifferent success, because this taste and the protection it extends produce abundance of talent on every side. Maria Leczinska delighted in the art of painting, and imagined she herself could draw and paint. She had a drawing-master, who passed all his time in her cabinet. She undertook to paint four large Chinese pictures, with which she wished to ornament her private drawing-room, which was richly furnished with rare porcelain and the finest marbles. This painter was entrusted with the landscape and background of

the pictures; he drew the figures with a pencil; the faces and arms were also left by the Queen to his execution; she reserved to herself nothing but the draperies, and the least important accessories. The Queen every morning filled up the outline marked out for her, with a little red, blue, or green colour, which the master prepared on the palette, and even filled her brush with, constantly repeating, 'Higher up, Madame—lower down, Madame—a little to the right—more to the left.' After an hour's work, the time for hearing mass, or some other family or pious duty, would interrupt her Majesty; and the painter, putting the shadows into the draperies she had painted, softening off the colour where she had laid too much, etc., finished the small figures. When the work was completed the private drawing-room was decorated with her Majesty's work; and the firm persuasion of this good Queen that she had painted it herself was so entire that she left this cabinet, with all its furniture and paintings, to the Comtesse de Noailles, her lady of honour. She added to the bequest: 'The pictures in my cabinet being my own work, I hope the Comtesse de Noailles will preserve them for my sake.' Madame de Noailles, afterwards Marechale de Mouchy, had a new pavilion constructed in her hotel in the Faubourg St. Germain, in order to form a suitable receptacle for the Queen's legacy; and had the following inscription placed over the door, in letters of gold: 'The innocent falsehood of a good princess.'

"Maria Leczinska could never look with cordiality on the Princess of Saxony, who married the Dauphin; but the attentive behaviour of the Dauphiness at length made her Majesty forget that the Princess was the daughter of a king who wore her father's crown. Nevertheless, although the Queen now saw in the Princess of Saxony only a wife beloved by her son, she never could forget that Augustus wore the crown of Stanislaus. One day an officer of her chamber having undertaken to ask a private audience of her for the Saxon minister, and the Queen being unwilling to grant it, he ventured to add that he should not have presumed to ask this favour of the Queen had not the minister been the ambassador of a member of the family. 'Say of an enemy of the family,' replied the Queen, angrily; 'and let him come in.'

"Comte de Tesse, father of the last Count of that name, who left no children, was first equerry to Queen Maria Leczinska. She esteemed his virtues, but often diverted herself at the expense of his simplicity. One day, when the conversation turned on the noble military actions by which the French nobility was distinguished, the Queen said to the Count: 'And your family, M. de Tesse, has been famous, too, in the field.'—'Ah, Madame, we have all been killed in our masters' service!'—'How rejoiced I am,' replied the Queen, 'that you have revived to tell me of it.' The son of this worthy M. de Tesse was married to the amiable and highly gifted daughter of the Duc d'Ayen, afterwards Marechale de Noailles. He was exceedingly fond of his daughter-in-law, and never could speak of her without emotion. The Queen, to please him, often talked to him about the young Countess, and one day asked him which of her good qualities seemed to him most conspicuous. 'Her gentleness, Madame, her gentleness,' said he, with tears in his eyes; 'she is so mild, so soft,—as soft as a good carriage.'—'Well,' said her Majesty, 'that's an excellent comparison for a first equerry.'

"In 1730 Queen Maria Leczinska, going to mass, met old Marechal Villars, leaning on a wooden crutch not worth fifteen pence. She rallied him about it, and the Marshal told her that he had used it ever since he had received a wound which obliged him to add this article to the equipments of the army. Her Majesty, smiling, said she thought this crutch so unworthy of him that she hoped to induce him to give it up. On returning home she despatched M. Campan to Paris with orders to purchase at the celebrated Germain's the handsomest cane, with a gold enamelled crutch, that he could find, and carry it without delay to Marechal Villars's hotel, and present it to him from her. He was announced accordingly, and fulfilled his commission. The Marshal, in attending him to the door, requested him to express his gratitude to the Queen, and said that he had nothing fit to offer to an officer who had the honour to belong to her Majesty; but he begged him to accept of his old stick, saying that his grandchildren would probably some day be glad to possess the cane with which he had commanded at Marchiennes and Denain. The known frugality of Marechal Villars appears in this

anecdote; but he was not mistaken with respect to the estimation in which his stick would be held. It was thenceforth kept with veneration by M. Campan's family. On the 10th of August, 1792, a house which I occupied on the Carrousel, at the entrance of the Court of the Tuileries, was pillaged and nearly burnt down. The cane of Marechal Villars was thrown into the Carrousel as of no value, and picked up by my servant. Had its old master been living at that period we should not have witnessed such a deplorable day.

“Before the Revolution there were customs and words in use at Versailles with which few people were acquainted. The King's dinner was called ‘The King's meat.’ Two of the Body Guard accompanied the attendants who carried the dinner; every one rose as they passed through the halls, saying, ‘There is the King's meat.’ All precautionary duties were distinguished by the words ‘in case.’ One of the guards might be heard to say, ‘I am in case in the forest of St. Germain.’ In the evening they always brought the Queen a large bowl of broth, a cold roast fowl, one bottle of wine, one of orgeat, one of lemonade, and some other articles, which were called the ‘in case’ for the night. An old medical gentleman, who had been physician in ordinary to Louis XIV., and was still living at the time of the marriage of Louis XV., told M. Campan's father an anecdote which seems too remarkable to have remained unknown; nevertheless he was a man of honour, incapable of inventing this story. His name was Lafosse. He said that Louis XIV. was informed that the officers of his table evinced, in the most disdainful and offensive manner, the mortification they felt at being obliged to eat at the table of the comptroller of the kitchen along with Moliere, valet de chambre to his Majesty, because Moliere had performed on the stage; and that this celebrated author consequently declined appearing at that table. Louis XIV., determined to put an end to insults which ought never to have been offered to one of the greatest geniuses of the age, said to him one morning at the hour of his private levee, ‘They say you live very poorly here, Moliere; and that the officers of my chamber do not find you good enough to eat with them. Perhaps you are hungry; for my part I awoke with a very good appetite this morning: sit down at this table. Serve up my ‘in case’ for the night there.’ The King, then cutting up his fowl, and ordering Moliere to sit down, helped him to a wing, at the same time taking one for himself, and ordered the persons entitled to familiar entrance, that is to say the most distinguished and favourite people at Court, to be admitted. ‘You see me,’ said the King to them, ‘engaged in entertaining Moliere, whom my valets de chambre do not consider sufficiently good company for them.’ From that time Moliere never had occasion to appear at the valets' table; the whole Court was forward enough to send him invitations.

“M. de Lafosse used also to relate that a brigade-major of the Body Guard, being ordered to place the company in the little theatre at Versailles, very roughly turned out one of the King's comptrollers who had taken his seat on one of the benches, a place to which his newly acquired office entitled him. In vain he insisted on his quality and his right. The altercation was ended by the brigade-major in these words: ‘Gentlemen Body Guards, do your duty.’ In this case their duty was to turn the offender out at the door. This comptroller, who had paid sixty or eighty thousand francs for his appointment, was a man of a good family, and had had the honour of serving his Majesty five and twenty years in one of his regiments; thus ignominiously driven out of the hall, he placed himself in the King's way in the great hall of the Guards, and, bowing to his Majesty, requested him to vindicate the honour of an old soldier who had wished to end his days in his Prince's civil employment, now that age had obliged him to relinquish his military service. The King stopped, heard his story, and then ordered him to follow him. His Majesty attended the representation in a sort of amphitheatre, in which his armchair was placed; behind him was a row of stools for the captain of the Guards, the first gentleman of the chamber, and other great officers. The brigade-major was entitled to one of these places; the King stopped opposite the seat which ought to have been occupied by that officer and said to the comptroller, ‘Take, monsieur, for this evening, the place near my person of him who has offended you, and let the expression of my displeasure at this unjust affront satisfy you instead of any other reparation:

“During the latter years of the reign of Louis XIV. he never went out but in a chair carried by porters, and he showed a great regard for a man named D’Aigremont, one of those porters who always went in front and opened the door of the chair. The slightest preference shown by sovereigns, even to the meanest of their servants, never fails to excite observation.

[People of the very first rank did not disdain to descend to the level of D’Aigremont. “Lauzun,” said the Duchesse d’Orleans in her “Memoirs,” “sometimes affects stupidity in order to show people their own with impunity, for he is very malicious. In order to make Marechal de Tease feel the impropriety of his familiarity with people of the common sort, he called out, in the drawing-room at Marly, ‘Marechal, give me a pinch of snuff; some of your best, such as you take in the morning with Monsieur d’Aigremont, the chairman.’”—NOTE BY THE EDITOR.]

The King had done something for this man’s numerous family, and frequently talked to him. An abbe belonging to the chapel thought proper to request D’Aigremont to present a memorial to the King, in which he requested his Majesty to grant him a benefice. Louis XIV. did not approve of the liberty thus taken by his chairman, and said to him, in a very angry tone, ‘D’Aigremont, you have been made to do a very unbecoming act, and I am sure there must be simony in the case.’—‘No, Sire, there is not the least ceremony in the case, I assure you,’ answered the poor man, in great consternation; ‘the abbe only said he would give me a hundred Louis.’—‘D’Aigremont,’ said the King, ‘I forgive you on account of your ignorance and candour. I will give you the hundred Louis out of my privy purse; but I will discharge you the very next time you venture to present a memorial to me.’

“Louis XIV. was very kind to those of his servants who were nearest his person; but the moment he assumed his royal deportment, those who were most accustomed to see him in his domestic character were as much intimidated as if they were appearing in his presence for the first time in their lives. Some of the members of his Majesty’s civil household, then called ‘commensalite’, enjoying the title of equerry, and the privileges attached to officers of the King’s household, had occasion to claim some prerogatives, the exercise of which the municipal body of St. Germain, where they resided, disputed with them. Being assembled in considerable numbers in that town, they obtained the consent of the minister of the household to allow them to send a deputation to the King; and for that purpose chose from amongst them two of his Majesty’s valets de chambre named Bazire and Soulaigre. The King’s levee being over, the deputation of the inhabitants of the town of St. Germain was called in. They entered with confidence; the King looked at them, and assumed his imposing attitude. Bazire, one of these valets de chambre, was about to speak, but Louis the Great was looking on him. He no longer saw the Prince he was accustomed to attend at home; he was intimidated, and could not find words; he recovered, however, and began as usual with the word Sire. But timidity again overpowered him, and finding himself unable to recollect the slightest particle of what he came to say, he repeated the word Sire several times, and at length concluded by paying, ‘Sire, here is Soulaigre.’ Soulaigre, who was very angry with Bazire, and expected to acquit himself much better, then began to speak; but he also, after repeating ‘Sire’ several times, found his embarrassment increasing upon him, until his confusion equalled that of his colleague; he therefore ended with ‘Sire, here is Bazire.’ The King smiled, and answered, ‘Gentlemen, I have been informed of the business upon which you have been deputed to wait on me, and I will take care that what is right shall be done. I am highly satisfied with the manner in which you have fulfilled your functions as deputies.’”

Mademoiselle Genet’s education was the object of her father’s particular attention. Her progress in the study of music and of foreign languages was surprising; Albaneze instructed her in singing, and Goldoni taught her Italian. Tasso, Milton, Dante, and even Shakespeare, soon became familiar to her. But her studies were particularly directed to the acquisition of a correct and elegant style of reading. Rochon de Chabannes, Duclos, Barthe, Marmontel, and Thomas took pleasure in hearing

her recite the finest scenes of Racine. Her memory and genius at the age of fourteen charmed them; they talked of her talents in society, and perhaps applauded them too highly.

She was soon spoken of at Court. Some ladies of high rank, who took an interest in the welfare of her family, obtained for her the place of Reader to the Princesses. Her presentation, and the circumstances which preceded it, left a strong impression on her mind. "I was then fifteen," she says; "my father felt some regret at yielding me up at so early an age to the jealousies of the Court. The day on which I first put on my Court dress, and went to embrace him in his study, tears filled his eyes, and mingled with the expression of his pleasure. I possessed some agreeable talents, in addition to the instruction which it had been his delight to bestow on me. He enumerated all my little accomplishments, to convince me of the vexations they would not fail to draw upon me."

Mademoiselle Genet, at fifteen, was naturally less of a philosopher than her father was at forty. Her eyes were dazzled by the splendour which glittered at Versailles. "The Queen, Maria Leczinska, the wife of Louis XV., died," she says, "just before I was presented at Court. The grand apartments hung with black, the great chairs of state, raised on several steps, and surmounted by a canopy adorned with Plumes; the caparisoned horses, the immense retinue in Court mourning, the enormous shoulder-knots, embroidered with gold and silver spangles, which decorated the coats of the pages and footmen, —all this magnificence had such an effect on my senses that I could scarcely support myself when introduced to the Princesses. The first day of my reading in the inner apartment of Madame Victoire I found it impossible to pronounce more than two sentences; my heart palpitated, my voice faltered, and my sight failed. How well understood was the potent magic of the grandeur and dignity which ought to surround sovereigns! Marie Antoinette, dressed in white, with a plain straw hat, and a little switch in her hand, walking on foot, followed by a single servant, through the walks leading to the Petit Trianon, would never have thus disconcerted me; and I believe this extreme simplicity was the first and only real mistake of all those with which she is reproached."

When once her awe and confusion had subsided, Mademoiselle Genet was enabled to form a more accurate judgment of her situation. It was by no means attractive; the Court of the Princesses, far removed from the revels to which Louis XV. was addicted, was grave, methodical, and dull. Madame Adelaide, the eldest of the Princesses, lived secluded in the interior of her apartments; Madame Sophie was haughty; Madame Louise a devotee. Mademoiselle Genet never quitted the Princesses' apartments; but she attached herself most particularly to Madame Victoire. This Princess had possessed beauty; her countenance bore an expression of benevolence, and her conversation was kind, free, and unaffected. The young reader excited in her that feeling which a woman in years, of an affectionate disposition, readily extends to young people who are growing up in her sight, and who possess some useful talents. Whole days were passed in reading to the Princess, as she sat at work in her apartment. Mademoiselle Genet frequently saw there Louis XV., of whom she has related the following anecdote:

"One day, at the Chateau of Compiègne, the King came in whilst I was reading to Madame. I rose and went into another room. Alone, in an apartment from which there was no outlet, with no book but a Massillon, which I had been reading to the Princess, happy in all the lightness and gaiety of fifteen, I amused myself with turning swiftly round, with my court hoop, and suddenly kneeling down to see my rose-coloured silk petticoat swelled around me by the wind. In the midst of this grave employment enters his Majesty, followed by one of the Princesses. I attempt to rise; my feet stumble, and down I fall in the midst of my robes, puffed out by the wind. 'Daughter,' said Louis XV., laughing heartily, 'I advise you to send back to school a reader who makes cheeses.'" The railleries of Louis XV. were often much more cutting, as Mademoiselle Genet experienced on another occasion, which, thirty years afterwards, she could not relate without an emotion of fear. "Louis XV.," she said, "had the most imposing presence. His eyes remained fixed upon you all the time he was speaking; and, notwithstanding the beauty of his features, he inspired a sort of fear. I was very young, it is true, when he first spoke to me; you shall judge whether it was in a very gracious manner. I was

fifteen. The King was going out to hunt, and a numerous retinue followed him. As he stopped opposite me he said, 'Mademoiselle Genet, I am assured you are very learned, and understand four or five foreign languages.'—'I know only two, Sire,' I answered, trembling. 'Which are they?' English and Italian.'—'Do you speak them fluently?' Yes, Sire, very fluently.' 'That is quite enough to drive a husband mad.' After this pretty compliment the King went on; the retinue saluted me, laughing; and, for my part, I remained for some moments motionless with surprise and confusion."

At the time when the French alliance was proposed by the Duc de Choiseul there was at Vienna a doctor named Gassner,—[Jean Joseph Gassner, a pretender to miraculous powers.]—who had fled thither to seek an asylum against the persecutions of his sovereign, one of the ecclesiastical electors. Gassner, gifted with an extraordinary warmth of imagination, imagined that he received inspirations. The Empress protected him, saw him occasionally, rallied him on his visions, and, nevertheless, heard them with a sort of interest. "Tell me,"—said she to him one day, "whether my Antoinette will be happy." Gassner turned pale, and remained silent. Being still pressed by the Empress, and wishing to give a general expression to the idea with which he seemed deeply occupied, "Madame," he replied, "there are crosses for all shoulders."

The occurrences at the Place Louis XV. on the marriage festivities at Paris are generally known. The conflagration of the scaffolds intended for the fireworks, the want of foresight of the authorities, the avidity of robbers, the murderous career of the coaches, brought about and aggravated the disasters of that day; and the young Dauphiness, coming from Versailles, by the Cours la Reine, elated with joy, brilliantly decorated, and eager to witness the rejoicings of the whole people, fled, struck with consternation and drowned in tears, from the dreadful scene. This tragic opening of the young Princess's life in France seemed to bear out Gassner's hint of disaster, and to be ominous of the terrible future which awaited her.

In the same year in which Marie Antoinette was married to the Dauphin, Henriette Genet married a son of M. Campan, already mentioned as holding an office at the Court; and when the household of the Dauphiness was formed, Madame Campan was appointed her reader, and received from Marie Antoinette a consistent kindness and confidence to which by her loyal service she was fully entitled. Madame Campan's intelligence and vivacity made her much more sympathetic to a young princess, gay and affectionate in disposition, and reared in the simplicity of a German Court, than her lady of honour, the Comtesse de Noailles. This respectable lady, who was placed near her as a minister of the laws of etiquette, instead of alleviating their weight, rendered their yoke intolerable to her.

"Madame de Noailles," says Madame Campan, "abounded in virtues. Her piety, charity, and irreproachable morals rendered her worthy of praise; but etiquette was to her a sort of atmosphere; at the slightest derangement of the consecrated order, one would have thought the principles of life would forsake her frame.

"One day I unintentionally threw this poor lady into a terrible agony. The Queen was receiving I know not whom,—some persons just presented, I believe; the lady of honour, the Queen's tirewoman, and the ladies of the bedchamber, were behind the Queen. I was near the throne, with the two women on duty. All was right,—at least I thought so. Suddenly I perceived the eyes of Madame de Noailles fixed on mine. She made a sign with her head, and then raised her eyebrows to the top of her forehead, lowered them, raised them again, then began to make little signs with her hand. From all this pantomime, I could easily perceive that something was not as it should be; and as I looked about on all sides to find out what it was, the agitation of the Countess kept increasing. The Queen, who perceived all this, looked at me with a smile; I found means to approach her Majesty, who said to me in a whisper, 'Let down your lappets, or the Countess will expire.' All this bustle arose from two unlucky pins which fastened up my lappets, whilst the etiquette of costume said 'Lappets hanging down.'"

Her contempt of the vanities of etiquette became the pretext for the first reproaches levelled at the Queen. What misconduct might not be dreaded from a princess who could absolutely go out

without a hoop! and who, in the salons of Trianon, instead of discussing the important rights to chairs and stools, good-naturedly invited everybody to be seated.

[M. de Fresne Forget, being one day in company with the Queen Marguerite, told her he was astonished how men and women with such great ruffs could eat soup without spoiling them; and still more how the ladies could be gallant with their great fardingales. The Queen made no answer at that time, but a few days after, having a very large ruff on, and some 'bouili' to eat, she ordered a very long spoon to be brought, and ate her 'bouili' with it, without soiling her ruff. Upon which, addressing herself to M. de Fresne, she said, laughing, "There now, you see, with a little ingenuity one may manage anything."—"Yes, faith, madame," said the good man, "as far as regards the soup I am satisfied."—LAPLACE's "Collection," vol. ii., p. 350.]

The anti-Austrian party, discontented and vindictive, became spies upon her conduct, exaggerated her slightest errors, and calumniated her most innocent proceedings. "What seems unaccountable at the first glance," says Montjoie, "is that the first attack on the reputation of the Queen proceeded from the bosom of the Court. What interest could the courtiers have in seeking her destruction, which involved that of the King? Was it not drying up the source of all the advantages they enjoyed, or could hope for?"

[Madame Campan relates the following among many anecdotes illustrative of the Queen's kindness of heart: "A petition was addressed to the Queen by a corporation in the neighbourhood of Paris, praying for the destruction of the game which destroyed their crops. I was the bearer of this petition to her Majesty, who said, 'I will undertake to have these good people relieved from so great an annoyance.' She gave the document to M. de Vermond in my presence, saying, 'I desire that immediate justice be done to this petition.' An assurance was given that her order should be attended to, but six weeks afterwards a second petition was sent up, for the nuisance had not been abated after all. If the second petition had reached the Queen, M. de Vermond would have received a sharp reprimand. She was always so happy when it was in her power to do good."

The quick repartee, which was another of the Queen's characteristics, was less likely to promote her popularity. "M. Brunier," says Madame Campan, "was physician to the royal children. During his visits to the palace, if the death of any of his patients was alluded to, he never failed to say, 'Ah! there I lost one of my best friends! 'Well,' said the Queen, 'if he loses all his patients who are his friends, what will become of those who are not?'"

When the terrible Danton exclaimed, "The kings of Europe menace us; it behooves us to defy them; let us throw down to them the head of a king as our gage!" these detestable words, followed by so cruel a result, formed, however, a formidable stroke of policy. But the Queen! What urgent reasons of state could Danton, Collot d'Herbois, and Robespierre allege against her? What savage greatness did they discover in stirring up a whole nation to avenge their quarrel on a woman? What remained of her former power? She was a captive, a widow, trembling for her children! In those judges, who at once outraged modesty and nature; in that people whose vilest scoffs pursued her to the scaffold, who could have recognised the generous people of France? Of all the crimes which disgraced the Revolution, none was more calculated to show how the spirit of party can degrade the character of a nation.

The news of this dreadful event reached Madame Campan in an obscure retreat which she had chosen. She had not succeeded in her endeavours to share the Queen's captivity, and she expected every moment a similar fate. After escaping, almost miraculously, from the murderous fury

of the Marseillais; after being denounced and pursued by Robespierre, and entrusted, through the confidence of the King and Queen, with papers of the utmost importance, Madame Campan went to Coubertin, in the valley of Chevreuse. Madame Auguid, her sister, had just committed suicide, at the very moment of her arrest.

[Maternal affection prevailed over her religious sentiments; she wished to preserve the wreck of her fortune for her children. Had she deferred this fatal act for one day she would have been saved; the cart which conveyed Robespierre to execution stopped her funeral procession!]

The scaffold awaited Madame Campan, when the 9th of Thermidor restored her to life; but did not restore to her the most constant object of her thoughts, her zeal, and her devotion.

A new career now opened to Madame Campan. At Coubertin, surrounded by her nieces, she was fond of directing their studies. This occupation caused her ideas to revert to the subject of education, and awakened once more the inclinations of her youth. At the age of twelve years she could never meet a school of young ladies passing through the streets without feeling ambitious of the situation and authority of their mistress. Her abode at Court had diverted but not altered her inclinations. "A month after the fall of Robespierre," she says, "I considered as to the means of providing for myself, for a mother seventy years of age, my sick husband, my child nine years old, and part of my ruined family. I now possessed nothing in the world but an assignat of five hundred francs. I had become responsible for my husband's debts, to the amount of thirty thousand francs. I chose St. Germain to set up a boarding-school, for that town did not remind me, as Versailles did, both of happy times and of the misfortunes of France. I took with me a nun of l'Enfant-Jesus, to give an unquestionable pledge of my religious principles. The school of St. Germain was the first in which the opening of an oratory was ventured on. The Directory was displeased at it, and ordered it to be immediately shut up; and some time after commissioners were sent to desire that the reading of the Scriptures should be suppressed in my school. I inquired what books were to be substituted in their stead. After some minutes' conversation, they observed: 'Citizeness, you are arguing after the old fashion; no reflections. The nation commands; we must have obedience, and no reasoning.' Not having the means of printing my prospectus, I wrote a hundred copies of it, and sent them to the persons of my acquaintance who had survived the dreadful commotions. At the year's end I had sixty pupils; soon afterwards a hundred. I bought furniture and paid my debts."

The rapid success of the establishment at St. Germain was undoubtedly owing to the talents, experience, and excellent principles of Madame Campan, seconded by public opinion. All property had changed hands; all ranks found themselves confusedly jumbled by the shock of the Revolution: the grand seigneur dined at the table of the opulent contractor; and the witty and elegant marquise was present at the ball by the side of the clumsy peasant lately grown rich. In the absence of the ancient distinctions, elegant manners and polished language now formed a kind of aristocracy. The house of St. Germain, conducted by a lady who possessed the deportment and the habits of the best society, was not only a school of knowledge, but a school of the world.

"A friend of Madame de Beauharnais," continues Madame Campan, "brought me her daughter Hortense de Beauharnais, and her niece Emilie de Beauharnais. Six months afterwards she came to inform me of her marriage with a Corsican gentleman, who had been brought up in the military school, and was then a general. I was requested to communicate this information to her daughter, who long lamented her mother's change of name. I was also desired to watch over the education of little Eugene de Beauharnais, who was placed at St. Germain, in the same school with my son.

"A great intimacy sprang up between my nieces and these young people. Madame de Beauharnais set out for Italy, and left her children with me. On her return, after the conquests of Bonaparte, that general, much pleased with the improvement of his stepdaughter, invited me to dine at Malmaison, and attended two representations of 'Esther' at my school."

He also showed his appreciation of her talents by sending his sister Caroline to St. Germain. Shortly before Caroline's marriage to Murat, and while she was yet at St. Germain, Napoleon observed to Madame Campan: "I do not like those love matches between young people whose brains are excited by the flames of the imagination. I had other views for my sister. Who knows what high alliance I might have procured for her! She is thoughtless, and does not form a just notion of my situation. The time will come when, perhaps, sovereigns might dispute for her hand. She is about to marry a brave man; but in my situation that is not enough. Fate should be left to fulfil her decrees."

[Madame Murat one day said to Madame Campan: "I am astonished that you are not more awed in our presence; you speak to us with as much familiarity as when we were your pupils!"—"The best thing you can do," replied Madame Campan, "is to forget your titles when you are with me, for I can never be afraid of queens whom I have held under the rod."]

Madame Campan dined at the Tuileries in company with the Pope's nuncio, at the period when the Concordat was in agitation. During dinner the First Consul astonished her by the able manner in which he conversed on the subject under discussion. She said he argued so logically that his talent quite amazed her. During the consulate Napoleon one day said to her, "If ever I establish a republic of women, I shall make you First Consul."

Napoleon's views as to "woman's mission" are now well known. Madame Campan said that she heard from him that when he founded the convent of the Sisters of la Charite he was urgently solicited to permit perpetual vows. He, however, refused to do so, on the ground that tastes may change, and that he did not see the necessity of excluding from the world women who might some time or other return to it, and become useful members of society. "Nunneries," he added, "assail the very roots of population. It is impossible to calculate the loss which a nation sustains in having ten thousand women shut up in cloisters. War does but little mischief; for the number of males is at least one-twenty-fifth greater than that of females. Women may, if they please, be allowed to make perpetual vows at fifty years of age; for then their task is fulfilled."

Napoleon once said to Madame Campan, "The old systems of education were good for nothing; what do young women stand in need of, to be well brought up in France?"—"Of mothers," answered Madame Campan. "It is well said," replied Napoleon. "Well, madame, let the French be indebted to you for bringing up mothers for their children."—"Napoleon one day interrupted Madame de Stael in the midst of a profound political argument to ask her whether she had nursed her children."

Never had the establishment at St. Germain been in a more flourishing condition than in 1802-3. What more could Madame Campan wish? For ten years absolute in her own house, she seemed also safe from the caprice of power. But the man who then disposed of the fate of France and Europe was soon to determine otherwise.

After the battle of Austerlitz the State undertook to bring up, at the public expense, the sisters, daughters, or nieces of those who were decorated with the Cross of Honour. The children of the warriors killed or wounded in glorious battle were to find paternal care in the ancient abodes of the Montmorencys and the Condes. Accustomed to concentrate around him all superior talents, fearless himself of superiority, Napoleon sought for a person qualified by experience and abilities to conduct the institution of Ecouen; he selected Madame Campan.

Comte de Lacepede, the pupil, friend, and rival of Buffon, then Grand Chancellor of the Legion of Honour, assisted her with his enlightened advice. Napoleon, who could descend with ease from the highest political subjects to the examination of the most minute details; who was as much at home in inspecting a boarding-school for young ladies as in reviewing the grenadiers of his guard; whom it was impossible to deceive, and who was not unwilling to find fault when he visited the establishment at Ecouen,—was forced to say, "It is all right."

[Napoleon wished to be informed of every particular of the furniture, government, and order of the house, the instruction and education of the pupils. The internal regulations were submitted to him. One of the intended rules, drawn up by Madame Campan, proposed that the children should hear mass on Sundays and Thursdays. Napoleon himself wrote on the margin, “every day.”]

“In the summer of 1811,” relates Madame Campan, “Napoleon, accompanied by Marie Louise and several personages of distinction, visited the establishment at Ecouen. After inspecting the chapel and the refectories, Napoleon desired that the three principal pupils might be presented to him. ‘Sire,’ said I, ‘I cannot select three; I must present six.’ He turned on his heel and repaired to the platform, where, after seeing all the classes assembled, he repeated his demand. ‘Sire,’ said I, ‘I beg leave to inform your Majesty that I should commit an injustice towards several other pupils who are as far advanced as those whom I might have the honour to present to you.’

“Berthier and others intimated to me, in a low tone of voice, that I should get into disgrace by my noncompliance. Napoleon looked over the whole of the house, entered into the most trivial details, and after addressing questions to several of the pupils: ‘Well, madame,’ said he, ‘I am satisfied; show me your six best pupils.’” Madame Campan presented them to him; and as he stepped into his carriage, he desired that their names might be sent to Berthier. On addressing the list to the Prince de Neufchatel, Madame Campan added to it the names of four other pupils, and all the ten obtained a pension of 300 francs. During the three hours which this visit occupied, Marie Louise did not utter a single word.

M. de Beaumont, chamberlain to the Empress Josephine, one day at Malmaison was expressing his regret that M. D—, one of Napoleon’s generals, who had recently been promoted, did not belong to a great family. “You mistake, monsieur,” observed Madame Campan, “he is of very ancient descent; he is one of the nephews of Charlemagne. All the heroes of our army sprang from the elder branch of that sovereign’s family, who never emigrated.”

When Madame Campan related this circumstance she added: “After the 30th of March, 1814, some officers of the army of Conde presumed to say to certain French marshals that it was a pity they were not more nobly connected. In answer to this, one of them said, ‘True nobility, gentlemen, consists in giving proofs of it. The field of honour has witnessed ours; but where are we to look for yours? Your swords have rusted in their scabbards. Our laurels may well excite envy; we have earned them nobly, and we owe them solely to our valour. You have merely inherited a name. This is the distinction between us.’”

[When one of the princes of the smaller German States was showing Marechal Lannes, with a contemptuous superiority of manner but ill concealed, the portraits of his ancestors, and covertly alluding to the absence of Lannes’s, that general turned the tables on him by haughtily remarking, “But I am an ancestor.”]

Napoleon used to observe that if he had had two such field-m Marshals as Suchet in Spain he would have not only conquered but kept the Peninsula. Suchet’s sound judgment, his governing yet conciliating spirit, his military tact, and his bravery, had procured him astonishing success. “It is to be regretted,” added he, “that a sovereign cannot improvise men of his stamp.”

On the 19th of March, 1815, a number of papers were left in the King’s closet. Napoleon ordered them to be examined, and among them was found the letter written by Madame Campan to Louis XVIII., immediately after the first restoration. In this letter she enumerated the contents of the portfolio which Louis XVI. had placed under her care. When Napoleon read this letter, he said, “Let it be sent to the office of Foreign Affairs; it is an historical document.”

Madame Campan thus described a visit from the Czar of Russia: “A few days after the battle of Paris the Emperor Alexander came to Ecouen, and he did me the honour to breakfast with me. After showing him over the establishment I conducted him to the park, the most elevated point of

which overlooked the plain of St. Denis. 'Sire,' said I, 'from this point I saw the battle of Paris'—'If,' replied the Emperor, 'that battle had lasted two hours longer we should not have had a single cartridge at our disposal. We feared that we had been betrayed; for on arriving so precipitately before Paris all our plans were laid, and we did not expect the firm resistance we experienced.' I next conducted the Emperor to the chapel, and showed him the seats occupied by 'le connetable' (the constable) of Montmorency, and 'la connetable' (the constable's lady), when they went to hear mass. 'Barbarians like us,' observed the Emperor, 'would say la connetable and le connetable.'

"The Czar inquired into the most minute particulars respecting the establishment of Ecoeu, and I felt great pleasure in answering his questions. I recollect having dwelt on several points which appeared to me to be very important, and which were in their spirit hostile to aristocratic principles. For example, I informed his Majesty that the daughters of distinguished and wealthy individuals and those of the humble and obscure mingled indiscriminately in the establishment. 'If,' said I, 'I were to observe the least pretension on account of the rank or fortune of parents, I should immediately put an end to it. The most perfect equality is preserved; distinction is awarded only to merit and industry. The pupils are obliged to cut out and make all their own clothes. They are taught to clean and mend lace; and two at a time, they by turns, three times a week, cook and distribute food to the poor of the village. The young girls who have been brought up at Ecoeu, or in my boarding-school at St. Germain, are thoroughly acquainted with everything relating to household business, and they are grateful to me for having made that a part of their education. In my conversations with them I have always taught them that on domestic management depends the preservation or dissipation of their fortunes.'

"The post-master of Ecoeu was in the courtyard at the moment when the Emperor, as he stepped into his carriage, told me he would send some sweetmeats for the pupils. I immediately communicated to them the intelligence, which was joyfully received; but the sweetmeats were looked for in vain. When Alexander set out for England he changed horses at Ecoeu, and the post-master said to him: 'Sire, the pupils of Ecoeu are still expecting the sweetmeats which your Majesty promised them.' To which the Emperor replied that he had directed Saken to send them. The Cossacks had most likely devoured the sweetmeats, and the poor little girls, who had been so highly flattered by the promise, never tasted them."

"A second house was formed at St. Denis, on the model of that of Ecoeu. Perhaps Madame Campan might have hoped for a title to which her long labours gave her a right; perhaps the superintendence of the two houses would have been but the fair recompense of her services; but her fortunate years had passed her fate was now to depend on the most important events. Napoleon had accumulated such a mass of power as no one but himself in Europe could overturn. France, content with thirty years of victories, in vain asked for peace and repose. The army which had triumphed in the sands of Egypt, on the summits of the Alps, and in the marshes of Holland, was to perish amidst the snows of Russia. Nations combined against a single man. The territory of France was invaded. The orphans of Ecoeu, from the windows of the mansion which served as their asylum, saw in the distant plain the fires of the Russian bivouacs, and once more wept the deaths of their fathers. Paris capitulated. France hailed the return of the descendants of Henri IV.; they reascended the throne so long filled by their ancestors, which the wisdom of an enlightened prince established on the empire of the laws.

[A lady, connected with the establishment of St. Denis, told Madame Campan that Napoleon visited it during the Hundred Days, and that the pupils were so delighted to see him that they crowded round him, endeavouring to touch his clothes, and evincing the most extravagant joy. The matron endeavoured to silence them; but Napoleon said, 'Let them alone; let them alone. This may weaken the head, but it strengthens the heart.']"

This moment, which diffused joy amongst the faithful servants of the royal family, and brought them the rewards of their devotion, proved to Madame Campan a period of bitter vexation. The hatred of her enemies had revived. The suppression of the school at Ecouen had deprived her of her position; the most absurd calumnies followed her into her retreat; her attachment to the Queen was suspected; she was accused not only of ingratitude but of perfidy. Slander has little effect on youth, but in the decline of life its darts are envenomed with a mortal poison. The wounds which Madame Campan had received were deep. Her sister, Madame Auguie, had destroyed herself; M. Rousseau, her brother-in-law, had perished, a victim of the reign of terror. In 1813 a dreadful accident had deprived her of her niece, Madame de Broc, one of the most amiable and interesting beings that ever adorned the earth. Madame Campan seemed destined to behold those whom she loved go down to the grave before her.

Beyond the walls of the mansion of Ecouen, in the village which surrounds it, Madame Campan had taken a small house where she loved to pass a few hours in solitary retirement. There, at liberty to abandon herself to the memory of the past, the superintendent of the imperial establishment became, once more, for the moment, the first lady of the chamber to Marie Antoinette. To the few friends whom she admitted into this retreat she would show, with emotion, a plain muslin gown which the Queen had worn, and which was made from a part of Tippoo Saib's present. A cup, out of which Marie Antoinette had drunk; a writing-stand, which she had long used, were, in her eyes, of inestimable value; and she has often been discovered sitting, in tears, before the portrait of her royal mistress.

After so many troubles Madame Campan sought a peaceful retreat. Paris had become odious to her.

She paid a visit to one of her most beloved pupils, Mademoiselle Crouzet, who had married a physician at Mantes, a man of talent, distinguished for his intelligence, frankness, and cordiality.

[M. Maigne, physician to the infirmaries at Mantes. Madame Campan found in him a friend and comforter, of whose merit and affection she knew the value.]

Mantes is a cheerful place of residence, and the idea of an abode there pleased her. A few intimate friends formed a pleasant society, and she enjoyed a little tranquillity after so many disturbances. The revisal of her "Memoirs," the arrangement of the interesting anecdotes of which her "Recollections" were to consist, alone diverted her mind from the one powerful sentiment which attached her to life. She lived only for her son. M. Campan deserved the tenderness of, his mother. No sacrifice had been spared for his education. After having pursued that course of study which, under the Imperial Government, produced men of such distinguished merit, he was waiting till time and circumstances should afford him an opportunity of devoting his services to his country. Although the state of his health was far from good, it did not threaten any rapid or premature decay; he was, however, after a few days' illness, suddenly taken from his family. "I never witnessed so heartrending a scene," M. Maigne says, "as that which took place when Marechal Ney's lady, her niece, and Madame Pannelier, her sister, came to acquaint her with this misfortune.—[The wife of Marechal Ney was a daughter of Madame Auguie, and had been an intimate friend of Hortense Beauharnais.]—When they entered her apartment she was in bed. All three at once uttered a piercing cry. The two ladies threw themselves on their knees, and kissed her hands, which they bedewed with tears. Before they could speak to her she read in their faces that she no longer possessed a son. At that instant her large eyes, opening wildly, seemed to wander. Her face grew pale, her features changed, her lips lost their colour, she struggled to speak, but uttered only inarticulate sounds, accompanied by piercing cries. Her gestures were wild, her reason was suspended. Every part of her being was in agony. To this state of anguish and despair no calm succeeded, until her tears began to flow. Friendship and the tenderest cares succeeded for a moment in calming her grief, but not in diminishing its power.

"This violent crisis had disturbed her whole organisation. A cruel disorder, which required a still more cruel operation, soon manifested itself. The presence of her family, a tour which she made

in Switzerland, a residence at Baden, and, above all, the sight, the tender and charming conversation of a person by whom she was affectionately beloved, occasionally diverted her mind, and in a slight degree relieved her suffering.” She underwent a serious operation, performed with extraordinary promptitude and the most complete success. No unfavourable symptoms appeared; Madame Campan was thought to be restored to her friends; but the disorder was in the blood; it took another course: the chest became affected. “From that moment,” says M. Maigne, “I could never look on Madame Campan as living; she herself felt that she belonged no more to this world.”

“My friend,” she said to her physician the day before her death, “I am attached to the simplicity of religion. I hate all that savours of fanaticism.” When her codicil was presented for her signature, her hand trembled; “It would be a pity,” she said, “to stop when so fairly on the road.”

Madame Campan died on the 16th of March, 1822. The cheerfulness she displayed throughout her malady had nothing affected in it. Her character was naturally powerful and elevated. At the approach of death she evinced the soul of a sage, without abandoning for an instant her feminine character.

CHAPTER I

I was fifteen years of age when I was appointed reader to Mesdames. I will begin by describing the Court at that period.

Maria Leczinska was just dead; the death of the Dauphin had preceded hers by three years; the Jesuits were suppressed, and piety was to be found at Court only in the apartments of Mesdames. The Duc de Choiseuil ruled.

Etiquette still existed at Court with all the forms it had acquired under Louis XIV.; dignity alone was wanting. As to gaiety, there was none. Versailles was not the place at which to seek for assemblies where French spirit and grace were displayed. The focus of wit and intelligence was Paris.

The King thought of nothing but the pleasures of the chase: it might have been imagined that the courtiers indulged themselves in making epigrams by hearing them say seriously, on those days when the King did not hunt, "The King does nothing to-day."—[In sporting usance (see SOULAIRE, p. 316).]

The arrangement beforehand of his movements was also a matter of great importance with Louis XV. On the first day of the year he noted down in his almanac the days of departure for Compiègne, Fontainebleau, Choisy, etc. The weightiest matters, the most serious events, never deranged this distribution of his time.

Since the death of the Marquise de Pompadour, the King had no titled mistress; he contented himself with his seraglio in the Parc-aux-Cerfs. It is well known that the monarch found the separation of Louis de Bourbon from the King of France the most animating feature of his royal existence. "They would have it so; they thought it for the best," was his way of expressing himself when the measures of his ministers were unsuccessful. The King delighted to manage the most disgraceful points of his private expenses himself; he one day sold to a head clerk in the War Department a house in which one of his mistresses had lodged; the contract ran in the name of Louis de Bourbon, and the purchaser himself took in a bag the price of the house in gold to the King in his private closet.

[Until recently little was known about the Parc-aux-Cerfs, and it was believed that a great number of young women had been maintained there at enormous expense. The investigations of M. J. A. Le Roi, given in his interesting work, "Curiosités Historiques sur Louis XIII., Louis XIV., Louis XV.," etc., Paris, Plon, 1864, have thrown fresh light upon the matter. The result he arrives at (see page 229 of his work) is that the house in question (No. 4 Rue St. Mederic, on the site of the Parc-aux-Cerfs, or breeding-place for deer, of Louis XIII) was very small, and could have held only one girl, the woman in charge of her, and a servant. Most of the girls left it only when about to be confined, and it sometimes stood vacant for five or six months. It may have been rented before the date of purchase, and other houses seem sometimes to have been used also; but in any case, it is evident that both the number of girls and the expense incurred have been absurdly exaggerated. The system flourished under Madame de Pompadour, but ceased as soon as Madame du Barry obtained full power over the King, and the house was then sold to M. J. B. Sevin for 16,000 livres, on 27th May, 1771, Louis not acting under the name of Louis de Bourbon, but as King,—*"Vente par le Roi, notre Sire."* In 1755 he had also been declared its purchaser in a similar manner. Thus, Madame Campan is in error in saying that the King made the contract as Louis de Bourbon.]—[And it also possible that Madam Campan was correct and that the house she refers to as sold for a "bag of gold" was another of the several of the seraglio establishments of Louis XV. D.W.]

Louis XV. saw very little of his family. He came every morning by a private staircase into the apartment of Madame Adelaide.

[Louis XV. seemed to feel for Madame Adelaide the tenderness he had had for the Duchesse de Bourgogne, his mother, who perished so suddenly, under the eyes and almost in the arms of Louis XIV. The birth of Madame Adelaide, 23d March, 1732, was followed by that of Madame Victoire Louise Marie Therese on the 11th May, 1733. Louis had, besides, six daughters: Mesdames Sophie and Louise, who are mentioned in this chapter; the Princesses Marie and Felicite, who died young; Madame Henriette died at Versailles in 1752, aged twenty-four; and finally, Madame the Duchess of Parma, who also died at the Court.]

He often brought and drank there coffee that he had made himself. Madame Adelaide pulled a bell which apprised Madame Victoire of the King's visit; Madame Victoire, on rising to go to her sister's apartment, rang for Madame Sophie, who in her turn rang for Madame Louise. The apartments of Mesdames were of very large dimensions. Madame Louise occupied the farthest room. This latter lady was deformed and very short; the poor Princess used to run with all her might to join the daily meeting, but, having a number of rooms to cross, she frequently in spite of her haste, had only just time to embrace her father before he set out for the chase.

Every evening, at six, Mesdames interrupted my reading to them to accompany the princes to Louis XV.; this visit was called the King's 'debotter',—[Debotter, meaning the time of unbooting.]—and was marked by a kind of etiquette. Mesdames put on an enormous hoop, which set out a petticoat ornamented with gold or embroidery; they fastened a long train round their waists, and concealed the undress of the rest of their clothing by a long cloak of black taffety which enveloped them up to the chin. The chevaliers d'honneur, the ladies in waiting, the pages, the equerries, and the ushers bearing large flambeaux, accompanied them to the King. In a moment the whole palace, generally so still, was in motion; the King kissed each Princess on the forehead, and the visit was so short that the reading which it interrupted was frequently resumed at the end of a quarter of an hour; Mesdames returned to their apartments, and untied the strings of their petticoats and trains; they resumed their tapestry, and I my book.

During the summer season the King sometimes came to the residence of Mesdames before the hour of his 'debotter'. One day he found me alone in Madame Victoire's closet, and asked me where 'Coche'[Piggy] was; I started, and he repeated his question, but without being at all the more understood. When the King was gone I asked Madame of whom he spoke. She told me that it was herself, and very coolly explained to me, that, being the fattest of his daughters, the King had given her the familiar name of 'Coche'; that he called Madame Adelaide, 'Logue' [Tatters], Madame Sophie, 'Graille'[Mite], and Madame Louise, 'Chiffie'[Rubbish]. The people of the King's household observed that he knew a great number of such words; possibly he had amused himself with picking them out from dictionaries. If this style of speaking betrayed the habits and tastes of the King, his manner savoured nothing of such vulgarity; his walk was easy and noble, he had a dignified carriage of the head, and his aspect, with out being severe, was imposing; he combined great politeness with a truly regal demeanour, and gracefully saluted the humblest woman whom curiosity led into his path.

He was very expert in a number of trifling matters which never occupy attention but when there is a lack of something better to employ it; for instance, he would knock off the top of an egg-shell at a single stroke of his fork; he therefore always ate eggs when he dined in public, and the Parisians who came on Sundays to see the King dine, returned home less struck with his fine figure than with the dexterity with which he broke his eggs.

Repartees of Louis XV., which marked the keenness of his wit and the elevation of his sentiments, were quoted with pleasure in the assemblies of Versailles.

This Prince was still beloved; it was wished that a style of life suitable to his age and dignity should at length supersede the errors of the past, and justify the love of his subjects. It was painful to judge him harshly. If he had established avowed mistresses at Court, the uniform devotion of the Queen was blamed for it. Mesdames were reproached for not seeking to prevent the King's forming an intimacy with some new favourite. Madame Henriette, twin sister of the Duchess of Parma, was much regretted, for she had considerable influence over the King's mind, and it was remarked that if she had lived she would have been assiduous in finding him amusements in the bosom of his family, would have followed him in his short excursions, and would have done the honours of the 'petits soupers' which he was so fond of giving in his private apartments.

Mesdames too much neglected the means of pleasing the King, but the cause of that was obvious in the little attention he had paid them in their youth.

In order to console the people under their sufferings, and to shut their eyes to the real depredations on the treasury, the ministers occasionally pressed the most extravagant measures of reform in the King's household, and even in his personal expenses.

Cardinal Fleury, who in truth had the merit of reestablishing the finances, carried this system of economy so far as to obtain from the King the suppression of the household of the four younger Princesses. They were brought up as mere boarders in a convent eighty leagues distant from the Court. Saint Cyr would have been more suitable for the reception of the King's daughters; but probably the Cardinal shared some of those prejudices which will always attach to even the most useful institutions, and which, since the death of Louis XIV., had been raised against the noble establishment of Madame de Maintenon. Madame Louise often assured me that at twelve years of age she was not mistress of the whole alphabet, and never learnt to read fluently until after her return to Versailles.

Madame Victoire attributed certain paroxysms of terror, which she was never able to conquer, to the violent alarms she experienced at the Abbey of Fontevault, whenever she was sent, by way of penance, to pray alone in the vault where the sisters were interred.

A gardener belonging to the abbey died raving mad. His habitation, without the walls, was near a chapel of the abbey, where Mesdames were taken to repeat the prayers for those in the agonies of death. Their prayers were more than once interrupted by the shrieks of the dying man.

When Mesdames, still very young, returned to Court, they enjoyed the friendship of Monseigneur the Dauphin, and profited by his advice. They devoted themselves ardently to study, and gave up almost the whole of their time to it; they enabled themselves to write French correctly, and acquired a good knowledge of history. Italian, English, the higher branches of mathematics, turning and dialing, filled up in succession their leisure moments. Madame Adelaide, in particular, had a most insatiable desire to learn; she was taught to play upon all instruments, from the horn (will it be believed!) to the Jew's-harp.

Madame Adelaide was graced for a short time with a charming figure; but never did beauty so quickly vanish. Madame Victoire was handsome and very graceful; her address, mien, and smile were in perfect accordance with the goodness of her heart. Madame Sophie was remarkably ugly; never did I behold a person with so unprepossessing an appearance; she walked with the greatest rapidity; and, in order to recognise the people who placed themselves along her path without looking at them, she acquired the habit of leering on one side, like a hare. This Princess was so exceedingly diffident that a person might be with her daily for years together without hearing her utter a single word. It was asserted, however, that she displayed talent, and even amiability, in the society of some favourite ladies. She taught herself a great deal, but she studied alone; the presence of a reader would have disconcerted her very much. There were, however, occasions on which the Princess, generally so intractable, became all at once affable and condescending, and manifested the most communicative good-nature; this would happen during a storm; so great was her alarm on such an occasion that she then approached the most humble, and would ask them a thousand obliging questions; a flash of lightning made her squeeze their hands; a peal of thunder would drive her to embrace them, but

with the return of the calm, the Princess resumed her stiffness, her reserve, and her repellent air, and passed all by without taking the slightest notice of any one, until a fresh storm restored to her at once her dread and her affability. [Which reminds one of the elder (and puritanic) Cato who said that he “embraced” his wife only when it thundered, but added that he did enjoy a good thunderstorm. D.W.]

Mesdames found in a beloved brother, whose rare attainments are known to all Frenchmen, a guide in everything wanting to their education. In their august mother, Maria Leczinska, they possessed the noblest example of every pious and social virtue; that Princess, by her eminent qualities and her modest dignity, veiled the failings of the King, and while she lived she preserved in the Court of Louis XV. that decorous and dignified tone which alone secures the respect due to power. The Princesses, her daughters, were worthy of her; and if a few degraded beings did aim the shafts of calumny at them, these shafts dropped harmless, warded off by the elevation of their sentiments and the purity of their conduct.

If Mesdames had not tasked themselves with numerous occupations, they would have been much to be pitied. They loved walking, but could enjoy nothing beyond the public gardens of Versailles; they would have cultivated flowers, but could have no others than those in their windows.

The Marquise de Durfort, since Duchesse de Civrac, afforded to Madame Victoire agreeable society. The Princess spent almost all her evenings with that lady, and ended by fancying herself domiciled with her.

Madame de Narbonne had, in a similar way, taken pains to make her intimate acquaintance pleasant to Madame Adelaide.

Madame Louise had for many years lived in great seclusion; I read to her five hours a day. My voice frequently betrayed the exhaustion of my lungs; the Princess would then prepare sugared water for me, place it by me, and apologise for making me read so long, on the score of having prescribed a course of reading for herself.

One evening, while I was reading, she was informed that M. Bertin, ‘ministre des parties casuelles’, desired to speak with her; she went out abruptly, returned, resumed her silks and embroidery, and made me resume my book; when I retired she commanded me to be in her closet the next morning at eleven o’clock. When I got there the Princess was gone out; I learnt that she had gone at seven in the morning to the Convent of the Carmelites of St. Denis, where she was desirous of taking the veil. I went to Madame Victoire; there I heard that the King alone had been acquainted with Madame Louise’s project; that he had kept it faithfully secret, and that, having long previously opposed her wish, he had only on the preceding evening sent her his consent; that she had gone alone into the convent, where she was expected; and that a few minutes afterwards she had made her appearance at the grating, to show to the Princesse de Guistel, who had accompanied her to the convent gate, and to her equerry, the King’s order to leave her in the monastery.

Upon receiving the intelligence of her sister’s departure, Madame Adelaide gave way to violent paroxysms of rage, and reproached the King bitterly for the secret, which he had thought it his duty to preserve. Madame Victoire missed the society of her favourite sister, but she shed tears in silence only. The first time I saw this excellent Princess after Madame Louise’s departure, I threw myself at her feet, kissed her hand, and asked her, with all the confidence of youth, whether she would quit us as Madame Louise had done. She raised me, embraced me; and said, pointing to the lounge upon which she was extended, “Make yourself easy, my dear; I shall never have Louise’s courage. I love the conveniences of life too well; this lounge is my destruction.” As soon as I obtained permission to do so, I went to St. Denis to see my late mistress; she deigned to receive me with her face uncovered, in her private parlour; she told me she had just left the wash-house, and that it was her turn that day to attend to the linen. “I much abused your youthful lungs for two years before the execution of my project,” added she. “I knew that here I could read none but books tending to our salvation, and I wished to review all the historians that had interested me.”

She informed me that the King's consent for her to go to St. Denis had been brought to her while I was reading; she prided herself, and with reason, upon having returned to her closet without the slightest mark of agitation, though she said she felt so keenly that she could scarcely regain her chair. She added that moralists were right when they said that happiness does not dwell in palaces; that she had proved it; and that, if I desired to be happy, she advised me to come and enjoy a retreat in which the liveliest imagination might find full exercise in the contemplation of a better world. I had no palace, no earthly grandeur to sacrifice to God; nothing but the bosom of a united family; and it is precisely there that the moralists whom she cited have placed true happiness. I replied that, in private life, the absence of a beloved and cherished daughter would be too cruelly felt by her family. The Princess said no more on the subject.

The seclusion of Madame Louise was attributed to various motives; some were unkind enough to suppose it to have been occasioned by her mortification at being, in point of rank, the last of the Princesses. I think I penetrated the true cause. Her aspirations were lofty; she loved everything sublime; often while I was reading she would interrupt me to exclaim, "That is beautiful! that is noble!" There was but one brilliant action that she could perform,—to quit a palace for a cell, and rich garments for a stuff gown. She achieved it!

I saw Madame Louise two or three times more at the grating. I was informed of her death by Louis XVI. "My Aunt Louise," said he to me, "your old mistress, is just dead at St. Denis. I have this moment received intelligence of it. Her piety and resignation were admirable, and yet the delirium of my good aunt recalled to her recollection that she was a princess, for her last words were, 'To paradise, haste, haste, full speed.' No doubt she thought she was again giving orders to her equerry."

[The retirement of Madame Louise, and her removal from Court, had only served to give her up entirely to the intrigues of the clergy. She received incessant visits from bishops, archbishops, and ambitious priests of every rank; she prevailed on the King, her father, to grant many ecclesiastical preferments, and probably looked forward to playing an important part when the King, weary of his licentious course of life, should begin to think of religion. This, perhaps, might have been the case had not a sudden and unexpected death put an end to his career. The project of Madame Louise fell to the ground in consequence of this event. She remained in her convent, whence she continued to solicit favours, as I knew from the complaints of the Queen, who often said to me, "Here is another letter from my Aunt Louise. She is certainly the most intriguing little Carmelite in the kingdom." The Court went to visit her about three times a year, and I recollect that the Queen, intending to take her daughter there, ordered me to get a doll dressed like a Carmelite for her, that the young Princess might be accustomed, before she went into the convent, to the habit of her aunt, the nun.—MADAME CAMPAN]

Madame Victoire, good, sweet-tempered, and affable, lived with the most amiable simplicity in a society wherein she was much caressed; she was adored by her household. Without quitting Versailles, without sacrificing her easy chair, she fulfilled the duties of religion with punctuality, gave to the poor all she possessed, and strictly observed Lent and the fasts. The table of Mesdames acquired a reputation for dishes of abstinence, spread abroad by the assiduous parasites at that of their maitre d'hotel. Madame Victoire was not indifferent to good living, but she had the most religious scruples respecting dishes of which it was allowable to partake at penitential times. I saw her one day exceedingly tormented by her doubts about a water-fowl, which was often served up to her during Lent. The question to be determined was, whether it was 'maigre' or 'gras'. She consulted a bishop, who happened to be of the party: the prelate immediately assumed the grave attitude of a judge who is about to pronounce sentence. He answered the Princess that, in a similar case of doubt, it had been resolved that after dressing the bird it should be pricked over a very cold silver dish; if the gravy of the

animal congealed within a quarter of an hour, the creature was to be accounted flesh; but if the gravy remained in an oily state, it might be eaten without scruple. Madame Victoire immediately made the experiment: the gravy did not congeal; and this was a source of great joy to the Princess, who was very partial to that sort of game. The abstinence which so much occupied the attention of Madame Victoire was so disagreeable to her, that she listened with impatience for the midnight hour of Holy Saturday; and then she was immediately supplied with a good dish of fowl and rice, and sundry other succulent viands. She confessed with such amiable candour her taste for good cheer and the comforts of life, that it would have been necessary to be as severe in principle as insensible to the excellent qualities of the Princess, to consider it a crime in her.

Madame Adelaide had more mind than Madame Victoire; but she was altogether deficient in that kindness which alone creates affection for the great, abrupt manners, a harsh voice, and a short way of speaking, rendering her more than imposing. She carried the idea of the prerogative of rank to a high pitch. One of her chaplains was unlucky enough to say ‘*Dominus vobiscum*’ with rather too easy an air; the Princess rated him soundly for it after mass, and told him to remember that he was not a bishop, and not again to think of officiating in the style of a prelate.

Mesdames lived quite separate from the King. Since the death of Madame de Pompadour he had lived alone. The enemies of the Duc de Choiseul did not know in what department, nor through what channel, they could prepare and bring about the downfall of the man who stood in their way. The King was connected only with women of so low a class that they could not be made use of for any delicate intrigue; moreover, the Parc-aux-Cerfs was a seraglio, the beauties of which were often replaced; it was desirable to give the King a mistress who could form a circle, and in whose drawing-room the long-standing attachment of the King for the Duc de Choiseul might be overcome. It is true that Madame du Barry was selected from a class sufficiently low. Her origin, her education, her habits, and everything about her bore a character of vulgarity and shamelessness; but by marrying her to a man whose pedigree dated from 1400, it was thought scandal would be avoided. The conqueror of Mahon conducted this coarse intrigue.

[It appeared at this period as if every feeling of dignity was lost. “Few noblemen of the French Court,” says a writer of the time, “preserved themselves from the general corruption. The Marechal de Brissac was one of the latter. He was bantered on the strictness of his principles of honour and honesty; it was thought strange that he should be offended by being thought, like so many others, exposed to hymeneal disgrace. Louis XV., who was present, and laughed at his angry fit, said to him: ‘Come, M. de Brissac, don’t be angry; ‘tis but a trifling evil; take courage.’—‘Sire,’ replied M. de Brissac, ‘I possess all kinds of courage, except that which can brave shame.’”—NOTE BY THE EDITOR.]

Such a mistress was judiciously selected for the diversion of the latter years of a man weary of grandeur, fatigued with pleasure, and cloyed with voluptuousness. Neither the wit, the talents, the graces of the Marquise de Pompadour, her beauty, nor even her love for the King, would have had any further influence over that worn-out being.

He wanted a Roxalana of familiar gaiety, without any respect for the dignity of the sovereign. Madame du Barry one day so far forgot propriety as to desire to be present at a Council of State. The King was weak enough to consent to it. There she remained ridiculously perched upon the arm of his chair, playing all sorts of childish monkey tricks, calculated to please an old sultan.

Another time she snatched a packet of sealed letters from the King’s hand. Among them she had observed one from Comte de Broglie. She told the King that she knew that rascal Broglie spoke ill of her to him, and that for once, at least, she would make sure he should read nothing respecting her. The King wanted to get the packet again; she resisted, and made him run two or three times round the table, which was in the middle of the council-chamber, and then, on passing the fireplace, she

threw the letters into the grate, where they were consumed. The King became furious; he seized his audacious mistress by the arm, and put her out of the door without speaking to her. Madame du Barry thought herself utterly disgraced; she returned home, and remained two hours, alone, abandoned to the utmost distress. The King went to her; she threw herself at his feet, in tears, and he pardoned her.

Madame la Marechale de Beauvau, the Duchesse de Choiseul, and the Duchesse de Grammont had renounced the honour of the King's intimate acquaintance rather than share it with Madame du Barry. But a few years after the death of Louis XV., Madame la Marechale being alone at the Val, a house belonging to M. de Beauvau, Mademoiselle de Dillon saw the Countess's calash take shelter in the forest of St. Germain during a violent storm. She invited her in, and the Countess herself related these particulars, which I had from Madame de Beauvau.

The Comte du Barry, surnamed 'le roue' (the profligate), and Mademoiselle du Barry advised, or rather prompted, Madame du Barry in furtherance of the plans of the party of the Marechal de Richelieu and the Duc d'Aiguillon. Sometimes they even set her to act in such a way as to have a useful influence upon great political measures. Under pretence that the page who accompanied Charles I. in his flight was a Du Barry or Barrymore, they persuaded the Comtesse du Barry to buy in London that fine portrait which we now have in the Museum. She had the picture placed in her drawing-room, and when she saw the King hesitating upon the violent measure of breaking up his Parliament, and forming that which was called the Maupeou Parliament, she desired him to look at the portrait of a king who had given way to his Parliament.

[The "Memoirs of General Dumouriez," vol. i., page 142, contain some curious particulars about Madame Du Barry; and novel details respecting her will be found at page 243 of "Curiosites Historiques," by J. A. Le Rol (Paris, Plon, 1864). His investigations lead to the result that her real name was Jean Becu, born, 19th August, 1743, at Vaucouleurs, the natural daughter of Anne Becu, otherwise known as "Quantiny." Her mother afterwards married Nicolas Rancon. Comte Jean du Barry met her among the demi-monde, and succeeded, about 1767, and by the help of his friend Label, the valet de chambre of Louis XV., in introducing her to the King under the name of Mademoiselle l'Ange. To be formally mistress, a husband had to be found. The Comte Jean du Barry, already married himself, found no difficulty in getting his brother, Comte Guillaume, a poor officer of the marine troops, to accept the post of husband. In the marriage-contract, signed on 23d July, 1768, she was described as "the daughter of Anne Becu and of an imaginary first husband, Sieur Jean Jacques Gomard de Vaubernier," and three years were taken off her age. The marriage-contract was so drawn as to leave Madame du Barry entirely free from all control by her husband. The marriage was solemnised on 1st September, 1768, after which the nominal husband returned to Toulouse. Madame du Barry in later years provided for him; and in 1772, tired of his applications, she obtained an act of separation from him. He married later Jeanne Madeleine Lemoine, and died in 1811. Madame du Barry took care of her mother, who figured as Madame de Montrable. In all, she received from the King, M. Le Roi calculates, about twelve and a half millions of livres. On the death of Louis XV. she had to retire first to the Abbey of Pont-aux-Dames, near Meaux, then she was allowed to go to her small house at St. Vrain, near Arpajon, and, finally, in 1775, to her chateau at Louveciennes. Much to her credit be it said, she retained many of her friends, and was on the most intimate terms till his death with the Duc de Brissac (Louis Hercule Timoldon de Cosse-Brissac), who was killed at Versailles in the massacre of the prisoners in September, 1792, leaving at his death a large legacy to her. Even the Emperor Joseph visited her. In 1791 many of her jewels were stolen and taken to England. This caused her to make several visits to that country, where she gained her suit. But these visits, though

she took every precaution to legalise them, ruined her. Betrayed by her servants, among them by Zamor, the negro page, she was brought before the Revolutionary tribunal, and was guillotined on 8th December, 1793, in a frenzy of terror, calling for mercy and for delay up to the moment when her head fell.]

The men of ambition who were labouring to overthrow the Duc de Choiseul strengthened themselves by their concentration at the house of the favourite, and succeeded in their project. The bigots, who never forgave that minister the suppression of the Jesuits, and who had always been hostile to a treaty of alliance with Austria, influenced the minds of Mesdames. The Duc de La Vauguyon, the young Dauphin's governor, infected them with the same prejudices.

Such was the state of the public mind when the young Archduchess Marie Antoinette arrived at the Court of Versailles, just at the moment when the party which brought her there was about to be overthrown.

Madame Adelaide openly avowed her dislike to a princess of the House of Austria; and when M. Campan, my father-in-law, went to receive his orders, at the moment of setting off with the household of the Dauphiness, to go and receive the Archduchess upon the frontiers, she said she disapproved of the marriage of her nephew with an archduchess; and that, if she had the direction of the matter, she would not send for an Austrian.

CHAPTER II

MARIE ANTOINETTE JOSEPHE JEANNE DE LORRAINE, Archduchess of Austria, daughter of Francois de Lorraine and of Maria Theresa, was born on the 2d of November, 1755, the day of the earthquake at Lisbon; and this catastrophe, which appeared to stamp the era of her birth with a fatal mark, without forming a motive for superstitious fear with the Princess, nevertheless made an impression upon her mind. As the Empress already had a great number of daughters, she ardently desired to have another son, and playfully wagered against her wish with the Duc de Tarouka, who had insisted that she would give birth to an archduke. He lost by the birth of the Princess, and had executed in porcelain a figure with one knee bent on the earth, and presenting tablets, upon which the following lines by Metastasio were engraved:

I lose by your fair daughter's birth
Who prophesied a son;
But if she share her mother's worth,
Why, all the world has won!

The Queen was fond of talking of the first years of her youth. Her father, the Emperor Francis, had made a deep impression upon her heart; she lost him when she was scarcely seven years old. One of those circumstances which fix themselves strongly in the memories of children frequently recalled his last caresses to her. The Emperor was setting out for Innspruck; he had already left his palace, when he ordered a gentleman to fetch the Archduchess Marie Antoinette, and bring her to his carriage. When she came, he stretched out his arms to receive her, and said, after having pressed her to his bosom, "I wanted to embrace this child once more." The Emperor died suddenly during the journey, and never saw his beloved daughter again.

The Queen often spoke of her mother, and with profound respect, but she based all her schemes for the education of her children on the essentials which had been neglected in her own. Maria Theresa, who inspired awe by her great qualities, taught the Archduchesses to fear and respect rather than to love her; at least I observed this in the Queen's feelings towards her august mother. She therefore never desired to place between her own children and herself that distance which had existed in the imperial family. She cited a fatal consequence of it, which had made such a powerful impression upon her that time had never been able to efface it.

The wife of the Emperor Joseph II. was taken from him in a few days by an attack of smallpox of the most virulent kind. Her coffin had recently been deposited in the vault of the imperial family. The Archduchess Josepha, who had been betrothed to the King of Naples, at the instant she was quitting Vienna received an order from the Empress not to set off without having offered up a prayer in the vault of her forefathers. The Archduchess, persuaded that she should take the disorder to which her sister-in-law had just fallen a victim, looked upon this order as her death-warrant. She loved the young Archduchess Marie Antoinette tenderly; she took her upon her knees, embraced her with tears, and told her she was about to leave her, not for Naples, but never to see her again; that she was going down then to the tomb of her ancestors, and that she should shortly go again there to remain. Her anticipation was realised; confluent smallpox carried her off in a very few days, and her youngest sister ascended the throne of Naples in her place.

The Empress was too much taken up with high political interests to have it in her power to devote herself to maternal attentions. The celebrated Wansvietten, her physician, went daily, to visit the young imperial family, and afterwards to Maria Theresa, and gave the most minute details respecting the health of the Archdukes and Archduchesses, whom she herself sometimes did not see for eight or ten days at a time. As soon as the arrival of a stranger of rank at Vienna was made known,

the Empress brought her family about her, admitted them to her table, and by this concerted meeting induced a belief that she herself presided over the education of her children.

The chief governesses, being under no fear of inspection from Maria Theresa, aimed at making themselves beloved by their pupils by the common and blamable practice of indulgence, so fatal to the future progress and happiness of children. Marie Antoinette was the cause of her governess being dismissed, through a confession that all her copies and all her letters were invariably first traced out with pencil; the Comtesse de Brandes was appointed to succeed her, and fulfilled her duties with great exactness and talent. The Queen looked upon having been confided to her care so late as a misfortune, and always continued upon terms of friendship with that lady. The education of Marie Antoinette was certainly very much neglected. With the exception of the Italian language, all that related to belles lettres, and particularly to history, even that of her own country, was almost entirely unknown to her. This was soon found out at the Court of France, and thence arose the generally received opinion that she was deficient in sense. It will be seen in the course of these “Memoirs” whether that opinion was well or ill founded. The public prints, however, teemed with assertions of the superior talents of Maria Theresa’s children. They often noticed the answers which the young Princesses gave in Latin to the harangues addressed to them; they uttered them, it is true, but without understanding them; they knew not a single word of that language.

Mention was one day made to the Queen of a drawing made by her, and presented by the Empress to M. Gerard, chief clerk of Foreign Affairs, on the occasion of his going to Vienna to draw up the articles for her marriage-contract. “I should blush,” said she, “if that proof of the quackery of my education were shown to me. I do not believe that I ever put a pencil to that drawing.” However, what had been taught her she knew perfectly well. Her facility of learning was inconceivable, and if all her teachers had been as well informed and as faithful to their duty as the Abbe Metastasio, who taught her Italian, she would have attained as great a superiority in the other branches of her education. The Queen spoke that language with grace and ease, and translated the most difficult poets. She did not write French correctly, but she spoke it with the greatest fluency, and even affected to say that she had lost German. In fact she attempted in 1787 to learn her mother-tongue, and took lessons assiduously for six weeks; she was obliged to relinquish them, finding all the difficulties which a Frenchwoman, who should take up the study too late, would have to encounter. In the same manner she gave up English, which I had taught her for some time, and in which she had made rapid progress. Music was the accomplishment in which the Queen most delighted. She did not play well on any instrument, but she had become able to read at sight like a first-rate professor. She attained this degree of perfection in France, this branch of her education having been neglected at Vienna as much as the rest. A few days after her arrival at Versailles, she was introduced to her singing-master, La Garde, author of the opera of “Egle.” She made a distant appointment with him, needing, as she said, rest after the fatigues of the journey and the numerous fetes which had taken place at Versailles; but her motive was her desire to conceal how ignorant she was of the rudiments of music. She asked M. Campan whether his son, who was a good musician, could give her lessons secretly for three months. “The Dauphiness,” added she, smiling, “must be careful of the reputation of the Archduchess.” The lessons were given privately, and at the end of three months of constant application she sent for M. la Garde, and surprised him by her skill.

The desire to perfect Marie Antoinette in the study of the French language was probably the motive which determined Maria Theresa to provide for her as teachers two French actors: Aufresne, for pronunciation and declamation, and Sainville, for taste in French singing; the latter had been an officer in France, and bore a bad character. The choice gave just umbrage to our Court. The Marquis de Durfort, at that time ambassador at Vienna, was ordered to make a representation to the Empress upon her selection. The two actors were dismissed, and the Princess required that an ecclesiastic should be sent to her. Several eminent ecclesiastics declined taking upon themselves so delicate an

office; others who were pointed out by Maria Theresa (among the rest the Abbe Grisel) belonged to parties which sufficed to exclude them.

The Archbishop of Toulouse one day went to the Duc de Choiseul at the moment when he was much embarrassed upon the subject of this nomination; he proposed to him the Abby de Vermond, librarian of the College des Quatre Nations. The eulogistic manner in which he spoke of his protegee procured the appointment for the latter on that very day; and the gratitude of the Abbe de Vermond towards the prelate was very fatal to France, inasmuch as after seventeen years of persevering attempts to bring him into the ministry, he succeeded at last in getting him named Comptroller-General and President of the Council.—[Comte de Brienne, later Archbishop of Sens.]

This Abbe de Vermond directed almost all the Queen's actions. He established his influence over her at an age when impressions are most durable; and it was easy to see that he had taken pains only to render himself beloved by his pupil, and had troubled himself very little with the care of instructing her. He might have even been accused of having, by a sharp-sighted though culpable policy, purposely left her in ignorance. Marie Antoinette spoke the French language with much grace, but wrote it less perfectly. The Abbe de Vermond revised all the letters which she sent to Vienna. The insupportable folly with which he boasted of it displayed the character of a man more flattered at being admitted into her intimate secrets than anxious to fulfil worthily the high office of her preceptor.

[The Abbe de Vermond encouraged the impatience of etiquette shown by Marie Antoinette while she was Dauphiness. When she became Queen he endeavoured openly to induce her to shake off the restraints she still respected. If he chanced to enter her apartment at the time she was preparing to go out, "For whom," he would say, in a tone of raillery, "is this detachment of warriors which I found in the court? Is it some general going to inspect his army? Does all this military display become a young Queen adored by her subjects?" He would call to her mind the simplicity with which Maria Theresa lived; the visits she made without guards, or even attendants, to the Prince d'Esterhazy, to the Comte de Palfi, passing whole days far from the fatiguing ceremonies of the Court. The Abbe thus artfully flattered the inclinations of Marie Antoinette, and showed her how she might disguise, even from herself, her aversion for the ceremonies observed by the descendants of Louis XIV.-MADAME CAMPAN.]

His pride received its birth at Vienna, where Maria Theresa, as much to give him authority with the Archduchess as to make herself acquainted with his character, permitted him to mix every evening with the private circle of her family, into which the future Dauphiness had been admitted for some time. Joseph II., the elder Archduchess, and a few noblemen honoured by the confidence of Maria Theresa, composed the party; and reflections on the world, on courts, and the duties of princes were the usual topics of conversation. The Abbe de Vermond, in relating these particulars, confessed the means which he had made use of to gain admission into this private circle. The Empress, meeting him at the Archduchess's, asked him if he had formed any connections in Vienna. "None, Madame," replied he; "the apartment of the Archduchess and the hotel of the ambassador of France are the only places which the man honoured with the care of the Princess's education should frequent." A month afterwards Maria Theresa, through a habit common enough among sovereigns, asked him the same question, and received precisely the same answer. The next day he received an order to join the imperial family every evening.

It is extremely probable, from the constant and well-known intercourse between this man and Comte de Mercy, ambassador of the Empire during the whole reign of Louis XVI., that he was useful to the Court of Vienna, and that he often caused the Queen to decide on measures, the consequences of which she did not consider. Not of high birth, imbued with all the principles of the modern philosophy, and yet holding to the hierarchy of the Church more tenaciously than any

other ecclesiastic; vain, talkative, and at the same time cunning and abrupt; very ugly and affecting singularity; treating the most exalted persons as his equals, sometimes even as his inferiors, the Abbe de Vermond received ministers and bishops when in his bath; but said at the same time that Cardinal Dubois was a fool; that a man such as he, having obtained power, ought to make cardinals, and refuse to be one himself.

Intoxicated with the reception he had met with at the Court of Vienna, and having till then seen nothing of high life, the Abbe de Vermond admired no other customs than those of the imperial family; he ridiculed the etiquette of the House of Bourbon incessantly; the young Dauphiness was constantly incited by his sarcasms to get rid of it, and it was he who first induced her to suppress an infinity of practices of which he could discern neither the prudence nor the political aim. Such is the faithful portrait of that man whom the evil star of Marie Antoinette had reserved to guide her first steps upon a stage so conspicuous and so full of danger as that of the Court of Versailles.

It will be thought, perhaps, that I draw the character of the Abbe de Vermond too unfavourably; but how can I view with any complacency one who, after having arrogated to himself the office of confidant and sole counsellor of the Queen, guided her with so little prudence, and gave us the mortification of seeing that Princess blend, with qualities which charmed all that surrounded her, errors alike injurious to her glory and her happiness?

While M. de Choiseul, satisfied with the person whom M. de Brienne had presented, despatched him to Vienna with every eulogium calculated to inspire unbounded confidence, the Marquis de Durfort sent off a hairdresser and a few French fashions; and then it was thought sufficient pains had been taken to form the character of a princess destined to share the throne of France.

The marriage of Monseigneur the Dauphin with the Archduchess was determined upon during the administration of the Duc de Choiseul. The Marquis de Durfort, who was to succeed the Baron de Breteuil in the embassy to Vienna, was appointed proxy for the marriage ceremony; but six months after the Dauphin's marriage the Duc de Choiseul was disgraced, and Madame de Marsan and Madame de Guemenee, who grew more powerful through the Duke's disgrace, conferred that embassy, upon Prince Louis de Rohan, afterwards cardinal and grand almoner.

Hence it will be seen that the Gazette de France is a sufficient answer to those libellers who dared to assert that the young Archduchess was acquainted with the Cardinal de Rohan before the period of her marriage. A worse selection in itself, or one more disagreeable to Maria Theresa, than that which sent to her, in quality, of ambassador, a man so frivolous and so immoral as Prince Louis de Rohan, could not have been made. He possessed but superficial knowledge upon any subject, and was totally ignorant of diplomatic affairs. His reputation had gone before him to Vienna, and his mission opened under the most unfavourable auspices. In want of money, and the House of Rohan being unable to make him any considerable advances, he obtained from his Court a patent which authorised him to borrow the sum of 600,000 livres upon his benefices, ran in debt above a million, and thought to dazzle the city and Court of Vienna by the most indecent and ill-judged extravagance. He formed a suite of eight or ten gentlemen, of names sufficiently high-sounding; twelve pages equally well born, a crowd of officers and servants, a company of chamber musicians, etc. But this idle pomp did not last; embarrassment and distress soon showed themselves; his people, no longer receiving pay, in order to make money, abused the privileges of ambassadors, and smuggled with so much effrontery that Maria Theresa, to put a stop to it without offending the Court of France, was compelled to suppress the privileges in this respect of all the diplomatic bodies, a step which rendered the person and conduct of Prince Louis odious in every foreign Court.

[I have often heard the Queen say that, at Vienna, in the office of the secretary of the Prince de Rohan, there were sold in one year more silk stockings than at Lyons and Paris together.—MADAME CAMPAN.]

He seldom obtained private audiences from the Empress, who did not esteem him, and who expressed herself without reserve upon his conduct both as a bishop and as an ambassador. He thought to obtain favour by assisting to effect the marriage of the Archduchess Elizabeth, the elder sister of Marie Antoinette, with Louis XV., an affair which was awkwardly undertaken, and of which Madame du Barry had no difficulty in causing the failure. I have deemed it my duty to omit no particular of the moral and political character of a man whose existence was subsequently so injurious to the reputation of Marie Antoinette.

CHAPTER III

A superb pavilion had been prepared upon the frontier near Kehl. It consisted of a vast salon, connected with two apartments, one of which was assigned to the lords and ladies of the Court of Vienna, and the other to the suite of the Dauphiness, composed of the Comtesse de Noailles, her lady of honour; the Duchesse de Cosse, her dame d'atours; four ladies of the palace; the Comte de Saulx-Tavannes, chevalier d'honneur; the Comte de Tesse, first equerry; the Bishop of Chartres, first almoner; the officers of the Body Guard, and the equerries.

When the Dauphiness had been entirely undressed, in order that she might retain nothing belonging to a foreign Court (an etiquette always observed on such an occasion), the doors were opened; the young Princess came forward, looking round for the Comtesse de Noailles; then, rushing into her arms, she implored her, with tears in her eyes, and with heartfelt sincerity, to be her guide and support.

While doing justice to the virtues of the Comtesse de Noailles, those sincerely attached to the Queen have always considered it as one of her earliest misfortunes not to have found, in the person of her adviser, a woman indulgent, enlightened, and administering good advice with that amiability which disposes young persons to follow it. The Comtesse de Noailles had nothing agreeable in her appearance; her demeanour was stiff and her mien severe. She was perfect mistress of etiquette; but she wearied the young Princess with it, without making her sensible of its importance. It would have been sufficient to represent to the Dauphiness that in France her dignity depended much upon customs not necessary at Vienna to secure the respect and love of the good and submissive Austrians for the imperial family; but the Dauphiness was perpetually tormented by the remonstrances of the Comtesse de Noailles, and at the same time was led by the Abbe de Vermond to ridicule both the lessons upon etiquette and her who gave them. She preferred raillery to argument, and nicknamed the Comtesse de Noailles Madame l'Etiquette.

The fetes which were given at Versailles on the marriage of the Dauphin were very splendid. The Dauphiness arrived there at the hour for her toilet, having slept at La Muette, where Louis XV. had been to receive her; and where that Prince, blinded by a feeling unworthy of a sovereign and the father of a family, caused the young Princess, the royal family, and the ladies of the Court, to sit down to supper with Madame du Barry.

The Dauphiness was hurt at this conduct; she spoke of it openly enough to those with whom she was intimate, but she knew how to conceal her dissatisfaction in public, and her behaviour showed no signs of it.

She was received at Versailles in an apartment on the ground floor, under that of the late Queen, which was not ready for her until six months after her marriage.

The Dauphiness, then fifteen years of age, beaming with freshness, appeared to all eyes more than beautiful. Her walk partook at once of the dignity of the Princesses of her house, and of the grace of the French; her eyes were mild, her smile amiable. When she went to chapel, as soon as she had taken the first few steps in the long gallery, she discerned, all the way to its extremity, those persons whom she ought to salute with the consideration due to their rank; those on whom she should bestow an inclination of the head; and lastly, those who were to be satisfied with a smile, calculated to console them for not being entitled to greater honours.

Louis XV. was enchanted with the young Dauphiness; all his conversation was about her graces, her vivacity, and the aptness of her repartees. She was yet more successful with the royal family when they beheld her shorn of the splendour of the diamonds with which she had been adorned during the first days of her marriage. When clothed in a light dress of gauze or taffety she was compared to the Venus dei Medici, and the Atalanta of the Marly Gardens. Poets sang her charms; painters attempted

to copy her features. One artist's fancy led him to place the portrait of Marie Antoinette in the heart of a full-blown rose. His ingenious idea was rewarded by Louis XV.

The King continued to talk only of the Dauphiness; and Madame du Barry ill-naturedly endeavoured to damp his enthusiasm. Whenever Marie Antoinette was the topic, she pointed out the irregularity of her features, criticised the 'bons mots' quoted as hers, and rallied the King upon his prepossession in her favour. Madame du Barry was affronted at not receiving from the Dauphiness those attentions to which she thought herself entitled; she did not conceal her vexation from the King; she was afraid that the grace and cheerfulness of the young Princess would make the domestic circle of the royal family more agreeable to the old sovereign, and that he would escape her chains; at the same time, hatred to the Choiseul party contributed powerfully to excite the enmity of the favourite.

The fall of that minister took place in November, 1770, six months after his long influence in the Council had brought about the alliance with the House of Austria and the arrival of Marie Antoinette at the Court of France. The Princess, young, frank, volatile, and inexperienced, found herself without any other guide than the Abbe de Vermond, in a Court ruled by the enemy of the minister who had brought her there, and in the midst of people who hated Austria, and detested any alliance with the imperial house.

The Duc d'Aiguillon, the Duc de La Vauguyon, the Marechal de Richelieu, the Rohans, and other considerable families, who had made use of Madame du Barry to overthrow the Duke, could not flatter themselves, notwithstanding their powerful intrigues, with a hope of being able to break off an alliance solemnly announced, and involving such high political interests. They therefore changed their mode of attack, and it will be seen how the conduct of the Dauphin served as a basis for their hopes.

The Dauphiness continually gave proofs of both sense and feeling. Sometimes she even suffered herself to be carried away by those transports of compassionate kindness which are not to be controlled by the customs which rank establishes.

In consequence of the fire in the Place Louis XV., which occurred at the time of the nuptial entertainments, the Dauphin and Dauphiness sent their, whole income for the year to the relief of the unfortunate families who lost their relatives on that disastrous day.

This was one of those ostentatious acts of generosity which are dictated by the policy of princes, at least as much as by their compassion; but the grief of Marie Antoinette was profound, and lasted several days; nothing could console her for the loss of so many innocent victims; she spoke of it, weeping, to her ladies, one of whom, thinking, no doubt, to divert her mind, told her that a great number of thieves had been found among the bodies, and that their pockets were filled with watches and other valuables. "They have at least been well punished," added the person who related these particulars. "Oh, no, no, madame!" replied the Dauphiness; "they died by the side of honest people."

The Dauphiness had brought from Vienna a considerable number of white diamonds; the King added to them the gift of the diamonds and pearls of the late Dauphiness, and also put into her hands a collar of pearls, of a single row, the smallest of which was as large as a filbert, and which had been brought into France by Anne of Austria, and appropriated by that Princess to the use of the Queens and Dauphinesses of France.

The three Princesses, daughters of Louis XV., joined in making her magnificent presents. Madame Adelaide at the same time gave the young Princess a key to the private corridors of the Chateau, by means of which, without any suite, and without being perceived, she could get to the apartments of her aunts, and see them in private. The Dauphiness, on receiving the key, told them, with infinite grace, that if they had meant to make her appreciate the superb presents they were kind enough to bestow upon her, they should not at the same time have offered her one of such inestimable value; since to that key she should be indebted for an intimacy and advice unspeakably precious at her age. She did, indeed, make use of it very frequently; but Madame Victoire alone permitted her, so long as she continued Dauphiness, to visit her familiarly. Madame Adelaide could not overcome her prejudices against Austrian princesses, and was wearied with the somewhat petulant gaiety of the

Dauphiness. Madame Victoire was concerned at this, feeling that their society and counsel would have been highly useful to a young person otherwise likely to meet with none but sycophants. She endeavoured, therefore, to induce her to take pleasure in the society of the Marquise de Durfort, her lady of honour and favourite. Several agreeable entertainments took place at the house of this lady, but the Comtesse de Noailles and the Abbe de Vermond soon opposed these meetings.

A circumstance which happened in hunting, near the village of Acheres, in the forest of Fontainebleau, afforded the young Princess an opportunity of displaying her respect for old age, and her compassion for misfortune. An aged peasant was wounded by the stag; the Dauphiness jumped out of her calash, placed the peasant, with his wife and children, in it, had the family taken back to their cottage, and bestowed upon them every attention and every necessary assistance. Her heart was always open to the feelings of compassion, and the recollection of her rank never restrained her sensibility. Several persons in her service entered her room one evening, expecting to find nobody there but the officer in waiting; they perceived the young Princess seated by the side of this man, who was advanced in years; she had placed near him a bowl full of water, was stanching the blood which issued from a wound he had received in his hand with her handkerchief, which she had torn up to bind it, and was fulfilling towards him all the duties of a pious sister of charity. The old man, affected even to tears, out of respect allowed his august mistress to act as she thought proper. He had hurt himself in endeavouring to move a rather heavy piece of furniture at the Princess's request.

In the month of July, 1770, an unfortunate occurrence that took place in a family which the Dauphiness honoured with her favour contributed again to show not only her sensibility but also the benevolence of her disposition. One of her women in waiting had a son who was an officer in the gens d'armes of the guard; this young man thought himself affronted by a clerk in the War Department, and imprudently sent him a challenge; he killed his adversary in the forest of Compiègne. The family of the young man who was killed, being in possession of the challenge, demanded justice. The King, distressed on account of several duels which had recently taken place, had unfortunately declared that he would show no mercy on the first event of that kind which could be proved; the culprit was therefore arrested. His mother, in the deepest grief, hastened to throw herself at the feet of the Dauphiness, the Dauphin, and the young Princesses. After an hour's supplication they obtained from the King the favour so much desired. On the next day a lady of rank, while congratulating the Dauphiness, had the malice to add that the mother had neglected no means of success on the occasion, having solicited not only the royal family, but even Madame du Barry. The Dauphiness replied that the fact justified the favourable opinion she had formed of the worthy woman; that the heart of a mother should hesitate at nothing for the salvation of her son; and that in her place, if she had thought it would be serviceable, she would have thrown herself at the feet of Zamor.

[A little Indian who carried the Comtesse du Barry's train. Louis XV. often amused himself with the little marmoset, and jestingly made him Governor of Louveciennes; he received an annual income of 3,000 francs.]

Some time after the marriage entertainments the Dauphiness made her entry into Paris, and was received with transports of joy. After dining in the King's apartment at the Tuileries, she was forced, by the reiterated shouts of the multitude, with whom the garden was filled, to present herself upon the balcony fronting the principal walk. On seeing such a crowd of heads with their eyes fixed upon her, she exclaimed, "Grand-Dieu! what a concourse!"—"Madame," said the old Duc de Brissac, the Governor of Paris, "I may tell you, without fear of offending the Dauphin, that they are so many lovers." 2 The Dauphin took no umbrage at either acclamations or marks of homage of which the Dauphiness was the object. The most mortifying indifference, a coldness which frequently degenerated into rudeness, were the sole feelings which the young Prince then manifested towards her. Not all her charms could gain even upon his senses. This estrangement, which lasted a long time, was said to be the work of the Duc de La Vauguyon.

The Dauphiness, in fact, had no sincere friends at Court except the Duc de Choiseul and his party. Will it be credited that the plans laid against Marie Antoinette went so far as divorce? I have been assured of it by persons holding high situations at Court, and many circumstances tend to confirm the opinion. On the journey to Fontainebleau, in the year of the marriage, the inspectors of public buildings were gained over to manage so that the apartment intended for the Dauphin, communicating with that of the Dauphiness, should not be finished, and a room at the extremity of the building was temporarily assigned to him. The Dauphiness, aware that this was the result of intrigue, had the courage to complain of it to Louis XV., who, after severe reprimands, gave orders so positive that within the week the apartment was ready. Every method was tried to continue or augment the indifference which the Dauphin long manifested towards his youthful spouse. She was deeply hurt at it, but she never suffered herself to utter the slightest complaint on the subject. Inattention to, even contempt for, the charms which she heard extolled on all sides, nothing induced her to break silence; and some tears, which would involuntarily burst from her eyes, were the sole symptoms of her inward sufferings discoverable by those in her service.

Once only, when tired out with the misplaced remonstrances of an old lady attached to her person, who wished to dissuade her from riding on horseback, under the impression that it would prevent her producing heirs to the crown, “Mademoiselle,” said she, “in God’s name, leave me in peace; be assured that I can put no heir in danger.”

The Dauphiness found at the Court of Louis XV., besides the three Princesses, the King’s daughters, the Princes also, brothers of the Dauphin, who were receiving their education, and Clotilde and Elisabeth, still in the care of Madame de Marsan, governess of the children of France. The elder of the two latter Princesses, in 1777, married the Prince of Piedmont, afterwards King of Sardinia. This Princess was in her infancy, so extremely large that the people nicknamed her ‘gros Madame.’

[Madame Clotilde of France, a sister of the King, was extraordinarily fat for her height and age. One of her playfellows, having been indiscreet enough even in her presence to make use of the nickname given to her, received a severe reprimand from the Comtesse de Marsan, who hinted to her that she would do well in not making her appearance again before the Princess. Madame Clotilde sent for her the next day: “My governess,” said she, “has done her duty, and I will do mine; come and see me as usual, and think no more of a piece of inadvertence, which I myself have forgotten.” This Princess, so heavy in body, possessed the most agreeable and playful wit. Her affability and grace rendered her dear to all who came near her.—
NOTE BY THE EDITOR]

The second Princess was the pious Elisabeth, the victim of her respect and tender attachment for the King, her brother. She was still scarcely out of her leading-strings at the period of the Dauphin’s marriage. The Dauphiness showed her marked preference. The governess, who sought to advance the Princess to whom nature had been least favourable, was offended at the Dauphiness’s partiality for Madame Elisabeth, and by her injudicious complaints weakened the friendship which yet subsisted between Madame Clotilde and Marie Antoinette. There even arose some degree of rivalry on the subject of education; and that which the Empress Maria Theresa bestowed on her daughters was talked of openly and unfavourably enough. The Abbe de Vermond thought himself affronted, took a part in the quarrel, and added his complaints and jokes to those of the Dauphiness on the criticisms of the governess; he even indulged himself in his turn in reflections on the tuition of Madame Clotilde. Everything becomes known at Court. Madame de Marsan was informed of all that had been said in the Dauphiness’s circle, and was very angry with her on account of it.

From that moment a centre of intrigue, or rather gossip, against Marie Antoinette was established round Madame de Marsan’s fireside; her most trifling actions were there construed ill; her gaiety, and the harmless amusements in which she sometimes indulged in her own apartments with

the more youthful ladies of her train, and even with the women in her service, were stigmatised as criminal. Prince Louis de Rohan, sent through the influence of this clique ambassador to Vienna, was the echo there of these unmerited comments, and threw himself into a series of culpable accusations which he proffered under the guise of zeal. He ceaselessly represented the young Dauphiness as alienating all hearts by levities unsuitable to the dignity of the French Court. The Princess frequently received from the Court of Vienna remonstrances, of the origin of which she could not long remain in ignorance. From this period must be dated that aversion which she never ceased to manifest for the Prince de Rohan.

About the same time the Dauphiness received information of a letter written by Prince Louis to the Duc d'Aiguillon, in which the ambassador expressed himself in very free language respecting the intentions of Maria Theresa with relation to the partition of Poland. This letter of Prince Louis had been read at the Comtesse du Barry's; the levity of the ambassador's correspondence wounded the feelings and the dignity of the Dauphiness at Versailles, while at Vienna the representations which he made to Maria Theresa against the young Princess terminated in rendering the motives of his incessant complaints suspected by the Empress.

Maria Theresa at length determined on sending her private secretary, Baron de Neni, to Versailles, with directions to observe the conduct of the Dauphiness with attention, and form a just estimate of the opinion of the Court and of Paris with regard to that Princess. The Baron de Neni, after having devoted sufficient time and intelligence to the subject, undeceived his sovereign as to the exaggerations of the French ambassador; and the Empress had no difficulty in detecting, among the calumnies which he had conveyed to her under the specious excuse of anxiety for her august daughter, proofs of the enmity of a party which had never approved of the alliance of the House of Bourbon with her own.

At this period the Dauphiness, though unable to obtain any influence over the heart of her husband, dreading Louis XV., and justly mistrusting everything connected with Madame du Barry and the Duc d'Aiguillon, had not deserved the slightest reproach for that sort of levity which hatred and her misfortunes afterwards construed into crime. The Empress, convinced of the innocence of Marie Antoinette, directed the Baron de Neni to solicit the recall of the Prince de Rohan, and to inform the Minister for Foreign Affairs of all the motives which made her require it; but the House of Rohan interposed between its protegee and the Austrian envoy, and an evasive answer merely was given.

It was not until two months after the death of Louis XV. that the Court of Vienna obtained his recall. The avowed grounds for requiring it were, first, the public gallantries of Prince Louis with some ladies of the Court and others; secondly, his surliness and haughtiness towards other foreign ministers, which would have had more serious consequences, especially with the ministers of England and Denmark, if the Empress herself had not interfered; thirdly, his contempt for religion in a country where it was particularly necessary to show respect for it. He had been seen frequently to dress himself in clothes of different colours, assuming the hunting uniforms of various noblemen whom he visited, with so much audacity that one day in particular, during the Fete-Dieu, he and all his legation, in green uniforms laced with gold, broke through a procession which impeded them, in order to make their way to a hunting party at the Prince de Paar's; and fourthly, the immense debts contracted by him and his people, which were tardily and only in part discharged.

The succeeding marriages of the Comte de Provence and the Comte d'Artois with two daughters of the King of Sardinia procured society for the Dauphiness more suitable to her age, and altered her mode of life.

A pair of tolerably fine eyes drew forth, in favour of the Comtesse de Provence, upon her arrival at Versailles, the only praises which could reasonably be bestowed upon her. The Comtesse d'Artois, though not deformed, was very small; she had a fine complexion; her face, tolerably pleasing, was not remarkable for anything except the extreme length of the nose. But being good and generous,

she was beloved by those about her, and even possessed some influence so long as she was the only Princess who had produced heirs to the crown.

From this time the closest intimacy subsisted between the three young families. They took their meals together, except on those days when they dined in public. This manner of living en famille continued until the Queen sometimes indulged herself in going to dine with the Duchesse de Polignac, when she was governess; but the evening meetings at supper were never interrupted; they took place at the house of the Comtesse de Provence. Madame Elisabeth made one of the party when she had finished her education, and sometimes Mesdames, the King's aunts, were invited. The custom, which had no precedent at Court, was the work of Marie Antoinette, and she maintained it with the utmost perseverance.

The Court of Versailles saw no change in point of etiquette during the reign of Louis XV. Play took place at the house of the Dauphiness, as being the first lady of the State. It had, from the death of Queen Maria Leczinska to the marriage of the Dauphin, been held at the abode of Madame Adelaide. This removal, the result of an order of precedence not to be violated, was not the less displeasing to Madame Adelaide, who established a separate party for play in her apartments, and scarcely ever went to that which not only the Court in general, but also the royal family, were expected to attend. The full-dress visits to the King on his 'debotter' were continued. High mass was attended daily. The airings of the Princesses were nothing more than rapid races in berlins, during which they were accompanied by Body Guards, equerries, and pages on horseback. They galloped for some leagues from Versailles. Calashes were used only in hunting.

The young Princesses were desirous to infuse animation into their circle of associates by something useful as well as pleasant. They adopted the plan of learning and performing all the best plays of the French theatre. The Dauphin was the only spectator. The three Princesses, the two brothers of the King, and Messieurs Campan, father and son, were the sole performers, but they endeavoured to keep this amusement as secret as an affair of State; they dreaded the censure of Mesdames, and they had no doubt that Louis XV. would forbid such pastimes if he knew of them. They selected for their performance a cabinet in the entresol which nobody had occasion to enter.

A kind of proscenium, which could be taken down and shut up in a closet, formed the whole theatre. The Comte de Provence always knew his part with imperturbable accuracy; the Comte d'Artois knew his tolerably well, and recited elegantly; the Princesses acted badly. The Dauphiness acquitted herself in some characters with discrimination and feeling. The chief pleasure of this amusement consisted in all the costumes being elegant and accurate. The Dauphin entered into the spirit of these diversions, and laughed heartily at the comic characters as they came on the scene; from these amusements may be dated his discontinuance of the timid manner of his youth, and his taking pleasure in the society of the Dauphiness.

It was not till a long time afterwards that I learnt these particulars, M. Campan having kept the secret; but an unforeseen event had well-nigh exposed the whole mystery. One day the Queen desired M. Campan to go down into her closet to fetch something that she had forgotten; he was dressed for the character of Crispin, and was rouged. A private staircase led direct to the entresol through the dressing-room. M. Campan fancied he heard some noise, and remained still, behind the door, which was shut. A servant belonging to the wardrobe, who was, in fact, on the staircase, had also heard some noise, and, either from fear or curiosity, he suddenly opened the door; the figure of Crispin frightened him so that he fell down backwards, shouting with his might, "Help! help!" My father-in-law raised him up, made him recognise his voice, and laid upon him an injunction of silence as to what he had seen. He felt himself, however, bound to inform the Dauphiness of what had happened, and she was afraid that a similar occurrence might betray their amusements. They were therefore discontinued.

The Princess occupied her time in her own apartment in the study of music and the parts in plays which she had to learn; the latter exercise, at least, produced the beneficial effect of strengthening her memory and familiarising her with the French language.

While Louis XV. reigned, the enemies of Marie Antoinette made no attempt to change public opinion with regard to her. She was always popular with the French people in general, and particularly with the inhabitants of Paris, who went on every opportunity to Versailles, the majority of them attracted solely by the pleasure of seeing her. The courtiers did not fully enter into the popular enthusiasm which the Dauphiness had inspired; the disgrace of the Duc de Choiseul had removed her real support from her; and the party which had the ascendancy at Court since the exile of that minister was, politically, as much opposed to her family as to herself. The Dauphiness was therefore surrounded by enemies at Versailles.

Nevertheless everybody appeared outwardly desirous to please her; for the age of Louis XV., and the apathetic character of the Dauphin, sufficiently warned courtiers of the important part reserved for the Princess during the following reign, in case the Dauphin should become attached to her.

CHAPTER IV

About the beginning of May, 1774, Louis XV., the strength of whose constitution had promised a long enough life, was attacked by confluent smallpox of the worst kind. Mesdames at this juncture inspired the Dauphiness with a feeling of respect and attachment, of which she gave them repeated proofs when she ascended the throne. In fact, nothing was more admirable nor more affecting than the courage with which they braved that most horrible disease. The air of the palace was infected; more than fifty persons took the smallpox, in consequence of having merely loitered in the galleries of Versailles, and ten died of it.

The end of the monarch was approaching. His reign, peaceful in general, had inherited strength from the power of his predecessor; on the other hand, his own weakness had been preparing misfortune for whoever should reign after him. The scene was about to change; hope, ambition, joy, grief, and all those feelings which variously affected the hearts of the courtiers, sought in vain to disguise themselves under a calm exterior. It was easy to detect the different motives which induced them every moment to repeat to every one the question: "How is the King?" At length, on the 10th of May, 1774, the mortal career of Louis XV. terminated.

[Christopher de Beaumont, Archbishop of Paris, the ardent apostle of frequent communion, arrived at Paris with the intention of soliciting, in public, the administration of the sacrament to the King, and secretly retarding it as much as possible. The ceremony could not take place without the previous and public expulsion of the, concubine, according to the canons of the Church and the Jesuitical party, of which Christopher was the leader. This party, which had made use of Madame du Barry to suppress the Parliaments, to support the Duc d'Aiguillon, and ruin the Choiseul faction, could not willingly consent to disgrace her canonically. The Archbishop went into the King's bedchamber, and found there Madame Adelaide, the Duc d'Aumont, the Bishop of Senlis, and Richelieu, in whose presence he resolved not to say one word about confession for that day. This reticence so encouraged Louis XV. that, on the Archbishop withdrawing, he had Madame du Barry called in, and kissed her beautiful hands again with his wonted affection. On the 2d of May the King found himself a little better. Madame du Barry had brought him two confidential physicians, Lorry and Borden, who were enjoined to conceal the nature of his sickness from him in order to keep off the priests and save her from a humiliating dismissal. The King's improvement allowed Madame du Barry to divert him by her usual playfulness and conversation. But La Martiniere, who was of the Choiseul party, and to whom they durst not refuse his right of entry, did not conceal from the King either the nature or the danger of his sickness. The King then sent for Madame du Barry, and said to her: "My love, I have got the smallpox, and my illness is very dangerous on account of my age and other disorders. I ought not to forget that I am the most Christian King, and the eldest son of the Church. I am sixty-four; the time is perhaps approaching when we must separate. I wish to prevent a scene like that of Metz." (when, in 1744, he had dismissed the Duchesse de Chateauroux.) "Apprise the Duc d'Aiguillon of what I say, that he may arrange with you if my sickness grows worse; so that we may part without any publicity." The Jansenists and the Duc de Choiseurs party publicly said that M. d'Aiguillon and the Archbishop had resolved to let the King die without receiving the sacrament rather than disturb Madame du Barry. Annoyed by their remarks, Beaumont determined to go and reside at the Lazaristes, his house at Versailles, to avail himself of the King's last moments, and sacrifice Madame du Barry when the monarch's condition

should become desperate. He arrived on the 3d of May, but did not see the King. Under existing circumstances, his object was to humble the enemies of his party and to support the favourite who had assisted to overcome them.

A contrary zeal animated the Bishop of Carcassonne, who urged that “the King ought to receive the sacrament; and by expelling the concubine to give an example of repentance to France and Christian Europe, which he had scandalised.”—“By what right,” said Cardinal de la Roche-Aymon, a complaisant courtier with whom the Bishop was at daggers drawn, “do you instruct me?”—“There is my authority,” replied the Bishop, holding up his pectoral cross. “Learn, monseigneur, to respect it, and do not suffer your King to die without the sacraments of the Church, of which he is the eldest son.” The Duc d’Aiguillon and the Archbishop, who witnessed the discussion, put an end to it by asking for the King’s orders relative to Madame du Barry. “She must be taken quietly to your seat at Ruelle,” said the King; “I shall be grateful for the care Madame d’Aiguillon may take of her.”

Madame du Barry saw the King again for a moment on the evening of the 4th, and promised to return to Court upon his recovery. She was scarcely gone when the King asked for her. “She is gone,” was the answer. From that moment the disorder gained ground; he thought himself a dead man, without the possibility of recovery. The 5th and 6th passed without a word of confession, viaticum, or extreme unction. The Duc de Fronsac threatened to throw the Cure of Versailles out of the window if he dared to mention them, but on the 7th, at three in the morning, the King imperatively called for the Abbe Maudous. Confession lasted seventeen minutes. The Ducs de la Vrilliere and d’Aiguillon wished to delay the viaticum; but La Martiniere said to the King: “Sire, I have seen your Majesty in very trying circumstances; but never admired you as I have done to-day. No doubt your Majesty will immediately finish what you have so well begun.” The King had his confessor Maudoua called back; this was a poor priest who had been placed about him for some years before because he was old and blind. He gave him absolution.

The formal renunciation desired by the Choiseul party, in order to humble and annihilate Madame du Barry with solemnity, was no more mentioned. The grand almoner, in concert with the Archbishop, composed this formula, pronounced in presence of the viaticum: “Although the King owes an account of his conduct to none but God, he declares his repentance at having scandalised his subjects, and is desirous to live solely for the maintenance of religion and the happiness of his people.”

On the 8th and 9th the disorder grew worse; and the King beheld the whole surface of his body coming off piecemeal and corrupted. Deserted by his friends and by that crowd of courtiers which had so long cringed before him, his only consolation was the piety of his daughters.—SOULAVIE, “Historical and Political Memoirs,” vol. i.]

The Comtesse du Barry had, a few days previously, withdrawn to Ruelle, to the Duc d’Aiguillon’s. Twelve or fifteen persons belonging to the Court thought it their duty to visit her there; their liveries were observed, and these visits were for a long time grounds for disfavour. More than six years after the King’s death one of these persons being spoken of in the circle of the royal family, I heard it remarked, “That was one of the fifteen Ruelle carriages.”

The whole Court went to the Chateau; the oiel-de boeuf was filled with courtiers, and the palace with the inquisitive. The Dauphin had settled that he would depart with the royal family the moment the King should breathe his last sigh. But on such an occasion decency forbade that positive orders for

departure should be passed from mouth to mouth. The heads of the stables, therefore, agreed with the people who were in the King's room, that the latter should place a lighted taper near a window, and that at the instant of the King's decease one of them should extinguish it.

The taper was extinguished. On this signal the Body Guards, pages, and equerries mounted on horseback, and all was ready for setting off. The Dauphin was with the Dauphiness. They were expecting together the intelligence of the death of Louis XV. A dreadful noise, absolutely like thunder, was heard in the outer apartment; it was the crowd of courtiers who were deserting the dead sovereign's antechamber, to come and do homage to the new power of Louis XVI. This extraordinary tumult informed Marie Antoinette and her husband that they were called to the throne; and, by a spontaneous movement, which deeply affected those around them, they threw themselves on their knees; both, pouring forth a flood of tears, exclaimed: "O God! guide us, protect us; we are too young to reign."

The Comtesse de Noailles entered, and was the first to salute Marie Antoinette as Queen of France. She requested their Majesties to condescend to quit the inner apartments for the grand salon, to receive the Princes and all the great officers, who were desirous to do homage to their new sovereigns. Marie Antoinette received these first visits leaning upon her husband, with her handkerchief held to her eyes; the carriages drove up, the guards and equerries were on horseback. The Chateau was deserted; every one hastened to fly from contagion, which there was no longer any inducement to brave.

On leaving the chamber of Louis XV., the Duc de Villequier, first gentleman of the bedchamber for the year, ordered M. Andouille, the King's chief surgeon, to open the body and embalm it. The chief surgeon would inevitably have died in consequence. "I am ready," replied Andouille; "but while I operate you shall hold the head; your office imposes this duty upon you." The Duke went off without saying a word, and the corpse was neither opened nor embalmed. A few under-servants and workmen continued with the pestiferous remains, and paid the last duty to their master; the surgeons directed that spirits of wine should be poured into the coffin.

The entire Court set off for Choisy at four o'clock; Mesdames the King's aunts in their private carriage, and the Princesses under tuition with the Comtesse de Marsan and the under-governesses. The King, the Queen, Monsieur, the King's brother, Madame, and the Comte and Comtesse d'Artois went in the same carriage. The solemn scene that had just passed before their eyes, the multiplied ideas offered to their imaginations by that which was just opening, had naturally inclined them to grief and reflection; but, by the Queen's own confession, this inclination, little suited to their age, wholly left them before they had gone half their journey; a word, drolly mangled by the Comtesse d'Artois, occasioned a general burst of laughter; and from that moment they dried their tears.

The communication between Choisy and Paris was incessant; never was a Court seen in greater agitation. What influence will the royal aunts have,—and the Queen? What fate is reserved for the Comtesse du Barry? Whom will the young King choose for his ministers? All these questions were answered in a few days. It was determined that the King's youth required a confidential person near him; and that there should be a prime minister. All eyes were turned upon De Machault and De Maurepas, both of them much advanced in years. The first had retired to his estate near Paris; and the second to Pont Chartrain, to which place he had long been exiled. The letter recalling M. de Machault was written, when Madame Adelaide obtained the preference of that important appointment for M. de Maurepas. The page to whose care the first letter had been actually consigned was recalled.

The Duc d'Aiguillon had been too openly known as the private friend of the King's mistress; he was dismissed. M. de Vergennes, at that time ambassador of France at Stockholm, was appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs; Comte du Muy, the intimate friend of the Dauphin, the father of Louis XVI.[?? D.W.], obtained the War Department. The Abbe Terray in vain said, and wrote, that he had boldly done all possible injury to the creditors of the State during the reign of the late King; that order was restored in the finances; that nothing but what was beneficial to all parties remained to

be done; and that the new Court was about to enjoy the advantages of the regenerating part of his plan of finance; all these reasons, set forth in five or six memorials, which he sent in succession to the King and Queen, did not avail to keep him in office. His talents were admitted, but the odium which his operations had necessarily brought upon his character, combined with the immorality of his private life, forbade his further stay at Court; he was succeeded by M. de Clugny. De Maupeou, the chancellor, was exiled; this caused universal joy. Lastly, the reassembling of the Parliaments produced the strongest sensation; Paris was in a delirium of joy, and not more than one person in a hundred foresaw that the spirit of the ancient magistracy would be still the same; and that in a short time it would make new attempts upon the royal authority. Madame du Barry had been exiled to Pont-aux-Dames. This was a measure rather of necessity than of severity; a short period of compulsory retreat was requisite in order completely to break off her connections with State affairs. The possession of Louveciennes and a considerable pension were continued to her.

[The Comtesse du Barry never forgot the mild treatment she experienced from the Court of Louis XVI.; during the most violent convulsions of the Revolution she signified to the Queen that there was no one in France more grieved at the sufferings of her sovereign than herself; that the honour she had for years enjoyed, of living near the throne, and the unbounded kindness of the King and Queen, had so sincerely attached her to the cause of royalty that she entreated the Queen to honour her by disposing of all she possessed. Though they did not accept her offer, their Majesties were affected at her gratitude. The Comtesse du Barry was, as is well known, one of the victims of the Revolution. She betrayed at the last great weakness, and the most ardent desire to live. She was the only woman who wept upon the scaffold and implored for mercy. Her beauty and tears made an impression on the populace, and the execution was hurried to a conclusion.—MADAME CAMPAN.]

Everybody expected the recall of M. de Choiseul; the regret occasioned by his absence among the numerous friends whom he had left at Court, the attachment of the young Princess who was indebted to him for her elevation to the throne of France, and all concurring circumstances, seemed to foretell his return; the Queen earnestly entreated it of the King, but she met with an insurmountable and unforeseen obstacle. The King, it is said, had imbibed the strongest prejudices against that minister, from secret memoranda penned by his father, and which had been committed to the care of the Duc de La Vauguyon, with an injunction to place them in his hands as soon as he should be old enough to study the art of reigning. It was by these memoranda that the esteem which he had conceived for the Marechal du Muy was inspired, and we may add that Madame Adelaide, who at this early period powerfully influenced the decisions of the young monarch, confirmed the impressions they had made.

The Queen conversed with M. Campan on the regret she felt at having been unable to procure the recall of M. de Choiseul, and disclosed the cause of it to him. The Abbe de Vermond, who, down to the time of the death of Louis XV., had been on terms of the strictest friendship with M. Campan, called upon him on the second day after the arrival of the Court at Choisy, and, assuming a serious air, said, "Monsieur, the Queen was indiscreet enough yesterday to speak to you of a minister to whom she must of course be attached, and whom his friends ardently desire to have near her; you are aware that we must give up all expectation of seeing the Duke at Court; you know the reasons why; but you do not know that the young Queen, having mentioned the conversation in question to me, it was my duty, both as her preceptor and her friend, to remonstrate severely with her on her indiscretion in communicating to you those particulars of which you are in possession. I am now come to tell you that if you continue to avail yourself of the good nature of your mistress to initiate yourself in secrets of State, you will have me for your most inveterate enemy. The Queen should find here no other confidant than myself respecting things that ought to remain secret." M. Campan answered that

he did not covet the important and dangerous character at the new Court which the Abbe wished to appropriate; and that he should confine himself to the duties of his office, being sufficiently satisfied with the continued kindness with which the Queen honoured him. Notwithstanding this, however, he informed the Queen, on the very same evening, of the injunction he had received. She owned that she had mentioned their conversation to the Abbe; that he had indeed seriously scolded her, in order to make her feel the necessity of being secret in concerns of State; and she added, "The Abbe cannot like you, my dear Campan; he did not expect that I should, on my arrival in France, find in my household a man who would suit me so exactly as you have done. I know that he has taken umbrage at it; that is enough. I know, too, that you are incapable of attempting anything to injure him in my esteem; an attempt which would besides be vain, for I have been too long attached to him. As to yourself, be easy on the score of the Abbe's hostility, which shall not in any way hurt you."

The Abbe de Vermond having made himself master of the office of sole confidant to the Queen, was nevertheless agitated whenever he saw the young King; he could not be ignorant that the Abbe had been promoted by the Duc de Choiseul, and was believed to favour the Encyclopedists, against whom Louis XVI. entertained a secret prejudice, although he suffered them to gain so great an ascendancy during his reign. The Abbe had, moreover, observed that the King had never, while Dauphin, addressed a single word to him; and that he very frequently only answered him with a shrug of the shoulders. He therefore determined on writing to Louis XVI., and intimating that he owed his situation at Court solely to the confidence with which the late King had honoured him; and that as habits contracted during the Queen's education placed him continually in the closest intimacy with her, he could not enjoy the honour of remaining near her Majesty without the King's consent. Louis XVI. sent back his letter, after writing upon it these words: "I approve the Abbe de Vermond continuing in his office about the Queen."

CHAPTER V

At the period of his grandfather's death, Louis XVI. began to be exceedingly attached to the Queen. The first period of so deep a mourning not admitting of indulgence in the diversion of hunting, he proposed to her walks in the gardens of Choisy; they went out like husband and wife, the young King giving his arm to the Queen, and accompanied by a very small suite. The influence of this example had such an effect upon the courtiers that the next day several couples, who had long, and for good reasons, been disunited, were seen walking upon the terrace with the same apparent conjugal intimacy. Thus they spent whole hours, braving the intolerable wearisomeness of their protracted tete-a-tetes, out of mere obsequious imitation.

The devotion of Mesdames to the King their father throughout his dreadful malady had produced that effect upon their health which was generally apprehended. On the fourth day after their arrival at Choisy they were attacked by pains in the head and chest, which left no doubt as to the danger of their situation. It became necessary instantly to send away the young royal family; and the Chateau de la Muette, in the Bois de Boulogne, was selected for their reception. Their arrival at that residence, which was very near Paris, drew so great a concourse of people into its neighbourhood, that even at daybreak the crowd had begun to assemble round the gates. Shouts of "Vive le Roi!" were scarcely interrupted for a moment between six o'clock in the morning and sunset. The unpopularity the late King, had drawn upon himself during his latter years, and the hopes to which a new reign gives birth, occasioned these transports of joy.

A fashionable jeweller made a fortune by the sale of mourning snuff-boxes, whereon the portrait of the young Queen, in a black frame of shagreen, gave rise to the pun: "Consolation in chagrin." All the fashions, and every article of dress, received names expressing the spirit of the moment. Symbols of abundance were everywhere represented, and the head-dresses of the ladies were surrounded by ears of wheat. Poets sang of the new monarch; all hearts, or rather all heads, in France were filled with enthusiasm. Never did the commencement of any reign excite more unanimous testimonials of love and attachment. It must be observed, however, that, amidst all this intoxication, the anti-Austrian party never lost sight of the young Queen, but kept on the watch, with the malicious desire to injure her through such errors as might arise from her youth and inexperience.

Their Majesties had to receive at La Muette the condolences of the ladies who had been presented at Court, who all felt themselves called on to pay homage to the new sovereigns. Old and young hastened to present themselves on the day of general reception; little black bonnets with great wings, shaking heads, low curtsies, keeping time with the motions of the head, made, it must be admitted, a few venerable dowagers appear somewhat ridiculous; but the Queen, who possessed a great deal of dignity, and a high respect for decorum, was not guilty of the grave fault of losing the state she was bound to preserve. An indiscreet piece of drollery of one of the ladies of the palace, however, procured her the imputation of doing so. The Marquise de Clermont-Tonnerre, whose office required that she should continue standing behind the Queen, fatigued by the length of the ceremony, seated herself on the floor, concealed behind the fence formed by the hoops of the Queen and the ladies of the palace. Thus seated, and wishing to attract attention and to appear lively, she twitched the dresses of those ladies, and played a thousand other tricks. The contrast of these childish pranks with the solemnity which reigned over the rest of the Queen's chamber disconcerted her Majesty: she several times placed her fan before her face to hide an involuntary smile, and the severe old ladies pronounced that the young Queen had decided all those respectable persons who were pressing forward to pay their homage to her; that she liked none but the young; that she was deficient in decorum; and that not one of them would attend her Court again. The epithet 'moqueuse' was applied to her; and there is no epithet less favourably received in the world.

The next day a very ill-natured song was circulated; the stamp of the party to which it was attributable might easily be seen upon it. I remember only the following chorus:

“Little Queen, you must not be
So saucy, with your twenty years;
Your ill-used courtiers soon will see
You pass, once more, the barriers.
Fal lal lal, fal lal la.”

The errors of the great, or those which ill-nature chooses to impute to them, circulate in the world with the greatest rapidity, and become historical traditions, which every one delights to repeat.

More than fifteen years after this occurrence I heard some old ladies in the most retired part of Auvergne relating all the particulars of the day of public condolence for the late King, on which, as they said, the Queen had laughed in the faces of the sexagenarian duchesses and princesses who had thought it their duty to appear on the occasion.

The King and the Princes, his brothers, determined to avail themselves of the advantages held out by inoculation, as a safeguard against the illness under which their grandfather had just fallen; but the utility of this new discovery not being then generally acknowledged in France, many persons were greatly alarmed at the step; those who blamed it openly threw all the responsibility of it upon the Queen, who alone, they said, could have ventured to give such rash advice, inoculation being at this time established in the Northern Courts. The operation upon the King and his brothers, performed by Doctor Jauberthou, was fortunately quite successful.

When the convalescence of the Princes was perfectly established, the excursions to Marly became cheerful enough. Parties on horseback and in calashes were formed continually. The Queen was desirous to afford herself one very innocent gratification; she had never seen the day break; and having now no other consent than that of the King to seek, she intimated her wish to him. He agreed that she should go, at three o'clock in the morning, to the eminences of the gardens of Marly; and, unfortunately, little disposed to partake in her amusements, he himself went to bed. Foreseeing some inconveniences possible in this nocturnal party, the Queen determined on having a number of people with her; and even ordered her waiting women to accompany her. All precautions were ineffectual to prevent the effects of calumny, which thenceforward sought to diminish the general attachment that she had inspired. A few days afterwards, the most wicked libel that appeared during the earlier years of her reign was circulated in Paris. The blackest colours were employed to paint an enjoyment so harmless that there is scarcely a young woman living in the country who has not endeavoured to procure it for herself. The verses which appeared on this occasion were entitled “Sunrise.”

The Duc d'Orleans, then Duc de Chartres, was among those who accompanied the young Queen in her nocturnal ramble: he appeared very attentive to her at this epoch; but it was the only moment of his life in which there was any advance towards intimacy between the Queen and himself. The King disliked the character of the Duc de Chartres, and the Queen always excluded him from her private society. It is therefore without the slightest foundation that some writers have attributed to feelings of jealousy or wounded self-love the hatred which he displayed towards the Queen during the latter years of their existence.

It was on this first journey to Marly that Boehmer, the jeweller, appeared at Court,—a man whose stupidity and avarice afterwards fatally affected the happiness and reputation of Marie Antoinette. This person had, at great expense, collected six pear-formed diamonds of a prodigious size; they were perfectly matched and of the finest water. The earrings which they composed had, before the death of Louis XV., been destined for the Comtesse du Barry.

Boehmer; by the recommendation of several persons about the Court, came to offer these jewels to the Queen. He asked four hundred thousand francs for them. The young Princess could not

withstand her wish to purchase them; and the King having just raised the Queen's income, which, under the former reign, had been but two hundred thousand livres, to one hundred thousand crowns a year, she wished to make the purchase out of her own purse, and not burthen the royal treasury with the payment. She proposed to Boehmer to take off the two buttons which formed the tops of the clusters, as they could be replaced by two of her own diamonds. He consented, and then reduced the price of the earrings to three hundred and sixty thousand francs; the payment for which was to be made by instalments, and was discharged in the course of four or five years by the Queen's first femme de chambre, deputed to manage the funds of her privy purse. I have omitted no details as to the manner in which the Queen first became possessed of these jewels, deeming them very needful to place in its true light the too famous circumstance of the necklace, which happened near the end of her reign.

It was also on this first journey to Marly that the Duchesse de Chartres, afterwards Duchesse d'Orleans, introduced into the Queen's household Mademoiselle Bertin, a milliner who became celebrated at that time for the total change she effected in the dress of the French ladies.

It may be said that the mere admission of a milliner into the house of the Queen was followed by evil consequences to her Majesty. The skill of the milliner, who was received into the household, in spite of the custom which kept persons of her description out of it, afforded her the opportunity of introducing some new fashion every day. Up to this time the Queen had shown very plain taste in dress; she now began to make it a principal occupation; and she was of course imitated by other women.

All wished instantly to have the same dress as the Queen, and to wear the feathers and flowers to which her beauty, then in its brilliancy, lent an indescribable charm. The expenditure of the younger ladies was necessarily much increased; mothers and husbands murmured at it; some few giddy women contracted debts; unpleasant domestic scenes occurred; in many families coldness or quarrels arose; and the general report was,—that the Queen would be the ruin of all the French ladies.

Fashion continued its fluctuating progress; and head-dresses, with their superstructures of gauze, flowers, and feathers, became so lofty that the women could not find carriages high enough to admit them; and they were often seen either stooping, or holding their heads out of the windows. Others knelt down in order to manage these elevated objects of ridicule with less danger.

[If the use of these extravagant feathers and head-dresses had continued, say the memoirs of that period very seriously, it would have effected a revolution in architecture. It would have been found necessary to raise the doors and ceilings of the boxes at the theatre, and particularly the bodies of carriages. It was not without mortification that the King observed the Queen's adoption of this style of dress: she was never so lovely in his eyes as when unadorned by art. One day Carlin, performing at Court as harlequin, stuck in his hat, instead of the rabbit's tail, its prescribed ornament, a peacock's feather of excessive length. This new appendage, which repeatedly got entangled among the scenery, gave him an opportunity for a great deal of buffoonery. There was some inclination to punish him; but it was presumed that he had not assumed the feather without authority.-NOTE BY THE EDITOR.]

Innumerable caricatures, exhibited in all directions, and some of which artfully gave the features of the Queen, attacked the extravagance of fashion, but with very little effect. It changed only, as is always the case, through the influence of inconstancy and time.

The Queen's toilet was a masterpiece of etiquette; everything was done in a prescribed form. Both the dame d'honneur and the dame d'atours usually attended and officiated, assisted by the first femme de chambre and two ordinary women. The dame d'atours put on the petticoat, and handed the gown to the Queen. The dame d'honneur poured out the water for her hands and put on her linen.

When a princess of the royal family happened to be present while the Queen was dressing, the dame d'honneur yielded to her the latter act of office, but still did not yield it directly to the Princesses of the blood; in such a case the dame d'honneur was accustomed to present the linen to the first femme de chambre, who, in her turn, handed it to the Princess of the blood. Each of these ladies observed these rules scrupulously as affecting her rights. One winter's day it happened that the Queen, who was entirely undressed, was just going to put on her shift; I held it ready unfolded for her; the dame d'honneur came in, slipped off her gloves, and took it. A scratching was heard at the door; it was opened, and in came the Duchesse d'Orleans: her gloves were taken off, and she came forward to take the garment; but as it would have been wrong in the dame d'honneur to hand it to her she gave it to me, and I handed it to the Princess. More scratching it was Madame la Comtesse de Provence; the Duchesse d'Orleans handed her the linen. All this while the Queen kept her arms crossed upon her bosom, and appeared to feel cold; Madame observed her uncomfortable situation, and, merely laying down her handkerchief without taking off her gloves, she put on the linen, and in doing so knocked the Queen's cap off. The Queen laughed to conceal her impatience, but not until she had muttered several times, "How disagreeable! how tiresome!"

All this etiquette, however inconvenient, was suitable to the royal dignity, which expects to find servants in all classes of persons, beginning even with the brothers and sisters of the monarch.

Speaking here of etiquette, I do not allude to majestic state, appointed for days of ceremony in all Courts. I mean those minute ceremonies that were pursued towards our Kings in their inmost privacies, in their hours of pleasure, in those of pain, and even during the most revolting of human infirmities.

These servile rules were drawn up into a kind of code; they offered to a Richelieu, a La Rochefoucauld and a Duras, in the exercise of their domestic functions, opportunities of intimacy useful to their interests; and their vanity was flattered by customs which converted the right to give a glass of water, to put on a dress, and to remove a basin, into honourable prerogatives.

Princes thus accustomed to be treated as divinities naturally ended by believing that they were of a distinct nature, of a purer essence than the rest of mankind.

This sort of etiquette, which led our Princes to be treated in private as idols, made them in public martyrs to decorum. Marie Antoinette found in the Chateau of Versailles a multitude of established customs which appeared to her insupportable.

The ladies-in-waiting, who were all obliged to be sworn, and to wear full Court dresses, were alone entitled to remain in the room, and to attend in conjunction with the dame d'honneur and the tirewoman. The Queen abolished all this formality. When her head was dressed, she curtsied to all the ladies who were in her chamber, and, followed only by her own women, went into her closet, where Mademoiselle Bertin, who could not be admitted into the chamber, used to await her. It was in this inner closet that she produced her new and numerous dresses. The Queen was also desirous of being served by the most fashionable hairdresser in Paris. Now the custom which forbade all persons in inferior offices, employed by royalty, to exert their talents for the public, was no doubt intended to cut off all communication between the privacy of princes and society at large; the latter being always extremely curious respecting the most trifling particulars relative to the private life of the former. The Queen, fearing that the taste of the hairdresser would suffer if he should discontinue the general practice of his art, ordered him to attend as usual certain ladies of the Court and of Paris; and this multiplied the opportunities of learning details respecting the household, and very often of misrepresenting them.

One of the customs most disagreeable to the Queen was that of dining every day in public. Maria Leczinska had always submitted to this wearisome practice; Marie Antoinette followed it as long as she was Dauphiness. The Dauphin dined with her, and each branch of the family had its public dinner daily. The ushers suffered all decently dressed people to enter; the sight was the delight of persons from the country. At the dinner-hour there were none to be met upon the stairs but honest

folks, who, after having seen the Dauphiness take her soup, went to see the Princes eat their 'bouilli', and then ran themselves out of breath to behold Mesdames at their dessert.

Very ancient usage, too, required that the Queens of France should appear in public surrounded only by women; even at meal-times no persons of the other sex attended to serve at table; and although the King ate publicly with the Queen, yet he himself was served by women with everything which was presented to him directly at table. The dame d'honneur, kneeling, for her own accommodation, upon a low stool, with a napkin upon her arm, and four women in full dress, presented the plates to the King and Queen. The dame d'honneur handed them drink. This service had formerly been the right of the maids of honour. The Queen, upon her accession to the throne, abolished the usage altogether. She also freed herself from the necessity of being followed in the Palace of Versailles by two of her women in Court dresses, during those hours of the day when the ladies-in-waiting were not with her. From that time she was accompanied only by a single valet de chambre and two footmen. All the changes made by Marie Antoinette were of the same description; a disposition gradually to substitute the simple customs of Vienna for those of Versailles was more injurious to her than she could possibly have imagined.

When the King slept in the Queen's apartment he always rose before her; the exact hour was communicated to the head femme de chambre, who entered, preceded by a servant of the bedchamber bearing a taper; she crossed the room and unbolted the door which separated the Queen's apartment from that of the King. She there found the first valet de chambre for the quarter, and a servant of the chamber. They entered, opened the bed curtains on the King's side, and presented him slippers generally, as well as the dressing-gown, which he put on, of gold or silver stuff. The first valet de chambre took down a short sword which was always laid within the railing on the King's side. When the King slept with the Queen, this sword was brought upon the armchair appropriated to the King, and which was placed near the Queen's bed, within the gilt railing which surrounded the bed. The first femme de chambre conducted the King to the door, bolted it again, and, leaving the Queen's chamber, did not return until the hour appointed by her Majesty the evening before. At night the Queen went to bed before the King; the first femme de chambre remained seated at the foot of her bed until the arrival of his Majesty, in order, as in the morning, to see the King's attendants out and bolt the door after them. The Queen awoke habitually at eight o'clock, and breakfasted at nine, frequently in bed, and sometimes after she had risen, at a table placed opposite her couch.

In order to describe the Queen's private service intelligibly, it must be recollected that service of every kind was honour, and had not any other denomination. To do the honours of the service was to present the service to a person of superior rank, who happened to arrive at the moment it was about to be performed. Thus, supposing the Queen asked for a glass of water, the servant of the chamber handed to the first woman a silver gilt waiter, upon which were placed a covered goblet and a small decanter; but should the lady of honour come in, the first woman was obliged to present the waiter to her, and if Madame or the Comtesse d'Artois came in at the moment, the waiter went again from the lady of honour into the hands of the Princess before it reached the Queen. It must be observed, however, that if a princess of the blood instead of a princess of the family entered, the service went directly from the first woman to the princess of the blood, the lady of honour being excused from transferring to any but princesses of the royal family. Nothing was presented directly to the Queen; her handkerchief or her gloves were placed upon a long salver of gold or silver gilt, which was placed as a piece of furniture of ceremony upon a side-table, and was called a *gantiere*. The first woman presented to her in this manner all that she asked for, unless the tirewoman, the lady of honour, or a princess were present, and then the gradation pointed out in the instance of the glass of water was always observed.

Whether the Queen breakfasted in bed or up, those entitled to the petites entrees were equally admitted; this privilege belonged of right to her chief physician, chief surgeon, physician in ordinary, reader, closet secretary, the King's four first valets de chambre and their reversioners, and the King's

chief physicians and surgeons. There were frequently from ten to twelve persons at this first entree. The lady of honour or the superintendent, if present, placed the breakfast equipage upon the bed; the Princesse de Lamballe frequently performed that office.

As soon as the Queen rose, the wardrobe woman was admitted to take away the pillows and prepare the bed to be made by some of the valets de chambre. She undrew the curtains, and the bed was not generally made until the Queen was gone to mass. Generally, excepting at St. Cloud, where the Queen bathed in an apartment below her own, a slipper bath was rolled into her room, and her bathers brought everything that was necessary for the bath. The Queen bathed in a large gown of English flannel buttoned down to the bottom; its sleeves throughout, as well as the collar, were lined with linen. When she came out of the bath the first woman held up a cloth to conceal her entirely from the sight of her women, and then threw it over her shoulders. The bathers wrapped her in it and dried her completely. She then put on a long and wide open chemise, entirely trimmed with lace, and afterwards a white taffety bed-gown. The wardrobe woman warmed the bed; the slippers were of dimity, trimmed with lace. Thus dressed, the Queen went to bed again, and the bathers and servants of the chamber took away the bathing apparatus. The Queen, replaced in bed, took a book or her tapestry work. On her bathing mornings she breakfasted in the bath. The tray was placed on the cover of the bath. These minute details are given here only to do justice to the Queen's scrupulous modesty. Her temperance was equally remarkable; she breakfasted on coffee or chocolate; at dinner ate nothing but white meat, drank water only, and supped on broth, a wing of a fowl, and small biscuits, which she soaked in a glass of water.

The tirewoman had under her order a principal under-tirewoman, charged with the care and preservation of all the Queen's dresses; two women to fold and press such articles as required it; two valets, and a porter of the wardrobe. The latter brought every morning into the Queen's apartments baskets covered with taffety, containing all that she was to wear during the day, and large cloths of green taffety covering the robes and the full dresses. The valet of the wardrobe on duty presented every morning a large book to the first femme de chambre, containing patterns of the gowns, full dresses, undresses, etc. Every pattern was marked, to show to which sort it belonged. The first femme de chambre presented this book to the Queen on her awaking, with a pincushion; her Majesty stuck pins in those articles which she chose for the day,—one for the dress, one for the afternoon-undress, and one for the full evening dress for card or supper parties in the private apartments. The book was then taken back to the wardrobe, and all that was wanted for the day was soon after brought in in large taffety wrappers. The wardrobe woman, who had the care of the linen, in her turn brought in a covered basket containing two or three chemises and handkerchiefs. The morning basket was called *pret du jour*. In the evening she brought in one containing the nightgown and nightcap, and the stockings for the next morning; this basket was called *pret de la nuit*. They were in the department of the lady of honour, the tirewoman having nothing to do with the linen. Nothing was put in order or taken care of by the Queen's women. As soon as the toilet was over, the valets and porter belonging to the wardrobe were called in, and they carried all away in a heap, in the taffety wrappers, to the tirewoman's wardrobe, where all were folded up again, hung up, examined, and cleaned with so much regularity and care that even the cast-off clothes scarcely looked as if they had been worn. The tirewoman's wardrobe consisted of three large rooms surrounded with closets, some furnished with drawers and others with shelves; there were also large tables in each of these rooms, on which the gowns and dresses were spread out and folded up.

For the winter the Queen had generally twelve full dresses, twelve undresses called fancy dresses, and twelve rich hoop petticoats for the card and supper parties in the smaller apartments.

She had as many for the summer; those for the spring served likewise for the autumn. All these dresses were discarded at the end of each season, unless, indeed, she retained some that she particularly liked. I am not speaking of muslin or cambric gowns, or others of the same kind—they were lately introduced; but such as these were not renewed at each returning season, they were kept

several years. The chief women were charged with the care and examination of the diamonds; this important duty was formerly confided to the tirewoman, but for many years had been included in the business of the first femmes de chambre.

The public toilet took place at noon. The toilet-table was drawn forward into the middle of the room. This piece of furniture was generally the richest and most ornamented of all in the apartment of the Princesses. The Queen used it in the same manner and place for undressing herself in the evening. She went to bed in corsets trimmed with ribbon, and sleeves trimmed with lace, and wore a large neck handkerchief. The Queen's combing cloth was presented by her first woman if she was alone at the commencement of the toilet; or, as well as the other articles, by the ladies of honour if they were come. At noon the women who had been in attendance four and twenty hours were relieved by two women in full dress; the first woman went also to dress herself. The grandee entrees were admitted during the toilet; sofas were placed in circles for the superintendent, the ladies of honour, and tirewomen, and the governess of the children of France when she came there; the duties of the ladies of the bedchamber, having nothing to do with any kind of domestic or private functions, did not begin until the hour of going out to mass; they waited in the great closet, and entered when the toilet was over. The Princes of the blood, captains of the Guards, and all great officers having the entry paid their court at the hour of the toilet. The Queen saluted by nodding her head or bending her body, or leaning upon her toilet-table as if moving to rise; the last mode of salutation was for the Princes of the blood. The King's brothers also came very generally to pay their respects to her Majesty while her hair was being dressed. In the earlier years of the reign the first part of the dressing was performed in the bedchamber and according to the laws of etiquette; that is to say, the lady of honour put on the chemise and poured out the water for the hands, the tirewoman put on the skirt of the gown or full dress, adjusted the handkerchief, and tied on the necklace. But when the young Queen became more seriously devoted to fashion, and the head-dress attained so extravagant a height that it became necessary to put on the chemise from below,—when, in short, she determined to have her milliner, Mademoiselle Benin, with her whilst she was dressing, whom the ladies would have refused to admit to any share in the honour of attending on the Queen, the dressing in the bedchamber was discontinued, and the Queen, leaving her toilet, withdrew into her closet to dress.

On returning into her chamber, the Queen, standing about the middle of it, surrounded by the superintendent, the ladies of honour and tirewomen, her ladies of the palace, the chevalier d'honneur, the chief equerry, her clergy ready to attend her to mass, and the Princesses of the royal family who happened to come, accompanied by all their chief attendants and ladies, passed in order into the gallery as in going to mass. The Queen's signatures were generally given at the moment of entry into the chamber. The secretary for orders presented the pen. Presentations of colonels on taking leave were usually made at this time. Those of ladies, and, such as had a right to the tabouret, or sitting in the royal presence, were made on Sunday evenings before card-playing began, on their coming in from paying their respects. Ambassadors were introduced to the Queen on Tuesday mornings, accompanied by the introducer of ambassadors on duty, and by M. de Sequeville, the secretary for the ambassadors. The introducer in waiting usually came to the Queen at her toilet to apprise her of the presentations of foreigners which would be made. The usher of the chamber, stationed at the entrance, opened the folding doors to none but the Princes and Princesses of the royal family, and announced them aloud. Quitting his post, he came forward to name to the lady of honour the persons who came to be presented, or who came to take leave; that lady again named them to the Queen at the moment they saluted her; if she and the tirewoman were absent, the first woman took the place and did that duty. The ladies of the bedchamber, chosen solely as companions for the Queen, had no domestic duties to fulfil, however opinion might dignify such offices. The King's letter in appointing them, among other instructions of etiquette, ran thus: "having chosen you to bear the Queen company." There were hardly any emoluments accruing from this place.

The Queen heard mass with the King in the tribune, facing the grand altar and the choir, with the exception of the days of high ceremony, when their chairs were placed below upon velvet carpets fringed with gold. These days were marked by the name of grand chapel day.

The Queen named the collector beforehand, and informed her of it through her lady of honour, who was besides desired to send the purse to her. The collectors were almost always chosen from among those who had been recently presented. After returning from mass the Queen dined every Sunday with the King only, in public in the cabinet of the nobility, a room leading to her chamber. Titled ladies having the honours sat during the dinner upon folding-chairs placed on each side of the table. Ladies without titles stood round the table; the captain of the Guards and the first gentleman of the chamber were behind the King's chair; behind that of the Queen were her first maitre d'hotel, her chevalier d'honneur, and the chief equerry. The Queen's maitre d'hotel was furnished with a large staff, six or seven feet in length, ornamented with golden fleurs-de-lis, and surmounted by fleurs-de-lis in the form of a crown. He entered the room with this badge of his office to announce that the Queen was served. The comptroller put into his hands the card of the dinner; in the absence of the maitre d'hotel he presented it to the Queen himself, otherwise he only did him the honours of the service. The maitre d'hotel did not leave his place, he merely gave the orders for serving up and removing; the comptroller and gentlemen serving placed the various dishes upon the table, receiving them from the inferior servants.

The Prince nearest to the crown presented water to wash the King's hands at the moment he placed himself at table, and a princess did the same service to the Queen.

The table service was formerly performed for the Queen by the lady of honour and four women in full dress; this part of the women's service was transferred to them on the suppression of the office of maids of honour. The Queen put an end to this etiquette in the first year of her reign. When the dinner was over the Queen returned without the King to her apartment with her women, and took off her hoop and train.

This unfortunate Princess, against whom the opinions of the French people were at length so much excited, possessed qualities which deserved to obtain the greatest popularity. None could doubt this who, like myself, had heard her with delight describe the patriarchal manners of the House of Lorraine. She was accustomed to say that, by transplanting their manners into Austria, the Princes of that house had laid the foundation of the unassailable popularity enjoyed by the imperial family. She frequently related to me the interesting manner in which the Ducs de Lorraine levied the taxes. "The sovereign Prince," said she, "went to church; after the sermon he rose, waved his hat in the air, to show that he was about to speak, and then mentioned the sum whereof he stood in need. Such was the zeal of the good Lorrainers that men have been known to take away linen or household utensils without the knowledge of their wives, and sell them to add the value to their contribution. It sometimes happened, too, that the Prince received more money than he had asked for, in which case he restored the surplus."

All who were acquainted with the Queen's private qualities knew that she equally deserved attachment and esteem. Kind and patient to excess in her relations with her household, she indulgently considered all around her, and interested herself in their fortunes and in their pleasures. She had, among her women, young girls from the Maison de St. Cyr, all well born; the Queen forbade them the play when the performances were not suitable; sometimes, when old plays were to be represented, if she found she could not with certainty trust to her memory, she would take the trouble to read them in the morning, to enable her to decide whether the girls should or should not go to see them, —rightly considering herself bound to watch over their morals and conduct.

CHAPTER VI

During the first few months of his reign Louis XVI. dwelt at La Muette, Marly, and Compiègne. When settled at Versailles he occupied himself with a general examination of his grandfather's papers. He had promised the Queen to communicate to her all that he might discover relative to the history of the man with the iron mask, who, he thought, had become so inexhaustible a source of conjecture only in consequence of the interest which the pen of a celebrated writer had excited respecting the detention of a prisoner of State, who was merely a man of whimsical tastes and habits.

I was with the Queen when the King, having finished his researches, informed her that he had not found anything among the secret papers elucidating the existence of this prisoner; that he had conversed on the matter with M. de Maurepas, whose age made him contemporary with the epoch during which the story must have been known to the ministers; and that M. de Maurepas had assured him he was merely a prisoner of a very dangerous character, in consequence of his disposition for intrigue. He was a subject of the Duke of Mantua, and was enticed to the frontier, arrested there, and kept prisoner, first at Pignerol, and afterwards in the Bastille. This transfer took place in consequence of the appointment of the governor of the former place to the government of the latter. It was for fear the prisoner should profit by the inexperience of a new governor that he was sent with the Governor of Pignerol to the Bastille.

Such was, in fact, the truth about the man on whom people have been pleased to fix an iron mask. And thus was it related in writing, and published by M. — twenty years ago. He had searched the archives of the Foreign Office, and laid the real story before the public; but the public, prepossessed in favour of a marvellous version, would not acknowledge the authenticity of his account. Every man relied upon the authority of Voltaire; and it was believed that a natural or a twin brother of Louis XIV. lived many years in prison with a mask over his face. The story of this mask, perhaps, had its origin in the old custom, among both men and women in Italy, of wearing a velvet mask when they exposed themselves to the sun. It is possible that the Italian captive may have sometimes shown himself upon the terrace of his prison with his face thus covered. As to the silver plate which this celebrated prisoner is said to have thrown from his window, it is known that such a circumstance did happen, but it happened at Valzin, in the time of Cardinal Richelieu. This anecdote has been mixed up with the inventions respecting the Piedmontese prisoner.

In this survey of the papers of Louis XV. by his grandson some very curious particulars relative to his private treasury were found. Shares in various financial companies afforded him a revenue, and had in course of time produced him a capital of some amount, which he applied to his secret expenses. The King collected his vouchers of title to these shares, and made a present of them to M. Thierry de Ville d'Avray, his chief valet de chambre.

The Queen was desirous to secure the comfort of Mesdames, the daughters of Louis XV., who were held in the highest respect. About this period she contributed to furnish them with a revenue sufficient to provide them an easy, pleasant existence: The King gave them the Chateau of Bellevue; and added to the produce of it, which was given up to them, the expenses of their table and equipage, and payment of all the charges of their household, the number of which was even increased. During the lifetime of Louis XV., who was a very selfish prince, his daughters, although they had attained forty years of age, had no other place of residence than their apartments in the Chateau of Versailles; no other walks than such as they could take in the large park of that palace; and no other means of gratifying their taste for the cultivation of plants but by having boxes and vases, filled with them, in their balconies or their closets. They had, therefore, reason to be much pleased with the conduct of Marie Antoinette, who had the greatest influence in the King's kindness towards his aunts.

Paris did not cease, during the first years of the reign, to give proofs of pleasure whenever the Queen appeared at any of the plays of the capital. At the representation of "Iphigenia in Aulis,"

the actor who sang the words, "Let us sing, let us celebrate our Queen!" which were repeated by the chorus, directed by a respectful movement the eyes of the whole assembly upon her Majesty. Reiterated cries of 'Bis'! and clapping of hands, were followed by such a burst of enthusiasm that many of the audience added their voices to those of the actors in order to celebrate, it might too truly be said, another Iphigenia. The Queen, deeply affected, covered her eyes with her handkerchief; and this proof of sensibility raised the public enthusiasm to a still higher pitch.

The King gave Marie Antoinette Petit Trianon.

[The Chateau of Petit Trianon, which was built for Louis XV., was not remarkably handsome as a building. The luxuriance of the hothouses rendered the place agreeable to that Prince. He spent a few days there several times in the year. It was when he was setting off from Versailles for Petit Trianon that he was struck in the side by the knife of Damiens, and it was there that he was attacked by the smallpox, of which he died on the 10th of May, 1774.—MADAME CAMPAN.]

Henceforward she amused herself with improving the gardens, without allowing any addition to the building, or any change in the furniture, which was very shabby, and remained, in 1789, in the same state as during the reign of Louis XV. Everything there, without exception, was preserved; and the Queen slept in a faded bed, which had been used by the Comtesse du Barry. The charge of extravagance, generally made against the Queen, is the most unaccountable of all the popular errors respecting her character. She had exactly the contrary failing; and I could prove that she often carried her economy to a degree of parsimony actually blamable, especially in a sovereign. She took a great liking for Trianon, and used to go there alone, followed by a valet; but she found attendants ready to receive her,—a concierge and his wife, who served her as femme de chambre, women of the wardrobe, footmen, etc.

When she first took possession of Petit Trianon, it was reported that she changed the name of the seat which the King had given her, and called it Little Vienna, or Little Schoenbrunn. A person who belonged to the Court, and was silly enough to give this report credit, wishing to visit Petit Trianon with a party, wrote to M. Campan, requesting the Queen's permission to do so. In his note he called Trianon Little Vienna. Similar requests were usually laid before the Queen just as they were made: she chose to give the permissions to see her gardens herself, liking to grant these little favours. When she came to the words I have quoted she was very, much offended, and exclaimed, angrily, that there were too many, fools ready, to aid the malicious; that she had been told of the report circulated, which pretended that she had thought of nothing but her own country, and that she kept an Austrian heart, while the interests of France alone ought to engage her. She refused the request so awkwardly made, and desired M. Campan to reply, that Trianon was not to be seen for some time, and that the Queen was astonished that any man in good society should believe she would do so ill-judged a thing as to change the French names of her palaces to foreign ones.

Before the Emperor Joseph II's first visit to France the Queen received a visit from the Archduke Maximilian in 1775. A stupid act of the ambassador, seconded on the part of the Queen by the Abbe de Vermond, gave rise at that period to a discussion which offended the Princes of the blood and the chief nobility of the kingdom. Travelling incognito, the young Prince claimed that the first visit was not due from him to the Princes of the blood; and the Queen supported his pretension.

From the time of the Regency, and on account of the residence of the family of Orleans in the bosom of the capital, Paris had preserved a remarkable degree of attachment and respect for that branch of the royal house; and although the crown was becoming more and more remote from the Princes of the House of Orleans, they had the advantage (a great one with the Parisians) of being the descendants of Henri IV. An affront to that popular family was a serious ground of dislike to the Queen. It was at this period that the circles of the city, and even of the Court, expressed themselves bitterly about her levity, and her partiality for the House of Austria. The Prince for whom the Queen

had embarked in an important family quarrel—and a quarrel involving national prerogatives—was, besides, little calculated to inspire interest. Still young, uninformed, and deficient in natural talent, he was always making blunders.

He went to the Jardin du Roi; M. de Buffon, who received him there, offered him a copy of his works; the Prince declined accepting the book, saying to M. de Buffon, in the most polite manner possible, “I should be very sorry to deprive you of it.”

[Joseph II, on his visit to France, also went to see M. de Buffon, and said to that celebrated man, “I am come to fetch the copy of your works which my brother forgot.”—NOTE BY THE EDITOR.]

It may be supposed that the Parisians were much entertained with this answer.

The Queen was exceedingly mortified at the mistakes made by her brother; but what hurt her most was being accused of preserving an Austrian heart. Marie Antoinette had more than once to endure that imputation during the long course of her misfortunes. Habit did not stop the tears such injustice caused; but the first time she was suspected of not loving France, she gave way to her indignation. All that she could say on the subject was useless; by seconding the pretensions of the Archduke she had put arms into her enemies’ hands; they were labouring to deprive her of the love of the people, and endeavoured, by all possible means, to spread a belief that the Queen sighed for Germany, and preferred that country to France.

Marie Antoinette had none but herself to rely on for preserving the fickle smiles of the Court and the public. The King, too indifferent to serve her as a guide, as yet had conceived no love for her, notwithstanding the intimacy that grew between them at Choisy. In his closet Louis XVI. was immersed in deep study. At the Council he was busied with the welfare of his people; hunting and mechanical occupations engrossed his leisure moments, and he never thought on the subject of an heir.

The coronation took place at Rheims, with all the accustomed pomp. At this period the people’s love for Louis XVI. burst forth in transports not to be mistaken for party demonstrations or idle curiosity. He replied to this enthusiasm by marks of confidence, worthy of a people happy in being governed by a good King; he took a pleasure in repeatedly walking without guards, in the midst of the crowd which pressed around him, and called down blessings on his head. I remarked the impression made at this time by an observation of Louis XVI. On the day of his coronation he put his hand up to his head, at the moment of the crown being placed upon it, and said, “It pinches me.” Henri III. had exclaimed, “It pricks me.” Those who were near the King were struck with the similarity between these two exclamations, though not of a class likely to be blinded by the superstitious fears of ignorance.

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