Memoirs of Marie Antoinette, v1

Madame Campan

Table of Contents

Memoirs of Marie Antoinette, v1

Madame Campan

This etext was produced by David Widger widger@cecomet.net

MEMOIRS OF THE COURT OF MARIE ANTOINETTE, QUEEN OF FRANCE

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,

> [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.]

and the Duc de La Vauguyon, should be before us. 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 Abby 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.

HISTORIC 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 Compiegne, 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 Compiegne, 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 embroideress 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 Mardchal 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 Louie 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 Compiegne, 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 Beauharnaias 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−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 Ecouen, 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 Ecouen, 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 Ecouen 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 Ecouen, and the post−master said to him: 'Sire, the pupils of Ecouen 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 Ecouen. 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 Ecouen, 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.