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Pompadour (vol. 2 of 2), by marquise de Jeanne Antoinette
Poisson Pompadour**

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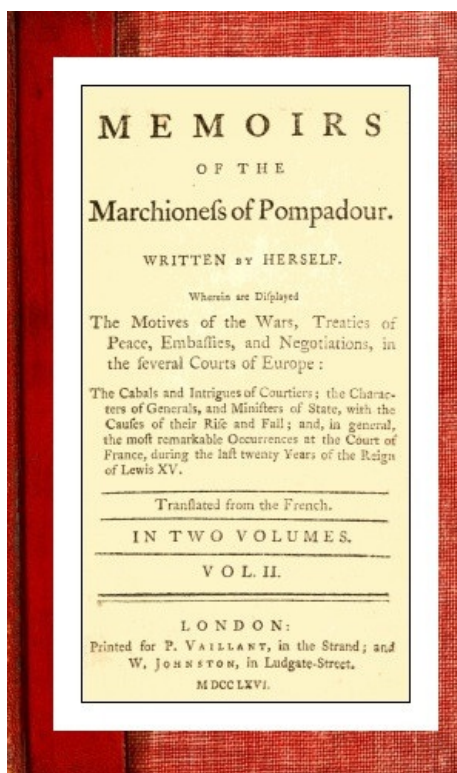
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(VOL. 2 OF 2) ***



**MEMOIRS
OF THE
Marchioness of Pompadour.**

WRITTEN BY HERSELF.

Wherein are Displayed

The Motives of the Wars, Treaties of Peace,
Embassies, and Negotiations, in the several Courts of
Europe:

The Cabals and Intrigues of Courtiers; the Characters

of Generals, and Ministers of State, with the Causes of their Rise and Fall; and, in general, the most remarkable Occurrences at the Court of France, during the last twenty Years of the Reign of Lewis XV.

Translated from the French.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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MEMOIRS

OF THE

Marchioness of Pompadour.

LEWIS XV. as I have said in another place, visited me habitually. He could not dispense with my company, which was become absolutely necessary to him: but this inclination had not entirely removed a taste for transitory amours. He yielded to them by constitution; but never reflected on them without repentance. After an adventure of gallantry, he was more constant than ever. Remorse brought him back to himself and to me. I may venture to say, that I enjoyed his infidelity; and had he been entirely divested of it, he would have given way to some other passion, that would have separated him from me. I was under apprehensions for some time that his mind would take a warlike turn: I desired Maurice count Saxe, who regularly paid his court to him, after the campaigns in Flanders, not to dwell so much upon battles and sieges: but Lewis assured me, as I have already mentioned, that he had sacrificed this inclination to the welfare of France.

The king had for some time devoted himself to politics; but this study no way interfered with his amusements. He applied himself to it through that beneficent disposition, which naturally prompts him to solace his people. He was desirous of being possessed of the present state of Europe: M. De Belleisle furnished him with it. The king shewed it to me: it was a system of political-topography. The Marshal entered into a minute detail upon the power of each government. He took a review of all Europe, and stipulated the state of the forces of the different people.

M. de Noailles, who saw this state of Europe, said, "That there was too much geometry in it; that the republic of Christendom was subject to so many revolutions, which derived their origin from so many secondary causes, wherewith politics had no kind of connexion, that cabinets frequently obtained honour from what was the mere effect of fortune. France, said he to me, exerted her influence to acquire Lorrain: Cardinal Richelieu could not succeed in the business, and Mazarin miscarried; accident threw it into the hands of France under the administration of cardinal de Fleuri.

"Europe was engaged for near two hundred years in negociation and war, to prevent the crown of Spain devolving to any branch of the house of Bourbon. The will of a weak and languishing prince bequeathed it entirely to France, at a time that Lewis XIV. did not even think of being included in the treaty of partition.

"The English never could have imagined making a conquest of Gibraltar, which gave them an ascendancy in the ocean, and made them masters of the Mediterranean; when the same accident that gave Spain to the house of Bourbon, produced them the acquisition of that important fortress, which they have ever since retained, though the reasons that induced them to gain possession of it no longer subsist, &c.

"If we were to recur to the origin of great revolutions, we should find that fortune governed the world, and that policy, which would reduce all events to rule, prevails too much in the cabinet of princes. He added, that these enumerations of the power of the states of Europe are useless, as it is not strength that regulates the fate of governments, but a certain combination of accidents, in opposition to which neither negotiations nor armies can prevail."

I do not at present recollect the precise terms in which this memorial of M. de Belleisle was conceived; I only remember that he concluded with these words: "France cannot be hurt by all the great states of Europe: Prussia only is to be feared, and England dreaded."

Though the king had for some time been fond of talking of state affairs, he was so polite as to dwell but little upon them in my company. Notwithstanding what I have said of his gravity, there is no man in France so agreeable at a *tête-a-tête*, as Lewis XV. He is some days so happy and vivacious, as even to inspire mirth and joy.

I have frequently mentioned his goodness; I shall now give a little anecdote, which will corroborate what I have said upon that head. One night, after having been pretty late with me in my apartments, he told me he should not dine with me the next day (as he frequently used to do) having resolved to go to Marli, where he should remain till towards the evening. My brother Marigni paid me a morning visit that day, and as I was

quite alone, I desired him to stay and dine with me. We conversed together for some time, after which he went to take a turn in Versailles gardens, till it was the hour to go to dinner.

The king altered his mind and did not go a riding. Instead of going to Marli, he came to dine with me. He observed the table laid with two covers, and as he had the day before acquainted me with his intended journey, he testified his surprise, asking me for whom I had intended the second cover. "Sire, I replied, my brother came to see me this morning, and as I was alone, I invited him to dine with me; but as your majesty does me that honour yourself, I shall send to acquaint him that he cannot be a guest." *No*, replied the king, *your brother is one of the family; instead of removing the cover that was laid for him, only lay another, and we will all three dine together.* My brother returned, and the king behaved to him with all possible politeness. This is not an important anecdote, but it displays this prince's regard, even in the most minute affairs.

M. Rouillé furnished the king every day with fresh estimates, by which it appeared that the marine was re-established. This minister publickly said in 1751, that he had seventy ships of the line, and thirty frigates; but he said that he had more than there really were. Ministers, in general, increase their plan; they almost constantly confound the establishments already made, with those that still remain to be made, and these latter frequently never take place.

A man of understanding said to me at that time, that if France had a fleet of seventy men of war or frigates, ready to put to sea, the great object of the French marine would be accomplished. This same person averred, that we wanted no more to face the English, who have not a greater number of ships fit for engagement; for, added he, we must not confound the coasting cruizers, and those which are destined for convoys; they are not comprised among the number of ships of the line.

The English ambassador was ordered to keep a watchful eye upon M. Rouillé and all his operations, in order to acquaint his court therewith. He no longer asked the administration, as was customary with him, what we intended to do with so many ships, because he had frequently had for answer, that the court of France was not obliged to give Great-Britain an account of what she did.

The king made a promotion of sea officers; commodores were appointed, captains and old lieutenants were promoted, and there was so much bustle made about the state of the marine, that the court of London began to take umbrage at it.

A foreign ambassador told me one day upon this occasion, that he discerned a great error in the French government, that is to say, "that we make a shew of ourselves to all Europe and our enemies. He added, there are no secrets of state at Versailles; all Christendom is informed of the designs of France, long before she is in a condition to execute them, whereby they are frustrated."

An affair that no way related to France, excited the attention of the king for a short time. The Genoese (an unsteady people, and who have never been in a state of tranquility since the foundation of their republic) had carried on a war for a long time against the Corsicans, whom they stiled rebels, whilst the Corsicans gave them the appellation of tyrants. There had been several engagements between them, which served only to protract the war, as peace must ever be the result of a reconciliation of sentiments. Hatred and antipathy had barred all the avenues to a mediation. Their aversion to each other surpassed their reciprocal dread. If religion itself had fomented a division, it could not have been more animated.

Marshal Belleisle, speaking to me of this war, often told me that the Genoese would never be rulers over the Corsicans; for which he assigned this reason; "When the principal state combats with its subjects, the first battle must decide the quarrel, otherwise it will remain for a long time undetermined. Rebels, who by sieges and battles, poise the sovereign authority, no longer bear the name of subjects, but adopt that of enemies; for the force of arms, which destroys all privilege, restores the level."

Such people as are in subjection to kings, would no longer be so, if they were capable of throwing off their submission; for subordination was not agreed upon by convention, but compelled by violence or open force. So that a people who throw off the yoke, are not rebels any farther than their ill conduct in the revolution, and their ignorance to procure the means of success, give them this title.

The Genoese, after fruitless endeavours to reduce the Corsicans, took a wrong step in addressing themselves to foreign powers; France, of whom they had asked succours, furnished them with some troops and a commander. The Venetian ambassador, who was then at Paris, said upon this occasion; "That the Genoese, who were reckoned to be people of great memory, had lost their recollection with regard to France, as they forgot that she bombarded Genoa in the time of Lewis XIV. and that the republic narrowly escaped from destruction through her, in the reign of Lewis XV."

The Genoese officers, whom the senate had appointed and sent to that island for the defence of their rights, were greater foes to the republic than they were to the Corsicans, seeking disputes with the French mediators, under pretence that they excited those islanders to hold them in contempt. If the allegation had been just, they should have connived at it, and pursued, without interruption, the restoration of peace. But envy, that vice so natural to Italians, and particularly the Genoese, occasioned this dissention. They saw with jealous eyes, foreigners interfering in a peace, all the honour of which they were desirous of keeping to themselves. The republic, equally jealous of their own officers, as these were of the French, took another ill-judged measure, by making application to the court of Versailles, to know how they should act against themselves, and what satisfaction the king required. Any other nation would rather have given up their interest with respect to Corsica, which even France could not bring back to its duty, than to have thus humbled themselves: but the republic of Genoa have been long accustomed to meanness and submission.

"The Genoese, said the King, deserve to be punished, by my interfering no longer with their affairs: but they have paved the way for my son Don Philip into Italy, and I owe them some acknowledgment—this predominates in my heart over the resentment which their conduct deserves."

Lewis XV. who had appointed M. de Chauvelin plenipotentiary in the island of Corsica, to terminate matters in an amicable manner, gave him fresh instructions to hasten his negociation, and new orders were dispatched to the marquis of Cursai, who commanded the French troops.

These two mediators settled the place for holding a congress, and peace was in appearance concluded. All formalities were observed: Harangues were made at the opening of the assemblies, and flowers of rhetoric

were scattered amongst an ignorant and barbarous people. The Corsicans stretched their large ears to these studied orations, but did not understand a syllable. They replied with acclamations, and the orators imagined they had seduced them by their eloquence.

After these speeches, the treaty, or regulation between the Republic and the Corsicans, was brought upon the carpet. Each party thereby retained prerogatives which made them independent of each other; that is to say, the subjects of this republic were treating for their liberty. The Corsicans terminated by negotiation, what they could not accomplish by arms.

When the articles of the treaty were sent to Versailles, Marshal Belleisle publicly said, "That the Republic had submitted too much: that they should have granted an amnesty to the rebels, and not have treated with them: that subjects who have thrown off the yoke, in returning to their duty, should obtain nothing but pardon. He added, that the Corsicans should either be punished as guilty of treason, or else abandoned as rebels; for subjects who are sufficiently powerful to oblige their sovereign to treat with them, are not faithful enough to submit long to obedience."

These reflexions appeared to be the more justly founded, as all these negotiations soon became useless, and a war was presently after rekindled.

Be this as it may, the Genoese were for the present left here, the attention of every one being taken up with news from Asia, which greatly flattered the king's expectations. We were informed from India, that the Nabob had confidence enough in France, to place his political interest in the hands of a Frenchman, named Dupleix; and that the nation of the Marats, who were subject to the Nabob, had appointed him their commander in chief.

It is said that Lewis XIV. who was animated with every kind of glory, was sensibly struck with the information given him by an ambassador from the king of Siam, who was delegated to acquaint him that his name was held in great veneration in those states. He testified more public joy, and was more flattered with this honour, than if he had obtained an important conquest.

The peace concluded with the Nabob, and the confidence which this prince reposed in France, were objects of far greater consequence. They increased the riches of the state, whereas the embassy from Siam had no other effect than flattering the monarch's vanity.

Dupleix became at once plenipotentiary and generalissimo; he stipulated the terms of the treaty of peace, and received the command. These two posts were preceded by an important negotiation, without which he could never have obtained them; he fixed the unsteady disposition of the Marats. This nation had been hitherto divided into various factions, who, in weakening themselves, prevented France deriving any advantage from them. This foreigner upbraided them with their impolitic conduct, and taught them to pursue connected views, and an uniform system.

This Dupleix was not, however, any great genius: but there are people who perform great things with very little capacity. We have since seen him at Paris fallen from the pinnacle of his fame, and at length give up his breath with the reputation of a man, who, so far from having been capable of governing India, had not talents sufficient to regulate his own household affairs.

He had a great law-suit with the India company. This quarrel is equally remarkable by the nature of the demand, as by that of the refusal. The Nabob's general declared, that the directors were indebted to him several millions, and the directors set forth that they owed him nothing. There is, in general, ingratitude on the one side, and but little acknowledgment on the other. The memorials that were published upon this occasion, produced at least this advantage, they opened the eyes of the government with respect to many things relative to India, which they would never have been acquainted with, had not these publications taken place.

I made business, pleasure, and amusements, by turns succeed at Versailles, which still prevented the king's serious reflexions. Lewis XV. existed, I may say, by a constitution which I communicated to him, and this factitious temperament hindered his own prevailing. I believe he would have been at length overcome without that art which I employed to repress nature. Notwithstanding this precaution, there were moments in which he gave himself up to melancholy. It was then necessary to invent new pleasures, in order to excite fresh sensations. As soon as I perceived these produced no effect, I redoubled my attention to substitute others that might be more prevalent.

Religion was the greatest obstacle I had to surmount, for the King was very devout. He prayed regularly, and went every day to mass, but did not perform his Easter-devotions. This estrangement from the sacraments arose rather from an excess of delicacy, than a contempt for the communion. His transitory amours separated him from the sacrament, which he feared to prophane. The jesuit who enjoyed the title of his confessor, had made various attempts to conquer his delicacy upon this head. His power would then have been more extensive, as his penitent would have been more at his devotion; but Lewis XV. never submitted.

I was judged a proper instrument to hint something to the monarch upon this subject; but it was necessary that I should begin by convincing myself, in order to persuade the King. This was thought an easy matter; people of the first rank, and of considerable dignity in the church, but who shall not be named here, fearing that the Roman catholic religion might appear to lose ground to the enemies of the state, undertook this great work.

I was not much versed in this kind of matters; for the women of Paris have no more religion than what is just necessary to prevent their having none at all.

These able theologians settled it as a principle, "That scandal in a king was the greatest evil he could be guilty of: that he is the mirror, where every one looks to see himself: that his example carries with it that of the state: that from the time the King did not commune, there were upwards of a million of subjects in France, who no longer partook of the sacraments: that the desertion from the holy table was become general," &c. &c.

Then speaking of constitutions, they added, "That God had given power to his ministers to absolve past sins; that repentance effaced in heaven crimes committed upon earth: that the Divinity, in forming man, had been obliged to give way to his weaknesses: that we should always fulfil our christian obligations,

notwithstanding the continual temptations with which the heart of man is surrounded," &c. &c.

In a word, I saw through these maxims of the fathers of the church, that the King, in order to be a good catholic, should be regularly guilty of profanation of the sacrament once a year.

I refused taking upon myself this moral commission. I had a glimpse of those consequences which might have affected myself. This prince's approaching the communion table, must necessarily have caused a revolution in him. I was under less apprehension for the King's religion, than the intrigues of churchmen. The confessor was particularly to be dreaded. He is always powerful, when the monarch is frequently at his feet.

Neither did I advise the King to absent himself from the holy table. I left things just as they were.

Peace, which had restored political tranquility, of itself produced fresh divisions in the state. Churchmen, the clergy, and the parliament, who in time of war, unite themselves to the administration, to participate of public misfortunes, in their turn create them, when battles and sieges are passed: so that by a fatality, which is, perhaps, derived from the constitution itself, France must always be armed to avoid domestic quarrels; or continually wage war with herself, to prevent that of the enemy. I have heard very able politicians say, that this arises from the government's not being sufficiently powerful to suppress divisions abroad, nor sufficiently absolute to destroy dissensions at home: a mixed state that will one day make it a prey to its enemies, or a victim to its subjects.

A trifling affair gave rise to a great misunderstanding between the court and the parliament, which was the distribution of the alms collected for the mendicants. The directors of the hospital of Paris had never yet been blamed by either the court or the city, because the war had engaged the attention of the government; but peace being restored, which gave them leisure to inspect into the minutest affairs, they at length took this into consideration.

The archbishop of Paris claimed this jurisdiction by right; the King was of the same opinion; but the parliament judged differently, and henceforward representations and deputations took place. A Prince of the blood royal said upon this occasion, *The parliament of Paris must have very little to do, when they quarrel with the King about beggars.*

Lewis XV. issued an arret in favour of the archbishop; it was to be registered, and now dissention broke out. The parliament went to Versailles and came back—they met, they adjourned; but the King shewed himself absolute. He wrote in these terms to the chambers assembled. "If I have thought proper to allow you to make remonstrances to me upon the edicts and declarations which I send you to be registered, I never gave you the power to annul or alter them, under pretence of modification.—It is my will that my declaration concerning the hospital be registered purely and simply. I shall see that my parliament obey my orders."

This was speaking like a master: the King was animated at certain moments support all his rights; but the goodness of his heart, his love of peace, and the tranquility of the state, and perhaps more than all, an undetermined character, discouraged by difficulties and opposition, made him yield.

I often complained to him of this disposition, which induced him to grant what he had at first refused. "What would you have me do, madam?" he said to me with that complaisance and sweetness which are so natural to him. "I know I should harden myself against certain bodies, who want to raise their authority upon a level with my throne. But I sacrifice my resentment to the general tranquility. I tremble to think of the misfortunes that the people suffered under the reign of my great grandfather, by the quarrels which arose between the court and the parliament. These quarrels renewed civil wars, which immersed France in the deepest desolation. I would rather be complaisant than ostentatious, as the consequences of the latter might be fatal to my subjects."

The majority of the members of the council were not of this way of thinking; one of the most penetrating said, that under a firm and absolute government, the laws were restored to their vigour, and abuses reformed; whereas indulgence and relaxation were the effects of a weak and irresolute administration. I acknowledge that I differ much in opinion from this last, and I could have wished that the King had possessed a little more resolution. The affair relating to the hospital terminated, like most of those of the parliament, that is to say, by modifications.

The King of his own accord, and without being sollicitated, appointed the count de St. Florentin and M. Rouillé ministers of state: They were each of them secretaries of state. A courtier at that time said, that the King had done a great deal in appointing them his secretaries, and that he had done too much in creating them ministers. It is certain that these two men had done nothing to entitle them to that rank. M. Rouillé, in particular, was far from being bright, having no other recommendation than his assiduity and application, which most constantly destroy every thing, when they are not accompanied with genius.

It was said at Paris that I induced the King to make this nomination. The truth is, that I no way interfered in it: Nay, it was added, that M. de St. Florentin had sold himself to me, and that I paid him for the letters de cachet which I had occasion for to drive such persons from Paris as displeased me. Those who spoke in this manner were ignorant that the great letters de cachet were not issued but in the name and by the consent of the King. The sovereign commands and the minister obeys.

I had very little acquaintance with this secretary of state; he paid his court to me like the other ministers; but he seldom spoke to me about private affairs. I found him at court, the King employed him, and this sufficed me.

M. Rouillé had been recommended to me. I mentioned him to the King. I recommended him to this Prince, not as a great minister, but as an honest man.

M. de Puisieux, secretary of state for the department of foreign affairs, begged leave to retire. This office was difficult to manage; several persons had refused it. Those who had before filled this employment, had sown disorder in this department, and the last troubles of Europe had compleated its confusion. France was not in a situation to hope that the last treaty of peace could long subsist, and in time of war there was more business in this department than in all the others. One minister is scarce sufficient when every thing is in order, but when every thing is in confusion, before sieges and battles take place, it is impossible for him to go on.

I very seldom saw M. de Puisieux. Those who were personally acquainted with this minister, have told me

that he had knowledge and understanding; but that he was deficient in that superiority of genius which characterizes a statesman. He had gone through the negotiations for which he was appointed with such middling talents, as never confer any future reputation. He may be ranked with those common ministers, who after having compleated their career in this world, never enter upon any in history.

After the retreat of M. de Puisieux, the King said to me: "*Well, madam, to whom shall we give the department of foreign affairs?*" And without giving me time to reply, he added, *This office requires an able minister, a man of assiduity and integrity. Do you know of such a one in my kingdom?*

"Sire, I replied, what you require is pretty difficult to be found; but some of your subjects may possess all these qualities; and amongst this number, I may venture to presume, that the marquis de Sr. Contest, your ambassador at the Hague, deserves a distinguished rank." *I am of your opinion*, the King immediately said; *M. Contest has already done me such services, as have entitled him to this place: I will give it to him*; and the ambassador immediately left the Hague, to come and take upon him this office.

I shall in this place mention an establishment which I planned, and to which the King gave his assistance, in order to put it in execution: This will appear but a trifling affair to those who estimate establishments in proportion as they are striking. I prevailed upon Lewis XV. to change the object of the expence made for public rejoicings, by applying it to the increase of the human species, which luxury and debauchery constantly diminish in France. His Majesty gave orders in consequence, that 600,000 livres, which were to be expended for fireworks, on account of the birth of the duke of Burgundy, should be divided into portions amongst a certain number of young women, to be married in the capital. It was then intended that the same orders should be sent into the provinces. The population of Paris is but the sixteenth part of that of the whole monarchy; so that, if all the other parts of France had followed the same example set them by the metropolis, population would have been considerably increased in France.

M. de Belleisle, who made all the calculations, averred that these marriages would furnish near 20,000 citizens annually to the monarchy: thus do small things promote great ones, and one single additional turn in the finances contribute to aggrandize a state. No one suspected that I had framed this establishment, any more than several others which I created for the advantage of France, and from which many persons who had no hand in them, derived honour to themselves; whilst I was reproached with others that were detrimental to the government, and of which I was entirely ignorant.

The sweets of peace began to be relished, when the first sparks of the torch of war were perceived from a distance. The duke of Mirepoix complained to the court of London of some grievances with which the French reproached the English, and the English ambassador at Paris remonstrated against the conduct of the French with respect to the English. They wanted to make infractions upon the treaty of peace, but they did not know where to begin. The time for fighting was not yet come; battles by sea and land, that were to create great revolutions, were anticipated by preparations on both sides.

The birth of the duke of Burgundy came in time to divert the occupations of the court. The disorder in the administration, the difficulty of finding able ministers, the confusion in the state of the finances, the misery of the people, the obstinacy of the clergy, the perverseness of the parliament, and the behaviour of the English, who threatened war in time of peace; these all united to interrupt the King's tranquility. He, however, yielded for some time to the pleasure of seeing his crown secured to his house. Kings are more sensible of this kind of joy than is imagined. They fancy, that in their descendants they see their reign perpetuated; it seems to them as if they did not die, if when they go to the grave, they have an heir in whose hands they can place the scepter. The rejoicings of the people, which the King was made acquainted with, increased his felicity. The Parisians, who make a point of loving their sovereign, surpassed themselves, in their demonstrations of joy.

There were great festivals at court. All the foreign ministers strove to be first in complimenting Lewis XV. who congratulated himself upon this birth. I never saw him so happy. This was the only period of his life, whilst I remained at Versailles, that I found him completely joyful: I also felt at this instant a sensible pleasure, to see the King so happy. His usual gaiety was much increased, and of longer duration. Our interviews were more tender, and our conversation more lively and animated.

This epocha made me reflect upon the few resources which the human heart has within itself to be happy. Favourable combinations of nature or fortune are necessary to draw it from that state of languor, in which it is almost constantly immersed: and this fatal law must surely be general, when even kings are not exempt from it. But there is a still greater misfortune attendant on humanity, which is, that pleasure is almost constantly counterbalanced by pain. One might say, that in the human heart there are two equal measures of joy and misery, and in proportion as the one is emptied the other is filled.

State affairs, and advices from foreign courts, soon overcast the court with serious looks, and the King lost his gaiety, and became more melancholy than ever.

Every time there was any important post to fill, or any considerable employment to be given away, the courtiers greatly increased their complaisance towards me. I had a constant train of solicitors. The Marquis de St. Contest having entered upon the post of secretary of state for foreign affairs, the embassy in Holland was vacant. M. de Bonac was mentioned to me in a favourable manner. I had but very little knowledge of him; I acquainted myself with his talents for negociation, and in consequence of the picture that was drawn to me of him, I interested myself in his favour. I spoke of him to the King, who appointed him his ambassador to the States General. As many courtiers interceded for the place, I made myself as many enemies as were refused it. The King's service and that of the state determined me in favour of M. de Bonac, who, it was said, had the necessary qualifications to do honour to his country.

The Prince of Soubise said, that of all the embassies in Europe, that of the Seven Provinces was the most difficult, as, in all the other courts, negociations are carried on with princes of a generous turn of mind, who often lose sight of their own advantages; whereas in Holland, the minister treats with merchants, who have their interest constantly in view. He added, that Holland is so situated, that in the wars between France and England, it may derive advantages from the one, and contribute to the other. Wherefore those who treat with the Dutch should have a great share of address, to make them declare when their succours are necessary; and they should have great abilities to keep them in an exact neutrality, when their arms may be prejudicial, &c.

I do not know whether M. de Bonac possessed all these qualities; for every thing is disguised at court, and people are not known till such time as they have been tried, and it is then too late to form a judgment that can be advantageous. M. de Bonac was an officer; this circumstance alone made me for some time hesitate upon the choice I proposed making. I never had any great faith in negociations carried on by military men. They are a kind of people that seldom have a turn of mind, and that pliant disposition necessary to succeed at foreign courts: but this is the age of warlike ministers. Lewis XV. has employed no others during his whole reign: and this, perhaps, is one of the reasons, why our affairs at foreign courts have not succeeded so well as we might have expected.

Those churchmen who make vows of poverty, but who are more covetous of riches than laymen, were also very assiduous in paying their court to me. The number of these that attended me, increased in proportion as abbeyes and bishopricks became vacant.

There were many candidates for the abbey of Auchin, but the King disposed of it in favour of Cardinal York, brother to the Pretender, who by enjoying this benefice, with the possession of several others, was richer than the real possessor of the duchy of York. This opulence, which in England the King's sons and brothers do not enjoy, made a courtier say upon this occasion, that it was very lucky for Cardinal York, that the house of Stuart had been dispossessed of the throne of Great-Britain; for without this accident, he would have been only a poor English citizen, instead of a rich Roman prince.

People, however, complained of the King's not having given this benefice to a Frenchman, who would have expended the revenue of it in the kingdom, instead of its being carried into Italy, which was now the case by this nomination. But those who reason in this manner did not know that kings who waged war against reigning families, gave alms to those families whose reign was expired. Moreover France had obligations to this unfortunate house. In the wars which France carried on, the Pretender was brought upon the carpet, and sent off, in the same manner as an actor is upon the stage.

In politics, those who perform a part must be paid; and I believe I have said in another place, that France never seriously thought of placing the Pretender on the throne of England.

M. de Machault, keeper of the seals and comptroller general, who laboured to re-establish the finances, succeeded therein but slowly. The King, who had an estimate of the national debts laid before him every month, found them always in the same situation. The financiers engrossed all the money of the state, which made M. de Machault say to the King, *Sire, I see but one method of bringing the money back into the treasury, which is to tax hôtel des fermes, or office of the farms.*

This proposal of the minister agreed perfectly well with an anonymous memorial, which was dedicated to me at Versailles, and which I had read to the King: it was conceived in these terms.

"The actual riches of the state consist of about eleven hundred millions of specie. This sum, in order to animate the whole body politic, should every where circulate geometrically. But this proportion is far from being settled in France, where it may be demonstratively proved, that two hundred individuals possess half the coin of the kingdom. These individuals are the financiers: their cash is that of the state: it contains the fortunes of all the citizens. Riches are daily buried in their coffers, as in a gulf. The crown, by yielding to a company the duties upon the entry of goods, never intended to subscribe to the ruin of the state. It granted the power of collecting those imposts to clerks, who by their activity and industry ought to enrich the state, and not impoverish it. This was the institution of farms; and inasmuch as they have swerved from this plan, they are become a monopoly of the company. The King has a right to reform abuses; and every contract that includes a grievance is of itself void.

"It is not proposed to correct past errors, but to remove present evils. If an attempt is never made, success cannot be expected. In dangerous disorders violent remedies are necessary. There is but one method of restoring the course of general circulation, which the monopoly of the company has interrupted. This is the establishment of an ardent chamber, wherein the financiers should give an account of their management of the farms, and which should enquire into the title whereby they are in possession of such immense riches, in order to transfer them for the benefit of the crown, as soon as the grievance and the monopoly shall be ascertained.

"To prevent the outcries of avarice, and the sordid love of pelf, against this regulation, two incontestible principles must previously be laid down.

"1. That the great profits of royal companies, when excessive, no longer bear that name, but come under the denomination of monopolies, being contrary to the intentions of the prince, who neither could nor would divest himself of great advantages upon any consideration whatever.

"2. That a King is always a minor, in regard to any grievance in the general finances: and that he is authorized by all the fundamental laws to annul a contract that is pernicious to the state and his people.

"That to proceed legally against the financiers, the ardent chamber should nominate commissaries to examine the books of the farmers-general. After having made an abstract thereof, they should report the monopolies used to accumulate these great riches, of which the company is possessed.

"From thence they should have recourse to the annual sub-divisions, in order to pursue the necessary clue, and ascertain the real state of their accounts.

"This operation being compleated, all the farmers-general should be summoned, one after another, before the tribunal of the ardent chamber, to give an account of the sum which they must have appropriated to themselves, according to the intelligence obtained.

"They should be directed to restore it all, except six per cent. which should be granted them as interest for their advanced money.

"In case of disobedience, they should be confined and kept in prison, until they had made entire restitution of the whole sum, without deducting any interest.

"The chief clerks, such as directors, registers, comptrollers, &c. should be subpoenaed before the ardent chamber, and obliged to make restitution, in the same manner as the farmers-general.

"None should be exempted, but such only as received nothing but wages of the company, &c. &c.

"According to a calculation made hereupon, 300,000,000, will return into the royal treasury, without imposing any tax upon the people.

"The establishing of an ardent chamber to compel the farmers to produce their accounts, is not (according to this memorial) an infraction of the rights of the people, nor a breach of civil liberty. Fouquet, intendant-general of the finances, in the former reign, was by a private commission adjudged to be divested of those immense sums, which he had accumulated by monopolies," &c. &c.

This memorial was not put in execution, any more than the greater part of those plans which have since appeared for the re-establishment of the finances. Much has been said in France of demolishing the farmers general; but when this scheme is to be executed no one dare assist, because those people have a great deal of money, and every body stands in need of them. I one day asked Marshal Saxe, who was very intimate with La Poupeliniere, what engaging qualities this farmer-general possessed, that could so much attract the Marshal. *Madam*, said he, *he has one that to me is excellent; for when I have occasion for a hundred thousand livres, I find them in his coffer; whereas when I apply to the comptroller-general, he constantly tells me he has no money.*

A prince of the blood said, that these people were beneficial, for the very reason that they appeared pernicious: for that since they were appointed, it is known where the riches of the state lie, whereas before no one knew where they were deposited.

The farmers-general got information of the memorial drawn up against the company, and another was penned to refute it. But this consisted of nothing but mere words. It chiefly displayed the utility of the company, who could instantaneously furnish considerable sums to the government in pressing exigencies: but the memorial took no notice that this money belonged to the state, and that the farmers are nothing more than agents to advance it, the money being raised upon the people.

M. de Belleisle, who read this answer, said to me, "These people, among whom there are many persons of sense, are so prejudiced in favour of their interest, that they are always extravagant when they are upon the subject of the finances. There is a capital error in the contract of the farms, which is, that it puts too much money into the pockets of a few individuals."

I have often at Versailles met with advocates who pleaded the cause of the farmers-general: but I never met with any judges that were favourable to them.

In the midst of domestic affairs, which occupied the administration and afflicted the King, a thousand different people eagerly endeavoured to present memorials to me for promoting arts, and increasing manufactures. I was unacquainted with the particulars upon which they turned; I desired the minister, who was sometimes busy with the King, to acquaint me with the advantages which the state derived from the prodigious number of manufactures established in France.

"This, madam, (said this statesman) is a matter that would take great time to impart to you: it would be necessary to recur to the age of Lewis XIV. in which he made many alterations in France, and who was called Great, because he struck home great strokes.

"This Prince, who possessed every kind of ambition, was not devoid of that of multiplying manufactures. Colbert his minister completely backed his designs; he passed his life in establishing trades as well as increasing arts; and as he had occasion for a great number of workmen to accomplish his design, he sent for five hundred thousand husbandmen from the country to promote the industry of cities. From that time such lands as were in want of hands remained uncultivated. This minister did not consider, that to increase the form he should multiply the matter. This the King over-looked also. Lewis XIV. was entirely taken up with the thirst of dominion, and this passion favoured those of all his ministers, who were desirous of sharing this ambition with him.

"The kingdom was filled with handicraftsmen; great luxury, the necessary consequence, took place, and from that time France, whose happy climate should make it superior, in point of riches, to all the other states of Europe, was impoverished.

"Nevertheless, the minister, who has since followed the plan of M. Colbert, has continued multiplying the arts, at the expence of the produce of agriculture.

"This policy is supported by a reason, which is, that this industry lays all the states of Europe under contribution; but France does not see that she begins by taxing herself, in diminishing the produce of her first substance: a disadvantage that immediately affects the power of the state, as it stops the progress of population."

M. de Belleisle was not of this opinion: he imagined that industry could supply every thing, even the deficiencies of production; for according to him the riches of a state depend upon its circulation; and he said that arts made money circulate better than agriculture: but he was mistaken. Eminent oeconomists have since demonstrated to me that the productions of the earth create real riches, whereas those formed by industry are only fictitious. Be this as it may, I determined to protect arts, and in order to encourage manufactures, I furnished the necessary funds to bring some into esteem.

Though the King's habitual disposition to visit me, made all France consider this inclination as his determined taste; the women constantly preserved a secret desire of supplanting me in the heart of this Prince. Lewis XV. always met with some in ambuscade. He could not go up or down stairs in his way to his own apartment, without meeting a beauty. The women of Paris, who are seldom in love with any thing but the opera or the play house, became enamoured with Versailles. They visited this place pretty regularly.

The custom which Lewis XIV. established of being applied to in person, when any favour was to be asked at court, and which was almost abolished since the death of this Prince, now revived. Many fair suiteresses addressed themselves to Lewis XV. Their eyes petitioned more than their memorials. Lewis yielded to their solicitations, and often gave them what they asked. He acquainted me with all these accidental intrigues, and this confidence enabled me to support them. I should have considered my influence as in its wane, if he had concealed them from me. I have said in another place, that unable to fix the constitution of this Prince, I was compelled to give him up to his inclination. His infidelity did not diminish the ascendancy I had over him. I reigned at Versailles, in the midst of those very causes which ought to have subdued my empire. By a

contradiction inherent in the human heart, his inconstancy made him constant to me. Remorse drove him fresh to my arms, which he only quitted to yield again to love and repentance.

What secured him to me, was, that of all the women, whom I knew he saw, there was not one, who was possessed of such qualities as were necessary to wrest him from me. Most of them had beauty; but they were wanting in those mental engagements, without which the charms of the face are of no effect. They all wanted to rule at court, to dispose of the first employments in the state, to acquire the Prince's favour; and the only means they used to obtain those ends, was to prostitute themselves to him; which was an infallible method of not succeeding.

A new object drew the attention of the court. This was to secure the tranquility of Italy—a boisterous country, where the first clouds of war always gather. All the treaties which have been concluded between sovereigns since Charlemain, could never give it stability, because it is the most happy continent upon earth, and the most feeble country in Europe.

Marshal Saxe said before he died, that if France could give a permanent peace to Italy, her population would become more flourishing. This general had demonstrated, that for two centuries more Frenchmen had perished in Italy, than all the other wars had carried off in the rest of Europe.

I have since been told by another general, that the soldiers do not fall there by cannon. They perish there by heat and voluptuousness; enemies by far more dangerous than the indefatigable labours of the North.

Lewis XV. found an advantage in this plan of pacification. He thereby secured the Dukes of Savoy, ever ready to introduce German troops into Italy, and to make incursions themselves into Dauphiny, upon the first misunderstanding that takes place in Europe. Naples, Parma, and Placentia, under the government of princes of the house of Bourbon, would have enjoyed a lasting tranquility, but this negotiation produced no effect.

Marshal Belleisle said to the King upon opening the conferences: "Sire, we may enter upon the plan of giving a lasting peace to Italy; but I apprise your Majesty, that the negotiation will not terminate but at the end of the world."

The Prince of Conti said upon this occasion, "That if a king of France were willing to prevent a war in Italy, the Italians would oppose him. This country, which with regard to money, is of itself poor, stands in need of foreign armies, whose military chests may supply their want of cash." The same thing has been said of Germany.

The King received a state of his naval force, according to which it consisted of fifty ships of the line and twenty frigates. I remember that a sensible man then said, that we had a navy, and wanted nothing but sailors—that is to say, we had half the necessary ingredients for forming a fleet. It was to procure this other half, which proved so useless some time after to France, that M. Rouillé was so assiduous.

The Count of Maurepas said, in his distant exile, "I know my successor—he will do so much, that he will at last destroy the French marine."

Those who decide at court the fate of the administrations of important departments, imagine that the province of the marine does not depend upon the minister who is at the head of it; that there are primary causes which counteract its progress. They are of opinion that France is formed to direct affairs by land; and England those that relate to the sea.

A statesman told me, nevertheless, one day at Versailles, that it was not impossible for France to have a marine; but to do this the system of the state must be changed, and the monarchy entirely subverted.

The minister assured Lewis XV. that besides this fleet, there was another upon the stocks, ready to be launched and put to sea.

The people, who ought always to be imposed upon by preparations, were satisfied with what was doing in the marine; but politicians and those who calculated the resources of England were dissatisfied.

At the time that we were endeavouring at the means of navigation, a projector presented a scheme to the King, for rendering France navigable. The object was the junction of two seas, by the means of two rivers. This man at first applied to me, and I sent him to M. Belleisle, who thought this project of great utility to the state. But several politicians were of a different opinion. They said that this junction would lessen the navigation, which should on the contrary be encreased. The English were quoted, who might easily shorten the course of their sea voyages, and who endeavoured to prolong them. But what may be judicious in this respect for Great Britain, might be very impolitic for France.

I mention these particular transactions, because they fell immediately under my notice, and the King did me the honour to consult me upon them. I shall pass over in silence such schemes as were offered to the administration during my residence at court, and which did not take place.

When the King acquainted me with the death of the duke of Orleans, who died the fourth of July 1752, he seemed greatly affected at it. Sudden deaths made a great impression upon Lewis XV. Philip of Orleans finished his career at that age when most men begin theirs. This prince was a striking example of the contrast there often is in the characters of a father and a son.

This Prince had nothing of the Regent's disposition. He had passed his time in praying and bestowing alms. Each day of his life was distinguished by some christian act. Brought up in the center of pleasures, he shunned them at an age when the passions strongly plead for gratification, and when it is very difficult to resist their intreaties.

The curate of St. Sulpice said, that if he had been Pope, he would have canonized the Duke of Orleans, had he possessed no other virtue than having resisted the example of the royal palace. We well knew that the Regent's house was not the model for christian virtues. The Cardinal du Bois, who ridiculed men, politics and religion, made it the residence of vice and debauchery.

But the Duke of Orleans, who is the subject of our present consideration, possessed none but those virtues which do honour in heaven, and not those which characterize great princes upon earth. His house, which he had divested of all regal magnificence, resembled a convent, of which he was the superior. He supported by charity an infinite number of people, who having no other care than that of receiving it, lived in idleness and effeminacy. His bigotry had made him retire from public affairs, and induced him to let the state

take care of itself, at a time that it stood in the most need of assistance.

It is well known that the Princes of the blood who have a watchful eye over the government, keep the ministers in awe, and prevent their being guilty of malversation. Such is the fate of the French monarchy, that the great in France either give themselves up to debauchery, or turn hermits.

The death of Madame Henriette, which succeeded that of the Duke of Orleans, filled the court with mourning, and the King's heart with sorrow. This Princess was endued with those qualities which endear the great: naturally gentle and affable, she was beloved by all that approached her. A good heart, and a compassionate sympathetic soul, formed her general character; the Parisians did not sufficiently lament her loss: they have no affection but for their Kings; they have none remaining for the royal family.

A foreigner, who was acquainted with the genius of our nation, said to me; "If France were deprived of the Dauphin, before he mounted the throne, no one would regret his loss; but that if he died six months after having wore the crown, all the world would weep for him. He added, that it was not the loss of the person, but the name of King that was regretted in France."

By the death of Madame Henriette, I discovered in Lewis XV. the qualities of a good father. Tears streamed from his eyes, and his melancholy surpassed his usual hypocondriac disposition. I exerted all my abilities to assuage his grief: but he paid all the rights that nature could extort, before they took effect.

Literature once more disturbed the King and the court. The council was informed that a large work was printing at Paris, under the title of the Encyclopedia. This was a rhapsody compiled from all the dictionaries extant, to which was added, by the compilers, reflexions of a suspicious tendency on religion and politics. This heap of reasoning conveyed no instruction how to think, but only taught how to doubt. A man of letters said to me at that time, the Encyclopedia could only increase the number of ignoramus's, and warp the minds of men of learning.

Such writings as tended to support materialism, made an impression at court, and this production was ranked in this predicament. The King commanded the two first volumes of this production to be suppressed. The same arret which prohibited them, condemned the publishers of them to pay a considerable fine.

This suppression gave birth to an anonymous memorial upon this subject, which appeared to me very sensible, and which was conceived in these terms.

"The government has established a tribunal to examine the productions of the mind. It consists of a minister and twenty-four royal censors, whose sole employment is to revise manuscripts destined for the press.

"A book that is submitted to the examination of this tribunal, is under the protection of the government. The author has done all that the laws required of him. He is not answerable for the effects that the publication of his book may produce. This literary minister should be its voucher, and liable to such penalties as the author would incur, if he had printed it in a clandestine manner. It nevertheless, daily happens, that a book meets with the approbation of this tribunal, and is often censured by the government. The writer is prosecuted—he is punished in such a manner, as if it had been concealed from this jurisdiction. The parliament takes cognizance of it, the book is burnt, and the author sent to the Bastile. What could be done more, if he had acted in defiance of the ordonnances made upon this subject?

"There is an error in literary jurisdiction, which will always occasion grievances and divisions in the republic of letters. The minister who presides at this tribunal, has neither the capacity nor leisure to peruse all the MSS. that are presented for the press: they are put into the hands of censors, who have neither more time nor more genius than himself.

"They are frequently upon abstracted subjects, and above the capacity of both—then the censors read them without comprehending them, and sign them without understanding them. Their approbation being thus obtained, the work is accordingly printed, the book appears, and the prosecution begins just where it should end.

"The inconvenience that resulted from it would be of no great importance, if the sentence pronounced against the author put an end to the dispute; but it almost constantly happens, that the public interest themselves in the contest. The erroneous maxims it contains are credited; the more they are condemned, the more the book comes into vogue. Its suppression is of no effect, the editions increase in proportion as they are prohibited: for it is only necessary to censure a book in order to raise its reputation. Many works that would have been despised had they passed unnoticed, have acquired importance from the government's condemning them.

"Hence those various divisions that have immersed the state into greater misfortunes than have been produced by civil wars.

"Instead of chastising the author that has written a dangerous book, the minister who allowed it to be printed, should be punished. The first submitted his performance to the established police for preventing the publication of dangerous works, and the other published it. The first only injured himself, the other injured the state," &c. &c.

The King had this memorial examined, the reasoning it contained was thought to be just; but it only met with approbation, like an infinite number of others upon the different branches of the administration, the utility of which is acknowledged, but they are, notwithstanding, never executed.

I have observed during my residence at Versailles, that the schemes which succeed are not those that are the most advantageous, but those which are the best recommended.

I have since learned from a man of great discernment, that "so much rigour on the part of the government with respect to literary productions, would be attended with many inconveniences; that printing in France is become a very extensive manufacture, which promotes an infinite number of others dependent on it, and which excite industry; that it comprehends a very important branch of trade, the suppression whereof would greatly cramp circulation; that by diminishing this profession, many others must be abolished, that tend to form the library: that France would be thereby a great sufferer, and neighbouring states reap advantages from it; that Holland, in particular, covetous of all industrious vocations, would seize upon this.

"He added, that Cardinal Fleury having suppressed the printing of romances in France, the United

Provinces availed themselves of this prohibition, to increase their workmen. The number of their presses was greatly augmented, and the kingdom overflowed with these very prohibited romances; so that by this suppression, the state lost its industry without abolishing romances."

Though the King constantly visited me, he conversed with other women. But his visits to them were, as has been already said, merely casual. These women, who had neither taste nor delicacy, were gratified with those moments that he could bestow upon them, and thought themselves happy to pass a few hours by stealth with this Prince. They had no regular plan, except two or three, who formed the design of supplanting me, and seizing upon the King's favour. The pleasure of having the King for a lover sufficed them. This idea, which occupied all the powers of their soul, left no room for ambition; so that they were not very dangerous rivals. I knew the King's temper; enjoyment always disgusted him. The act of gratification was followed by contempt: this is what every woman must expect, who has no other attractions for men than mere personal possession.

The disputes of the clergy, which were renewed, notwithstanding the assiduity of the court to suppress them, kept the state in a constant ferment. All the prelates who disturbed the court, owed their fortune to the King; and this the more afflicted him. Lewis XV. has often said to me, that of all vices ingratitude the most shocked him.

It happened in this dispute, as it does in most others, that it was not confined to the first object. The original point in debate was, a sum demanded of the clergy, to supply the exigencies of the state: the minister carried his views farther; he reflected upon the disorders occasioned by this body to the finances of the state; a calculation was made that a very considerable sum went out of the kingdom every year for purchasing of bulls, and that this treasure of the political government, which was sent into Italy, never returned back to France: that Rome, to whom we paid large sums, granted nothing in return but indulgences. The means of withdrawing from this spiritual dominion, which ruined the temporal state, came next under consideration. But after every thing was thoroughly examined, supposed, and calculated, things were left just in the same situation as they were found.

The Chevalier de Belleisle formerly told me, "that the process between the court of Rome and that of Versailles had continued for several ages, and that it would not be terminated till such time as a King of France arose equally enterprising with Henry VIII. of England. He added, that the ministry had hit upon the wrong object of power to destroy; that we had wrested the sword of excommunication from Rome, but that we had left her in full power to fleece the state; and that we had better let ourselves be excommunicated than reduced to poverty."

The general body of the clergy incessantly engaged the attention of the court: one of their members disturbed a-new the King's repose, and troubled the state. The archbishop of Paris forbid the administration of the sacraments to a certain abbé, who was ill and desired it. The sick abbé was required to name his confessor, and as he was known to be a Jansenist, he was asked to accept of the constitution. I have already mentioned this constitution, and the disputes it occasioned in the government. The abbé obstinately refused accepting of it, and the archbishop resolved that the sacraments should not be administered to him.

Lewis XV. was informed of this debate, the example whereof might be productive of a schism in the kingdom. I was witness to his grief; his uneasiness arose from his affection. He loved his subjects, and he was chagrined to see that the disputes of schools should deprive them of the only remaining consolation upon their death-beds. The Princes of the house of Bourbon have always acted more reasonably in religious than in political matters.

The bull Unigenitus put Lewis XIV. to death; some old courtiers have, at least, assured me, that father Le Tellier shortened his days by dint of talking to him of the constitution. The refusal of the sacraments was cognizable by the general police; so that this schism in the spiritual government was attended with a double inconvenience, as it might produce one in the political state.

The parliament of Paris, who seize upon every occasion to reform abuses, and let none escape that may extend their prerogatives; summoned the curate, who had been guilty of no other crime than that of obeying his bishop. A penalty was inflicted on him which the prelate should have been mulcted, and he was forbid relapsing on pain of losing his temporalities. The chief point was to know whether the curate should obey the parliament or his bishop. The case would not have been difficult to determine, if the clergy had been appointed judges, or if the government had been to decide: but the question was who was the competent judge in this case? If the church were permitted to decide the affair, this would be infringing upon temporal rights; and by allowing the parliament this prerogative, spiritual privileges would thereby be usurped. There was a third inconvenience still greater, which was, that the King himself, according to the opinion of the clergy, was incapable of appointing judges.

In this sort of disputes, a national council should be convened; this council is never held, and the disorder always continues. The King commanded the parliament not to interfere in the matter, and the parliament determined that they ought to interfere therein. Louis XV. had displayed sufficient resolution in the last misunderstanding about the administration of the hospital; but this body always forget that they yielded, that they may remember to be steadfast. The King undertook to have the sacraments administered to the sick man; but this method had its inconveniences, for it was necessary to command priests, and they obeyed none but their bishops.

The parliament would have thought that they had given up their rights, if, upon this occasion, they had not opposed the will of their sovereign. They commanded by arret the curates, whom Louis XV. only wanted to engage to fulfil their duty. Without this decree the affair would have been immediately stifled, whereas many other priests were hereby disposed to refuse the administration of the sacraments.

I have often heard it said at Versailles, "that the body of the parliament, by reason of their desire to reform abuses, are the source of a great number of abuses." A prince of the blood was of opinion, that the parliament should be abolished, if it were only to prevent that spirit of contention and obstinacy which they disperse in the kingdom. But those who are esteemed sagacious judges of things, pretend that this same spirit of opposition to the will of the court, is the bulwark of the state.

A councilor of the great chamber said one day in my hearing, to a courtier who was highly complaining of

the reiterated remonstrances made to the King, *Perhaps, Sir, we may be mistaken in the form; but we cannot err with respect to the object, as we constantly plead for the prerogatives of the nation, and the happiness of the people.*

The president de Maupeou said to me one day, upon returning from an audience he had with the King, when he met with a very disagreeable reception, "You must allow, Madam, that there is a particular fatality annexed to our situation; we are always scolded without obtaining justice. Nevertheless, if things were thoroughly examined with care, it would appear that we have no interest in view by making continual representations to our Prince, and being compelled to say disagreeable things to him. If we did not interest ourselves so much as we do for the good of the people, we must substitute flattery for truth, and should be benefited by the smiles of the court; whereas we now meet with nothing but refusals from it." In another of these visits, when this same president did not meet with a more favourable reception, he added, in speaking of the counsellors of state, "It is surprising, that men of understanding do not see through the uprightness of our intentions; and that prejudice, which we thought only actuated the populace, falls to the lot of those who surround the throne."

Be this as it may, these people displeased me, because they put the King into a bad humour, and every time they repaired to Versailles, to make representations to him, Lewis XV. was more serious than usual.

The affair of the bills of confession was attended with consequences. The members of parliament had hitherto spoke as orators; upon this occasion they spoke in the stile of preachers. Their remonstrance to the King resembled a sermon. The pope's doctrine, dogmas, and faith, were called in question. When a body of people quit their proper sphere, they expose themselves to raillery. A pleasant courtier said to the King,—"Sire, we may now attend a homily in the great chamber; the members of your parliament know how to make sermons."

These representations made to Lewis XV. having been printed, every one was desirous of being possessed of them: but there was not a sufficient number for every body. The discourses of these new missionaries were sold at a dearer rate than Bourdaloue's sermons, and were more in vogue. I shall insert them here, lest this learned production should be lost to posterity.

SIRE,

"Never did so important an affair lead your parliament to the foot of your throne. The religion, the state, the rights of your crown are equally threatened. A fatal schism has burst forth, less to be dreaded from the blaze of division it kindles amongst your subjects, and the shock it gives to the fundamental laws of the monarchy, than from the prejudice it does to religion.

"Your majesty, struck with the disorders occasioned by the disputes daily renewed on account of the bull Unigenitus, has at all times been sensible, and particularly in 1731, of the necessity of suppressing a division so dangerous, and so contrary to the common good of the state and of religion.

"We shall make use of the same terms in which your majesty then expressed yourself, in declaring your will. You forbid, in the most express manner any of your subjects, of what state or condition soever, to do or write any thing tending to support the disputes that had arisen in regard to this constitution, or to create new ones. You forbid them to attack or provoke one another, by the injurious terms of *innovators, heretics, schismatics, Jansenists, Semi-pelagians*, or any other party names, as any such delinquents would be treated as rebels disobedient to your orders, and seditious perturbators of the public tranquility. In a word, you enjoined all the archbishops and bishops to watch each in his particular diocese, that peace and tranquility were charitably and inviolably observed, and that these disputes were no more renewed.

"It were to have been wished, that such sagacious orders had been followed by the most rigorous execution; and that you had armed your avenging hand against such ecclesiastics as dared contemn your Majesty, and withdraw from the obedience that was due to you! But this they have dared, and the attempt has remained unpunished: their passionate zeal has no longer known any bounds; they have declared those who were not of their opinion rebels to the church, and as such unworthy of partaking of its benefits, and they have inhumanly refused them the sacraments at the point of death. These abuses have been daily increased—and how much has not religion suffered by them?

"Impiety has availed itself of disquisitions that prevailed amongst the ministers of religion, to attack religion itself.

"The uncertainty that was introduced with regard to the foundation of the legitimacy of faith, hath been the means employed by impiety to insinuate into people's minds its mortal poison. What advantage hath it not derived from the melancholy circumstances wherein we saw the holy fathers, who had passed their lives in exercising the laborious functions of the ministry to which they were consecrated? enlightened doctors, still more recommendable for their piety than their understanding: pious maidens, who, in their recluse retreat entirely engaged with God and their salvation, passed their time in the most austere works of repentance, treated like refractory members of the church, deprived with ignominy of the benefits it dispensed to its children, without its being known what truths decided by the church, these children refused to believe, or what errors prescribed by it, they refused to condemn!

"The ostentatious philosopher, who foolishly jealous of the divinity itself, sees with regret the homage that is paid to him, judged this to be the favourable moment for producing his monstrous system of incredulities.

"This system promulgated abroad, has unhappily made but too rapid a progress. A torrent of writings, infected with these detestable errors, rushed forth; and to complete the misfortune, they have insensibly crept into those schools defined to form proper defenders of faith and religion. Strange calamity for a most christian King! Error gains ground, and is not removed; the principal ministers of religion are employed only in exacting the acceptance of a decree, which offering

nothing certain, alarms timid consciences by the consequences that may be drawn from it against the salutary doctrine, and whilst they with the greatest rigour prosecute those, who, by at least a pardonable, if not a well grounded scruple, refuse subscribing to it; they neglect what is essential, and let religion be shaken to its very foundation.

“The impious become more resolute, and audacity is carried to its greatest height; and it was reserved for us to be eye-witnesses of a public thesis being maintained without opposition, in the first university of the christian world, whereby all the false principles of incredulity are systematically established^[A].

“Your parliament, Sire, who by the authority you have conferred upon them, should principally attend to whatever regards the religion of the state, are moved at the sight of so scandalous a proceeding. They have summoned the agents of the university. The attention of the magistrates has called the faculty back to their duty, has awakened the zeal of the pastors; and soon after appeared the censures of the Thesis, accompanied with the most dishonourable sentence, with which he, who had the audacity to maintain it, was branded^[B].

“Such are the wounds that the growing schism has from its birth given to religion. What may we not fear it has to suffer in the sequel; and can we view it without being penetrated with affliction? With some it will be totally destroyed, and if others preserve it, the spirit will be entirely lost.

“Hatred, animosity, and persecution, seize upon their hearts; those divine characters of union and charity, which distinguish the catholic church, are no longer to be known; and religion will be almost universally destroyed, either in the mind, or in the heart.

“But, Sire, if your parliament owe their first attention to the interest of religion, they are equally engaged by the fidelity they have sworn to you, to guard the preservation of those great maxims which constitute the essence of your sovereignty.

“And how could they avoid opposing with all their might, the progress of a scheme framed by some ministers of the church, to erect the constitution *Unigenitus, as a rule of faith*. This enterprize, inasmuch as it is prejudicial to religion, is contrary to the principles of public right, upon which the independency of your authority is founded. When this bull came into France, your parliament acquainted Lewis XIV. with all the danger of the condemnation which was therein pronounced against the proposition that relates to the matter of excommunication.

“Hence will follow, we told him, *that unjust excommunications, that even the menaces of an unjust censure, may suspend the accomplishment of the most essential and indispensable duties: and what might be the consequence? The liberties of the Gallican church, the maxims adopted by the kingdom upon the authority of kings, upon the independency of their crown, upon the fidelity that is due to them from their subjects, might be annihilated, or at least suspended in the minds of the people, solely by the impression made on them by a menace of excommunication, though unjust.*

“Lewis XIV. was sensible of the importance of these reflections. The bull was not received but with such modifications, as are not so much modifications as an absolute assertion of the condemned proposition.

“These wise precautions, the ramparts of our liberty, judged necessary by the late King, confirmed by your Majesty upon every occasion, carefully repeated in the declarations you made to establish the authority of the bull, conformable to the sentiments of the bishops, who gave their explanations in 1744, and corroborated by the formal decision of the Sorbonne, as they solemnly declared it verbally, by their Syndic in 1732; how are these to be reconciled with the eminent character that is now wanted to be given this bull, in erecting it into *a rule of faith*?

“Dogmas of faith are not susceptible of modification; so that giving to the bull the qualifications or effects of a *rule of faith*, and exacting its pure and simple acceptance upon this foundation, is by a necessary consequence destroying the modifications which have been opposed to it, subverting the great principle of your absolute independence of all other power whatever; it is endeavouring to obtain the acknowledgment of an authority, capable of annihilating or suspending the rights of your sovereign authority.

“Your Majesty, convinced of this truth, however favourably you may have expressed yourself upon the bull, has never allowed it to be denominated *a rule of faith*. All those writings which have appeared, wherein it has been endeavoured to represent it in that light, have been proscribed by judgments which you yourself have given: and when your parliament represented to you in 1733, their uneasiness at the conduct of some ecclesiastics, in various dioceses, who appeared to give this character to the bull; your Majesty reproached them for having foreseen that it could happen, that the spiritual authority should desire to erect into a dogma of faith, propositions contrary to the inviolable maxims of France.

“Your Majesty told us that such an undertaking would not revolt less against the church of your kingdom, than against the magistrates; and that we might have been in security by the precautions which the bishops took in 1714, for the preservation of maxims, with regard to the ninety-first condemned proposition.

“But, Sire, of what signification are these precautions taken by some bishops of your kingdom, if the others do not adhere to them, if they exact the pure and simple acceptance of the bull, if they look upon those as out of the pale of the church who do not declare their submission to it, without any restriction or reserve, and if they pretend to exclude them upon this foundation from the participation of all sacraments?

“There are few amongst them, it is true, who have openly declared themselves, by saying, that the constitution is *a rule of faith*; but by giving it the effects of *a rule of faith*, is not that saying that it is a *rule of faith*? In matters of doctrine, none but those who err in a point of faith, can be

excluded the participation of the sacraments of the church; therefore a refusal of the sacraments to whosoever does not submit to the constitution, is making the constitution a rule of faith.

"The condemnation that the constitution has pronounced against the ninety-first proposition, is manifestly contrary to the great maxims of the kingdom, and is absolutely incompatible with the observance of these maxims. Therefore, when we see the ministers of the church, when we see the bishops establish the constitution as a rule of faith, we see that by a fatality, which, Sire, your goodness could not presume, that they want to erect into dogmas the faith of opinions, contrary to the most inviolable maxims of France.

"They in vain protest their attachment to our liberties. Their conduct belies the sincerity of their words: Or, if it is really nothing more than an extravagant zeal for the bull that actuates them, they teach us how dangerous it is for them to decide arbitrarily in causes that may exclude the participation of the sacraments. Their pretended zeal becomes a passion that blinds them; prejudice shuts their eyes to the consequences of their conduct. Add to this, that if this tyranny were once introduced, we should soon see it by a still greater abuse, if possible, extending itself over matters entirely foreign to the dogma, and purely temporal. The point would not then only be what might relate to conscience; they would make themselves arbiters of the state, and of the form of the citizens, and would render the admission of the sacraments just as conditional as they pleased.

"These are not vain fears that agitate us. We know but too well, that even in this case, nothing could conquer the obstinacy of an unjust refusal; and that neither the most respectable birth, nor the most pure, constant, and exemplary virtue, would be sufficient titles to claim, at the point of death, these sacred benefits, the dispensation whereof cannot depend upon human motives, and which by right belong to the faithful^[C].

"Your parliament, Sire, strangely surprised at so many abuses, daily committed before their eyes, have been made still more strongly sensible of the danger, when having sent a deputation to the archbishop of Paris, with regard to the fresh refusal of the sacraments, by the curate of St. Étienne du Mont; this prelate, without making any reply, imperiously declared, that this was done by his orders. What reflections must the mind make at such a declaration! We shall now suppress them out of respect.

"It will be sufficient to say, that your parliament have judged it to be their indispensable duty to act with rigour against this curate, in order to teach the inferior ministers of the church, that whatever orders they may have received from their superiors, they are answerable for putting them in execution, when these orders tend to disturb the public tranquility, and particularly when they are liable to foment a schism, the consequences of which cannot be considered without horror.

"May we be permitted, Sire, to supplicate you to take into consideration the remonstrances which your parliament had the honour of presenting you last year. You will there find it demonstrated, that the error in the representation of a bill of confession, which the curate of St. Étienne du Mont alledged for the reason of his refusal, cannot be a legal cause for refusing the *holy viaticum* to a dying person, and that the exaction of this bill is only a vague pretence for refusing the sacraments to those who are suspected of not accepting the constitution.

"May we be allowed to recal to your memory, the principles established in the representations which your parliament made previously to you in 1731, and 1733, upon the first refusal of the sacraments that came to their knowledge. The *Bull Unigenitus* is not a rule of faith. The church alone could give it this supreme character, and the church has not given it. This bull is even of such a nature that it cannot be a rule of faith. It offers nothing certain. The different qualifications it gives to the propositions which it condemns, and this indetermination, absolutely oppose its ever being a dogma of faith: These maxims of France, which form the basis of our liberties, would otherwise soon be destroyed.

"Will you, then, Sire, permit the torch of schism to be lighted up in the heart of your kingdom, on account of the acceptance that is exacted of this bull. There is nothing more menacing to an empire, than divisions in religious matters: They become still more fatal when the cause is unjust. Let them not be introduced into your kingdom, stifle them in their birth, and to that end let your parliaments act. They alone can restore a calm, by the vigilant exertion of their institution. A dying person may at every instant have recourse to the magistrate, to claim the benefits that may be inhumanly denied him.

"If you reserve to yourself the care of making provision in this case, however favourable your intentions may be, the distance of places, the importance of your occupations, the difficulty of gaining access to the foot of your throne, will prevent their effect.

"Severity will not so effectually suppress the designs that veil the schism, as dispatch. Its progress is to be dreaded. Preachers already arise, who endeavour to disturb the people's minds, and make our churches echo with their seditious sermons. If the fire encreases, it is to be feared that the flames will spread to such a degree, that no authority will be sufficiently powerful to stop the conflagration.

"Let us call to mind in the history of past ages, those bills of association; those extorted declarations in the tribunal of penance; those scandalous sermons which spread the alarm in timorous consciences; those bloody wars carried to such an excess, that shook even this throne.

"Struck with dread at the sight of these great misfortunes, we shall not cease, Sire, to rise up against all such proceedings as tend to schism; and we shall not cease to lay before you their shocking consequences. To prevent our acting, to stifle our voices, we must be annihilated. And if by an event which we should consider ourselves as almost guilty to foresee, it should happen that our constancy to support the rights of your crown, those of the state and of religion, we should

draw upon ourselves your Majesty's disgrace, we should lament without altering our conduct.

"Incapable of betraying our duty, we should have nothing to offer you in homage but our tears, till time should convince you how advantageous it is for you, that your parliament at no period swerve from the inviolable fidelity they owe to religion, to their country, and to their King; and that in their archives may be found the uninterrupted tradition of conduct and maxims, which secure the tranquility of your kingdom, and the independance of your sovereignty.

"Such, Sire, are the most humble and respectful remonstrances which the counsellors in parliament assembled, have the honour of presenting to your Majesty.

"Done in parliament, this
13th of April, 1752.

"Signed,
"DE MAUPEOU."

This fine discourse, written with energy, did not proclaim peace, but was, on the contrary, a declaration of war, founded in appearance upon the exigencies of the police, and the tranquility of the state; the spirit of party was, however, its only dictator: The parliament being composed almost entirely of Jansenists, wanted to destroy the Molinist cabal. Each pursued his private prejudices, and no one thought of the advantage of the state.

The King, in answer to these representations, declared, that he should take upon himself to punish such priests as gave offence to the state, by refusing the sacraments, and forbade the parliament interfering in the matter: but this court took care not to obey. So far from submitting, they published an arret, expressly ordering the priests to ask no bills of confession from the sick people, and to administer the sacraments to them, without interrogating them in any shape upon the subject. As ordonnances are generally of greater latitude than they should be, this body, having become all at once Theologists, availed themselves of this opportunity to forbid the preachers using certain expressions, and they specified the terms in which their sermons should be conceived.

Idle people, who deride every thing, even the most serious affairs, turned this arret into ridicule. The wits of Paris said that the parliament had pared the preachers nails in such a manner, that they could not scratch the Jansenists any more.

Such sick people as wanted to commune, purchased an arret, which they presented instead of a bill of confession. The retailers of bon-mots said, "That the parliament of Paris were going to establish a communion office at Paris, where the Jansenists might furnish themselves with each sacrament, at the rate of forty-two sols tournois, for an arret."

The court issued another ordonnance in favour of the *Bull Unigenitus*; but the parliament, without paying attention to it, sent forth decrees against the priests who refused to administer. The two parties became inveterate, by their reciprocal obstinacy.

The Dauphin's illness, which happened at the height of this dispute, produced some short truce. This Prince found himself indisposed, as he retired to his apartment on the first of May, 1752, at night. His disorder was the smallpox, as was visible from the usual symptoms. He happily recovered from it; and the King, who was at first alarmed, testified great joy upon this Prince's recovery.

Louis XV. is very fond of his children; and particularly the Dauphin: never did a father sympathise so much at the vicissitudes of his family. He pays remarkable attention to all those who belong to him. Whenever the Queen is the least indisposed, he flies to her apartment, and never leaves her till she is better.

All France congratulated him upon the recovery of the presumptive heir to the crown. Each body of the state demonstrated their joy by some particular rejoicings, and the people displayed theirs by general festivity.

I resolved in turn to testify my satisfaction at this happy event, by an analogous feast; but I would do nothing without consulting the King. I imparted to him my design, which he approved of, and my plan, which he applauded.

Every one that has heard my name mentioned, knows that I obtained BELLE-VUE, where I had exhausted the refinements of art to make an agreeable receptacle for the King. These kinds of feasts must be allegorical, otherwise they do not express the subject of the rejoicing.

My decoration represented various dens surrounded with a piece of water, in the middle of which was seen a luminous dolphin. Several monsters attacked it, in vomiting flames; but Apollo, who was its protector, hurled his thunder at them from above, and a large quantity of fireworks completed their destruction, as well as that of their residence. The scene then instantly changed, and became the brilliant palace of the sun, where the dolphin re-appeared, in all its splendor, by means of a magnificent illumination, which lasted all night.

Scarce had the Dauphin recovered from his disorder, before the parliament and the bishops engaged anew the attention of the court and the city. It was the peace that gave sufficient leisure to attend to these disputes. In time of war, they would have had other objects to engage their attention than bills of confession. The court would have despised such an affair; and the parliament would not have allowed it to be mentioned.

The obstinacy of the parliament, and the stubbornness of the curates in refusing the sacraments, increased the King's melancholy. I endeavoured to multiply the amusements of his private parties, in order to remove that state of languor which business had brought upon him. I detained him with me at night as late as I possibly could, and did not let him retire, till I had dissipated the clouds of his mind, by every method that I thought would produce the effect. Music was a great assistant to me; Rameaux was very useful to me in this respect. The King had a taste for light airs, and this musician excelled in this kind of composition, Jelliot executed still better than Rameaux composed. He was unrivalled in giving life to expression, and grace to sound. I may venture to say, that this performer, by the gaiety that he spread over the King's mind, was often the mediator of the most important affairs of Europe.

We know that all our resolutions spring from the actual disposition of the soul. A monarch that refuses

every thing when his mind is seized with a certain melancholy, grants every thing when this vapour is dissipated.

This disposition, the usual effect of secondary causes, and which derives its origin from an harmonious sound, a wink, and most frequently from the temperature of the air, does not always pursue the rule of justice. It is unhappy for the people to be governed by mortals subject to a machine susceptible of every kind of impression. It would be for the good of mankind if they were governed by angels. I often repeated, that Lewis XV. was extremely affected by these religious disputes. I often heard him say, he would prefer being at war with princes rather than with Theologians, because with those the treaty of peace terminates the quarrel; whereas with these even the spirit of reconciliation contributes to encrease it.

Marshal Saxe formerly said to me, that if he were to have gained an advantage over the Tartars, he would have given them quarter; but that if he had conquered an army of Theologians, he would have exterminated them without mercy.

A man of wit, and a great politician, was of opinion, that the universities should be shut up, and their theses forbidden upon pain of death. He shewed me a manuscript work, whereby he pretended to prove that all the wars, and all the crimes that had been committed in Europe since the establishment of christianity, derived their origin from religious disputes.

This is easy to believe, he added, if we consider that the spirit of contention, which springs from dogmas, spreads itself through every class, and that it is this general spirit that forms the genius of nations.

The war relating to the *Constitution* still continuing, plenipotentiaries were appointed: these were commissaries, who were to decide, whether the curates had a right to let the King's subjects die without communing. The Bishops said, this was the business of a council; but the parliament were of opinion, that the Bull *Unigenitus* was in subordination to the police of the state. These commissaries assembled very regularly; but they took care to come to no determination.

The Prince of Conti, who was always in a passion when this affair was mentioned before him, said, it should be decided by a court martial.

To this kind of tragedy some comic scenes were united. A curate who was compelled to administer to a sick person, said to him in a loud voice, *I commune you by order of the parliament*. Another expressed himself thus to a dying man: *It is in consequence of an arret of the great chamber, that I bring you God Almighty*.

The body of the clergy, who till now had appeared neuter in the affair, entered the lists. The bishops asked justice of the King, for the attempt of the parliament, who interfered in what did not relate to them; and the reason they assigned was, that only God, the Pope, the bishops, and the curates, had the right of administering. They pretended that the great chamber should make reparation to the archbishop of Paris, for having accused him of favouring a schism.

The King was very far from granting them what they required, as he could not obtain of the parliament what he asked of them. Here again it was necessary to issue arrets, to prevent licentious writings, and order certain books to be burnt by the hand of the hangman. These were so many fresh attacks upon the King's constitution, and what spread an additional gloom over his temper, already too grave.

Of all the royal family, the King was the only one who took this matter to heart. The Queen had accustomed herself to lay all the vicissitudes of this world at the foot of the crucifix: the King's daughters would not allow the *Bull Unigenitus* to be mentioned: the Dauphin only said that he could not speak, but that if he were King, he should know what he had to do; the Princes of the blood despised these disputes; the courtiers wanted to be meddling, but they knew nothing of the matter. It was happy for France that old Marshal Belleisle was no Theologian, for he would have embroiled matters still more. His highest ambition was to fathom these things; but his age and vocations did not allow him to signalize himself upon this occasion. He nevertheless, engaged in a dispute upon predestination, to seem as if he was acquainted with what he was entirely ignorant of.

Both parties were very solicitous for my declaring myself openly; but besides my discovering that they were both head-strong, my happiness prompted me to wish for the annihilation of the *Constitution*, as the King's repose so much depended on it.

I proposed to Lewis XV. that he should forbid all his subjects, as well ecclesiastics as seculars, to pronounce the words *Bull*, *Jansenist*, or *Molinist*, on pain of being severely punished; and to sentence such priests as should be convicted of having refused the administration of the sacraments, to perpetual imprisonment. But the goodness of his heart would not allow him to exercise any methods that had an air of violence or despotism. He wanted to be obeyed; but then, only by moderate and gentle means.

While it was debated what method to pursue, to terminate these disputes, a courtier said to the King, "Sire, there is but one resource, which is, to renew the *Vingtieme*, and examine the ecclesiastical revenues; the bishops will forget the *Bull Unigenitus*, when they are reminded that they must give money to the state." In effect, this new object diverted their attention from the other.

The arrival of the Infanta of Parma completely dissipated that lowring disposition which the *Constitution* had spread at court. Nothing was thought of but entertaining the Princess. I advised the King to give a ball and an opera. In these diversions I strove rather to amuse the King, than to divert this sovereign Princess his daughter.

The ministers of state, whom I often saw, told me that they were very much occupied. The war had thrown them into arrears for ten years. The King had given M. d'Argenson a coadjutor in the war department. This was the Marquis de Paulini, a very able and intelligent man; but arts and literature engaged part of that time which might have been employed for the benefit of the state.

He knew more than a learned man need to have done, and he was unacquainted with more things than a minister should have been ignorant of. The King had sent him to examine the military state of France. He had just visited the southern parts to reconnoitre the fortresses, and the troops quarters. When he made his report to the King, he added, that he had seen the protestants of Languedoc, and that at a time they were suspected of taking up arms, they were assembled to offer up prayers to heaven for the recovery of the Dauphin. This intelligence greatly affected the King. It gives peculiar pleasure to sovereigns to find all their

subjects attached to them. This, perhaps, is the most tender point of self-love in princes.

Though the King, by an effect of that goodness which is so natural to him, often laid aside his disposition to make our conversation agreeable, the progress of melancholy was very rapid upon my mind. At certain moments every thing was insipid to me. I was convinced of the propriety of what Madam de Maintenon once said, that in every state of life there is a dreadful vacuum. What increased my anxiety was, that I was obliged to put on a gay appearance, at the very time that the most gnawing grief preyed upon me.

Here will I say, to the scandal of human greatness, that notwithstanding the favour I possessed, and the brilliant elevation of my fortune, I several times resolved upon quitting the court—Ambition alone doubtless withheld me, for we sacrifice all things to our predominant passion. It was this same ambition that, having raised me to the pinnacle of grandeur, made me pass more unhappy days than those which would have glided away, if I had remained in a less distinguished state. Every body envied my fate, and no one thought but that I was the happiest of women: but the state of my felicity was far from corresponding with the idea the world entertained of it.

Those who aspire to a more elevated sphere than that wherein virtue has placed them, fancy that riches, rank, grandeur and titles, contribute to happiness, and that in these imaginary advantages felicity centers. This is a fallacious opinion; when once we are accustomed to these things, they seldom afford us any gratification. The idea which we frame of them, pleases us more than possession itself. Neither magnificent palaces, superb furniture, nor the most valuable jewels in Europe, which I possessed, could make me happy.

The Count de Maurepas, who had compelled me to request the King to grant him an exile, signified to some persons about me, that he should like to obtain leave to reside in common at Pontchartrain. This castle is situated near Versailles, and he was expressly forbid, upon leaving court, to reside there. I voluntarily took upon myself to obtain this permission for him. I asked it of the King, who said to me, in granting it,—“Indeed, Madam, I admire your noble soul; the Count de Maurepas has grievously offended you, and you, nevertheless, interest yourself in his behalf.”

When the Count’s friends found that the King so easily granted what was requested in his favour, they spoke to me about his recall to court: But I refused to employ my credit to obtain this fresh indulgence. This was the only thing wherein Lewis XV. possessed unshakeable fortitude. I do not know, that notwithstanding all this Prince’s favour, with which I was honoured, I could in this have succeeded. The attempt might have been dangerous to myself: We should never expose ourselves to a refusal: it is the first step that leads to indifference.

It was then publicly said, that this minister was indebted for this favour to the Cardinal de la Rochefoucault and the Duke de Nivernois, his relations, who at that time had some interest at court: but the truth is, that neither the one or the other had any share in it.

The King was always surrounded with remonstrances from his parliaments. I complained to the gentlemen of the gown, of the disturbances which they themselves created in the state, by their obstinacy. They always answered me, that they laboured for the glory of the King, the welfare of the state, and the happiness of the people. It is, in my opinion, a great abuse of the administration in France, that private individuals, born in obscurity, and almost constantly without any other merit than that of having purchased an employment for two or three thousand louis d’ors, should consider themselves as part of the monarchy, and be continually struggling with the royal authority. Marshal Saxe, before he died, told the King, “Sire, I advise you to reimburse your parliaments; for it is from the value of their employment, that these people derive their consequence.”

These disputes brought religion into contempt. An author, who, supposing that the *Bull Unigenitus* was entirely destroyed, as the parliament wanted to compel the curates to administer to sick people, suspected of Jansenism, published a performance under this title, “*The funeral oration of that most high and powerful Princess, the Bull UNIGENITUS.*”

It has been observed, that such books as these corrupt the morals more than heresy itself. The parliament, who would not submit to the King, said, that they opposed the schism. The Jansenists, who were refused the administration of the sacraments, maintained with all their might, that the gates of heaven were shut against them, in opposing the will of God; which was a schism in this doctrine, as they allowed of no flexibility in Providence: wherefore Mr. Maillebois, the father, said, that the Jansenists were guilty of heresy against their own sect; for they wanted to force predestination, after having taught that it was immutable.

This scene, which continued for several years, made France quite ridiculous. The protestants of the kingdom, who were forbidden to speak, said nothing: but those in foreign countries avenged their brethren’s taciturnity, by publishing the most poignant satires against those disputes, without considering that the same principles amongst them produce the same divisions.

Engraving was made a party in this affair; a plate was dedicated to me, wherein the hall of the parliament of Paris represented the school of the Sorbonne. All the presidents and counsellors were dressed like doctors, who instructed the King and the bishops of France in points of religion, and these were depicted as scholars.

These sarcasms, which afflicted the King, embittered my days. I spoke upon this subject to the first president, complained to the bishops, and had some curates introduced to me, to talk with them about it; but these measures procured me no relief, this dispute having given importance to these people, in the opinion of the world, which they would not otherwise have obtained.

Whilst a proper medicine was sought to appease these troubles, the clergy came to ask justice of the King, for the attack the parliament had made. This body had issued arrets in regard to matters that were more connected with theology than policy.

The King appointed a commission to take cognizance of this affair. The deputies of the bishops required preliminaries to be settled, before they entered upon a negotiation. They demanded, 1. The annulling of a certain arret, as an attack upon the authority of the church. 2. The establishment of bills of confession. 3. A reparation of honour from the parliament to the archbishop, for having accused him of favouring a schism. The King granted the deputies partly what they asked, and refused them the other part. He annulled the

arret, not only because it infringed the rights of the clergy, but because it attacked his own authority; "inasmuch, said the declarations, as the parliament have not a right to make regulations; and that in case they should have any to make, they should apply to the King, to ask him leave."

In the same arret it was set forth, that no case could occur, wherein a priest was entitled to refuse the sacraments on account of the *Bull Unigenitus*. It was therefore added, "that with respect to spiritual administration, the lay judges had no right to take any cognizance, unless a law-suit ensued."

These distinctions did not restore peace, but war continued. They fought as before with the weapons of remonstrance. The parliament, who were desirous of interfering as a party in the affair relating to the administration of the sacraments, would not content themselves with being only judges. New satirical writings made their appearance: they spared neither church nor state; and the King was greatly mortified by them. I often entreated him to pay no regard to these wretched pamphlets, whose low obscure authors were more deserving of contempt than chastisement. But I could never prevail upon him to take this revenge, which is the only one that should gratify sovereigns, with respect to these unfortunate scribblers.

To convince him what sort of animals these authors were, I sent for one into my apartment at Versailles, after having promised him pardon for the book he had wrote, and also my protection. The King saw him, and spoke to him for some time; after which he said to me, in raising his shoulders, "Indeed, Madam, you are right, those folks deserve more to be pitied than hated."

Though Europe enjoyed a state of tranquility in 1753, this was a period of troubles and divisions in France.

The nobility of Brittany shewed themselves equally turbulent as the bishops, the clergy, and the parliament. They protested in a very high stile, against what had been determined by arret, during the assembly of the states. They had no such right. This assembly in a body represent the royal authority; so that their deliberations are above the protestations of any individuals that compose it. Louis XV. had several letters de cachet dispatched, which exiled the bishops in their dioceses, and the gentlemen in their estates.

Marshal Belleisle said, that "Letters de cachet in France were the only specific for curing the disorder of disobedience: but that they were so often used, that it was to be feared, they would at length produce no effect?" But this remedy is not always made use of by the King; ministers oftener apply it than the Prince: this is what renders the French administration so odious to foreigners. I have, nevertheless, heard a man of great sense applaud the use of them. He pretended that *order* was produced by this *disorder*. "It is said, continued he, that the King of England has no authority to arrest the lowest of his subjects. This is very well in England, where a republican spirit keeps every one within the bounds prescribed to him by the constitution; but, in France, where nobody is acquainted with the laws, where the climate and society excite every man's desire of speaking, all would be lost, if the administration had not the authority of stopping this natural impetuosity of Frenchmen, &c. &c."

"This authority lodged with the sovereign is, perhaps, necessary amongst us; without it the great bodies politic would infringe too much upon the rights of the crown. We have often seen in France, the clergy, the third estate, and parliaments, endeavouring to rule over the rights of the King. If the sovereign had not then the power of stopping the proceedings of these bodies, all government must have subsided; for it cannot be imagined, that those, who represent the church and the people, would rule with a spirit of moderation and patriotism. In every state of life, man is animated with ambition, and the most dangerous kind of ambition is that which has for its pretext the glory of God, and the happiness of the people."

The same year gave us one example of this, with respect to the parliament of Paris, to whom the court paid too great deference, and who were so daring as to speak to the King in these words, in one of their remonstrances.

"If those persons, who abuse your Majesty's confidence, pretend to reduce us to the alternative, either of failing in our duty, or incurring your disgrace, we declare to them, that we feel ourselves possessed of courage to become the victims of our fidelity."

M. de Belleisle, who personally attended at this last representation, said to the King, that after this *coup d'eclat* (bold stroke) the parliament must either be dissolved, or the administration of the kingdom given up to them. Lewis XV. banished them to Pontoise; but this did not increase their docility: chastisement came too late; they had been accustomed to withstand the government. From the extremity of their exile they braved the authority of the King, who upon this occasion testified less fortitude than the parliament did weakness. They were exiled to punish them for having interfered with the bills of confession; and they were no sooner at Pontoise, than he decreed the seizing of a priest, for having refused the administration of the sacraments.

Two marriages took place, which in some measure diverted these parliamentary broils. That of the Prince de Conde with Mademoiselle Soubise. There were at first some difficulties raised, with respect to the titles of the house of Soubise; for this was a ticklish period, when obstacles were started on every hand; but the King found out a modification, by granting to both the houses of Bouillon and Soubise the quality of serene highnesses.

Mademoiselle de Soubise brought the Prince of Conde a portion of five millions of livres in land, without reckoning her jewels and other expectancies, at the death of her father. The Princess whom Lewis XIV. wedded, and the lady with whom Lewis XV. shared his throne, were not by far so rich.

The second marriage was that of the Duke of Gisors, son to Marshal Belleisle, with Mademoiselle de Nivernois. The court is the region of metamorphose: the *procureur-general* Fouquet, condemned to death by nine judges, and banished France for his malversation in the finances, would never have imagined that his grandson would become the father-in-law to the daughter of the duke of Nivernois.

This duke was at that time ambassador at Rome, and I frequently saw him upon his return. He was, in my opinion, one of the foremost in merit among the lords at court. The characters of the great are generally composed of good qualities and defects, whereby they are less distinguished by their virtues than their vices. This nobleman was exempt from those foibles which tarnish superior talents. He was an active, vigilant, indefatigable minister; a great statesman; a profound politician; uniting with the sublime qualities of a negociator all those which make a man amiable in society, being a good husband, a good father, and a good

friend—in a word, an honest man. Interest, that passion which vilifies the great, found no refuge in his heart. I could willingly compare him to Prince Charles of Lorraine, for the virtues of his mind; and to one of the greatest geniuses that do honour to the age, for the qualities of his head:—he may not, perhaps, be so brilliant, but, then he has more solidity.

These two marriages were necessary to free us from that languid state, in which those mournful disputes had immersed us. It was in vain for me to attempt giving the King a gay turn of mind; those unhappy affairs constantly brought him back to his melancholy state. Besides, I did not now, as I have already said, possess myself that gaiety and cheerfulness which, before my residence at Versailles, so greatly characterized me; and it is difficult to transmit to others what we no longer enjoy ourselves.

Lewis XV. who, in his lively moments, took a good deal of pleasure in reproaching me with this change of disposition, said to me one day, "*Methinks, Madam, that you throw a great share of gravity into your behaviour. If this continues, I must play my part to make you laugh; I must sing little couplets to divert you.*" This was precisely the means I had used to dispel that gloom which overwhelmed him: upon my arrival at Versailles I understood his meaning, and I endeavoured to get the better of my pensive disposition.

The parliament still continued in disgrace: the Prince of Conti endeavoured to restore them to favour. He exerted himself greatly to compass this design. This prince, who had retired from Versailles, troubled himself very little with the perplexities of the court. When the King was informed of the task he had undertaken, his Majesty said, *It is surprising that the Prince of Conti who has hitherto never meddled with any thing, should give himself the trouble to bring such head-strong people back to their duty.*

His efforts were fruitless; they would not submit to this Prince's reasons, and he said upon his return to the isle of Adam, "If the King had sent me plenipotentiary to some prince at enmity with France, I should have terminated the war; but I cannot negotiate between him and his parliament."

The King set out for Compiègne, where the Court was very brilliant. All the Princes of the blood and the nobility of the kingdom repaired thither. It is by custom established, that the subjects eat with the King at Compiègne; in consequence of which several lords regaled the monarch. Among those who gave feasts to his Majesty, one Marquis Regnier de Guerchy, lieutenant general, and colonel of the King's regiment, distinguished himself the most. Methought he had taste and judgment; for both are necessary to treat a King of France with splendour and delicacy. This colonel's table at Compiègne usually consisted of two hundred covers, and it happened more than once in this journey, that he had upwards of three hundred guests. It was said of this lieutenant-general, that he had served his country very well, which, according to me, is the greatest elogium that can be given to a military man.

When the King was at Compiègne, he was less taken up with the disputes about religion and the parliament. Hunting and encampments entirely engaged his attention, which gave him an air of contentment, that he lost when he came to Versailles.

The year 1753 was the epocha of remonstrances. The comedians turned their representations into state affairs. The opera of Paris, who saw with regret the success of the other theatres, finding that the French comedians had constantly full houses, thought proper to forbid their performing ballets. The comedians made application to the government, to obtain an edict of council to permit them to have dances. There was something whimsical in their remonstrances to the King; for it is difficult for a set of people, who by their profession are destined to excite laughter, to acquire sufficient gravity to preserve such a serious stile as is requisite in a piece dedicated to a supreme tribunal. One of the deputies said to me, "Madam, the modern productions are so very bad, that the greater part of them cannot be supported without ballets. Capering is a great auxiliary to declamation, I foretel you, Madam, that if we are not allowed to dance, words will be of no signification." The King laughed when I related to him this slight.

Nevertheless these same French comedians shut up their theatre, and haughtily declared that they could not act, unless they were allowed to dance. This theatrical vacation, which appeared trifling, was really an affair of state. Dramatic performances prevent an infinite number of vices which idleness creates.

The parliament, who were always in part exiled, no longer officiating, it occasioned great detriment to public affairs. The King ordered them to resume their vocations; they did not obey. The great chamber sent a deputation to Versailles; they made fresh remonstrances, and here things remained.

Happily for France, the Dauphiness was brought to bed, and those disputes, which had spread such a general gloom at court and in the city, were immediately forgot. Public rejoicings inspired such gaiety as dispelled this universal cloud. Frenchmen are seldom long bereft of their cheerfulness. A marriage, or recovery, restores to them their natural sprightliness. I do not know whether this continual transition from grief to joy, is not preferable to that pensive disposition of the English, which inspires them with a melancholy, from which no secondary cause can retrieve them. A Spanish Ambassador said to me, *that the French have some moments of existence, but that the English are in a continual state of mortality.*

The new-born Prince was named Duke of Aquitaine. The King forsook business to give an entire loose to pleasure, for which this happy event gave him a relish. It made a sensible change in my disposition, as it inspired our conversation with gaiety, and renewed our satisfaction. Versailles was now the scene of festivity; when all the nobility belonging to court signalized themselves, and the courtiers upon this occasion seemed transported with joy at an event, which in reality must have been a matter of indifference to them.

Such resources as these were necessary to rescue us from that languid state, wherein the sameness of amusement immersed us. I had employed the greatest refinements of art to dissipate the King's melancholy; but every thing is at length exhausted. Custom destroys even that novelty, which alone can make impression on our senses.

The Duke of Richelieu, who was often of our parties in the little apartments, afforded us great amusement. He related every thing with that insinuating art that so happily pleases; but even his wit betrayed too much of the courtier. One might read in his very looks his desire of success; never did any mortal sacrifice more to fortune; he was for grasping all favour, and disposing of the state as an absolute matter. He publicly said, that he had done all for me, and I had done nothing for him. But if I did not do better for him, he should blame his genius for intrigue, and his ambitious desires, which he had not always

the power to moderate. Complaints were frequently made against him, which I appeased. Several courtiers who had resolved to destroy him, had prejudiced Lewis XV. against him, and I restored him to favour. But I was not willing that he should see the King too often; for I knew his scheme was to gain his confidence, and afterwards to estrange from court all those who had too great an ascendant over him.

The bishops of France, who did not know in what to insult the parliament personally, whom they said pretended to regulate the Romish church, took occasion from the birth of the Duke of Aquitaine, to render them odious to the nation, by comparing them to the parliament of England in the reign of Charles I.

The bishop of Montauban, in visiting his dioceses, to thank heaven for having given a grandson to France, thus expressed himself in his mandate. "The spirit of party and faction was predominant in England; there was no stability in the laws, either divine or human; and in the midst of those clouds of darkness which gathered on every side, all things became uncertain or indifferent, except the sacrilegious dogma of attributing spiritual supremacy to secular authority.

"It was at this unfortunate period, that the enemies of episcopacy having prevailed, true religion was entirely abolished, and the regal dignity expired in the opprobrium. We saw for the first time, revolted subjects seizing sword in hand, and leading to a shocking prison, a King, whose only crime was, having too patiently borne their first sedition; the parliament throwing off the yoke of all superior authority, striking with one hand the bishops, and raising the other against the head of their sovereign; accusing him with indecency, and calumniating him without shame; condemning him without justice, leading him to the scaffold like butchers, and executing him with fury; and the people infatuated with this execrable parricide, became deeply intoxicated with fanaticism and independence; pursuing like ideots, a phantom of liberty, whilst like slaves, they paid to a tyrant that obedience which they owed to their lawful King. What a dreadful series of crimes! Here a king assassinated in his bed—there another hurled from his throne—all his family banished—the crown transferred upon the head of a foreigner—ever tottering, notwithstanding the blood spilt to secure it," &c.

The Prince of Conti said upon this occasion, that the bishops should be forbid introducing the history of England into public prayers. This was a most poignant satire against the parliament, which foretold what the state had to fear from this body: but we had no Cromwell in France; and the commons of England act upon different principles from the parliament of Paris.

The English ambassador made great complaints, that any one in France should dare to reproach his nation with having put their King to death. He spoke to the minister about it, and the bishop's discourse was suppressed. The fate of this kind of writings is always determined by the times. If France had been at war with England, the mandate would not have been suppressed; but the peace which then subsisted between the two nations would not allow it to pass.

The parliament's arret, nevertheless, left a vacuum in the administration of justice, and business languished. I was applied to by a great number of people to prevail upon the King to create new judges. Lewis XV. for a long time resisted these solicitations; but he at length resolved upon doing it. He established a chamber of *vacations*, who performed the functions of the parliament: but this new chamber was scarce established before the members of the Chatelet declared against it; for divisions now reigned between the bodies of judicature. There was no one in the kingdom that did not declare itself independent of any other; which made a man of wit say, that the Turkish constitution was preferable to ours, as the divan alone regulated the state; whereas every parliament in France created confusion in the kingdom.

Some bailiwicks and presidials in the jurisdiction of the parliament, wanted to share in the general disobedience, as well as disgrace. They refused to acknowledge the chamber of Vacations. Here was fresh subject for exile; which made a courtier say, that "every corporation was concerned, and the body of ushers would soon oppose the orders of the court." The foreign ambassadors who were eye-witnesses of this disorder, gave their sentiments with respect to the system of their governments. The minister from Venice said, that a senate should be called, wherein the supreme power should be lodged, and which no other body could oppose. The English ambassador spoke of a house of commons. The Spanish ambassador advised the establishment of the inquisition in France.

The parliament, removed to Soissons, obstinately refused resuming their functions; and the chamber of *vacations* rather increasing the disorder, than restoring public tranquility, it was necessary to form a royal chamber, to pursue the business of the parliament. M. de Belleisle said, "he wished that this chamber might continue till the end of time."

All France was occupied with the parliament's exile. Another tribunal was substituted in their place, for which it was necessary to create fresh edicts, containing a new form of judicature. The court and city were entirely taken up with these misunderstandings. Upon which occasion a prince of the blood said, that "the court was very good to trouble themselves with such trifles, whilst foreign affairs of importance should engage the attention of the cabinet."

The ministry was in fact greatly weakened during these quarrels. Several members of the great chamber were related to those who filled the first employments in the kingdom. The parliament were by alliance connected with the finances; and many brave officers were either relations or friends of the exiles: Courtiers and those who had their fortunes to make at court, were for the King. I say nothing of the populace, for their opinion is of no weight in France, all divisions of this nature taking place in a region that is quite foreign to them.

These different parties animated the disputes with so much heat, that they were often carried to extremities. Many duels have been fought in Paris, in defence of the great chamber.

A lieutenant-general walking in the Elysian fields, seeing an officer fighting with a counsellor's brother, said to the military man, in parting them, "Sir, keep your courage for the service of the state, we shall soon have occasion for it, for we are assured that the English are going to declare war against France."

Marshal Belleisle, who wanted to be every where, but who could not enter into the disquisitions, because they had began upon theological disputes, which he did not understand, endeavoured to put an end to them. He said to me one day; "In God's name, Madam, bid the King abolish the parliament, that they may be no

more spoken of at court." *Marshal*, I replied, *Speak to him yourself, I give you the preference.*

The members of the Chatelet, who would not acknowledge the royal chamber, had also their partisans, who excited murmurs in Paris; which made a courtier say, that "the Chatelet should be sent to the Bastille."

Most of the provincial tribunals refused in turn to submit to this chamber. Lyons set the example, and this was sufficient to create general disobedience. Lewis XV. saw with indignation, that his subjects, under pretence of fidelity and submission, should rebel against his orders. If this Prince had been as absolute as Lewis XIV. a civil war would have desolated France; but the goodness of his soul, and that gentleness which characterizes him, made him prefer the general peace of his kingdom to the gratification of his own particular revenge. Had he but spoke, those who opposed him would have been exterminated.

The kings of France had formerly but very little power; but since they have had three hundred thousand men at their command, who only wait for orders to obey their will, they can do every thing. A mandate from Lewis XV. to two or three regiments, would have been sufficient to have made the parliament return to their duty. But this Prince was an enemy to every thing that carried with it the appearance of violence. He would be obeyed; but then only by gentleness and moderation. Ministers, who are usually as jealous of the royal authority as the King himself, pretended that this very moderation was the source of all the disorders that disturbed the state.

These ministers exhorted me to induce the King to have fortitude. They represented to me the dangerous consequences that would result to the state, by leaving the disobedience of the parliament unpunished. Those who were in the interest of this body remonstrated to me on their part, the danger of keeping in exile the depository tribunal of justice, and who alone could administer it: a tribunal that were meritorious for their very resistance, as it was the strongest conviction of their zeal for the glory of the King, and the happiness of the people, &c.

If I had followed my inclination, I should have insisted upon the royal chamber's being sustained, to the exclusion of the parliament; but I knew the King's heart. I knew that his natural goodness would prevail over his resolution.

The Duke of Richelieu was ever intriguing with the King, and had gained an ascendant over him. This courtier always fought for opportunities of conversing with the Prince in private, and of obtaining his good graces. I had frequently opposed his designs, and this had determined him to make one great effort for ingrossing the King's favour. This conduct displeased me, and as he always renewed the attack, *My Lord*, said I to him one day in the presence of the King, *I have received letters from Languedoc, by which I am informed, that your presence is there required. I advise you to fit out for Montpellier, which is in your department; for his Majesty will not have any bishops or governor of that province at Paris.* The courtier understood my meaning. He set out a few days after for Bourdeaux, and I seldom saw him upon his return.

The Duchess de Talard, governess to the children of France, being lately dead; the King said to me, *Who shall we entrust with the Dauphins young family?* "Sire, I replied, Madam Talard was possessed of great merit, which makes it difficult to supply her place. I have thought upon all the women of France, and I do not know of any but the Countess de Marsan, who is capable of succeeding her."

She was appointed, and this lady, who was acquainted with my interposition in her favour, made me her acknowledgments. This preference I had given her, created me many enemies. All the ladies that were excluded, considered me as the cause of their exclusion: thus is a King's favourite loaded with public hatred. When there is a vacancy, she can ask it only for one person, and most frequently all those who laid claim to it, become the enemies of her that disposed of it.

The birth of the Duke of Aquitaine had diffused universal joy at court; and his death immersed the royal family again in melancholy—tears succeeded joy—but the subject was soon forgot. Had it not been for the funeral pomp, which lasted several days, he probably would have been no more thought of after the first. The spectacle of his death made tears to flow; without these obsequies, his loss would scarce have been mentioned. The court was still engaged in curbing the strides of the parliament and the Chatelet. This affair filled the state with edicts. A politician said, "that if the government had given the same attention to the other branches of the administration, France would have been the best regulated kingdom in Europe."

This attention did not, however, restore order; no one of the parties would yield to the other.

At length this great affair, by which France had been so much disturbed, and given foreign nations so much scope for satire, was terminated just as it should have been terminated; that is to say, by the obstinacy of the parliament, and the weariness of the King. Lewis XV. (I cannot too often repeat it in these Memoirs) is a good Prince; his tender and sympathising soul is not of the number of those that are irritated by resistance.

The self-love of kings who will be absolute, creates disorders, which usually swallows up both states and politics. The Prince, who was desirous of maintaining the peace of his kingdom, and advancing the happiness of his people, yielded, the very instant he saw that, by opposing his parliament, a general revolution might be dreaded.

The King's conduct in this respect, was by many greatly censured; he was accused of weakness. Perhaps he was animated only by respect. The shafts of ridicule began to fly; for kings of France, as absolute as they may be, are not exempted from their attacks. A prince of the blood thus expressed himself before several courtiers. "I always said, gentlemen, that the mountain in labour would bring forth nothing but a mouse."

M. de Maupeou had a private audience of the King at Compiègne, where all the preliminary articles of peace were signed. The monarch declared to him, that he should recal the letters de cachet, and that the parliament might return to Paris, where the general treaty of reconciliation was to be framed.

The triumph was too great not to be accompanied with glory. The president immediately proclaimed his victory. He dispatched a courier to every court in the kingdom, and gave intelligence to his brethren, who arrived at Paris in triumph. Although this peace restored tranquility at Versailles, which influenced the happiness of my life; yet I acknowledge, my indignation was kindled to see the lawyers thus get the better of the King's first resolutions. I was acquainted with their obstinacy, and this alone set me against them.

Reports were spread that I was the instrument of this reconciliation, and that the King yielded only at my intercession; but this was rumoured like an infinite number of other things, which had no more foundation. I

acknowledge, that I ardently wished that these parliamentary disputes were at an end; but if I considered my own tranquility, I did not forget the glory of the King. I several times scolded M. de Maupeou, in the minister's presence, for the little deference he paid to his master's orders, and of the formal disobedience of his body. He constantly replied, with that gravity which is common to those who are at the head of an assembly, that he and his brethren were the most submissive subjects of the state; and this answer irritated me still more.

The King desired to see this magistrate once more before an entire reconciliation took place. He received M. de Maupeou with that politeness that is so natural to him, and which gains him the hearts of all those who approach him.

"My intention, Sir, (said the King to him) is, that my parliament should resume their functions in the capital: I hope I shall have no farther occasion to complain of them; and that the goodness with which I treat them, will engage them to fulfil their duty for the future, with that zeal which they owe to my service, and a ready submission to my orders."

The Queen was desirous of having her share in the event; the president waited upon her. "I conceive the most perfect joy, said this Princess, at the King's restoring the parliament of Paris to their ancient functions. I have been greatly affected at the interruption that has occurred; and it is with satisfaction I assure you of my esteem for that body."

Those who determine every thing at court and in the city, thought the King had shewn too much weakness upon this occasion; that he should either not have carried things so far, or else pursued them still farther. But those who determined in this manner, could they themselves have communicated to the government that foresight that is necessary to be acquainted with events before they happen? The first disputes that arose between the court and the parliament were so trifling, that to have judged of them by the usual course of things, they could not have occasioned the least disturbance in the state. The minds of people were insensibly irritated.

Fresh circumstances having changed the state of the question, they insensibly wandered from the first principles, and then each party were carried beyond their goal. The King often told me, at the very time that he was thundering forth edicts against the parliament, that if he had known things would have been carried to such a length, he would have yielded at first.

The recal of the parliament had great influence over us. From that moment the King became gayer than usual; our conversation was lively and joyous. "Sire, I said to the King, if you have any subject of complaint against your parliament, I entreat you not to let them remain long in exile; for I have too much at stake in the misunderstanding, and much to gain by a reconciliation."

The death of the Marquis de S. Contest, which happened at the time of the recal of the great chamber, occasioned a vacancy in the ministry. I have in another place spoke of the talents and character of this minister; it was said of him that he was fond of peace, because he did not know how to conduct a war. By his death there was a post to be filled in the department of foreign affairs. There were many candidates, but few ministers. The war had disposed every one's genius for arms. Few but the first clerks in offices applied themselves to business. The King sought about him, and I enquired of all those who surrounded me, without finding what the state wanted. "Sire, I said to the monarch, till such time as some happy discovery can be made, I advise your Majesty to appoint M. Rouillé to supply the place."

All France was astonished at this choice, and M. Rouillé himself as much as all France.

Many considerations induced me to make this determination in his favour.

He was to be raised or lowered at will. M. de Belleisle said, that he might be created King of France, and afterwards reduced to a clerk of the navy or war office. He had none of those brilliant qualities which attract admiration; but he was endued with probity, and a minister was then wanted who was an honest man.

Many placemen had been guilty of malversation; some upright person was required to remove the disorders of the state. I heard a very honest man say, that the office of foreign affairs required a chief who had more equity than sense, and more probity than knowledge. He said, that the northern nations, with whom this minister was continually engaged, have the character of frankness, which they like to find in those with whom they are concerned. This same person proved that all, or the greater part of the wars between France and Germany, derived their source from the corruption of this minister.

The department of the marine was given to M. de Machault; he was already keeper of the seals, and comptroller-general. Many persons had spoken to me of him; but his qualifications alone determined me in his favour. He had great penetration, and was very proper to fill the post he held: I could have wished that he had possessed not quite so much ambition; for this passion, when it has no bounds, makes the most enlightened geniuses commit many errors. Ingratitude is most constantly its attendant, and I look upon a man who is wanting in sentiments of acknowledgment, as a monster in nature.

The comptrollership of the finances was given to M. Moreau de Seychelles. These changes puzzled the public, and gave a wide field for speculation. Those who aspired to these places, thought that the persons to whom the preference had been given did not deserve them. They were first murmured at, and then courted. M. de Machault in giving up the finances for the marine had degenerated. It was said of this minister, *that he had left a golden post for a wooden one.*

I acknowledge that I would have induced the King to have placed at the head of these two first departments in the kingdom, two men of superior genius to those who were lately invested with them; but where were they to be found? Marshal Saxe said before he died, "that a ministerial school and not a military school should be established; he pretended that all Frenchmen were born soldiers, and that no one came into the world with the qualities of a minister."

The officers of the navy had for a long time complained that they did not enjoy the same honours as those of the land-forces. They underwent more fatigue, and equally exposed their lives; it was therefore unjust not to allow them the same prerogatives. Lewis XIV. who had done a great deal for the French navy, had not yet done enough. I interested myself in its favour, and only seconded the King's good intentions: he instituted a great cross of St. Lewis, with three commanders, the orders of which were to be distributed according to the

rank and merit of sea-officers.

The joy that sprung from the reconciliation of the court and parliament, was succeeded by still greater. The Dauphiness brought forth a Duke of Berry. The satisfaction the King received from the increase of his royal family, was unparalleled. Each new heir filled him with happiness. I may say, that the fortnight following these two events, was the most agreeable period of my life whilst I was at Versailles.

In the mean while the parliament was received at Paris with demonstrations of joy, rather insulting to the court; all the avenues to the palace were illuminated, bonfires blazed, and the bells were rung. The King was displeased; but M. de Maupeou answered him, that none of his body had any hand in these rejoicings—and this should have rendered them the more suspected.

Edicts had been created for establishing a royal chamber of justice; others were now issued for suppressing it: whereupon one of the members said, "that it was not worth while to make a court-gown for so short a time; and that if he had known that the royal chamber would have been revoked so soon, he would have bought neither wig nor band, but would have judged the criminals with a sword by his side."

The King's letters-patent upon the return of the parliament, are worthy of being handed down to posterity. Lewis XV. there speaks like a master to a court who had opposed him, because they had considered themselves as absolute, and whose fresh convocation was a manifest proof of their disobedience. The King expressed himself in this manner.

"The resolution which the officers of our parliament took on the fifth of May, last year, of discontinuing the administration of justice to our subjects, which they should perform from us; their refusal of resuming their functions, which form an indispensable duty of the functions of their state, and which they have engaged by the sanctity of oath to perform, compelled us to testify to them our displeasure at their conduct: the pretext they gave for discontinuing their usual service was a kind of additional fault on their part, the less excusable, as they could not doubt of the intentions which we had, and by which we constantly abide, of listening to what our parliament might have to represent to us, for the good of our service and that of our subjects; and not being ignorant that we were informed by their arrears, of the object of their remonstrances, they must have acknowledged that they had brought upon themselves the refusal which we gave to hearing those repeated remonstrances. But after having for a time made them feel the effects of our displeasure, we have willingly listened to the dictates of our clemency, and we have recalled to our good city of Paris, the officers of our parliament. Being, nevertheless, ever attentive to the dissipating of those divisions, which have for some time arisen, the consequences of which have appeared deserving of our greatest attention, we have taken the most effectual measures for procuring henceforward public tranquility; and in hopes that our parliament, earnestly striving, by ready obedience and redoubled assiduity, to repair the injury our subjects may have sustained, will upon every occasion testify their submission and fidelity to us, by conforming themselves to the wisdom of those designs which animate us, we have resolved to re-assemble them at Paris, to signify to them our intentions.

"Urged by these motives and others, with the advice of our council, and our certain knowledge, full power and royal authority, we have by these presents, signed with our hand, ordered, and do order all and every one of our officers of our parliament to reassume their usual functions, in our good city of Paris, notwithstanding any thing to the contrary, and to administer justice to our subjects without delay or interruption, according to the laws and the duties of their posts; and being sensible that the silence imposed for so many years, upon matters that cannot be agitated, without being equally prejudicial to the advantage of religion and to that of the state, is the most proper means of securing the public peace and tranquility; we enjoin our parliament to pay attention, that there be nothing on any side attacked, attempted, or innovated, that may be contrary to this silence, and to the peace which we desire should reign in our dominions; ordering them to proceed against the offenders agreeable to the laws and ordinances. And, moreover, to contribute to the pacifying of turbulent minds, and have what is past forgotten; we will and expect, that all proceedings and prosecutions, that may have been carried on, and the definitive sentences that may have been pronounced for contumacy, from the beginning, and on account of the late troubles, till the date of these presents, shall remain without any consequence or effect, without injuring, however, the definitive judgments that may have been contradictorily given without appeal; provided always, that the parties against whom they may have been given, may have recourse to such legal methods as remain, if such there be," &c. &c.

We were told at Versailles, that this declaration met with many difficulties from the great chamber. Marshal Belleisle said to the King upon this occasion, "If your parliament after their exile, do not register your letters patent, they must be banished out of the kingdom," &c. A courtier, on the other hand, said, he should be very much surprised if they did register them. His reason for being of this opinion, was, that when too much respect is paid to a body, they naturally abuse it. The declaration was nevertheless registered, but with the usual restrictions and distinctions.

After the parliament's recall, it was necessary that they should pay a compliment to the King, and M. de Maupeou pronounced it. He acquitted himself like a subtle and skilful magistrate, who, in cautiously treating the prerogatives of the crown, displayed those of his own body. This second piece deserves also to be handed down to posterity. It was as follows.

"SIRE,

"The greatest misfortune that can befall faithful subjects is, doubtless, to incur their sovereign's disgrace.

"This trial, which your parliament has lately made, plunged them into such excess of grief, as cannot better be described to your Majesty, than by the striking testimony which we give you, in respectfully acknowledging it.

"The union, Sire, which, through your goodness, has taken place amongst those members, who were for a long time dispersed, has enabled us to testify our submission to your orders, and our love to your sacred person.

"Can any thing be more worthy of the best of Princes, than to stretch out a paternal hand to the magistrates, who were totally incapable of giving him fresh proofs of the zeal, with which they are animated for his service, and enable them to lay before him the motives which induced them to take, as may be said,

against their inclinations, such steps as have been so unfortunate as to displease him?

"What glory, Sire, will ever be comparable to your's! After having so often conquered your enemies in person, your sole occupation, in the height of peace, is the happiness of your people. You love truth, and you endeavour to be acquainted with it; truth reaches even you, without any other aid than your own understanding: and it is no sooner known to you than it enjoys all its prerogatives.

"Truth alone made you sensible how much the dispersion of all the members of a parliament is a dangerous example, by reason of the blow it levels at all the fundamental laws of the kingdom; and by the immensity of the evils that are derived from it.

"It was this same truth that made you acquainted with the feelings of your parliament, at the dread of being for ever banished from your presence, by your refusing to receive their remonstrances, upon the mere view of the nature of the objects that must have been introduced into these important representations.

"In a word, it was this truth that engaged you to remove their fears with that goodness which will transmit to future ages the true love which you have for subjects, whose interests, you know, are inseparable from your own.

"You have gone still farther; you have extended the wisdom of your designs throughout your whole kingdom, by taking the unshakeable resolution of maintaining therein that order and tranquility upon which its splendor depends. It is in order to stop those divisions, the dangerous consequences whereof you are acquainted with, that you have commanded the most profound silence to be kept with regard to matters, which cannot be discussed without being prejudicial to religion, and the happiness of the state.

"Ah! Sire, how could your parliament have refrained from consecrating, by registering, so salutary a law, notwithstanding the pungent grief with which they were afflicted upon reading the preamble to this law? Yes, Sire, we dare make this representation to you; your parliament, in all the unhappy circumstances in which they have found themselves, have, by giving the preference to public affairs before private ones, only done what was exacted from them by the duties of their station, and the sacred observance of their oath.

"Let us be allowed to tell you, Sire, that your parliament desires nothing so ardently, as to know how fully to convince you of the strength and extent of their duty. They can do nothing of themselves: they exercise that portion of authority you have entrusted them with; and the only object to which all their efforts tend, shall be to make themselves agreeable to your Majesty, and to fulfil their duty: a duty, Sire, that compels them incessantly to watch over the preservation of that precious deposit of authority which you hold from the Almighty, and which should be transmitted in all its purity to your most remote posterity.

"How happy is it for us, to see this supreme power in the hands of a Prince, who governs with such wisdom and moderation, as must gain him all hearts; and who knows that the real links which unite Frenchmen to their Sovereign, are those of love.

"So deeply, Sire, is it graven in our souls, that we protest to you, in the name of all the magistrates that compose your parliament, that they will be always ready to sacrifice what is the most dear and precious to them, as soon as the interest of your glory is concerned, and to set an example to your subjects of the fidelity and obedience they owe to the Sovereign will."

The bishops of France pretended that this was a stroke of the most arrogant modesty that had appeared this century. Courtiers found many contradictions in it. The first president declared, in the name of his body, that the authority exercised by the parliament was a deposit entrusted with them by the King; how then, it was said, could this trust confer to this body such independence as extends to opposing the will of the Prince?

Towards the close of this discourse, we find an insult offered to the crown. This body, who had manifestly opposed the King's orders, and who had preferred exile to submission, say, that they will always be found ready to set an example of obedience. It was said, that an example of *obedience* was never before given by *disobedience*.

Notwithstanding this reconciliation, there was still some animosity remaining on both sides. For my part, I was delighted that this affair was terminated. I have frequently repeated in these Memoirs, that it troubled the King, and this was sufficient for me to desire a reconciliation.

To the parliamentary quarrels succeeded political affairs. The English were making great warlike preparations; the last peace had not removed all difficulties. The plenipotentiaries were more eager to put an end to battles, than to prevent fresh bloodshed.

Marshal Noailles had often told me, that the negociators at a congress have only one point in view, which is to sign the treaty. Upon this they exhaust all their genius, so that they have not the faculty of foresight remaining.

The Duke of Mirepoix came from London to receive the King's orders. This Minister, in speaking to his Majesty of the preparations that the English were making, assured him, "That Great Britain had no thoughts of interrupting the peace." *Whence comes it then*, said the King, *that they are arming as if they wanted to be at war?*

"Sire, answered the Duke, it is a maxim with the English, to avail themselves of the tranquility of Europe, to increase their forces."

This Minister, who was besides an honest man, believed what he said. French emissaries in London had written to court, that the English deceived him, that he let himself be imposed upon by appearances, and that the cabinet of St. James's concealed their views and designs from him.

I often desired the King to appoint another Ambassador for the court of London: but he was afraid of disobliging this Lord, who, moreover, did honour to his employment, by his grandeur and magnificence.

Lewis XV. has such a beneficent soul, that he cannot resolve upon withdrawing his friendship from those whom he has once honoured with his confidence, unless he is convinced of some capital fault that compels him to it.

Versailles became daily more and more melancholy; the unhappy affairs of the clergy, the bishops, and the parliament, spread a gloomy air over all those who frequented court.

To relieve the King from the languid state into which these disputes had brought him, I had Bellevue

built. It was a square pavilion, where the eye discovered more taste than magnificence: the King complimented me upon it. He often repaired thither. I had embellished this spot with simple works, and art was concealed behind nature, which prevented its discovery.

The gardens and groves were delightful. Lewis XV. often said to me, that he was suffocated at Compiègne, at Fontainebleau, and at Marli; but that he breathed at Bellevue. We divided our time between walking and gardening, with other rural amusements. Flowers composed part of the plan of our recreations, and I had some brought from every part of the world.

When the King entered this house, he laid aside that air of Majesty which regal pageantry obliged him to keep up elsewhere. I was always a gainer by this metamorphosis, as it rendered him gayer than usual; and his satisfaction, which increased mine, spread an air of joy over our conversation. There was, besides, another difference, which was, that at Bellevue the King talked to me of his taste, of his appetites, and other things that tended to his pleasure; whereas at Versailles he never entertained me with any thing but disputes upon religion, the refusal of sacraments, or other matters, which were far from being agreeable to him.

This retreat gave him frequent occasion to speak of the advantages that accompanied private life. He discovered in it charms, that the perplexity of public business, and the tumults of the throne, made him the more sensible of.

The King, desirous of giving me marks of his particular protection, created the estate of Marigni, which belonged to my brother, into a marquisate. I thanked him for this favour, which appeared to me the greater, as Vandiere had not done any thing yet to deserve it.

Let us return to general affairs. America, which was upon the point of exciting universal war, began already to display some sparks of that blaze which was to inflame Europe. The English made the first complaints. The Earl of Albemarle represented to the court of France, that the French in Canada committed hostilities, contrary to the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle.

The court of France replied, that they were ignorant of such proceedings: but that to prevent any misunderstanding, they would send orders to suppress these first differences, on condition that the English would, on their side, act in the same manner. Both nations promised, but neither kept their word. They were mutually deceived, as most usually happens upon these occasions.

I remember that when the English made these first complaints to our court, a foreign minister said to me, that the cabinet of Versailles and that of St. James's knew very well they were going to war; but that they would not say so, to make the thing more mysterious.

"In that case, Sir," said I to him, "the King is not in the secret, for he does not know a syllable about this war which you foretel." In fact, Lewis was quite ignorant that he was at the eve of engaging in a long succession of sieges and battles. He was well informed of the motives which induced the English to complain: but he had not been acquainted with their resolution of having recourse to arms.

Whilst the misunderstandings in the new world were the subject of conversation, the religious war still continued in the kingdom. The King, who, in order to restore tranquility to the state, had done every thing that was desired of him, had the mortification to find that nothing was done that he desired. He was obliged to exile the Archbishop of Paris. I was witness of the affliction he was under, from the necessity of giving this order. He had endeavoured to bring this prelate back to his duty, by all the methods which his goodness, and his beneficent soul, could suggest to him; and it was not till after he had in vain essayed them, that he resolved upon sending him to Conflans.

The conduct of this Archbishop, who had openly disobeyed his Sovereign's orders, irritated the courtiers to that degree, that the Monarch was advised by several of them to have him seized by the military power, and to keep him closely confined: but Lewis XV. was of too gentle a disposition to put such rigorous counsel into execution. I have often heard him say, that Kings should punish, but never think of revenge. He entrusted the letter de cachet to one of his ministers, with orders to signify it to the Archbishop as privately as possible.

The King found himself again obliged to banish the bishops of Orleans and Troyes, two prelates whose sentiments were too conformable to those of the Archbishop of Paris. These two might be considered as the fire-brands of the kingdom. They prepared the people's minds for disobedience, in showing themselves rebels to their Prince's orders. One of these, from the extremity of his exile, insulted the court and the state by a mandate, wherein he forbid all his diocesans to have recourse, in the case of administration, to any other priests than those whom he prescribed; and it was necessary that these priests should be vicars, or curates. This was constraining the extent of priesthood; but as soon as the episcopal authority is the least attacked, the Princes of the church are always ready to undertake any thing. Marshal Saxe said, "That if God were to limit the power of bishops in France, these bishops would, in turn, allot bounds to the power of God."

The exile of the Archbishop of Paris silenced his most considerable partizans; but it did not finish the quarrel.

The minister of the marine laid before the King a list of his navy: it consisted of sixty-six ships of the line, and thirty frigates. A politician of the North said, that this was not sufficient to make head against the English; and he prophesied, at that time, that if we did not avoid going to war, the French navy would be totally destroyed when we made peace. I repeated these words to several of our ministers, who answered, that this politician was unacquainted with marine prophecies. France has long since been deprived of those statesmen whose penetrating genius could unravel the most distant events. We at present go mechanically and habitually to work, in the track we are compelled to follow. Marshal Saxe made use of a very singular expression, he said, *that our government daily performed their day's work.*

The naval force was kept in readiness: seamen were enrolled; but able sea-officers were wanting. France has seldom had any good ones. Lewis XIV. formed some, but they expired with his reign.

The spirit of party and animosity was still kept up at court. The cabal who strove to destroy me, increased with my favour. Envy displayed all the latent springs that human wickedness could suggest. All who surrounded the Prince, endeavoured to deprive me of his confidence.

Amongst those who conspired against me, there were people who were indebted to me for their fortune, and for whom I constantly interested myself. I pointed them out to the King. Lewis XV. detests ingratitude;

these dark proceedings produced a very contrary effect to what my enemies had proposed. The King paid me more attention than before, and despised those the more who would have deceived him. I shall not repeat here the low and scandalous artifices that courtiers, and even some ambitious women, put in practice to surprize the Monarch's heart. A detail of these intrigues are unworthy of history, and I have no design of transmitting to posterity the artifices of cabals, which relate to no one but myself.

M. Moreau de Seychelles, comptroller-general of the finances, was of service to the state. He was very assiduous in regulating the finances. I made the King take notice of him, and immediately this Prince made him minister of state. He had his enemies at court: it was said that he had done nothing yet to deserve that post, and that fortune having so precipitately forced his elevation, he would never advance above half way to favour.

When he came to court, to return the King thanks, I said to him, "Sir, many people pretend to foretel the destiny of your administration, convince all France that they are false prophets."

The Duke of Mirepoix, who had always assured the court, that the English had no thoughts of breaking the treaty of peace, was at length obliged to write that they prepared for war. France hastily put herself into a state of defence, without knowing precisely whether she was coming to blows. Orders were dispatched from the office of the marine to all the ports and harbours. The ships that were finished were launched, and the others kept ready to sail on the first notice.

The treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle was, nevertheless, still negotiating at Paris. This business was no longer transacted with Lord Albemarle; he was dead. The interests of Great Britain were in the hands of a secretary of embassy, who gave vague replies to the questions that were put to him, upon the preparations his court was making.

Some politicians have assured us, that if Lord Albemarle had lived, the war, which afterwards rent the two nations, would never have taken place. It has been said that minister, who had great weight with George the Second, was at that time connected with a woman of pleasure at Paris, whom he would not part with. This perhaps is only a surmise, destitute of foundation; but after all, this would not have been the first time that the amours of a courtesan have influenced the affairs of Europe.

Upon the arrival of the dispatches from London, a great council was held at Versailles, and the King expressed himself in the following manner to his ministers. "I am resolved I will not begin the war, and if the English break the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, Europe, who shall be witness to my moderation, shall see that they are the aggressors."

M. de Maillebois, the father, said publicly at court, that it were better to prevent them, than to give them an opportunity of doing it.

The King's moderation met with no advocates but those whose interest it was to avoid sieges and battles; for every one was concerned in the event according to his particular views of interest. Military people wanted war, merchants and financiers wished for peace.

The court of London sent my Lord Hertford to Paris, to replace the Earl of Albemarle. This Ambassador was compared to a herald at arms: it was said that he was come to declare war against France. He spoke, in fact, in such a tone, as testified that every thing was ready in England to invade America. M. Rouille was so intimidated, that he said to the King: "Sire, Great Britain must have resolved to declare war, for her Ambassador talks in such a stile, as if the English were ready to open the campaign."

Upon the first report of the preparations of an armament, the military men, who, since the last campaigns in Flanders, had deserted Versailles, came in shoals to make their court to me. All my apartments were lined with officers, who, in intreating my interest to recommend them to the Prince, set forth their talents in the military art.

The Bishops war, nevertheless, still continued. The Archbishop of Paris, banished to Conflans, was not thereby rendered more submissive. He, from the extremity of his exile, braved the court and the city. He was removed to *Lagny sur Maine*, a little town that had neither the grandeur nor magnificence of Conflans. This retreat, by diminishing his episcopal pomp, no way changed his character, which remained inflexible. The other rebellious bishops were treated with more severity: but these lettres de cachet had a very opposite effect to what was intended. They served only to make them more important in the eyes of their partizans, which increased their arrogance.

A courtier said to the King, that a seminary should be built at Rome, to which should be sent all the French bishops who rebelled against his orders, with an establishment of 100 Roman crowns per head, for supporting their grandeur.

It is certain that too much respect was paid to these people; and the very chastisements that were inflicted on them, when they swerved from their duty, were tempered with so much consideration, as to prevent their returning to it.

The bishops having nothing to do in their exile but to write, and being unable to employ any other arms than their pens, France was deluged with letters and mandates. These were so many manifestoes against the royal authority. The King was often advised to hang the Printers, who were instrumental in the circulation of these seditious papers; but Lewis XV. would never have recourse to these violent methods.

The English, at length, explained themselves with respect to their warlike preparations, the news of which Fame had trumpeted throughout Europe. They declared to the government, that the French in Canada had made incursions upon lands under the dominion of Great Britain, and that England was not inclined to suffer such usurpations. We have seen that the two crowns, when peace was concluded, left the decision of this affair to commissaries. Count de Argenson had foreseen, at first, that these commissaries would completely ruin the interests of the two courts. "Sir, said he, when two powers, with arms in hand, cannot agree upon certain differences, it is impossible for individuals to reconcile them."

Nevertheless, the English council did not say that they should declare war, but only that they were discontented with the French in America.

This declaration afflicted the King, who did not desire war. The national debts were not yet paid, the same imposts still subsisted as before, the people were always oppressed; so that a new war must overwhelm

them. Lewis XV. spoke to me of the misfortune that threatened France, in such a manner as persuaded me he was sensibly affected. I was a witness to his uneasiness upon this account; and it is but justice, which I owe this Prince, to say he was penetrated with grief upon the occasion. This was not the case with the ministers and military courtiers, who were in hopes to advance their fortune by means of this new revolution. The difficulty was not to undertake the war, but to find generals to carry it on.

Marshal Saxe, the terror of France's enemies, and in whom the troops placed an implicit confidence, was dead. Of all the officers who had served under him, there was not any one who furnished the same hopes of his abilities. They had courage and experience: but these were not sufficient; for I have heard it said, that to form a hero, requires an assortment of qualities, which are seldom found in the same man.

Amongst the generals who had served in the late wars, Marshal Belleisle was the most desirous of commanding in chief; but besides his never having been a good general, his capacity was greatly impaired. He expressed himself in diffuse terms, and was very verbose. It was said of him at court, that of all the genius that had elevated him to the pinnacle of greatness, he retained nothing but loquacity.

The state was now threatened with three different wars, two of which were declared. That of the Bull, as it was called, which was upon the point of causing a revolution in the state: that of the Barbarians, who, notwithstanding the faith of treaties, interrupted the trade of the nation; and that of the English, who were ready to give us battle.

A man of wit, who was told that the English were going to be our foes, said, *God be praised, the bishops quarrel is now at an end, for these people are never at war but in time of peace.*

The Archbishop of Paris, who was still exiled, and still obstinate, wrote a letter to the King in a stile truly original, and without example since the foundation of the monarchy. He said to the King, in very formal terms, that "His power was superior to that of the Sovereign, in matters relative to the administration which God hath entrusted him with; that his duty was that of conducting his flock; that he acknowledged no other upon earth; finally, he would not, nor could not, retract from the first steps he had taken; that these were his last sentiments, which would continue always the same to the grave, &c. &c."

This was a period distinguishable for disobedience. The clergy gloried in rebelling against the orders of the King. This obstinate disposition had made its way into the provinces. The deputy of Languedoc related to the King an event that happened at Montpellier, which pointed out to this Prince the necessity of stopping the progress of such abuses. This man said, that the wife of a counsellor of that city, who had refused to receive the Bull, and whose life was in danger, requested the curate of her parish to administer the sacraments to her. Upon her first request, the curate and four vicars fled. Application was made to the other parishes, but it was found that all the clergy who administered had deserted. The chief justice then ordered an independent priest, and who was not belonging to any church, to administer to the Lady. This ecclesiastic thought it was his duty to obey; but he had observed that the host had accompanied the priests in their retreat. He did not find a single wafer in the tabernacles of the different churches of the city. The curates and the secondaries had eat them all before their departure. He consecrated one: but this was not sufficient; it must be administered. A general insurrection was feared. The commander of the place was obliged to put the garrison under arms, and appoint guards for the conducting of the host in safety to the sick Lady's house.

Such scenes as these, in a city full of Protestants, made the Romish religion become a subject of public derision. The King was greatly affected at it, though he would not yet resolve to use violent remedies.

I have said that the King did not desire war; to prevent which, if it were yet possible, he sent Bussy to Hanover, where George II. was expected. I was not for employing this man, thinking he had not sufficient capacity to succeed in a negociation of this importance; but Lewis XV. had been prejudiced in his favour.

Bussy's partizans said he spoke with resolution, and an absolute tone; qualities that were looked upon as essential at a free court, where moderation and suppleness are always unsuccessful. But the contrary was the truth. Bussy negociated badly to prevent the war, and he failed some years after to restore peace; but I laid it down as a maxim, never to oppose the King's sentiments.

Orders were dispatched to all the commanders in the American colonies, to fit out as many ships as they could, to oppose the designs of the English. I heard Marshal Noailles then say, that troops should have been sent, and not orders.

The death of Marshal Lowendahl, the pupil and companion of Count Saxe, that happened at this time, created sorrow, which in the present circumstances was the more sensibly felt. His military talents had made us conceive hopes that his death destroyed. The conquest of Bergen-op-zoom had acquired him a reputation, from which France might have derived advantages in the war with which she was threatened. I testified my chagrin, upon this occasion, to the King. "You have reason to lament the death of this officer, he replied to me; he was among the number of those who were most deserving of any confidence. It is in vain for me to seek amongst my subjects, I shall find no one capable of supplying his place."

Lewis XV. who had honoured him during his life-time, was willing to bestow marks of distinction upon him after his death. He was at the expence of his funeral obsequies, and granted pensions to his children of both sexes; recompences that were due to his merit, and with which the King gratified his heirs. All those who were eclipsed by this general's merit, rejoiced at his death; none but real patriots lamented it.

Whilst France was employed about the means of supplying the expences of the war, we learnt at Versailles that England found voluntary resources in her subjects for her's. Private persons offered money to such sailors as enrolled themselves in the royal navy, and others engaged to support their families at their own expence during the war, had it continued six lustrums.

Certain communities offered free gifts to those who would bear arms against France. I said to Marshal Belleisle, who related these facts to me: "It appears to me, sir, that a people who act in this manner, has the advantage over those who give no money but what they are compelled to part with, for the expences of the war." *That is true,* replied the old Courtier; *but this same English nation, who thus voluntarily part with their riches for a war, which they think useful to the state, often lose all their advantages at a peace. A Lord who wants to make his way to the administration by a system of pacification, intrigues with the king, gains his confidence, and has his creatures. These set forth, that sieges and battles ruin the state, that commerce is*

hurt by them, and that industry perishes. The cabal acquire strength, the candidate minister's party increases, he gains the ascendent, and the peace is signed, at the expence of the nation's blood and treasure.

M. de Mirepoix still continued his negotiations at London: he conferred with Sir Thomas Robinson, who gave him hopes; but this was only to gain time: the war was resolved upon. Count D'Argenson often said to the King, that this Ambassador should be recalled, as his residence in London only amused the state, and made the French nation ridiculous. The King and council were greatly perplexed; Lewis XV. was not willing that Europe should be able to reproach him with having committed the first hostilities.

Marshal Lowendahl, who before his death was witness to this embarrassment, said publicly at court, that *it was better to attack as a principal, than to be beat as a second.* This counsel was not followed, but we repented of it.

As for me, I was neuter in this great affair. It was reported that I wished for this war, to make myself more considerable at court. I had no occasion for either sieges or battles, things constantly destructive to a state, to support my credit with the King. Lewis XV. honoured me with his confidence: all those who had endeavoured to prejudice me had miscarried in their attempt; rank and grandeur had no longer any charms for me: the only ambition I had remaining was the settling of my daughter; but she was not arrived at an age to be married, and I did not doubt that the King would honour her with his protection.

Peace was still the subject of conversation at London and Paris; but we at length learned that the English had declared war against France in the new world; the court of Versailles received advice, that Admiral Boscawen had with his fleet taken the *Alcide* man of war, upon the banks of Newfoundland. The manner in which he took this ship aggravated the offence. The *Alcide* should not have been attacked, at the time it was attacked, for she had no fighting orders. It is a custom established amongst all civilized nations, when they declare war, to publish a manifesto, containing the grievances which induce them to have recourse to arms; and England had not published any such: therefore this step was considered as a real piracy. This was observed to the King, who immediately sent orders to the duke of Mirepoix and Bussy to return to France, without taking leave of the court of England. Henceforward all means of accommodation were suspended.

The King, who had been desirous of avoiding a war before it began, took his measures as soon as he was acquainted with this first act of hostility. His honour would let him no longer put up an affront offered to his flag. He said, upon retiring from the council, "Madam, war is declared; the English are my enemies."

The operations of the war office took place; the armaments by land and sea, the augmentation of the troops, and the means of supporting the army, were taken into consideration.

From this time the King lived more retired, he did not hunt so often, and he debarred himself several diversions which he took before. He conferred regularly with his ministers. Count D'Argenson, with whom he was often locked up, gave him a circumstantial detail of his land forces, and the naval minister laid before him a similar account of his navy. Lewis XV. made several objections to them concerning the principal points of their administration, to which these chiefs in office were obliged to answer.

The count D'Argenson, whose administration was then the most important, as he was at the head of military affairs, told the King that his troops were in a good state, that military discipline was well enforced, that the French were fond of war, and that we might flatter ourselves with successful campaigns, provided the generals seconded the ardour of the troops, and were not themselves an obstacle to the grandeur of France.

The conferences with the minister of the finances were of a still more intricate nature; there were many ancient debts unpaid, the revenues of the crown were mortgaged, commerce and industry, which had just recovered some little vigour since the peace, were upon the point of returning to their inactive state.

The comptroller-general said to the King, "Sire, the state of things must not be disguised to your Majesty; great springs must be put in motion to maintain the burthen of the war. I have made a calculation from the state of your finances, and they will procure me resources for four years: if at the end of that time peace should not take place, the campaigns cannot be carried on without imposing very oppressive taxes upon your people."

The King, who after this conference paid me a visit, said, *that he had just been conversing with a minister, who was the honestest man in all France; for such I must call him, he added, who has so much probity as to speak freely to his King.*

The minister of the war department required an augmentation of 40000 men, which was granted him, and orders were issued accordingly for raising recruits. M. Belleisle told me, that so many men were not necessary for the defence of a handful of barbarians, that this would increase the expences of the state, and only tend to weaken it. He did not foresee that these levies were nothing in comparison of those that were to be afterwards made.

France had been perfectly secured by the treaty of Aix la Chapelle. Her ports were open and defenceless. Upon the commission of the first acts of hostility in America, it was resolved to restore the works at Dunkirk. The prince of Soubise was appointed by the King to see this operation take place: eight thousand troops were allotted him to favour the execution of this design.

Upon the first reports of the revolutions in Canada, two successive squadrons were dispatched, of which no news had yet been received. The uncertainty of the success of this small naval armament suspended the grand operations by land.

The council of state could not resolve upon any fixed plan of operations, the members being divided in their opinion. I was a witness to a great part of the diversity of sentiments which then disturbed the court, with respect to this grand affair.

A man of much good sense said, like Marshal Belleisle, "that great armies were useless; that land campaigns were not the object, but a sea war; that the colonies should be put in a state of security, which alone could be conquered; that the plan of the English was not to increase their power in Europe, but to extend their limits in America; that all their designs tended that way, and that we should direct ours to the same object; that France was guarantied in Europe by the general balance; but that there was no system whereby our settlements in the new world were guarantied; that the crown would lose its influence, when

trade would be entirely in the power of the English; that the British navy was already superior to the navies of all Europe, but that after the loss of Canada and the other parts of the continent of America, it would be the only one in Europe; that this was the crisis for France, and that if the opportunity was neglected of protecting ourselves from this last attempt, it would never return; that all other plans of warlike operations should be given up, to pursue that of the colonies, as they interested the general republic; but that this personally and solely interested France; that America being once conquered, the whole body of Europe could not restore the equilibrium, because the power of the first states of the continent did not extend to the sea; that the English in the center of the christian world, were separated from Christendom; that they could not be attacked in their own islands; that nature had secured them from all invasions in Europe, &c."

The opposite party, on the contrary, said, "that great armies should be raised to oppose the allies of England, who would not fail to form designs in Germany; that here the capital strokes would be struck; that the war in America was only the pretext for that which was to be carried on in Europe; that some troops should be sent to Canada; but that numerous legions should be raised for Germany; that we were mistaken if we thought the English limited their enterprizes to America, as it was visible that their designs tended to excite a revolution in the north of Europe; that the general balance guaranteed France no farther than she herself contributed to support a just equilibrium; that with respect to trade in general, there was no reason to apprehend that England could engross it, as there were not sufficient materials in that country to compass the design; that the English were compelled to have recourse to industrious nations, and where the price of labour was not so high; that universal trade consisted in exchanges, and that a people who should considerably diminish that of other states, would greatly cramp their own; that with respect to the navy, one could not be immediately formed to balance that of England; that the expences made upon this account would be endless, as the time was too short and the means too circumscribed; that the loss of Canada was not certain, the events of war being casual; that the savage nations loved the French and hated the English; that they would prefer being exterminated, rather than submit to the British yoke; lastly, that if Canada should be conquered in this war, it might be retaken in another; but that if the English, united with their allies, should avail themselves of favourable circumstances to gain advantages in Europe, it would be then too late to repair the damage, as the last victories would be guaranteed by new treaties of peace; whereas in America the barbarous nations in alliance with France, who are unacquainted with the laws of nations, are always ready to create revolutions: in a word, that it was France's interest to set on foot numerous armies to support her pretensions by land, and to yield for some time the dominion of the sea, &c. &c."

A third party maintained that both these objects should be attended to: "We should (said they) prevent the English making conquests in America, and hinder any taking place in Europe. France is sufficiently powerful for this; she need only manage well her forces; she will prevail every where, when those who govern the state unite in one common interest; that is to say, the glory of the nation, and the happiness of the people. If the northern powers of Europe are inclinable to avail themselves of the misunderstandings in America, we must keep our engagements, and send 24000 men into Germany. A more numerous army can only procure us a greater loss without any advantage. These moderate succours will enable us to send more considerable assistance to the new world, to protect our colonies; the revolution in Canada is not a maritime quarrel, it is a land war. The point is to defend the continent, and it is only necessary to land troops there; and this the English cannot prevent. They have taken no measures yet to block up the passages; but if we do not make haste, we shall be too late; for the English, who keep a steady eye upon our operations, will no sooner find that we do not make any great preparations by land, than they will begin to make very considerable ones by sea."

There was also a numerous party inclined for peace: the reasons which they alledged, were founded upon our inability of carrying on the war; but the minds of the people were too much agitated to listen to plans of pacification; each had his schemes for pushing his fortune, and private interest always prevails over the common weal. Subaltern officers who wanted advancement, were desirous of sieges and battles. Those who endeavoured to obtain the command of armies, were desperate advocates for war; and such as would be employed in furnishing the necessaries for carrying it on, thought it indispensable: it is plain from these motives, how little the interest of the state was considered.

During this crisis the clergy of France were assembled; they deliberated very seriously, whether sick people should have the sacraments administered, or whether they should die without them. The bishops who had been brought over by the court and the parliament, were of opinion, that they could not be refused this assistance. Those who expected nothing of the King, and who hated the parliament, maintained on the contrary, that they should be refused them like heretics. At length, after many debates, they seemed inclinable to leave this great affair to the determination of the Pope.

I learnt this news with pleasure. Benedict XIV. then filled the papal chair. Many persons who had been at Rome, gave me a very favourable opinion of this pontiff. He despised his predecessors, refined policy of turning every thing to their own advantage; the first steps he took upon his obtaining the pontificate, made me conceive a real esteem for him. He had abolished at Rome those wretched equivocations, which in serving as food for superstition, dishonour the Christian religion. He knew that God sometimes wrought miracles, but that he does not daily alter the course of nature. This prince of the church preferred the title of an honest man to that of a holy one, and this quality raised him above all the Popes that ever existed upon earth. Benedict XIV. had so much understanding and so little prejudice, that his decision could not fail to restore tranquility to the Gallican church.

The administration of the sacraments was not the only disquisition which engaged the clergy; the grand affair for which they were convened, and in which the whole body were unanimous, was to deny the authority of the parliaments, or any other body of laymen whatever. Lewis XV. who could not begin the war without oppressing his people, was willing to set them an example of œconomy, by diminishing his household expences. He reduced his hunting equipages, and the number of his hunting horses in both stables. The expences of his little journies were regulated and diminished: it was resolved that there should be no diversions this year at court, and the works of the Louvre were suspended, &c.

The Count D'Argenson said, "that these savings are so small an object, that they will scarce enrich a

commissary of stores during the war.”

I was myself often inclined to have an eye to œconomy; but M. de Belleisle had told me that it was scarce possible to benefit the state by such frugality; he added, “if it were an evil, it was impossible to remedy it; but that all those who served the King would enrich themselves; that a reform would produce no advantage; that it was better to continue employing the old officers who were already opulent, than to replace them with new ones, who would endeavour to become so.”

Neither the council of state nor the warlike preparations deprived me of the King’s company, who visited me regularly, and communicated to me his designs and intentions. The resolution he had taken of being revenged of his enemies, gave him an air of satisfaction, which he had not before he had taken it; his only uneasiness was for his people: he was afraid that the continuance of the war would exhaust them too much.

It was thought necessary to review the troops, and there were three encampments. The prince of Soubise wanted the command of the camp of Hainault: I spoke to the King, and it was granted him. M. de Chevert, and the Marquis de Voyer, in whose favour I also interested myself, obtained the two others.

Though hostilities were begun in America, Lewis XV. would not continue them in Europe. A frigate of the Brest squadron having taken an English frigate, the King immediately ordered it to be released, as he said, *he would not make war in time of peace, and be the first to infringe the treaty of Aix la Chapelle in Europe.*

A general officer, who was in my apartment when the King told me he had just dispatched this order, could not refrain telling him, in my presence, “Permit me, Sire, to represent to your Majesty, that this moderation will noways alter the system of the court of London. The English have resolved to fall upon us, and to seize all such ships as they think they have the superiority over: reprisals are necessary, and we should seize all such vessels as are inferior in strength to our’s that meet with them.”

The Count de Argenson said, there was but one method of carrying on the war, “which was to drub the enemy well, and take a good deal from them.”

The sea-officers paid their court regularly to me; for the navy was to have the honour of this war. There was a promotion of officers, and I interested myself in behalf of some, in consequence of the characters that were given me of their capacity and courage.

I know that complaints have often been made in France of my choice of certain persons, as well in the army as in the administration: but those who condemned me were unacquainted with Versailles. Every courtier has a party who cry up their talents and genius. It is impossible to descry real merit through these extravagant elogiums. All those who are interested in a courtier’s advancement, either in the army or in the government, hide his faults, and display his good qualities; for every man has a favourable side.

The death of Madame, daughter to the Dauphin, created fresh affliction for the King. I have often heard the happiness of Kings extolled, when they are in reality more to be pitied than other men. A citizen has scarce any thing but domestic troubles to afflict him: a Monarch unites family misfortunes with those of the state.

Scarce had Lewis wiped away his tears, before he had news of a battle that was fought in America, near the Ohio, between his troops and those of England, in which General Braddock fell, and where the French gained a compleat victory. The blood that was spilt in this affair, a detail of which may be found in the annals of Europe, closed all avenues to an accommodation. The only measure to be taken in Europe was to be upon the defensive, and this was not taken. The English seized as many merchant-ships in Europe as they met with in both seas. The commanders of these ships had received orders to surrender without making any resistance. I desired the King to explain to me the motive of this policy, and he replied to me as before, *that he would not break treaties, and make war in time of peace.*

The English availed themselves of this moderation; they became absolute masters of the sea, and filled their island with French prisoners.

At the very time that the court of Versailles piqued themselves upon fulfilling their engagements, the court of London reproached us with breaking them. The restoration of the works at Dunkirk was construed into an infraction of these same treaties, for which France sacrificed what power she had remaining at sea. In this manner each government endeavoured to justify their designs; and thus was ambition disguised under every form to obtain its ends.

Marshal Noailles, who was not of opinion that France should let the remainder of her navigation and trade be crushed, to convince all Europe that the English made war like pirates, said, that this external moderation deceived none, that the court of Versailles alone was deceived.

Those who agreed in opinion with the King, pretended that all these captures made without a declaration of war would be restored; but real politicians thought otherwise, and experience has demonstrated, by the event, that these were not deceived.

Repeated orders were dispatched to all the sea-ports, and preparations were making for a land-war; but there was not a sufficient fund in the royal treasury to support the extraordinary expences. The Comptroller-general said to the King, “Sire, the farmers-general offer your Majesty money, it should be taken. They will lend the crown sixty-six millions at 4 per cent. the state in its present exigence cannot purchase money at a cheaper rate.”

It may, perhaps, be thought that the financiers, affected at the state of France, made this voluntary proposal from a spirit of patriotism; but posterity will know that the same sordid interest which constantly actuates them, incited them to display this generosity. One of the first conditions was, that the lease of the farms should be renewed. They afterwards insisted that there should be no under-farmers; that is to say, that the profits arising from the farms should be no longer divided, and that they should be sole masters of the finances. They also wanted to have the disposal of all the employments in the farms.

It was publicly said in Paris, that I had framed the scheme of this loan. It is true that four farmers-general applied to me, to make the proposal from their body, and that I mentioned it to the King. Lewis XV. had it examined in his council, who approved of it; this is all the share I had in the transaction. Those who imagine that a King of France can raise money by the act of his own private will, are unacquainted with the government. This sum was far from being sufficient to put in motion all the machines of war that were

foreseen to be necessary. The King borrowed thirty millions upon the posts at 3 per cent. but even this additional sum was not enough. The King's secretaries, as well of the upper as the inferior college, were taxed, and this impost, the least burthensome perhaps of any, because it fell upon such as purchased their employments through ostentation, produced a supply of forty-five millions.

With this fund, it was incumbent upon us to oppose the designs of the English at sea, and of such powers as were enemies to France by land.

I saw the King as usual. He supped almost every night with me, and communicated to me all his plans and designs. Difficulties did not astonish him. Lewis XV. is slow at resolving, but when he is determined, his resolution is firm. He appeared more gay than usual: perhaps the internal tranquility of the state greatly contributed towards it; for the broils with the court of England had produced so good an effect at home, that schisms were no longer the subject of conversation. The curates administered to the sick, and thus the clergy and parliament were reconciled.

We learnt at Versailles that George II. who had made a voyage to his Electoral dominions, was returned to London. His presence was there necessary to expedite the military operations. We were at the same time informed, that several councils had been held at Kensington, in which it was resolved to make war. It had already been pursued for some time; and these councils were held only to deliberate upon the means. The English had by this time taken from the French 250 merchantmen, and made upwards of 4000 sailors prisoners of war.

The two nations mutually upbraided each other with the injustice of their proceedings. The English reproached the French with having infringed upon the treaty of peace, and the French openly declared, that the English made war like pirates; and added, that the parliament of England might be compared to the Divan of Constantinople, and George II. to the Dey of Algiers.

The Duke of Belleisle said, that these reproaches were carried too far; that there were sufficient grounds for the two nations fighting for five hundred years without declaring war.

Count de Argenson asked a foreign minister, in my presence, *Which of the two parties was the most equitable?* "They are both unjust, said the foreigner. France is in the wrong for having made incursions upon the British dominions in America, and for having fortified Dunkirk; and England has done amiss by seizing the ships of this nation, and for having made prisoners of war in time of peace."

I related this discourse to the King, who said, that most of the foreign ministers were unacquainted with the origin of the dispute, and that they judged of things only by appearances, or according to the ideas they entertained of their own country.

These private discourses no way altered the general operations. The armaments by sea and land continued going on, and we prepared ourselves for war. The Pope offered his mediation; this was Benedict XIV. The matter might have been referred to him, had it been possible for him to have negotiated the affair in person; but it must have been entrusted to nuncios, who are usually men as ambitious as they are ignorant, and who are acquainted with no other politics than those of the Vatican.

The King of Portugal also offered his service: but as he was incapable of throwing any weight in the scale, he occasioned no alteration in the designs that were formed for pursuing the war.

The duke of Noailles said, he was surprised that petty princes without power, should think of being the arbiters of the power of the first states in Europe.

I shall not conceal to posterity that pacific proposals were made between the two courts; but they were so distant from their respective views, that it may be presumed they were offered only to make the torch of war blaze the more, though the pretext was to extinguish it.

France's demands were great, and the English required too much. This was the method of succeeding in the design that was formed of not agreeing.

In order to increase the troops, and render the armies more numerous, recourse was had to an expedient which was of very little consequence. The invalids, who, by their services and their wounds, had obtained admission into the hospital, were ordered to bear arms and fight the enemies of the state.

A wit said upon this occasion, that "this was having recourse to the dead to wage war against the living."

In proportion as the quarrel between France and England increased, Lewis XV. gave me more power. It was imagined in the world, that I was the arbitress of this new revolution: it is true, the King asked my opinion upon many things; but I took care not to be answerable for such events as might give a new bias to affairs in general: I referred them to the council of state, leaving them to share all the blame, if any was incurred.

The ministers saw me more regularly, and the general officers who were desirous of commanding the armies, paid their court to me with remarkable assiduity.

Whilst agreeable news was received from the new world, the court was very uneasy about two squadrons which had set sail for America; but advice came of their being returned to Brest. The King came himself to acquaint me with the news, at which he testified much joy. It was natural to think that the ships which composed these squadrons would fall into the hands of the English, who had sent very considerable fleets to America.

The first advantage the French gained in Canada, produced a second. The Iroquois nation offered to enter into alliance with the French.

The count D'Argenson shewed me the discourse which the deputies of this savage people addressed to M. Vaudreuil, who commanded the King's troops.

"May the Great Spirit preserve the captain of the French and his valiant warriors! May the extent of their courage be measured by the number of their wounds! We, whose nations are as ancient as the stars, and the most courageous upon earth, come to offer thee the right arm of our warriors. The black gowns who are amongst us, have taken care to make us acquainted with thy nation, which is the most valiant of any after our own, because they have seen that these warriors might learn from ours what they did not know before. Our nation, who reckon more than ten thousand moons, come then to unite their forces to assist thee, in order to

regale our wives and children with the dead bodies of the enemies of the captain of the French. Receive the calumet of peace, and as a mark of joy, give three shouts to the sun, which is risen to enlighten our nations."

This letter being made public at Versailles, a courtier, who had read it, said to the King: "Sire, we must make an alliance with the Iroquois, for they will eat as many Englishmen as they can find. Those people are so famished with glory, that they devour their conquests."

A few days after the return of the Brest fleets, the King said to me: "The English parliament desire peace, the people of England want war. I shall take no steps to procure the last; but if it is proposed to me upon honourable terms, I will accept of it."

M. de Belleisle told me, that no terms would be proposed, and that all the reports that were spread in England, were only designed to amuse France, and surprise the government.

"Marshal, said I to him, we may possibly be surprised, for it is above a year since we were told that we ought to be so."

Whilst warlike preparations were making on every side, the ministers often received memorials from individuals, pointing out the object of our first attack.

The French have for some time been greatly addicted to politics. It is pretended that we caught the infection from the English, and that it was communicated to France by the way of Calais. A man of great wit said to me one day upon this head, that since this contagion had spread, an infinite number of people, whose labour and industry might have been very beneficial to the state, became idle spectators. In England this rage is not so dangerous; the citizens engage themselves as well with their own private affairs, as with the administration in general. But in France, when a man gives himself up to politics, he passes his life systematically.

The Count D'Argenson shewed me a memorial, which he had received from an unknown hand, bearing this title, *Important advice to the government*.

"We should not wage war, said the anonymous author, either in Germany or in America; the English navy is superior to ours: the English will in the end have the advantage over us. In opposing ourselves to their forces, we shall only compleatly ruin our own.

"We should take the field with a bold stroke. It should seem for some time past, as if our ministers were paid by the English government, to go into all the snares that were laid for them. It is only necessary that the court of London chalk out a plan, for that of Versailles to follow them. This bold stroke is to enter into alliance with Spain, and invade Portugal provisionally. The Portuguese are allies of the English, and this is a sufficient plea to conquer them: I say this is sufficient, for princes have long since thought they had no occasion for a pretext to make war: it was only necessary that an invasion favoured their designs.

"That kingdom is easy to invade; Portugal has neither armies nor officers, for we should not consider as soldiers, a few natives badly disciplined, who never saw fire, and commanders that never served. Some months must elapse before the English can send them troops and generals. Lisbon will be taken before the English fleet can set sail to defend it.

"Portugal being once in the hands of the French, the English will attempt nothing; or else at the peace, they will give up every thing.

"To form a judgment of the importance of this invasion, the advantages which Great Britain derives from Portugal should be considered.

"All Europe knows that this kingdom has no manufactures, and that the English furnish the Portuguese not only with every thing which promotes their luxury, but even their physical wants. Forty thousand artizans, in every kind of trade, are constantly at work for them. Portugal maintains forty thousand of King George's subjects. These contribute to the support of an equal number of other citizens; and as this primitive industry is the source of infinite subordinate species of it, the interruption given to these manufactures would occasion a diminution in the general circulation.

"Eight thousand merchantmen sail every year from the river Thames to enter the Tagus; twenty thousand English sailors are therefore supported by this single branch of commerce.

"The mines of Brazil produce annually fresh riches for England, which are the more advantageous, as they furnish that nation with the means of purchasing alliances, and paying subsidies. It is partly with the gold of Portugal that Great Britain maintains her fleets, and raises armies.

"It is true that the riches of Portugal are in America, and that the English fleets might possess themselves of the mines; but the English would not derive great advantage from this conquest.

"The extraction of gold is a manufacture that must be rendered profitable, to draw advantages from it: and this capacity is not the lot of every one. The Portuguese, naturally sober, and who have but few wants, can alone derive these advantages from it; the English, with whom labour is much dearer, would be losers by it. Great Britain, instead of being enriched, would be impoverished by the mines.

"It is a general rule, that mines always ruin their proprietors, as Spain and Portugal evince, which are continually impoverished in proportion as their mines become fruitful. The only nations that are thereby enriched, are those who barter their industry for the produce.

"The invasion of Portugal would make a change in all the systems of Europe. It would cause a general revolution in cabinets. The face of affairs in Germany would be entirely altered. The King of Prussia would change his plans. The Belligerent powers, who are preparing for a certain war, would be obliged to carry on another, which would greatly distress many powers.

"France by this first cast would save great armies, and still greater sums. Portugal would be no sooner taken, than the English would set about re-taking it: this war, which would at once entirely occupy them, would divert them from any other.

"The English ministry are prepared for every thing, except the invasion of Portugal. They have planned all their operations for the German war, and that in America; but no steps are taken for the defence of Portugal.

"But this expedition should be equally secret as speedy: these form the soul of success. The greatest part

of our operations miscarry, because they are tardy and public. The enemy is almost constantly acquainted with our designs the very instant that they are projected: this is the certain means of rendering them abortive. The English, it is true, are not prepared to oppose this invasion; but if they gain timely notice of it, they will set aside some other plans to prevent this. Expedition and penetration are, we know, the two characteristic qualities of that government.

“The court of Madrid should be made acquainted with this scheme by an extraordinary courier, and their assistance requested; or, we should rather propose giving up Portugal to them, after the invasion.

“If the court of Madrid has hitherto refused entering into alliance with France, it was because an expensive war was proposed to them, which offered nothing but charges without conquest: but when we propose giving them, as the fruit of their alliance, a kingdom at hand, and to which they pretend having ancient claims, they will not hesitate a moment.

“The troops that are in Rousillon, Languedoc, and Provence, should be forwarded by degrees nearer and nearer; the marching of those that are more distant would discover the project.”

END of the SECOND VOLUME.

FOOTNOTES:

[A] The Thesis of the Abbé Prade.

[B] We did not know that the magistrate first brought the Sorbonne back to their duty, and awakened the zeal of the pastors, who slept in tranquility by the side of the wolf.

[C] The features of this portrait were certainly drawn for the late Duke of Orleans, to whom, we are assured, the archbishop refused the sacraments. If this be true, who dare think himself worthy of aspiring to this favour?

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK MEMOIRS OF THE MARCHIONESS OF POMPADOUR
(VOL. 2 OF 2) ***

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