

Lenormand d'Estolles, might enter, there was no challenge at the entrance of the palace to any one who might come properly dressed and masqued. It was the first open step in which the King "lost sight of the path of glory, and the bed of domestic felicity and the very light of honor," (de Nulhae "Louis XV at Me. de Pompadour.")

From this moment the King did everything he could to rehabilitate the woman's father. He obtained a separation, through others (her uncle) from her husband. He bought the marquisate of Pompadour and endowed her with its title. Old Poisson was pardoned, returned from his exile, "ennobled," and at the same time an inquiry—as a blind—was ordered into his previous condemnation, when it was discovered that the papers of the court relating thereto had "mysteriously disappeared." Poisson was called on to furnish them from memory and, as he made out, the State instead of being his creditor was his debtor to \$200,000. With this statement, the King presented him with the noble estate of Marigny and offered him the rank of marquis, which Poisson reserved for his son. One of the Paris brothers who was in the secrets of the Poisson family was "ennobled with the title of Montmartel and made Garde du Tresor Royal,"—a nice place near the money box. It was through him that the funds were paid out to buy the Pompadour estates for the King's favorite. Uncle Lenormand who had invested in her education was made Treasurer-General. Every position that had pay or perquisites attached to it was petitioned for by the friends of Madame de Pompadour and was given by the King as she wished—for she desired to have her supporters about her. This "financial" coterie played into each other's hands. "The hope of an entire party was founded on the success of this new mistress," (de Nulhae "Louis XV at Me. de Pompadour, p. 70.) Those who opposed her were sent to the Bastille. Even the Marechal Due de Richelieu was threatened by the King with imprisonment for neglect to give due attention to the royal trumpet. La Marquise de Ferte-Imbault, who had declared that "It seemed impossible to continue her acquaintance, so much was her family disered," was forced to silence. Voltaire, Crebillon, and even the "genteel de Bernis" wrote in her praise—but it must be supposed that it was to obtain, or to retain royal favor. But the Bishop of Mirepoix was stoutly against her influence in the State and was sustained by the Dauphin.

In the meantime through the extravagance of Pompadour and the peculations of her creatures in office, the debt of the State increased so much that Orry, the honest comptroller-general of finance, protested to the King on the delapidation of finance. On complaint of Pompadour he was removed from office to make way, if possible, for one of her own party. Then Orry warned the King of the danger into which the kingdom was running. The debt had never been so high, the people were restive, the ancient nobility were sullen and felt insulted, the navy had disappeared, the soldiers were badly provisioned, the commissary was corrupt, the foreign colonies were shrinking, yet the "financial" party of Pompadour were growing rich and prosperous, buying and embellishing vast estates with money stolen from the State. Ten palaces were going up at one time for Pompadour. For gardens and houses for herself, her bill against the royal treasury amounted in twenty years to 7,443,723 pounds sterling! Pamphlets by anonymous writers flooded the country teeming with sarcasms and invectives against her and her infamous coterie of "nouveaux riches." The King himself was menaced in them for supporting such a gang of political vampires and thieves. One of the engravings of the time exhibits the King as France, enchained by Pompadour and scourged by foreigners. One of the best specimens of the verses of the time on this subject engrosses all complaints:

"Louis, dissipateur des biens de tes sujets,
Toi qui comptes les jours par les maux
que tu fais,
Esclave d'un ministre et d'une femme
avare,
Louis, apprends le sort que le ciel te prepare."

* * * * *
De guerres sans succes fatigant tes
Etats,
Tu fus sans generaux, tu seras sans
soldats.
Tu ne trouveras plus des ames assez
viles
Pour oser celebrer tes pretendus exploits,
Et c'est pour t'abhorrer qu'il reste des
francais."

Even after the King's death some one wrote on his monument:

"Il est ici comme a Versailles,
Il est sans coeur et sans entrailles."