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Moral and pedagogical ideas in the works of Madame de Genlis

Arlene Hoiland Barkley

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THE MORAL AND PEDAGOGICAL IDEAS IN THE WORKS OF MADAME DE GENLIS

by

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Date
PREFACE

Despite the numerous works left by Madame de Genlis, she remains today little known, if not forgotten, in French literary history.

Of the eighty works written by Madame de Genlis, the author was only able to obtain and examine fifty-nine. Of the remaining works there were either no copies found in the United States and Canada, or the libraries who did have copies were unwilling to lend them.

It is the hope of the author that the present thesis will serve to set forth the ideas which Madame de Genlis expressed concerning pedagogy and morality, these two terms being synonomous in her point of view, and to indicate how and why Madame de Genlis did or did not conform to the predominating trends of thought of the eighteenth century.

After pertinent biographical information concerning Madame de Genlis has been summarized, she will be dealt with first as an educator, then as a moralist, and finally as an adversary of the eighteenth century philosophes. As a conclusion to her role of pedagogue, a brief comparison of her ideas on education with those of two other educator-moralists, Fénelon and Rousseau, and the moralist Montaigne, all of whom influenced Madame de Genlis' thinking, will be made. In treating her as a moralist, recurrent themes about which she moralized, favorite leit-motives which she expressed, and her conception of an ideal woman will be discussed. After indicating the stand she took against the philosophes and after pointing out some of the specific criticisms she made of them, general conclusions will be drawn in an attempt to evaluate Madame de Genlis as a woman of letters.
I wish to express my sincere appreciation to Professor Robert M. Burgess for his direction and encouragement in this study and to Miss Zada Bridges for her assistance in obtaining the necessary works through interlibrary loans.

A.H.E.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In retracing briefly the main events in the life of Madame de Genlis, an effort will be made to emphasize particularly those phases of her life which influenced her later as an educator and as a writer.

Born on January 25, 1746, at Chamoéry (champ de Ceres), near Autun, in the province of Burgundy, France, Stéphanie-Félicité Ducrest was of both bourgeois and noble heritage. Her mother's family, the Minards, were members of the bourgeoisie of modest fortune among whom the most noteworthy was her great grandfather, François, "conseiller des défaits" at the bailiwick of Avallon. The Ducrests, on the other hand, belonged to a family of nobility dating back to the fifteenth century and were originally "de robe." It was to the paternal side of her family that Mademoiselle Ducrest owed her relationship to Madame du Deffand, one of the influential "femmes de salon" of the eighteenth century. While most of her works dealing

\footnote{Also spelled Chamoéry. See, e.g., Mme de Genlis, Mémoires inédits de Madame la Comtesse de Genlis (Paris: Ladvocat, 1825), I, p. 6.}

\footnote{Jean Harmand, A Keeper of Royal Secrets Being the Private and Political Life of Madame de Genlis (New York: Brentano's, 1913), p. 401.}

\footnote{She was also referred to by one writer as Etienne-Félicie. See, e.g., M. P. Bourgain, "La Jeunesse d'une femme célèbre: Mme de Genlis," Revue des deux mondes, LII, No. 5 (1909), p. 844.}

\footnote{Ibid., p. 845.}

\footnote{Ibid., p. 852.}

1


with education were to be destined for the children of the upper class of society, she dedicated at least two volumes to the children of the middle class.\(^6\)

Mademoiselle Ducrest was five years old when her father, Pierre-César Ducrest, having sold the property at Châncery, acquired the marquisate and château of Saint-Aubin, situated on the bank of the Loire, as well as the land and barony of Bourbon-Lancy.\(^7\) It was here in the ancient and dilapidated château of Saint-Aubin that she spent six years of "innocence and happiness."\(^8\) It was also an ancient and dilapidated château which was to serve as a setting for many of her works, e.g., *Les Veillées du Château.*\(^9\)

The education given Mademoiselle Ducrest by her parents forms a striking contrast with the system of education she herself later formulated. The religious training which Madame Ducrest received in the Convent of Malnoue where she remained until her marriage, was not reflected in the way in which she later brought up her own daughter.\(^10\)

Monsieur Ducrest, whom she met by chance at Malnoue, is described as an

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\(^7\)Mme de Genlis, Mémoires inédits..., I, pp. 8-10.

\(^8\)Ibid., p. 8.


\(^10\)Madame Ducrest's mother favored the daughter born to her by her second husband, the Marquis de la Haie. She therefore sent Mlle Ducrest's mother to the convent. See, e.g., Bourgain, p. 817.
adventurer.\textsuperscript{11} From the time of their marriage in 1743 until their complete financial ruin, Mademoiselle Ducrest's parents were mainly concerned with amusing themselves.\textsuperscript{12} As a result, their daughter saw them for only a moment each day.

Although Monsieur Ducrest had been successful in his studies at a Jesuit school in Lyon,\textsuperscript{13} his only contribution to his daughter's education was an attempt to make her a "femme forte" by ordering her to touch spiders and toads without cringing and obliging her to raise a mouse.\textsuperscript{14} Madame Ducrest, occupied with entertaining her guests, limited herself to developing the dramatic qualities of her daughter by giving her the role of Cupid to play in an \textit{opéra-comique} of her own composition. While Monsieur Ducrest was away trying to re-establish his fortune, the parties continued at Saint-Aubin, and Mademoiselle Ducrest, who was later to ban all love from the plays she wrote for children, was given the following roles—all portraying love—to play: Zaire in Voltaire's play by the same name, Agathe in Regnard's \textit{Folies amoureuses}, Darivane in La Chausée's \textit{Mélanide}, and Iphigénie in Racine's play by the same name.\textsuperscript{15}

The chambermaids had full responsibility for Mademoiselle Ducrest up to her seventh year when a tutor, Mademoiselle de Mars,

\begin{footnotes}
\item\textsuperscript{11}Ibid., p. 852.
\item\textsuperscript{12}Ibid., pp. 849-50.
\item\textsuperscript{13}Mme de Genlis, \textit{Mémoires inédits...}, I, p. 24.
\item\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., p. 27.
\item\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., pp. 33-48.
\end{footnotes}
ignorant of everything except music, was hired to instruct and guide her in everything. It is no wonder, then, that she later wrote "Mon éducation a été si extraordinaire ...," and that Bourgain referred to her as the "victim" of her education:

Il est curieux que la femme qui devrait inventer des systèmes d'éducation si compliqués ait été dans sa première enfance si entièrement livrée à elle-même, et, dans les années qui suivirent, victime, pourrait-on dire, de l'éducation la plus bizarre qui fût jamais.

Included in the instruction given by Mademoiselle de Mars were the catechism, Bible history, and the reading of novels of which the first one she chose for her pupil was Mademoiselle de Scudéry's précieux novel, Clélie. Since she was never given a lesson in penmanship, it was necessary for her to dictate the novels and comedies she began composing at the age of eight to her teacher. Among the instruments which she learned to play were the harpsichord, the harp, the mandolin, the viol, the musette, the hurdy-gurdy, the kettledrum, and the guitare.

It was at this stage of her life that—what Sainte-Beuve considered her real originality—"cette verve de pédagogie poussée

16 Bourgain, p. 855.
17 Mme de Genlis, Mémoires inédits..., I, p. 56.
18 Bourgain, p. 856.
19 Ibid., p. 861.
20 Mme de Genlis, Mémoires inédits..., I, p. 56.
21 Ibid., p. 29.
22 Honoré Bonhomme, Madame la Comtesse de Genlis, sa vie, son œuvre, sa mort (Paris: Jouaust et Sigaux, 1885), p. 5.
jusqu'à la manie" first manifested itself. From the terrace of the château Mademoiselle Ducrest delighted in giving lessons to her little Burgundian friends who would gather below to hear her recite verses from Mademoiselle Barbier's tragedies.

The constant indebtedness of Monsieur Ducrest made it impossible for his family to have their own home. In 1758 Monsieur Le Normand, with whose financial aid Ducrest had originally acquired Saint-Aubin, repurchased the marquisate and the château. While Monsieur Ducrest went to Santo Domingo in an attempt to recover some of his loss, his wife and daughter were lodged for more than a year in Paris at the home of Madame Bellevaux, aunt and godmother of Mademoiselle Ducrest.

It was in Paris that Mademoiselle Ducrest, at the age of twelve, began forming her taste for literature as she was exposed not only to writers who encouraged her, e.g., Monsieur de Mondorge who presented her the Poesies sacrées by J.-B. Rousseau, the poetry of Gresset,

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24 Mme de Genlis, Mémoires inédits... I, pp. 31-32. Barbier, Marie-Anne, "femme poète morte en 1742. Auteur des tragédies Arria et Rethusa, Cornélie, Thomyrissa." See, LaRousse's Grand dictionnaire universel, II.

25 "Fermier général des postes" and husband of Mme de Pompadour. See, e.g., Mme de Genlis, Mémoires inédits... I, p. 15.

26 Bourgain, p. 852.

27 Ibid., p. 854.

28 This writer is not identified in the Grand dictionnaire universel, but he is mentioned both by Mme de Genlis and Bonhomme. Harmand referred to M. de Mondorge as "a humorous poet and ballad writer, and something of a critic." See, e.g., Harmand, p. 25.

29 Mme de Genlis, Mémoires inédits... I, p. 69.
and the *Fables* of La Fontaine, but also to those of whom she, as a writer, was to become the adversary, namely, the *philosophes*. Among these were Monsieur de Marmontel, who came to Madame de Bellevaux to read his stories, and Helvétius about whose work, *De l'Esprit*, she heard discussions which formed "les germes d'un profond mépris pour la philosophie moderne." At Passy where she and her mother were next received and sheltered by the tax collector, La Poplinière, she was asked to play the harp for Monsieur d'Alembert, another *philosophe*, of whom she said "il me déplut beaucoup."32

During his return trip from Santo Domingo, Monsieur Ducrest was taken captive by the English. While in England he became closely associated with the Comte de Genlis, who was returning from Pondichery where he had commanded a regiment, and who was also being held captive.33 The Comte's interest in Monsieur Ducrest increased when he was shown a picture of the latter's daughter playing the harp. Both the prisoners obtained their liberty through the efforts of the Marquis de Puisieux, uncle of the Comte de Genlis, who was then the minister of foreign affairs.34 The subsequent marriage between Mademoiselle Ducrest and the Comte de Genlis took place on November 8, 1763, the

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30 Ibid., p. 77.
32 Ibid., p. 105.
33 Ibid., p. 147.
34 Bonhomme, pp. 13-14.
year of the death of her father, but was kept secret for a time due to the disapproval of the Marquis.\textsuperscript{35}

While the Comte, who had been made colonel of the grenadiers,\textsuperscript{36} returned to his regiment, his wife stayed at the abbaye d'Origny Sainte-Benoîte until he could join her at his property at Genlis. And here began Madame de Genlis' real effort to make up for the lacunes in her education by putting every moment to use. The rigid schedule of learning which she followed from the time of her marriage to the end of her life, which well qualified her to later write a work on the use of time,\textsuperscript{37} was similar to the one she followed while she was at Genlis. Here she continued practicing music regularly, she began writing a diary of all her observations, and she read with her husband Pascal's Lettres provinciales, Madame de Sévigné's Lettres, and Corneille's theatre.\textsuperscript{38} A surgeon, Monsieur Milet, who came weekly to Genlis, taught her osteology and the science of bleeding; she listened attentively to the discussions about agriculture; she learned to ride horseback and to make cider; she visited the village tradesmen—the carpenter, the weaver, the basketmaker. Her husband had skill in drawing which prompted her to take up drawing and painting.\textsuperscript{39} When she went to Paris to await the birth of her first child, she

\textsuperscript{35}Ibid., pp. 15-16.

\textsuperscript{36}Mme de Genlis, Mémoires inédits..., I, p. 147.

\textsuperscript{37}Mme de Genlis, De l'Emploi du temps (Paris: Arthur Bertrand, 1824).

\textsuperscript{38}Mme de Genlis, Mémoires inédits..., I, pp. 206-207.

\textsuperscript{39}Ibid., pp. 207-214.
wrote Réflexions d'une mère de vingt ans, a work which was never published.\textsuperscript{40}

Three children were born of the Ducrest-Genlis union: Caroline, the eldest, who later married the Marquis de Becelaer de Lowesteine, and who died in childbirth at the age of twenty-one,\textsuperscript{41} Pulcherie, who later married the Vicomte de Valence,\textsuperscript{42} and a son who died of measles at the age of five.\textsuperscript{43}

The turning point in Madame de Genlis' life may be said to have come in 1770 when she, at the age of twenty-four, was nominated to the Palais Royal as a lady-in-waiting to the Duchesse de Chartres. At the same time her husband was appointed Captain of the Guards of the Duc de Chartres.\textsuperscript{44} These appointments resulted largely from the influence of an aunt, Madame de Montesson, half-sister of Madame de Genlis' mother.\textsuperscript{45}

The Duchesse de Chartres preferred Madame de Genlis to her other dames, and she therefore chose her to accompany her on her travels to Holland, Italy, Forges-les-eaux, and other places.\textsuperscript{46} When twin daughters were born to her in 1777, it was decided that Madame de Genlis would be their governess. The first-born died at an early

\textsuperscript{40}Ibid., p. 258.  
\textsuperscript{41}Ibid., III, p. 195.  
\textsuperscript{42}Bonhomme, p. 19.  
\textsuperscript{43}Mme de Genlis, Mémoires inédits..., II, pp. 292-293.  
\textsuperscript{44}Bonhomme, p. 20.  
\textsuperscript{45}Harmand, p. 72. Mme de Montesson married the Duc d'Orléans after the death of her husband. See, e.g., Bonhomme, p. 19.  
\textsuperscript{46}Bonhomme, p. 22.
age, and the remaining sister then took the title of "Mademoiselle d'Orléans."^{47}

In this same year, at the age of thirty-one, Madame de Genlis was to retire from the Palais Royal in order to devote herself completely to the education of Mademoiselle d'Orléans. Quarters were arranged for them at the convent of Belle-Chasse near Paris. A description of the decorations and furnishings of Belle-Chasse (which were an interesting attempt at visual aids in education) is found in Madame de Genlis' work, Adèle et Théodore,^{48} which is treated in Chapter II of this thesis. Madame de Genlis had obtained permission to have her own two daughters with her at Belle-Chasse,^{49} as well as an orphaned niece, Henriette de Sercey,^{50} a nephew, César Ducrest,^{51} and an English girl, Pamela, whom she had adopted.^{52}

In 1782 Madame de Genlis' position as governess was extended to include the education of the Princes, sons of the Duc d'Orléans: the Duc de Valois, who was to become King Louis-Philippe, the Duc de Montpensier, and the Duc de Beaujolais. The two youngest ones died in exile at the age of twenty-eight and thirty-two, respectively.^{53} While it was not traditional in France to entrust a woman with the education

^{47}Ibid. Mille d'Orléans later became the secret counsellor of her eldest brother, King Louis-Philippe. See, e.g., Bonhomme, p. 23.
^{48}Mme de Genlis, Adèle et Théodore ou Lettres sur l'éducation (Maiestricht, Holland: J. E. Dufour & Phil. Roux, 1783).
^{49}Mme de Genlis, Mémoires inédits..., III, p. 125.
^{50}Ibid., p. 155.
^{51}Ibid., pp. 152-153.
^{52}Mme de Genlis, Précis de la conduite de Madame de Genlis depuis la Révolution (Hambourg: B. G. Hoffman, 1796), p. 108.
^{53}Bonhomme, p. 104.
of the Princes after they were beyond seven years of age, she received the appointment as a result of her own suggestion upon being consulted by the Duc d'Orléans about the choice of a governor to replace Monsieur de Bonnard with whom he was dissatisfied. Madame de Genlis wrote in one of her works that she gave the Orléans children lessons seven or eight hours a day for twelve years, and that she did this free of charge having received an inheritance from the Maréchale d'Estrées.

As their preceptress, Madame de Genlis succeeded in dominating her royal pupils to such an extent that a rupture resulted in the relations between herself and their mother. The latter felt that Madame de Genlis had deliberately alienated the children from her. As a consequence of the strained relations between the two women, Madame de Genlis was released from her duties only to be restored as governess upon her return from the provinces, although never to be reconciled with the Duchesse.

In 1791 Madame de Genlis accompanied Pamela and Mademoiselle to England where the latter was to undergo treatment in the waters of Bath. The following year the Duc d'Orléans ordered them to return

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55 Bonhomme, p. 25.
56 Mme de Genlis, Précis de la conduite..., pp. 196-197.
57 Bonhomme, p. 27.
58 Ibid., p. 42.
59 Ibid., p. 46.
immediately for political reasons. When they reached Tournay, however, they learned that the law regarding political exiles had been changed so as to include a person as young as fifteen in that group. Since Mademoiselle d'Orléans was just that age it was necessary for them to remain outside of France.

While they were in Bremgarten where Monsieur de Montesquieu received them in the Convent of Sainte-Claire, they learned of the decapitation of Louis XVI. The Comte de Genlis, who had taken the name of Sillery upon joining with the girondins, was also guillotined.

While they were still in Bremgarten they learned that the Princesse de Conti, aunt of Mademoiselle who was living in exile at Fribourg, would be willing to take charge of her niece. Thus Madame de Genlis parted from the last one of her royal pupils—she did not see her again until several years after the Revolution—and henceforth devoted more and more time to writing.

60Mme de Genlis, Précis de la conduite..., p. 42.
61Ibid., p. 59.
63Mme de Genlis, Précis de la conduite..., p. 64.
64Sainte-Beuve, p. 24.
65Mme de Genlis, Précis de la conduite..., p. 89.
66Bonhomme, pp. 62-63. Mme de Genlis was even prohibited by the Princesse de Conti from writing to Mlle because she had sent her a red rose and a white one on a blue background. See, e.g., Mme de Genlis, Mémoires inédits..., V, pp. 70-71.
After having accompanied Mademoiselle to Fribourg, Madame de Genlis stayed successively at Hambourg, Altona, and Holstein until it was safe for her to return to France in July, 1800. Napoleon granted her a pension of 6,000 francs and lodging at the Arsenal as well as the right to use any of the books in the library. He also appointed her as inspectress of the schools in her district of Paris.

After the Bourbons returned to power in 1814, she offered her services to Louis XVIII, and after his death in 1824 was granted a pension by the Duc d'Orléans, her former pupil whom she saw become King of France in the year 1830.

In addition to the approximately one hundred volumes which she wrote and the education of her nine pupils, Madame de Genlis devoted much time to music and painting. She also developed skill, according to Madame Tastu's calculation, in fifty-two handcrafts which included basketwork, latticework, and sheath-making. One of her last undertakings was a new edition, or rather a purification, of the Encyclopédie, which, of course, was not completed.

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67Mme de Genlis, Précis de la conduite..., pp. 188-195.
68Harmand, p. 307.
69Bonhomme, pp. 60-61.
70Harmand, p. 342.
71Bonhomme, p. 62.
72Ibid., pp. 62-63.
74Harmand, p. 384.
On December 31, 1830, at the age of eighty-four, Madame de Genlis died in her sleep. Twelve years later her remains were transferred to Pere Lachaise Cemetery.75

75 Ibid., p. 392.
CHAPTER II

MADAME DE GENLIS AS AN EDUCATOR

PART I

According to Sainte-Beuve, Madame de Genlis was more than a woman of letters. She was a "femme enseignante, ... née avec le signe au front."\(^1\)

Émile Faguet, who, according to Harmand, was the "first in our time to recognize her as a genius,"\(^2\) described her system of educating as an "opening out instead of filling in."\(^3\) In the field of education he considered her an inventor.

She invented the entire system of modern education, both literary and scientific, directed towards the true, no less than towards the beautiful, and taking account of history, modern languages, and of realities combining the study of important new discoveries with the study of the great books of ancient and modern times.\(^4\)

Monsieur Faguet considered her an inventor also in the respect that she would give the same education to girls as to boys.\(^5\) Yet he could and

\(^1\)Sainte-Beuve, p. 20.
\(^2\)Harmand, p. 421.
\(^3\)Ibid., see preface by Faguet, p. vii.
\(^4\)Ibid.
\(^5\)The following quote will show that this was not entirely the case: "L'éducation des hommes & celle des femmes a cette ressemblance, qu'il est essentiel de tourner leur vanité sur des objets solides; mais elle diffère d'ailleurs sur presque tous les autres points." See, e.g., Mme de Genlis, Adèle et Théodore, I, p. 30.
did classify her as a feminist for

... if she was a femme savante, she was so far from
neglecting practical, domestic, humdrum matters that she
attended more thoroughly to these things than to anything
else.\(^6\)

In a general criticism of Madame de Genlis' works, Sainte-
Beuve classified those written by her under Louis XVI and before 1789
as the ones having a direct relationship to education:\(^7\) Théâtre à
l'usage des jeunes personnes, Théâtre de Société,\(^8\) Adèle et
Théodore, Annales de la vertu,\(^9\) Les Veilles du Château, La Religion
considérée comme l'unique base du bonheur et de la véritable
philosophie.\(^10\) This narrow classification, however, draws the line
too soon for while she was exiled in Germany, Madame de Genlis wrote
Les Petits émigrés,\(^11\) a work dedicated to the education of adolescents,
and after her return to France her Nouvelle méthode d'enseignement pour
la première enfance\(^12\) was published. Even in her very late works,

\(^6\) Harmand, see preface by Faguet, p. viii.
\(^7\) Sainte-Beuve, p. 29.
\(^8\) Mme de Genlis, Théâtre de Société (Paris, 1781).
\(^9\) Mme de Genlis, Oeuvres complètes de Mme la Comtesse de Genlis:
Annales de la vertu (Maaestricht, Holland: J. E. Dufour & Phil. Roux,
1783).
\(^10\) Mme de Genlis, La Religion considérée comme l'unique base du
bonheur et de la véritable philosophie (Paris: Imprimerie Polytype,
1787).
\(^11\) Mme de Genlis, Les Petits émigrés ou Correspondance de
quelques enfans (3\(^e\) éd.; Paris: Maradan, 1803).
\(^12\) Mme de Genlis, Nouvelle méthode d'enseignement pour la
première enfance (Nouvelle éd.; Paris: Maradan, 1807).
e.g., Le Dernier voyage de Nelgis,\textsuperscript{13} written two years before her
death, we find that the author was still preoccupied with education.

Madame de Genlis' philosophy of education was essentially
Christian. It served as a complement to her system of morality. She
believed that man fulfilled his destiny by expanding his intellectual
capacities.

\textit{Etendre autant qu'il est possible nos facultés intellectuelles, est un devoir religieux; c'est remplir notre destination ... plus l'homme s'élève par les vertus et par le génie, plus il s'éloigne de la brute, et plus il remplit les vues du Créateur, ...}\textsuperscript{14}

The intellectual superiority of man over the animals was, according to
her belief, one of the proofs of the immortality of the soul.\textsuperscript{15}

She further believed that by the proper use of time one's
period of ideal physical development could coincide with one's under­
standing in regard to morality. However, due to the "vices of
education" existent during her time--such as entrusting chambermaids
with the care and education of children--this achievement had not been
possible.

\textit{... mais il n'en paraît pas moins étrange que l'époque de la
perfection de l'organisation physique ne soit pas aussi celle de la plénitude de l'intelligence morale, et je ne puis résoudre cette difficulté qu'en l'attribuant aux vices de l'éducation, ...}\textsuperscript{16}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{13}Mme de Genlis, \textit{Le Dernier voyage de Nelgis ou Mémoires d'un vieillard} (Paris: Roux, 1826).
\item \textsuperscript{14}Mme de Genlis, \textit{Les Battuécas} (Paris: Maradan, 1817), I, p. 67.
\item \textsuperscript{15}Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{16}Mme de Genlis, \textit{Nouvelle méthode d'enseignement...}, p. 5.
\end{itemize}
A precocious child, later considered a genius, was nothing more, in her opinion, than one educated with special care.\textsuperscript{17} These "vices" joined with the fact that we naturally avoid anything requiring great application and would rather spare children the added effort,\textsuperscript{18} made the task of educating à la Genlisienne a tremendous one.

According to Madame de Genlis' method, the educational process would begin at the age of eighteen months or two years.\textsuperscript{19} The education from this young age to the age of four or five years would consist of giving correct examples.\textsuperscript{20} For inasmuch as details to which we ordinarily attach no importance could cast in a child of two or three "les semences de la cruauté, de l'injustice et de la méchanceté,"\textsuperscript{21} the majority of the youths, in her opinion, were already "spoiled" and "vicious" by the age of three or four years. This condition was worsened when at the age of five the child was given a book which was unintelligible to him.\textsuperscript{22}

\textsuperscript{17}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{18}Mme de Genlis, Les Souvenirs de Félicie L** (Paris: Maradan, 1804), pp. 360-361.
\textsuperscript{19}Mme de Genlis, Nouvelle méthode d'enseignement..., p. 15.
\textsuperscript{20}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{21}This quote recalls another one cited by Mme de Genlis from Montaigne's Essais where he warns of the necessity for punishing children's wrongs: "Ce sont les vraies semences & racines de la cruauté, de la tyrannie, & de la trahison." See, e.g., Adèle et Théodore, II, p. 132.
\textsuperscript{22}Mme de Genlis, Nouvelle méthode d'enseignement..., p. 16.
It was preferable, then, to begin with single definitions of words rather than by the reading of books which served only to give children "false ideas" and to encourage them in the habit of reading carelessly and inattentively. The method employed in giving these "leçons de définitions" was as follows: The mother or instructor would read a single definition to the child and ask if he understood it; if the answer was yes, the child would be asked to repeat the meaning in his own words; he would then be helped, corrected, and encouraged, thus ending his first lesson. In order to prepare the children for the dialogues and the story which were to follow the definition lessons and which were to form a "course in morals" Madame de Genlis explains that she inserted in the sample definitions numerous principles of morality. Two definitions will serve to illustrate this:

La Pédanterie: c'est s'empresser de faire connoître aux autres toute son instruction; toute vanité est ridicule et celle-là est de plus extrêmement ennuyeuse.

La Vertu: être vertueux, c'est être véritablement pieux, c'est-a-dire juste, sincère, reconnaissant, indulgent, sobre, charitable, etc.

The thirteen dialogues following the definitions were samples for a mother to follow in conversing with her young daughter. Highly moralistic in tone, every question or action on the part of the child

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23 Ibid., p. 18.
24 Ibid., p. 23.
25 Ibid., pp. 24-25.
26 Ibid., p. 73.
27 Ibid., p. 34.
was seized by the mother as an occasion to instruct. For example, the child's interest in the needle while sewing leads the mother to take her daughter to visit the needle factory where they examine a needle under the microscope, and (since the child had believed it was a sample of perfection) they compare it with a bee stinger. The mother then explains:

*C'est que l'ouvrier qui a fait cet aiguillon est infiniment plus habile que l'ouvrier qui a fait l'aiguille.*

This early stage of education ended with the reading of a first story, *L'Ile des enfans*, a story which recalls Robinson Crusoe and has as its moral:

... aimez donc toujours le travail; les ressources et les jouissances qu'il procure sont aussi douces qu'honorables.

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Madame de Genlis' system of education from the age of six to marriage is exposed in fullest detail in her work, *Adele et Theodore ou Lettres sur l'éducation*. In the course of this three-volume novel, the Baron and the Baronne d'Almane and the Comte de Roseville—all of whom are spokesmen for the author—indicate the manner in which the Genlis method should be put into practice for:

(1) a girl—Adèle d'Almane, age six, (2) a boy—Théodore d'Almane, age

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28 Ibid., p. 165.

29 Ibid., p. 291.

Ironically, Choderlos de Laclos' *Les Liaisons dangereux*, considered "infâme" by Mme de Genlis, was published at the same time this work appeared, and it was attributed for a time to Mme de Genlis. See, e.g., Mme de Genlis, *Mémoires inédits...*, III, p. 179.
seven, (3) a prince for whose education the Comte is responsible. The Baronne corresponds with the Vicomtesse de Limours, who wishes to follow the same system in educating her daughter as the Baronne is following in Adele's education, while the Baron and the Comte exchange letters comparing their views on educating Theodore and the Prince.

For the sake of convenience in treating Madame de Genlis as a pedagogue, we shall refer to Adele, Theodore, and the Prince rather than to "education for a girl," etc. At the same time, taking into account Madame de Genlis' voluminous writings on pedagogy and her personal experience as governess of the Orleans Princesse and Princes, and as teacher of her own daughters, nephew, and niece, we shall draw not only upon Adele et Theodore, but also on many other of her works, including her Mémoires, for our information.

The d'Almanes, who were inhabitants of Paris, found it first of all necessary to leave the capital in order to get their children away from anything which might inspire in them the taste for "faste et magnificence," and to take them to one of the provinces, Languedoc.

The setting at Languedoc, as at Belle-Chasse, was made as conducive as possible to education as will be seen by the following description of the château. In the vestibule were frescos representing Ovid's metamorphoses; the tapestry in one of the salons was a large oil painting on canvas depicting the chronology of Roman history; a part of

31Madame de Genlis, Adele et Theodore, I, p. 15.
32Ibid., p. 11.
33Ibid., p. 12
Biblical history was painted in the bedroom of the Baronne; the wall-paper in Adèle's bedroom was decorated with twenty small pictures painted in **gouache** depicting scenes from the history of France. These pictures could be detached and behind each one was a written explanation of it. The apartment of Monsieur and Madame d'Almane contained a gallery of which the wall represented in chronological order the most famous men from Greek history and some scenes chosen from this history. The tapestries in the Baron's quarters represented all the Kings and Queens of France and several of the great men. The bedrooms of Monsieur d'Almane and of Theodore were decorated and filled with various objects related to military art such as drawings of fortifications. The dining room walls portrayed scenes from mythology. In the storeroom there were large folding-screens painted to give an idea of the chronology of the histories of England, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Malta, and Turkey. There was also a provision of geographical hand screens representing ancient as well as modern geography. On the reverse side of each screen Madame d'Almane had written a short historical description in English or Italian of each country represented on the map. The study contained a library of four hundred select volumes and was also supplied with globes and spheres.\(^{34}\)

The natural setting, which was equally important by Genlis standards, consisted of a garden of common plants—all classified, a small wood, two groves of chestnut trees, and finally a park containing "three small mountains."\(^{35}\)

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During the ten years of education at Languedoc the word "study" was not to be pronounced, yet every moment of the day would be profitable to Adèle and her brother. According to Madame de Genlis' philosophy of education, the art of instructing young people without their suspecting it was perhaps the most "effective and most useful of all." It was also her belief that the education given a child should correspond to his "character" and "mind." If he should lack intelligence the danger of rendering him a pedant by aspiring to teach him eloquence should be avoided. It was also necessary, in her opinion, to consider the type of life the pupil was destined for in planning his education.

The parents, such as the d'Almanes, were the best-qualified, from Madame de Genlis' point of view, to be the educators of their children, or at least to direct their education. She found that maîtres, in general, were too negligent and that a conscientious mother could accomplish in three months what a maître would accomplish in two years of lessons. The education received in a convent was also inferior to the one a good mother could give.

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36 Ibid., p. 57.
37 Ibid., II, p. 201.
38 Ibid., p. 96.
39 Ibid., p. 241.
40 Ibid., II, p. 81.
41 Mme de Genlis, Théâtre à l'usage..., III: La Bonne mère, I, vii, p. 252.
42 Ibid., L'Intrigante, I, i, p. 341.
The Genlis mother-educator, however, had to be a completely devoted one such as Aglaé's mother in the play, *La Mère rivale*, who... a passé sa vie à apprendre, à étudier, renonçant à tout, toujours enfermée avec des maîtres; & tout cela pour rendre à sa fille les leçons qu'elle recevait.\(^3\)

Émile's mother, as eulogized by her daughter, would be another who exemplifies the Genlis ideal mother-educator:

Ne vivre que pour ses enfants, renoncer à la dissipation, aux plaisirs, pour se livrer entièrement à leur éducation; passer le jour à leur donner des leçons & une partie des nuits à étudier, à s'instruire pour eux; leur sacrifier avec joie sa jeunesse, son temps, sa santé... voilà... l'exemple sublime qui me fut donné.\(^4\)

It is interesting to note at this point that Madame de Genlis attributed the superior education given Henri le Grand to the fact that his mother directed it *toute seule.*\(^5\)

Less praise was given by Madame de Genlis to the father, step-father, or the husband who served as instructor to his child or wife. However, it is not uncommon to find in Madame de Genlis' works a child being taught by his father or a spouse by her husband. The father of Donatien, one of the young exiles in *Les Petits émigrés*, directed all of his son's studies and activities.\(^6\)

Richard, the Comte

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\(^3\)Mme de Genlis, *Theatre de Societe*, I: *La Mere rivale*, II, i, p. 28.


de Corke, had only one teacher—Mulcroon, his step-father. Inès, one of the Battuécas, felt a stronger tie with her husband when she became his pupil.

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PART II

As Faguet noted, history, modern languages, and literature were accounted for in Madame de Genlis' study plan. Along with these studies, geography, science, mathematics, music, art, and physical education were considered important by her. After treating each of these subjects separately an attempt will be made to show how Madame de Genlis combined them with the "practical, domestic, and humdrum" affairs to which Faguet said she tended so carefully. Religious instruction will be considered in the following chapter.

The principal reading and most serious study proposed by Madame de Genlis would be based on texts dealing with morality and history. Since the former is better discussed in conjunction with literature and since morality will form the basis of the following chapter only history will be discussed at this point.

History was taught not only by means of the tapestries and wall decorations already described, but also by means of games such as the magic lanterns. The magic lantern was an optical instrument by which one could see an enlarged image painted on a screen. The magic lanterns used by Madame de Genlis at Belle-Chasse contained paintings of scenes taken from Biblical, ancient, Roman, Chinese, and Japanese

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49 Mme de Genlis, Adèle et Théodore, II, p. 243.
Another method of teaching history used at Belle-Chasse was the dramatization of the most famous voyages in history.\footnote{Mme de Genlis, Mémoires inédits..., III, p. 154.}

By the age of twelve Théodore knew a "prodigious quantity of historical facts"\footnote{Ibid., p. 155.} from the magic lantern method. Adele, by the age of ten knew the chronology of all the tapestries by heart,\footnote{Mme de Genlis, Adèle et Théodore, III, p. 93.} and by the end of her formal education she would have read fifty volumes of history.\footnote{Ibid., I, p. 265.}

The first history text Adele would have was one composed by her mother, Annales de la vertu,\footnote{Mme de Genlis, Adèle et Théodore, III, p. 116.} to be read during her eighth and ninth years and reread at the age of thirteen.\footnote{Ibid., II, p. 116.} Other histories to be read by both Adele and Théodore included the following: Rollin's Histoire ancienne, Macauley's History of England, Echard's Histoire romaine, l'abbé de Velly's Histoire de France, Voltaire's Histoire universelle, Histoire du Siècle de Louis XIV, and Histoire de Charles XII, Hume's Histoire d'Angleterre, and Guiciardini's Historie de l'Italie.\footnote{Mme de Genlis avowed in the preface of this work that she omitted the telling of details which involved any "mauvaise action." See, e.g., Mme de Genlis, Annales de la vertu, p. x.}

The first requirements set by the Comte de Roseville for the Prince were a general knowledge of history and the constitution of his

\footnote{Mme de Genlis, Adèle et Théodore, III, see reading list pp. 373-385.}
state. The Comte had still another method of teaching history. Every day at a certain time the Prince and all those who were responsible for his education were required to tell a story based on ancient or modern history. For each error a penalty was imposed.

Geography, which was integrated with the study of history, was taught by the use of the maps which formed part of the château's decor, Mentelle's *Geographie comparée*, and travel, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

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In her *Mémoires* Madame de Genlis applauded herself as being the first instructor of princes in France to follow the custom practiced in other countries, i.e., teaching children modern languages by usage.

Je suis la première institutrice de princes, en France, qui ait imaginé d'imiter l'excellente coutume pratiquée dans les pays étrangers, d'apprendre aux enfans les langues vivantes par l'usage.

The Princesse d'Orléans was given one English and one Italian chambermaid so that by the age of five she understood three languages and spoke English and French "perfectly." The Princesse d'Orléans were accompanied on their morning walks by the German gardener and their German valet and spoke only German during this time. During their

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59 Ibid., p. 241.
60 Ibid., III, see reading list pp. 373-385.
62 Ibid.
afternoon promenade and at dinner only English was spoken. During the evening meal Italian was the medium of expression.63

With the d'Almane family in Languedoc was an English girl—Miss Bridget who had joined them when Adele was only six months old in order to teach her English.64 At six years of age Adele spoke both English and French perfectly,65 and she was beginning to read English at the age of ten.66 When she later had her own apartment, in order to retain her fluency in this language, she was given an English chambermaid who knew no French.67

When Théodore was twelve he spoke and wrote English and Italian with no difficulty and understood German.68 At a dinner for the Ambassador of France he modestly recited two hundred verses from Milton's Paradise Lost in English.69 Théodore was also to study Latin, while Adèle would study neither Latin nor Greek.70

The Comte de Roseville, who would also give the Prince modern languages by usage, would have him study ten years of Latin beginning at the age of twelve or thirteen.71

63Ibid., p. 154.
64Ibid., I, p. 19.
65Ibid., III, p. 373.
66Ibid., I, p. 265.
67Ibid., III, p. 191.
68Ibid., II, p. 93.
69Ibid., III, p. 22.
70Ibid., I, p. 90.
71Ibid., II, pp. 211-212.
Madame de Genlis seldom failed to cite the linguistic training of the heroes and heroines of her novels, e.g., Henri le Grand who knew Spanish and Italian, and Madame de Maintenon who knew Italian. In the story Alphonse et Dalinde, Alphonse learned Swedish from a traveling companion.

A method considered good by Madame de Genlis for retaining reading ability in several languages was to obtain a livre d'heures in each language involved and to read each one regularly.

As an example of the carry-over value in language learning she made the following statement:

... quand on sait bien l'italien et l'espagnol, on apprend en trois semaines le portugais.

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Those who cultivate letters "with application and success" are usually less "vindictive" and "hateful" than others, according to the Genlis theory. To define a good work of literature Madame de Genlis preferred to quote La Bruyère's definition as found in Chapter I of his Caractères.

72 Mme de Genlis, Histoire de Henri le Grand, I, p. 48.
76 Ibid., p. 59.
Quand une lecture vous éleve l'esprit et qu'elle vous inspire des sentiments nobles et vertueux ne cherchez pas une autre règle pour juger de l'ouvrage; il est bon et fait de main d'ouvrier.78

It was her belief that an instructor should forbid his student the reading of novels for if during early childhood he read novels and verse it would be unlikely that he would later develop an interest in solid, serious reading. She considered, in short, the premature reading of novels dangerous.

Il est bien dangereux d'occuper vivement son imagination avant l'entier développement de sa raison et de son esprit.79

The historical novel, in her opinion, was the novel genre best suited to developing "veritable moral conceptions."80 However, while she had originally thought that moralistic novels were appropriate only for young married couples, she found upon composing Les Petits émigrés and Madame de Maintenon that adolescents, too, could find value in such works.81

Adèle knew how to read perfectly upon her arrival in Languedoc.82 For her first reading from the age of six to seven she would have works composed for her by her mother, such as Les Veillées

80Mme de Genlis, Madame de Maintenon, p. vi.
81Ibid., p. iii.
82Mme de Genlis, Adèle et Théodore, III, p. 373.
At the age of nine she would read five comedies from her mother's *Théâtre d'éducation*. Other plays from this work and her mother's work on mythology were listed for the age of thirteen.

For amusement she would read some of the plays of Campistron, Lagrange-Chancel, La Chaussée, Destouches, Marivaux, and the poetry of Fontenelle, Pavillon, and Demahis. All of these authors were considered second class by Madame d'Almane, but their works would satisfy her until she was of an age to read ingenious works "with transport." Madame de Genlis contended that works considered masterpieces of literature ought not be given a child until he was able to understand them.

N'est-il pas absurde de mettre tous ces chefs-d'œuvres entre les mains d'un enfant qui n'y peut rien comprendre & de le priver par là du plaisir de les lire un jour avec sa raison, pour la première fois?

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83 *Ibid.*, I, p. 71. The *Veillées* consist of stories told by a mother to her children. After each story the children ask questions and discuss the moral taught.

84 *Ibid.*, III, see reading list pp. 373-385. This work consists of five volumes of plays. The ones in the first volume represent themes from the Bible, e.g., *La Mort d'Adam*. There are no male characters in the last four volumes which form, essentially, a code of ethics for young girls to follow.

85 Mme de Genlis, *Arabesques mythologiques ou Les Attributs de toutes les divinités de la fable* (Paris: Charles Barois, 1810). Mme de Genlis stated in the preface of this work that while mythology offers some "beaux traits de morale" no "uniform" morality existed before Christianity. See, pp. xx-xxxviii.

86 Mme de Genlis, *Adèle et Théodore*, III, see reading list pp. 373-385.


Among the masterpieces of French literature on Adele's list of reading for the years sixteen to twenty-two were the following: Madame de Sévigne's Lettres, La Fontaine's Fables, the plays of Corneille, Racine, Voltaire, and Molière, the works of Boileau, La Bruyère's Caractères, La Rochefoucault's Maximes, Pascal's Pensees, Montesquieu's L'Esprit des lois, and Rousseau's Emile.89

Works to be read in English were Richardson's Clarissa Harlowe, Grandisson, and Pamela. These works, which Adele would read at the age of eighteen, were considered by Madame de Genlis as the only "veritally moral novels."90 She would also read the works of Shakespeare and Milton.91

In Italian Adele would read these works: le Tasse's Jerusalem Delivered, and the works of Ariosto, Petrarch, and Dante.92

Théodore's reading would be more extensive, including works on law and politics. He would also read some works in Latin, while Adele would read Plautus and Terrence in translation.93

Fénelon's Télémaque, a vital work for the Prince,94 was also to be read by Adèle and her brother.95

89 Ibid., III, see reading list pp. 373-385.
90 Ibid., II, p. 263.
91 Ibid., III, see reading list pp. 373-385.
92 Ibid.
93 Ibid.
94 Ibid., II, p. 221.
95 Ibid., III, see reading list pp. 373-385.
Plays were valuable for children, in Madame de Genlis' opinion, in that while the child amused himself he would also exercise his memory, improve his pronunciation, acquire grace, and overcome his puerility. At Belle-Chasse the governess contrived a portable theatre where her pupils played all the plays from her Théâtre d'éducation and did pantomimes. At Languedoc, too, a small théâtre de chambre presented plays from this work and did pantomimes.

When the Duc de Montpensier, the second eldest of the Orléans Princes, was twelve years old Madame de Genlis obtained a box at the Comédie Française for she believed that a royal prince, who should naturally be a protector of the arts, should attend theatrical performances and know how to judge them from the moralistic point of view. One of the greatest virtues a king could possess was a reputation as a protector of letters.

The reading of good literature was nearly always one of the major preoccupations of the heroes and heroines of Madame de Genlis' novels, e.g., the hermit in Les Voyages poétiques on whose shelf were: The Bible and works by Pascal, La Bruyère, Bossuet, J.-B. Rousseau, Corneille, Racine, La Fontaine, and Gresset.

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96 Ibid., I, p. 175.  
97 Mme de Genlis, Mémoires inédits..., III, p. 156.  
98 Mme de Genlis, Adèle et Théodore, III, p. 104.  
99 Mme de Genlis, Mémoires inédits, II, p. 162.  
100 Mme de Genlis, Histoire de Henri le Grand, II, pp. 345-347.  
Adele was also to have practice in writing, and this exercise, while it was designed more specifically to prepare her to enter society, was also for the purpose of forming her style. During one year—from the age of fourteen and a half to the age of fifteen and a half—she was to compose the responses to her mother's letters which would form an epistolary novel. The letters she would receive were to be from a brother who had been led astray by reading bad literature. Adele, who was to pretend that she was ten years older than she actually was, would attempt through her writing to bring her brother back to good reading. Monsieur d'Almane would direct Theodore in this same type of apprenticeship in writing.

In this connection it is interesting to note Madame de Genlis' thought concerning the writing of letters.

Bien écrire une lettre est un talent aussi utile qu'agréable; et qui devient tous les jours plus rare.

Adele also wrote summaries of the history she read in English and Italian. In French she wrote summaries of her mother's plays and letters. These would then be read by Madame d'Almane who corrected errors of style and grammar.

The model compositions recommended by Madame de Genlis again suggest, as with the letter writing, the purpose of forming both the "esprit" and the "cœur" at the same time. Two subjects for

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102 Mme de Genlis, Adèle et Théodore, III, p. 56.
103 Ibid., p. 58.
compositions recommended for children of twelve or thirteen will suffice to illustrate this: (1) "Quels sont les avantages et les inconvénients d'une grande fortune?" \(^{106}\) (2) "Pourquoi les méchants sont-ils en si grand nombre, et les gens vertueux si rares?" \(^{107}\) The pupil would first treat the suggested topic in his own manner. After criticizing the errors of language and reasoning, the model composition written by Madame de Genlis would be given him as a comparison with his original attempt.

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The subject of mathematics was not discussed in much detail by Madame de Genlis. A knowledge of this science, however, she considered necessary and practical. Théodore would have six years of mathematics while Adèle would have just enough geometry to enable her to draw a landscape with the proper perspective. \(^{108}\) In addition, Adèle would have practice in practical mathematics, for at the age of twelve she was to help her mother regulate the household accounts. \(^{109}\) When she was sixteen she would have her own apartment and would manage her own accounts having them inspected by her mother at regular intervals. \(^{110}\)

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\(^{106}\) Mme de Genlis, *Nouvelle méthode d'enseignement...*, p. 79.

\(^{107}\) Ibid., p. 85.


\(^{109}\) Ibid., II, p. 115.

\(^{110}\) Ibid., III, p. 191.
She was also given training in those matters of business which could be of benefit to her later as the manager of her home.\footnote{Ibid., p. 207.}

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Botany was the branch of science most stressed by Madame de Genlis. She disagreed with Rousseau who considered it sufficient to know one's "botte de foin." It was necessary, from her point of view, that a housewife and mother know all the properties of the plants that are eaten as well as have a knowledge of plants used in medicine.\footnote{Mme de Genlis, Le Dernier voyage de Nelgis, I, p. 261.} Indeed, Madame de Genlis attempted to do for plants what La Fontaine did for animals in writing a volume of fables, \textit{Herbier moral}, all dealing with plants. She dedicated this work to her adopted daughter, Lady Edward Fitz-Gerald (the former Pamela) who was especially interested in the study of botany.\footnote{Ibid., p. 9.}

Another of her works, \textit{La Botanique historique et littéraire},\footnote{Mme de Genlis, \textit{Herbier moral ou Recherche de fables nouvelles et autres poésies fugitives} (Paris: Maradan, 1801).} contains characteristics, anecdotes, and superstitions pertaining to plants and flowers as well as details about plants bearing the names of
famous people or those used in religious and civil ceremonies among different peoples.\textsuperscript{116}

It was natural, then, that Adele on her trip to the Antibes should write a journal containing the nomenclature of the plants and flowers found there,\textsuperscript{117} and that Juliette, one of the Petits émigrés should write to her cousin that she frequently took long walks in search of plants.\textsuperscript{118}

At Belle-Chasse the Orleans Princes were accompanied by Monsieur Aylon, a pharmacist-chemist-botanist, who supervised them as they gathered and classified plants.\textsuperscript{119}

At the age of sixteen Adele would have two lessons a week in physics, chemistry, and natural history.\textsuperscript{120} In the latter field she would read Buffon's \textit{Histoire naturelle} when she reached the age of eighteen and a half.\textsuperscript{121}

Science was considered a good form of relaxation by many of the characters in Madame de Genlis' works, e.g., Monsieur Lagaraye, director of a hospital visited by the d'Almanes, who had as his recreation the "reading of chemistry and the study of botany."\textsuperscript{122}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{116}Ibid., see title page.
\item \textsuperscript{117}Mme de Genlis, \textit{Adele et Theodore}, II, p. 201.
\item \textsuperscript{118}Mme de Genlis, \textit{Les Petits émigrés}, II, p. 61.
\item \textsuperscript{119}Mme de Genlis, \textit{Mémoires inédits...}, III, p. 154.
\item \textsuperscript{120}Mme de Genlis, \textit{Adele et Theodore}, III, pp. 193-194.
\item \textsuperscript{121}Ibid., see reading list pp. 373-385. Mme de Genlis, who knew Buffon personally, admired the simplicity of his style. See, \textit{Suite des souvenirs...}, p. 67.
\item \textsuperscript{122}Ibid., II, p. 51.
\end{itemize}
According to Madame de Genlis, whose love for music was intensifies by the praises of Gluck, music was not a frivolous art, but since it was a gift from heaven it should draw its inspiration from its divine source "for in profaning it one degraded it." Too much emphasis, however, should not be placed on music. Citing from her personal experience, Madame de Genlis, who learned to play eight instruments as a child, stated that she regretted that the time devoted to some of these instruments— the musette, the kettledrum, and the mandolin—had not been used to instruct her in more practical matters such as business.

Nor should one force music on a child who has no talent for music. In reflecting on the musical training of her younger daughter, Pulcherie, Madame de Genlis wrote:

... il est bien regrettablle d'avoir employe inutilement un temps si considérable qu'on aurait pu donner à l'acquisition de connaissances solides.

Theodore's studies would not include music, while Adele would learn both instrumental and vocal music. At the age of six she would begin to read music. By the age of ten she was able to read vocal music by sight and could execute on the harp nearly all the "agréments

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123 Mme de Genlis, Mémoires inédits..., III, p. 1.
124 Mme de Genlis, De l'Emploi du temps, p. 31.
125 Mme de Genlis, Les Souvenirs de Félicie L***, p. 365.
126 Mme de Genlis, Mémoires inédits, III, p. 130.
127 Mme de Genlis, Adèle et Theodore, I, p. 57.
She later gave concerts with her mother, both playing their harps. Music instruction was also given the Prince.

Since only by assiduous practice could talent in music be maintained, Madame de Genlis advised Mademoiselle d'Orléans to play the harp at least two hours and a half each day and the piano one hour each day. Madame de Genlis concluded that cultivating music from the time of one's youth would prove to be of great benefit in later years since

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\text{... il repose entièrement la tête lorsqu'on joue soi-même d'un instrument...}
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Madame de Genlis boasted that all of her pupils learned to draw and to paint. A good age to begin drawing and painting was five or six. The first years, however, would be spent simply learning to see "juste" and not until the age of fourteen would the pupil actually begin drawing. The best lessons that could be given in art would consist of going to visit the churches, monuments, art collections, and

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128 Ibid., p. 265.
129 Ibid., III, p. 104.
131 Mme de Genlis, Précis de la conduite..., p. 172.
132 Mme de Genlis, De l'Emploi du temps, p. 68.
133 Mme de Genlis, Nouvelle méthode d'enseignement..., p. 117.
134 Ibid.
135 Ibid., pp. 121-122.
art fairs. This would accustom the pupils to compare and to judge "sanely" which, she said, was "the whole secret of art." 136

During the ninth year the student would spend six months studying osteology and myology—the two parts of anatomy "absolutely necessary for drawing." 137 To become a great painter a knowledge of mythology, ancient history, and of the customs of antiquity was essential. 138

By the age of sixteen Madame de Genlis' student of art would begin painting, and after one year he would no longer need a maître. 139 In painting the most important thing was to see and to sense well. 140

Drawing was to be the only "talent d'agrément" in which Théodore would be given instruction. 141 Drawing was also considered by Madame de Genlis as an art form a prince should cultivate. Drawing was included in the Comte de Roseville's schedule for the Prince, 142 and both drawing and painting were taught the Princes at Belle-Chasse by a Polish artist, Monsieur Merys. 143

Of all the talents drawing and painting were the ones which were best preserved without assiduous practice since they were more

136 Ibid., p. 118.
137 Ibid., p. 125.
138 Ibid., p. 126.
139 Ibid., p. 132.
140 Mme de Genlis, De l'Emploi du temps, p. 143.
141 Mme de Genlis, Adèle et Théodore, II, p. 93.
142 Ibid., pp. 241-242.
143 Mme de Genlis, Mémoires inédits..., III, p. 154.
"intellectual" than the other talents. Contrary to music, which required constant practice, drawing and painting could be practiced simply by observation.

The arts, however, did not have the grandeur they could have unless they were consecrated to the glory of religion.

Ce sont les arts qui ont immortalisé les beaux siècles de Pélicles, d'Auguste, Charlemagne, de François I, des Médicis et de Louis XIV.

Placide, the only one of the Battuecas who left his isolated home valley where no one knew of the arts, stopped before a tomb to pay touching tribute to the fine arts:

O noble puissance des beaux arts, qui perpétue les plus touchants souvenirs! ... Dans notre vallée, on meurt tout entier!

Madame de Genlis also took into account the need for physical training.

Comme il y a des études destinées à cultiver et à orner l'esprit, il y a aussi des exercices propres à former le corps, et, l'on ne doit pas les négliger.

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1. Madame de Genlis, De l'Emploi du temps, p. 112.
2. Ibid., p. 114.
3. Ibid., p. 116.
5. Madame de Genlis, Mémoires inédits..., V, p. 32.
Long walks were the type of physical activity most frequently lauded by Madame de Genlis. On their first promenades with their children in Languedoc, the d'Almanes simply had Adèle and Théodore practice running and jumping. The following year they would do as Rousseau recommended, i.e., estimate the measurements of a certain space by sight, and guess how many trees there were in a certain lane. They would also make use of the "jeux de nuit" recommended by Rousseau. The three mountains in the park at Languedoc served the children for exercise in climbing.

The "pure air" and the "active life" at Languedoc as compared with Paris' atmosphere made Adèle and Théodore regret Languedoc when they returned to Paris several years later and complained of the "dust" and the "crowd" at the Palais Royal. Adèle, as a result of her running and jumping ability, needed only six months of dancing lessons in Paris in order to be able to dance at the ball as well as any of her age who had had dance lessons much longer than she. It should be noted, however, that Madame de Genlis considered dancing useful only for the sake of health.
Other physical activities which she deemed wise for a girl to learn were swimming, horseback riding, and driving a cabriolet.\textsuperscript{157}

The Princes at Belle-Chasse were sent to swimming school\textsuperscript{158} and were also given lessons in gymnastics which are described in \textit{Leçons d'une gouvernante},\textsuperscript{159} a work which was unavailable to the thesis writer. They were also taught some first aid such as bleeding and bandaging.\textsuperscript{160}

Like Rousseau, Madame de Genlis would have the mothers nurse their babies.\textsuperscript{161} Today, however, one might question the diet Adele was to follow after she had been weaned for it consisted of "l'eau pour toute boisson," and only occasionally was she to have cold milk.\textsuperscript{162}

A hard bed, open windows, not rushing her child to begin walking, and avoiding "corps baleines" until Adele was at least four were other health rules followed by the Baronne d'Almane when her daughter was very young.\textsuperscript{163}

When Placide went to Madrid and was exposed to civilization for the first time, his health suffered because of the soft bed he was given:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{157}Mme de Genlis, \textit{Le Dernier voyage de Nelgis}, I, p. 262.
\item \textsuperscript{158}Mme de Genlis, \textit{Mémoires inédits...}, IV, p. 3.
\item \textsuperscript{159}Ibid., III, pp. 159-160.
\item \textsuperscript{160}Ibid., IV, p. 3.
\item \textsuperscript{161}Mme de Genlis, \textit{Les Mères rivales, ou La Calomnie} (Berlin: F. T. De LaGarde, 1800), I, p. 10.
\item \textsuperscript{162}Mme de Genlis, \textit{Adèle et Théodore}, I, p. 63.
\item \textsuperscript{163}Ibid.
\end{itemize}
La mollesse de mon lit me tint éveillé toute la nuit.\textsuperscript{164}

He later became drunk from drinking too much wine since in the valley of the Battuecas only pure water was drunk.\textsuperscript{165}

It was due both to the rigorous physical training and to the education that the Duc de Chartres had received from his governess that he was able to later withstand and even profit from his experience as a political exile during the French Revolution.

M. de Chartres se décida à faire à pied le voyage entier de la Suisse, ce qu'il a exécuté, passant partout pour un allemand; combien de fois depuis ses malheurs je me suis félicité de l'éducation que je lui ai donnée! de lui avoir fait apprendre dès l'enfance les principales langues modernes, de l'avoir accoutumé à se servir seul, à mépriser toute espèce de mollesse, à coucher habituellement sur un lit de bois recouvert d'une simple natte de sparterie, à braver le soleil, la pluie & le froid, à s'accoutumer à la fatigue en faisant journallement de violents exercices & quatre ou cinq lieues avec des semelles de plomb, à ses promenades ordinaires, enfin de lui avoir donné de l'instruction & le goût des voyages. Il a perdu tout ce qu'il devait au hazard de la naissance & à la fortune, il ne lui reste plus que ce qu'il tient de moi!\textsuperscript{166}

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Madame de Genlis did not believe that instruction and talents should cause one to scorn working with the hands. Madame d'Almane explained to her friend, the Vicomtesse, that she had brought a servant with her to Languedoc who was especially skilled in embroidering for, as she said:

\textsuperscript{164}Mme de Genlis, Les Battuecas, I, p. 73.
\textsuperscript{165}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{166}Mme de Genlis, Précis de la conduite..., p. 113.
... je veux qu'Adele soit adroite, & que les talens & l'instruction ne lui fassent dédaigner un genre d'occupation si agréable.\[167\]

Another practical aspect of Adele's education consisted of an apprenticeship in preparation for motherhood. At the age of twelve Adele was to become "la petite maman" of an orphaned Italian girl. Under her mother's supervision she would instruct the child in reading, etc., and thus learn to know the inclinations of children.\[168\]

At Belle-Chasse Madame de Genlis learned to do lathwork, sheath-making, and basketweaving with her pupils. The Princes and her nephew also learned carpentry.\[169\]

Agriculture, usually in the form of gardening, was an important part of Madame de Genlis' system of "practical and domestic" education since she considered it "ingenious" and as offering the only "veritable riches."\[170\]

Mathurin, the gardener, would be the first agriculture instructor Adele and Theodore would have at Languedoc when they were seven and eight, respectively. Each would then be given a small garden to cultivate.\[171\] Similarly, at Belle-Chasse each Prince was given a little garden in the park,\[172\] and, as indicated earlier in this chapter, gardening at Belle-Chasse was combined with the study of German.

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\[167\] Mme de Genlis, Adèle et Théodore, I, p. 21.
\[168\] Ibid., III, p. 8.
\[169\] Mme de Genlis, Mémoires inédits..., III, p. 157.
\[170\] Mme de Genlis, Maison rustique ou Retour en France d'une famille émigrée (Paris: Maradan, 1810), I, p. 6.
\[171\] Mme de Genlis, Adèle et Théodore, I, p. 56.
\[172\] Mme de Genlis, Mémoires inédits..., III, pp. 153-154.
One of the greatest pleasures of Pierrot in Les Petits émigrés was the fact that his father was going to give him a "carre à cultiver à moi seul." In another of Madame de Genlis' novels, a family of ex-nobles, having returned to France after a long exile, was looking forward to the "fruits cultivés de nos mains!"

* * * * *

We have already seen that Madame de Genlis often instructed by amusing. Other examples of this type of recreation were a game whereby one learned the various styles of architecture, and frequent visits to the factories, art galleries, museums, and the like. Adele and Théodore finished their "cours de manufactures" by traveling to Holland where they visited a paper factory and a printing press and witnessed the cutting of diamonds.

Another country visited by the d'Almanes was Italy. The voyage to Italy would offer not only cultural benefits,
which often accompany traveling such as a bad supper\textsuperscript{179} or being obliged to sleep in a granary.\textsuperscript{180} They would learn to do without many things which they had previously deemed necessary.\textsuperscript{181}

Travel time was also put to instructive use by telling stories, reciting verse, discussing poetry, speaking alternately English, French, and Italian, or simply by reading.\textsuperscript{182}

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We shall now leave Theodore and the Prince as we were not given the privilege of seeing them as finished products. We know only that after the return of the d'Almane family to Paris when their children were sixteen and seventeen, Théodore went to Strasbourg with his father to study law, while his sister remained with her mother to be prepared to enter society. This did not mean that her studies would cease, for according to Madame de Genlis, a woman's education could not be completed until the age of eighteen.\textsuperscript{183}

The first step in Adèle's preparation for entering society consisted of spending six months with her mother in absolute retreat,\textsuperscript{184} continuing her studies all the while.\textsuperscript{185} Then, at the age

\textsuperscript{179}\textit{Ibid}.
\textsuperscript{180}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 223-225.
\textsuperscript{181}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 138.
\textsuperscript{183}Mme de Genlis, \textit{Précis de la conduite}..., p. 173.
\textsuperscript{184}Mme de Genlis, \textit{Adèle et Théodore}, III, p. 171.
\textsuperscript{185}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 207.
of sixteen and a half, Adele would be ready to observe society with her own eyes and to reflect for herself because

Elle n'a nulle confusion dans la tête, & a l'esprit parfaitement juste, parce qu'elle n'a jamais rien appris, rien écouté dans la conversation, rien lu qui fût au-dessus de son intelligence.\textsuperscript{186}

Adele's schedule for the last year and a half of her mother's tutelage furnishes a typical example of the Genlis "emploi du temps." During one day she would write summaries of the history and the literature she had read in two languages besides her native tongue; she would practice the harp; she would go for a long walk; she would spend a half hour at some type of handwork; she would take lessons in dancing, singing, and drawing; she would read aloud with her mother; and finally she would visit a factory or do some other type of "instructive recreation."\textsuperscript{187}

By the time Adele was eighteen, the age when she would marry,\textsuperscript{188} she was truly the masterpiece that her mother's friend, Madame de Valsé, described as

... cette petite merveille, ce chef-d'œuvre de la nature & de l'éducation.\textsuperscript{189}

\textsuperscript{186}Ibid., p. 113.
\textsuperscript{187}Ibid., p. 117.
\textsuperscript{188}Ibid., II, p. 202.
\textsuperscript{189}Ibid., III, p. 115.
PART III

In concluding the portion of the thesis dealing with Madame de Genlis' pedagogical ideas, it is necessary to make certain comparisons between her ideas and those of two other educator-moralists, Fenelon and Rousseau, and the moralist Montaigne.

Madame de Genlis thought highly not only of Fenelon's *Telemaque* but also of his *De l'Education des filles*. This is the work the Baronne d'Almane advised the Vicomtesse de Limours to read as a further guide in educating her daughter.\(^{190}\)

*Emile* is the only one of Rousseau's works which appeared on Adele's reading list. In spite of this fact, we find this statement in regard to this work:

... il (Rousseau) savait bien que son plan d'éducation ne vaut rien, et qu'il est tout-a-fait impracticable dans les points les plus essentiels; il ne voulait pas que l'exécution démentît son système.\(^{191}\)

Fenelon praised the education given in the good convents, but he, like Madame de Genlis, considered better the one given by a mother free to apply herself to it.\(^{192}\) During this period the mother, according to Fenelon, should leave her daughter only in cases of

\(^{190}\text{Ibid., II, p. 109.}\)

\(^{191}\text{Mme de Genlis, Les Soupers de la Maréchale de Luxembourg (2e éd.; Paris: Roux, 1828), p. 94.}\)

\(^{192}\text{François de Salignac de La Mothe-Fenelon, Œuvres choisies de Fenelon: De l'Education des filles (Paris: Librairie Hachette et Cie., 1909), I, p. 226.}\)
absolute necessity. Similarly, a mother, according to Rousseau, would be to her home as the nun is to her cloister.

The knowledge of a woman, in Fenelon's opinion, should be related to her intended functions such as raising children, directing the servants, and handling the expenses. In view of this he proposed that the child in early childhood become accustomed to keeping accounts and doing the marketing. We have already seen that Adèle's education included this practical and domestic learning for Madame de Genlis' idea of the woman's lot in life was similar to Fenelon's.

On doit éviter avec soin d'enflammer l'imagination des femmes, & d'exalter leurs têtes; elles sont nées pour une vie monotone & dépendante.

Fenelon's belief was that the dangers of "vanity" and "presumption" which accompany a premature education do not offset the advantages of such an education. Madame de Genlis said that one must not make "ridiculous parrots" of them nor "victims" of a premature instruction. Yet they should be taught all that is possible with "agrément" and "facilité."

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193 Ibid., p. 227.
195 Fenelon, p. 213.
196 Ibid., p. 215.
197 Mme de Genlis, Adèle et Théodore, I, p. 30.
198 Fenelon, p. 176.
199 Mme de Genlis, Nouvelle méthode d'enseignement..., p. 3.
For Fenelon the learning situations would arise naturally, while Madame de Genlis would create them until the child was fourteen and a half and then take advantage of the natural situations. Contrary to both, Rousseau preferred not to have instructors and to let the individual learn freely whatever he desired. Madame de Genlis, no doubt, was criticizing this practice when in her *Les Petits émigrés* a fifteen year-old boy named Emile was criticized for having been educated "à la Jean-Jacques" which meant that he did not know his catechism and hadn't yet learned to write.

Fenelon, like Madame de Genlis with her magic lanterns and Rousseau with his "jeux de nuit," believed that games should be made instructive, not just amusing.

It was evident that Madame de Genlis would cultivate the mind, heart, and body simultaneously, while Rousseau believed that the body should be trained first since it was "born so to speak before the mind."

One of the results of a neglected education, according to Fenelon, was that a poorly instructed girl would become bored and would not know how to employ her time. If a girl were carelessly educated, and if she did not apply herself, her imagination would wander. As a

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200 Fenelon, p. 176.
202 Rousseau, p. 454.
204 Fenelon, p. 180.
205 Rousseau, p. 41.
result, she would become more interested in "dangerous" and "vain" things. Madame de Genlis considered a good education as one of the greatest resources a person could possess.

Nous avons de l'éducation, des ressources contre l'ennui, les utiles leçons du malheur; ...207

With respect to language learning and physical education, at least two comparisons may be found between Montaigne and Madame de Genlis. Montaigne suggested that parents travel abroad while their child was still at an early age in order to take advantage of his flexible tongue for the sake of learning a foreign language.208 Montaigne also tells us in his Essais that he learned Latin as if it had been his maternal tongue from a German doctor fluent in Latin whom his father had hired for this purpose.209 Adele, as we have said, had a teacher of English from the age of six months and was also taken on journeys abroad by her parents.

A youth, in Montaigne's opinion, should be hardened to withstand the rigors of the weather, to tolerate the lack of food and drink, the discomforts of dress, and lack of sleep.210 This recalls the experience of the Duc de Chartres cited on page forty-four of this chapter.

An idea found in Madame de Genlis which we do not find in Montaigne of the sixteenth century, nor in Fenelon of the seventeenth,

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206 Fenelon, pp. 172-173.
207 Mme de Genlis, Les Petits émigrés, I, p. 303.
209 Ibid., p. 125.
210 Ibid., p. 214.
nor in Rousseau of her own century, was the belief that only education accounts for the true inequality that exists among men. The Marquise de Clémire, the mother who tells the stories in the Veillees, tells her children this:

Une grande naissance n'est qu'un avantage d'opinion; l'éducation seule établit entre les hommes une véritable inégalité.211

Ophémon, "le vrai sage," expresses this same belief to his son:

Son défaut d'éducation ... Et voilà l'inégalité la plus remarquable & la plus réelle qui puisse exister entre les hommes.212


212 Mme de Genlis, Théâtre à l'usage..., V: Le Vrai sage, II, i, p. 308.
CHAPTER III

MADAME DE GENLIS AS A MORALIST

PART I

Madame A. Tastu characterized Madame de Genlis as the "moraliste du grand monde."¹ According to her, the faithful portraits Madame de Genlis painted ridiculing the grand monde earned her a great number of enemies in society.²

Harmand found that Madame de Genlis' chief merit lay in her "alertness" and "social tact."³ In the preface to Harmand's work, Faguet wrote of her that there was never "anyone so equally at home in la grande histoire and in la petite histoire as Madame de Genlis."⁴

"La véritable perfectibilité est celle de la morale,"⁵ wrote Madame de Genlis, and

La morale ne peut avoir pour base que la religion ... ⁶

¹Madame de Genlis, Mademoiselle de Clermont, see "Notice littéraire sur l'auteur" par Mme A. Tastu, p. xii.
²Ibid., pp. v-vi.
³Harmand, p. 406
⁴Harmand, see preface by Faguet, p. vii.
⁶Madame de Genlis, Arabesques mythologiques, p. xxxvii.
Principles of morality founded on religion and nature\textsuperscript{7} were "true" and "immutable," and a father could therefore insist that his child positively adopt these principles from him.\textsuperscript{8} According to her viewpoint, there was no middle ground, no negative side in morality: "On est honnête ou vicieux."\textsuperscript{9} One could correct himself at any age provided he had recourse to religion such as one of \textit{Les Prisonniers} who was condemned to death. After spending the night in prayer he became another man and "courut à la mort comme les saints vont au martyr."\textsuperscript{10} True nobility of character consisted of resigning oneself to his fate,\textsuperscript{11} for life is a trial and the earth but an exile.\textsuperscript{12}

It is curious to note that in her \textit{Mémoires}, Madame de Genlis expressed regret for the fact that in spite of always having been a religious person, none of the "sacrifices de dévot" which she made were inspired by religion.\textsuperscript{13}

\textsuperscript{7}Mme de Genlis allied religion closely with nature: "Diana remarqua avec délice que le printemps animoit vivement en elle toutes les idées religieuses, et que sa piété s'augmentoit sensiblement à mesure que le jardin et les champs s'embellissoient sous ses yeux, et reprenoient leur brillante parure." See, e.g., Mme de Genlis, \textit{Alphonsine}, III, pp. 119-120.

\textsuperscript{8}Mme de Genlis, \textit{Les Petits émigrés}, p. 20.


\textsuperscript{11}Mme de Genlis, \textit{Belisaire} (Paris: Maradan, 1806), I, pp. 19-20.

\textsuperscript{12}Mme de Genlis, \textit{L'Étude du cœur humain}, p. 48.

\textsuperscript{13}Mme de Genlis, \textit{Mémoires inédits...}, III, p. 87.
Madame de Genlis believed that Greek mythology had given the ancient Greeks and Romans a quality of "melancholy" and "ferocity."

... les effets de son influence furent de donner au génie grec et romain une profonde mélancolie, une grande féroceité à leurs mœurs et une morale ... sans bases, sans but, sans enchaînement de principes.\(^{14}\)

While antiquity offered us masterpieces of literature, Madame de Genlis believed that we, "enlightened by Christianity," should offer works on morality superior to those of the ancients.\(^{15}\) From whence Madame de Genlis' preference for the authors of the century before her: "Ils avaient profondément étudié les livres sacrés."\(^{16}\)

Madame de Genlis' work, La Religion considérée comme l'unique base du bonheur et de la véritable philosophie, was written for the first communion of the eldest of the Orleans princes.\(^{17}\) The purpose of this work was to "expose" and "refute" the principles of the "prétendus philosophes modernes."\(^{18}\) The contents of this work will be discussed in the last chapter.

Adele's religious instruction began with the reading of the Bible at the age of seven.\(^{19}\) She was also to have a Livre d'heures, and psalms and prayers prescribed by the Church.\(^{20}\)

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\(^{11}\) Mme de Genlis, Arabesques mythologiques, pp. xxix-xxx.


\(^{16}\) Mme de Genlis, Les Soupers de la Marechale de Luxembourg, II, p. 192.

\(^{17}\) Mme de Genlis, Mémoires inédits..., III, p. 193.

\(^{18}\) Mme de Genlis, La Religion considérée..., see title page.

\(^{19}\) Mme de Genlis, Adele et Théodore, III, see reading list pp. 373-385.

\(^{20}\) Ibid., II, p. 83.
One of the journeys made by the d'Almanes was planned for the purpose of giving Adèle and Théodore a "juste idée" of religion. They were taken to Lagaraye to visit a charitable institution founded and directed by Monsieur and Madame Lagaraye, who for ten years had been taking in the sick and less fortunate ones. The salle de comédie at Lagaraye had been converted to a hospital for the sick. The thickets of roses and myrtle had been transformed to fruit trees; vegetable gardens had replaced the flowerbeds. The children were taught to read and to write as well as given moral instruction. The curé taught them the catechism and they would then spend eighteen months reading and studying the Gospels. At the close of their visit, man's need for religion was explained to Théodore by his father this way:

L'homme est né bon; son premier mouvement est toujours généreux: mais aussi la réflexion le refroidit, le change, & le rend personnel. Il est inconsciente, parce qu'il n'est qu'un être imparfait & borné; & c'est la religion seule qui lui peut donner le goût constant de la vertu, & la persévérance dans le bien.
In addition to the Bible, Madame de Genlis advised the reading of the following works dealing with religion: *l'Imitation de Jésus-Christ*, an anonymous work, *Le Petit carême* by Massillon, and the sermons of Bourdaloue.\(^2\)

Madame de Genlis' concept of virtue was the putting into practice of one's moral strength. To emphasize the inflexible quality inherent in virtue she cited Montaigne who wrote: "La vertu ne rompt son chemin, ni son train pour orage qu'il fasse."\(^3\) The difficulty of achieving true virtuousness or in perfecting oneself morally was symbolized by Madame de Genlis in one of her works, *Les Meres rivales*,\(^4\) where she described a "parc moral" which was to represent "la vie humaine." After having passed the pavilion of childhood and adolescence, one had to pass through the path of Error on both sides of which were boxes of flowers surrounded by partially hidden thorns, nettles, and poisonous plants. Having come this far, one arrived at the palace of Innocence marked by the statue of Verity. Then began the path of Virtue. It represented a very steep incline, but as one advanced, the beauty of it increased. One soon arrived on a plain where there was a temple of Hope. This was a rotund structure which received light only through its cupola. A few steps away stood a high mountain covered with rocks and brambles. There was no beaten path,


but as one ascended the mountain the rocks disappeared, the mountain flattened, and flowers and lush vegetation embellished the perspective. Finally, at the summit stood the statue of Virtue, represented by Hercules, the emblem of Force with the inscription: "Après les travaux le repos." All along the path leading to the statue of Virtue were smaller tortuous crossways, all leading to the path of Error. 32

32 Ibid., II, pp. 178-184. Similar allegories are found in Mlle de Scudéry's Clélie and Le Roman de la Rose written by Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meung. However, Mme de Genlis' allegory is not "précieux" like the "Carte de tendre" in Clélie which symbolizes a route for achieving friendship. See, Albert Schinz and Helen Maxwell King, Seventeenth Century French Readings (New York: Henry Holt & Company, 1950), pp. 56-61. While the ideas underlying the allegory of Le Roman de la Rose would be more similar to Mme de Genlis', her "passe moral" was more general and did not attempt merely to show the dangers of love as in the thirteenth century allegory. See, Verriest, p. 9.
As Harmand noted, Madame de Genlis continually reverts to two important themes: maternal and filial love in all its forms.\(^3^3\)

As a refrain for one of her plays, *La Bonne mere*, Madame de Genlis quoted the following from Monsieur Gaillard: "Le chief-d'œuvre d'amour est le cœur d'une mere."\(^3^4\) Maternal love, in Madame de Genlis' conception, was among "les sentiments les plus vrais et les plus vifs." It was therefore one of the most "disinterested" sentiments.\(^3^5\) Among all animated beings, maternal love was the most "imperious," the most "tender," and the most "touching" of all the passions.\(^3^6\) Compared with love for a man or a woman, maternal love did not bring with it the undesirable qualities associated with love.

Tout est égoïsme, tout est personnalité dans l'amour, on veut même plaire exclusivement. De là ces soupçons, ces inquiétudes, cette jalousie ... les émotions les plus douloureuses; au lieu que tout est désintéressé dans l'amour maternel.\(^3^7\)

*Alphonsine*, subtitled *La Tendresse maternelle*, offers the most striking examples of the expression of maternal love. Although in this novel, as in several others, it is the case of an unwed mother's love

\(^{3^3}\) Harmand, p. 312.

\(^{3^4}\) Mme de Genlis, *Théâtre à l'usage...*, III: *La Bonne mere*, see title page.


\(^{3^7}\) Ibid., p. 386.
for her child, the circumstances surrounding Alphonsine's birth and rearing serve to reinforce the mother-daughter relationship. Before becoming a mother, Diana had never imagined that such an attachment as the one for a child could exist. However, she found that such a "generous affection" could enrich her soul, perfect her morally, and give her courage. When her child was old enough to speak, her first utterance was not "maman," but rather "mon Dieu." Diana vowed solemnly to God that if they regained their liberty, she would marry only if she could marry the father of her child. Diana became completely identified with Alphonsine.

When they were released from the cellar Diana renounced seeing anyone with the exception of the curé and some close relatives. She would henceforth live only for God and her daughter. Living less in

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38 Alphonsine's mother, Diana, was unhappily wed to the Comte de Moncalde who chose not to live with her as a husband. When he learned of her love for another man, don Pêdre, he had her imprisoned in the cellar of his château near Grenada. Seven months later, Alphonsine, daughter of don Pêdre and Diana, was born there.

39 Mme de Genlis, Alphonsine, II, p. 137.
40 Ibid., p. 149.
41 Ibid., p. 182.
42 Ibid., I, p. 238.
44 Ibid., p. 5.
seclusion did not alter the relationship between the mother and her
dughter. In fact, the ties between them became even stronger.

Alphonsine est l'âme de Diana; c'est Alphonsine qui fait
agir, espérer, craindre, réfléchir, penser Diana. Jamais la
nature, l'habitude et la tendresse n'ont uni deux êtres par
des liens si puissants; jamais les bienfaits et la reconnaissance
n'ont pu former une union si touchante et si sacrée! ...

Until Alphonsine was able to be exposed to daylight Diana wore a thick
veil in order not to contemplate nature again until she could do it for
the first time with Alphonsine.46

Léonore, who had conspired with Diana's husband in locking her
in the cellar, had also saved Diana's life by warning her of some
poisoned food sent her by the Comte. Therefore, Diana forgave Léonore
everything upon her release since by saving her life she had spared
Alphonsine.47

Madame de Genlis believed that the mother of an illegitimate
child was ordered God to love and bless her child, but she should
always bemoan his birth. Expiation would help, but nothing could
completely erase this error's trace.48

We noted in the last chapter that complete devotion to the
education of one's child was another aspect of maternal affection.
Madame de Genlis quoted from Chapter III of the book of Ecclesiasticus
as a refrain for the play, Le Retour du jeune Tobie:

46 Ibid., p. 27.
47 Ibid., I, p. 236.
48 Madame de Genlis, La Duchesse de La Valliere (Paris: Maradan,
1801), II, pp. 302-303.
Celui qui instruit son fils y trouvera sa joie, &
se glorifiera en lui parmi ses proches ...59

The mother who so thoroughly fulfilled this duty such as Madame
d' Almane, was in some cases the adoptive mother, e.g., Pauline in Les
Mères rivales, who devoted so much energy to educating Léocadie, a
foundling whom she later adopted.50 In other instances it was a
surviving relative who had replaced the child's mother such as the
grandmother-tutor of Ines de Castro.51

None of these relationships, however, indicate with such force
the maternal obligation to instruct as does the relationship between
Diana and her daughter. During the twelve years in the cellar
Alphonsine was taught by her mother to play a guitare,52 to speak both
French and Spanish,53 to count and do arithmetic,54 to do physical
exercises,55 to draw,56 and to speak English.57 She also found a way
to teach her some botany,58 and to instruct her in religion.59 When

59 Mme de Genlis, Théâtre à l'usage..., I: Le Retour du jeune
Tobie, see title page.
50 Mme de Genlis, Les Mères rivales, II, p. 143.
51 Mme de Genlis, Inès de Castro (Paris: Lecointe et Durey,
1826), pp. 3-4.
52 Mme de Genlis, Alphonsine, II, p. 50.
53 Ibid., p. 188.
54 Ibid., p. 251.
55 Ibid., p. 252.
56 Ibid., p. 273.
57 Ibid., p. 283.
58 Ibid., p. 305.
59 Ibid., III, p. 29.
they were free again, Alphonsine's education continued with even more care due to her mother's attention:

... sa vigilance maternelle étoit si active et si prévoyante, qu'Alphonsine n'entendit pas un mot et ne reçut pas une impression qui put déplaire à sa mère ou contrarier son plan et ses projets.60

Another symbol of maternal affection was nursing one's child.

Allaiter son enfant est sans doute un bonheur pour toutes les mères.61

Nursing gave a mother more right to her child. Adéline, who found out when Cléophas was grown that he was not really the child born to her, felt that having nursed him she had acquired the title of second mother at least.

... combien je m'applaudissois de l'avoir allaité! J'avais acquis près de lui le titre touchant de seconde mère, rien ne peut me l'ôter, puisque je suis sa nourrice ...62

Perhaps the most difficult phase of maternity was that of confiding in detailed story form the errors and wrongs committed by the mother so that her daughter might learn to avoid similar pitfalls.

Diana began tracing in detail her errors and misfortunes from the first day of her captivity and continued until her release so that Alphonsine could profit from her mother's mistakes.63

The Comtesse de Rosmond, Léocadie's real mother who by choice gave her daughter to Pauline to be raised, sent her daughter a

60Ibid., pp. 29-30.
61Ibid., II, p. 117.
63Mme de Genlis, Alphonsine, I, p. 243.
manuscript recounting the bad effects she had suffered from an Epicurean type of up-bringing. She also explained to her daughter why and how she arranged for her to be found by Pauline. 64

Madame de Melrose, upon her death, left to her daughter, Flaminie, a manuscript telling why she had been unable to retain her husband's love.

... si je n'eusse eu pour votre père qu'un sentiment réglé par la raison, j’aurois pu prendre sur lui un utile ascendant et le retenir à Melrose.65

When Emilie, L'Épouse impertinente par air, 66 became a mother, she, too, promised to tell her story to her daughter one day.67

Maternal love, by virtue of being disinterested, should not expect an equal return.

N'exigeons donc point de nos enfants une tendresse aussi passionnée que celle que nous avons pour eux.68

Filial love, as expressed in the works of Madame de Genlis, was most often in the form of gratitude. When Alphonsine was shown the place in the cave where she was born—which her mother had afterwards made into a richly decorated chapel consecrated to religion—69 she was

64Mme de Genlis, Les Mères rivales, III, pp. 223-250.
65Mme de Genlis, Palmyre et Flaminie, I, p. 234.
66Mme de Genlis, L'Épouse impertinente par air (Paris: Maradan, 1804).
67Ibid., p. 56.
68Mme de Genlis, Adèle et Théodore, II, p. 121.
69Mme de Genlis, Alphonsine, III, pp. 87-88.
overwhelmed by the thought of how much her mother had suffered and had
done for her during those twelve years.\textsuperscript{70}

Alphonse, Alphonsine's counterpart since he is the \textit{fils naturel}
of Mélanie, believed to have profaned "le plus pur de tous les
sentiments" when he discovered, after declaring his love for Mélanie,
that she was his mother.\textsuperscript{71}

Lack of confidence on the part of their children was the only
thing, according to Madame de Genlis, that could profoundly hurt
"sensitive" and "reasonable" parents.\textsuperscript{72} Edouard, one of \textit{Les Petits
émigrés}, wrote to his friend: "Je ne cache rien à mon père."\textsuperscript{73}
Alphonsine and Adèle became such confidants of their mothers that the
former, when asked in marriage by don Alvar, answered: "Ma mère seule
peut en disposer."\textsuperscript{74} In like manner, Adèle replied to her mother
concerning the proposal of the Marquis d'Hernay:

\[ \text{Je sais que je n'aurais pas assez de lumière & d'expérience}
\text{pour bien choisir moi-même, & que je serais aussi insensée}
\text{qu'ingrate, si je ne me reposais pas entièrement sur vous du}
\text{soin de mon bonheur.}\textsuperscript{75} \]

The reaction of Mademoiselle de La Vallière to her projected
marriage to the Marquis de Bragelone, a man whom she did not know, was
one of complete confidence:

\textsuperscript{70}Ibid., p. 82.
\textsuperscript{71}Mme de Genlis, \textit{Alphonse ou Le Fils naturel} (Paris: Maradan,
1809), I, p. 50. There is no similarity between this work and
Diderot's play \textit{Le Fils naturel}.
\textsuperscript{72}Mme de Genlis, \textit{Les Petits émigrés}, I, p. 11.
\textsuperscript{73}Ibid., p. 28.
\textsuperscript{74}Mme de Genlis, \textit{Alphonsine}, III, p. 253.
\textsuperscript{75}Mme de Genlis, \textit{Adèle et Théodore}, III, p. 199.
... elle confiais sans inquietude à la tendresse maternelle son bonheur et sa destinée.  

Célanire, who betrayed her filial gratitude by marrying secretly the man whom her father was to present to her later as a husband, found herself guilty of a "funeste error."  

Education, rather than alienating a child from his parents, made him realize even more the extent of his duties towards his parents and the gratitude owed them. 

True affection for one's mother was likened by Madame de Genlis to religious faith as we shall see when she wrote of the filial love experienced by the Duchesse de La Valliere. 

Elle avoit pour sa mère ce sentiment inspiré par la nature et perfectionné par la religion, qui ne peut se comparer à nul autre, cette profonde vénération et cette confiance aveugle qui ressemblent à la foi religieuse.  

In times of distress a mother should be her daughter's best friend and source of consolation. When Pauline was falsely accused of being unfaithful to her husband, she wrote to her mother: "Vous seule, mon unique amie, n'avez pu me soupçonner un moment!"  

Léocadie, who had been raised by her adoptive mother and then met her real mother, experienced equal affection for both mothers: 

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76 Mme de Genlis, La Duchesse de La Vallière, I, p. 26.  
77 Mme de Genlis, Les Chevaliers du Cygne, II, p. 91.  
78 Mme de Genlis, Théâtre à l'usage..., II: Les Dangers du monde, II, iv, p. 445.  
79 Mme de Genlis, La Duchesse de La Vallière, I, p. 10.  
80 Mme de Genlis, Les Mères rivales, I, p. 245.
"Comment l'une pourroit-elle me faire oublier l'autre?" When she was away from her stepmother for the first time, she continued to follow her advice. Obeying her was not only a duty, but a pleasure. She read, drew, practiced music, and followed the same schedule she followed when she was home. She was guided and inspired as much by her mother when absent from her as when in her presence.

Filial affection was experienced also by some of the young people in Madame de Genlis' works for their tutors. When Flaminie married Nelmur, her tutor, Dumas, became a part of her new household.

Dumas ne quitte point son élève, et elle est traitée par Nelmur, ainsi que par sa jeune épouse, comme la mère la plus chérie.

Beatrix, a queen in Les Chevaliers du Cygne, "réveroit comme un père son vertueux instituteur." Zélia, who had been educated by her father's friend, felt she owed him all that a "titre si cher" imposed.

Another phase of family affection discussed often by Madame de Genlis, was that of conjugal love and relationship. One's choice in marriage was to be based on "l'estime," "l'admiration," and "la reconnaissance."

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she, offers a good example of a union formed on this basis. Although she loved Tobie, she married Robin as filial recompense for the fact that Robin had saved her father's life.87

Madame de Genlis recommended that the husband be at least seven or eight years older than his wife since it would be his duty to complete his wife's education.

C'est à un mari qu'il appartient de former le cœur, l'esprit, et d'affermir les principes de sa femme par ses exemples ... et enfin de diriger sa conduite.88

In choosing mates for their children, parents should consider the conformity of character and tastes between the two young people.

Toujours pour vos enfans, Pour leur hymen consultez la tendresse, Assortissez et les mœurs et les goûts, Et n'unissez jamais la rose avec le houx.89

Pauline and Albert were matched by this method, and their union represented the ideal conjugal relationship according to Genlis standards.

Ge n'est pas une passion ardente qu'ils ont l'un pour l'autre, ils s'aiment depuis l'enfance; la même éducation, les mêmes principes, les mêmes affections ont formé entre eux une conformité de goûts, d'opinions et de sentiments, dont il résulte un attachement qui n'est pas de l'amour, mais qui est mille fois plus tendre et plus solide.90

87 Mme de Genlis, Les Chevaliers du Cygne, I, p. 94.
89 Mme de Genlis, Herbier moral, fable XVI: La Rose blanche entée sur le houx, p. 65.
90 Mme de Genlis, Les Mères rivales, I, p. 9.
Friendship, and not love, was the sentiment Madame de Genlis found as the ideal one between a husband and wife. Love was too fragile and unsure.

... bonheur inquiet et fragile de l'amour! qu'êtes-vous auprès de ces joies ineffables du cœur, produites par les sentiments, de la nature, l'amitié fidèle et la vertu?\textsuperscript{91}

\textsuperscript{91}Madame de Genlis, Les Battuecas, II, p. 25h.
PART III

Favorite leit-motives of Madame de Genlis are, again as Harmand observed:

... the simple life, rural life, the love of Nature as opposed to the corruptions of the town and of the court; learning as opposed to vanity, luxury, and frivolity; and finally charity as atoning for all other faults.92

According to Madame de Genlis,

Le goût de la campagne suppose une telle pureté de mœurs, que les anciens l'ont confondu avec la vertu elle-même.93

It is evident throughout her works that she, too, found a close relationship between the simple, rural life and her concept of virtue. To define happiness she quoted the English writer, Addison, who said: "True happiness is of a retired nature, and an enemy to pomp and noise."94 Not only the solitude, but also the pleasures offered by nature were superior to those of the city and the court. During a stay in the Pyrenees, Madame de Genlis made the following reflection:

Dans ce pays fertile, pittoresque et sauvage, au fond de ces sombres forêts, où sur ces montagnes majestueuses chargées de rochers, d'ombrages, de fleurs, de fontaines et de cascades, qui pourroit se retracer avec délices le bois de Boulogne, les Tuileries, les jets d'eau de Versailles, et les petites rivières des jardins à l'anglaise?95

92 Harmand, p. 113.
93 Mme de Genlis, La Maison rustique, p. ix.
94 Mme de Genlis, Voyages poétiques d'Eugene et d'Antonine, p. 15.
95 Mme de Genlis, L'Etude du cœur humain suivi Des Cinq premières semaines d'un journal écrit sur les Pyrénées, p. 183.
The simple country life also had a favorable effect on one's physical condition and appearance because of the purity of the mores associated with that type of life.

Mélanie n'avait pas encore trente-trois ans, et sa beauté, conservée par des moeurs si pures et par un genre de vie si simple, étoit dans tout son éclat.\textsuperscript{96}

In sharp contrast, the Marquis, a philosophe who had corrupted his wife, found her at the age of thirty-six already "pâle, défigurée, environnée des ombres de la mort."\textsuperscript{97} Old age could not be beautiful unless youth had been "exempte d'orages."\textsuperscript{98} Speaking of her distant relative, Madame du Deffand, Madame de Genlis made this observation:

Son cœur a bien vieilli, la philosophie l'a tout-à-fait desséché, et son esprit n'a point mûri; ...\textsuperscript{99}

Placide, who had only left his country valley once before was now regretting the fact that he had to make another journey to the city.

... O que j'ai vieilli depuis ce temps! J'ai perdu toutes les illusions qui me charmoient! ... et je vais connoître tout ce qui peut dégoûter de la vie et de la société. Je vais voir toute la perversité sanguinaire enfantée par l'orgueil, l'ambition, la discorde et la vengeance! Allons ... du moins ces horreurs acheveront de m'attacher au val fortuné des Battuecas.\textsuperscript{100}

Gelimer, the last king of the Vandals of Africa, also preferred to be away from the city. After a brief sortie from his place of

\textsuperscript{96}Mme de Genlis, Alphonse, II, p. 170.
\textsuperscript{97}Mme de Genlis, L'Epouse impertinente par air suivi du Mari corrupteur, p. 334.
\textsuperscript{98}Mme de Genlis, Les Veillées du Château, II, p. 239.
\textsuperscript{99}Mme de Genlis, Les Souvenirs de Félicie L***, p. 352.
\textsuperscript{100}Mme de Genlis, Les Battuecas, II, p. 166.
refuge in the Thebaid Desert, he returned there willingly--having refused all the gifts of the Emperor--where he lived on wild fruits and slept on a bed of reeds and dried leaves.

... après avoir éprouvé des infortunes inouïes, et toutes les vicissitudes du sort le plus funeste, j'ai trouvé dans cette caverne le sommeil et la paix.101

Solitude, however, did not suit everyone, e.g., the atheist whose thoughts there would be "stériles comme le néant,"102 or a vindictive person who would "perir de la consomption."103

There were other instances in which one did not take refuge in solitude because of an unhappy experience while living in society, but where one felt it his calling to live in solitude where he could dedicate himself to meditation. Such was the case of the young hermit, Sylvester, who abandoned all his fortune to his younger brother in order to join another hermit.104 When the younger brother visited the two solitary men he was charmed by their conversation because

Elle peignoit le calme de leurs âmes et la tranquillité parfaite de leur situation.105

Because of the simplicity of his life, Sylvester, upon his return to France after the Revolution, found that he had lost nothing as a result of the Revolution, but rather that he had gained new reasons to

101 Mme de Genlis, Belisaire, I, p. 8.
103 Ibid., pp. 173-174.
105 Ibid., p. 74.
... mépriser les fragiles grandeurs, de haïr le monde,
de désirer l'oubli des hommes et d'aimer la solitude.106

The poet Pétrarque who, according to Madame de Genlis, spent
much time at the grotto at Vaucluse, also found nature superior to the
city.

Si j'en suis jamais le maître, je le préférerais
aux villes les plus somptueuses.107

Madame de Genlis considered vanity, luxury, and frivolity
enemies of learning and a danger to morality. When the d'Almanes
returned to Paris and gave Adèle and Théodore each their private
apartments, they also gave them the following excerpt from Charon's

De la Sagesse:

Avoir une maison bien distribuée, commode, élégante dans
sa simplicité, des habits de bon goût, mais sans recherche
ni magnificence, des loges aux Spectacles qu'on aime le mieux,
un excellent souper, voilà tout ce que les richesses peuvent
procurer d'agrément. Les diamants, une vaisselle magnifique,
des bijoux, de superbes ameublements, etc. ne sont absolument
que des choses de pure ostentation.108

The lack of material things, rather than hindering Alphonsine's
education in the cellar was, in her mother's opinion, a blessing.

mais ne dois-je pas bénir le ciel, qui, par des événements si miraculeux, lui préparait et lui assurait
par la nature même des choses, une éducation morale si
pure et si parfaite?109

When the Duchesse de La Vallière, one of the favorites of
Louis XIV, decided to see the king no more and was contemplating

106 Ibid., p. 125.
107 Mme de Genlis, Pétrarque et Laure (Paris: l'Imprimerie de
Schulze et Dean, 1819), I, p. 17.
108 Mme de Genlis, Adèle et Théodore, III, pp. 189-190.
becoming a nun, she renounced all type of faste, lived on a fourth of her revenue in order to give the remainder to the poor, sold her jewels, and exchanged the luxurious furnishings of her apartments for more modest and less expensive ones. Similarly, Lucidor, L'Ambitieux, having become disenchanted with material luxuries, contented himself with two straw chairs, a bed, a table, a desk, and a closet as his only furniture.

Study was considered by Madame de Genlis as the most effective, and perhaps the only effective, means of overcoming sorrow, disappointment, and despair. Study also served as a partial recompense for misuse or abuse of time due to one's vain, frivolous, or luxurious tastes.

Se livrer à des occupations continuelles et constantes, c'est lutter avec courage contre la douleur.

In one of the comedies written by Madame de Genlis for children, a fairy bewitched two pretty, vain sisters, Genie and Iphise, so that they would see themselves as ugly and realize that they then had nothing. Henceforth the sisters agreed to use the time ordinarily spent for grooming, etc., on reading and practicing music. Study was also to be cultivated for later years when youth and beauty have vanished. Using magic again to illustrate the moral, Madame de Genlis had Zumelinde, the pretty young heiress to a throne, transformed into

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{Mme de Genlis, La Duchesse de La Vallière, II, p. 206.}
\footnote{Mme de Genlis, Six nouvelles morales...: L'Ambitieux, pp. 295-296.}
\footnote{Mme de Genlis, Les Battucass, I, p. 14.}
\footnote{Mme de Genlis, Théâtre à l'usage..., II: Les Flacons, I, iii, pp. 87-92.}
\end{footnotes}
a woman of fifty. After six months of being deprived of her youth and beauty, Zumélinde became aware of

... combien il est nécessaire de se préparer d'honorables ressources pour cet âge où tous les agréments sont évanouis ... Elle se mit à lire un gros volume. 114

Sainville, disillusioned by society, was advised by his best friend, the Baron de Verceil:

Arrachez-vous à l'ennui par des occupations solides; lisez, travaillez, cherchez dans l'étude & dans les sciences, ce bonheur qui vous a fui dans la dissipation.115

When he withdrew to one of the provinces where he encountered the English woman, Constance, he felt inspired to study English.116

The Comte de Poligni cured himself of an unfortunate love affair by arduously delivering himself "aux charmes de l'étude, de la lecture et de la philosophie."117 In order to triumph over a "malheureux penchant" don Alvar planned to devote himself completely to solitude, the sciences, and meditation.118 For Mademoiselle de Clermont, reading, which she had always liked, became a passion for her when she learned that she had this pastime in common with the Duc de Melun.119 The

114 Mme de Genlis, Le Comte de Corke suivi de six nouvelles: Zumélinde ou La Jeune vieille, pp. 88-89.
116 Ibid., p. 90.
118 Mme de Genlis, Alphonsine, III, pp. 219-220.
119 Mme de Genlis, Mademoiselle de Clermont, p. 5.
sight of Nelmur, who had caused Flaminie grief, was quickly forgotten when she read "twenty pages of an excellent book." 120

Richard, the Comte de Corke, became upset because the Queen ignored him. As a result, he devoted his time to such intensive study that he astonished the literary figures and savants of Dublin with the extent of his knowledge. 121

Timothe, who visited some of the prisoners, found that at least two of them had discovered the formula for expiating their past misuse of time. Linval was in prison for failure to pay his debts. With Timothe's help, he put to good use the two years that he was retained in prison.

... il emporta de sa prison des trésors, fruits heureux d'une étude assidue, une piété solide, une science dirigée et mûrie par d'excellentes réflexions, une connaissance approfondie de l'histoire, de notre littérature et des chefs d'œuvres écrits en italien et en anglais. 122

Hippolyte, another of the prisoners who had been falsely accused of fratricide, was released when the real murderer confessed. He then returned to Autun where

... la lecture, le dessein, la botanique et l'agriculture, lui procurèrent à la fois la recompense de ses vertus, des occupations utiles et bienfaisantes, et des délices agréables. 123

Study and constant occupation were also part of the scheme for preserving Theodore's innocence, for preventing him from falling in love until he was at least eighteen.

120 Mme de Genlis, Palmyre et Flaminie, II, p. 88.
121 Mme de Genlis, Le Comte de Corke, p. 19.
122 Mme de Genlis, Les Prisonniers, p. 159.
123 Ibid., pp. 74-75.
... occupez-lui sans relâche, ne le laissez jamais un seul instant cîsif ou désœuvré, & croyez que son imagination ne l'éclairera sur rien de ce que vous voulez lui cacher.124

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Charity, according to Madame de Genlis, could not be classified as heroism.

... car soulager les infortunés est un devoir quand on le peut.125

Charity was a duty to the extent that caring for or reading to a sick person should be substituted for saying one's Rosary if such a choice needed to be made.126 Madame de Genlis found that there was no end to the charitable ways in which the possessor of a fortune could utilize his money.

- Comment concevoir qu'un homme possesseur d'une fortune immense puisse convenir qu'il s'ennuie? Quoi! lorsqu'il peut aller porter le bonheur dans une famille désolée; lorsqu'il peut retirer des prisons, des cachots, une multitude d'infortunés détenus pour dettes et souvent sans qu'il y ait de leur faute, lorsqu'il peut rendre un père, une mère à de jeunes enfants sans appui, sans moyens, sans ressource, lorsqu'il peut préserver l'innocence de l'affreuse séduction du vice; il s'ennuie!127

Another idea concerning charity which Madame de Genlis expressed was that people who had had the good fortune of receiving an education should profit from it by giving lessons gratis to those unable to hire

124 Mme de Genlis, Adèle et Théodore, III, p. 32.
125 Mme de Genlis, Les Souvenirs de Felicie L***, p. 321.
126 Mme de Genlis, Précis de la conduite..., p. 171.
127 Mme de Genlis, Le Dernier voyage de Nélgis, I, p. 100.
The only real benefactors of humanity were those who contributed by their deeds to the purification of morality.

We shall see that for some of the personnages in the Genlis novels, doing charity was a form of consolation; for others it was a form of inspiration to please God or another person; for still others charity was the expiation of faults committed.

Jeanne de France, chagrined by the fact that her husband loved another, found doing charity her "unique consolation." She rented a house in Paris where twelve poor widows and twelve poor girls might live. Having established the house of charity in the name of her husband, she visited there often incognito.

For Madame de Maintenon, too, after she came to live at the court of Louis XIV

The recently widowed Eliza Durocher, besides founding a home for orphan girls, contributed to the church by singing and playing the organ, and by doing paintings and embroidery work for the church.

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128 Ibid., p. 102.
129 Mme de Genlis, L'Etude du cœur humain, p. 20.
131 Mme de Genlis, Madame de Maintenon, I, p. 31.
132 Mme de Genlis, Six Nouvelles morales...: L'Ambitieux, p. 289.
Donna Blanca, who realized she could not expect to marry Placide since he was promised to another, gave regular free lessons to the granddaughter of a poor man.133

Adele was taught to give half of her excess allowance to the poor; the remaining half was spent not to satisfy her own fantasy, but that of Hermine, the Italian orphan for whom she was caring.134

Sainville found out that doing good for others was the manner in which he pleased Constance the most. Therefore, he had one hundred acres cultivated and had cottages built there for newly-wed couples who lacked funds.135

Upon their release from the cellar, Alphonsine and her mother expressed their gratitude by helping the poor in their vicinity.136 In memory of his son, Valmore transformed a château into a home for two hundred poor children.137

When the Duchesse de La Vallière was given a luxurious house at Versailles in which to live, she sold a box of diamonds which she found there and established a hospital for the aged and founded a school for orphan girls.138 As she became more involved with the King, she

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133 Mme de Genlis, Les Battuecas, I, p. 155.
134 Mme de Genlis, Adele et Théodore, III, p. 59.
135 Mme de Genlis, Les Vœux téméraires, p. 28.
136 Mme de Genlis, Alphonsine, III, p. 120.
137 Mme de Genlis, Le Siège de La Rochelle ou Le Malheur et la conscience (Paris: Maradan, 1808), I, p. 150.
138 Mme de Genlis, La Duchesse de La Vallière, I, p. 240.
realized that "En servant l'humanité je nuis à la morale!" Henceforth she distributed her alms and did charity in the name of the King.¹³⁹

Mademoiselle de La Fayette, a favorite of Louis XIII, inspired the King to be charitable when he found her giving religious instruction to twelve poor children. The King, in turn, gave each child a pension for life.¹⁴⁰ Before taking her vows, Mademoiselle de La Fayette gave her fortune to a friend who had not been able to marry due to lack of finances.¹⁴¹

Célanire, who had wed secretly, regretted having betrayed filial confidence and practiced charity to rectify her fault in part. She gave a dowry to each of the granddaughters of her father's aged gardener.¹⁴²

As a final resort in atoning for an error, entering a religious order was the practice followed by more than one of the characters in Madame de Genlis' works.

The Duchesse de La Vallière, who had borne the King two children, became a Carmelite and spent her last thirty years "au milieu de tant d'austerités."¹⁴³ She took with her from the magnificent palace she had inhabited only her casket to place in her cell.¹⁴⁴

¹³⁹ Ibid., p. 263.
¹⁴⁰ Mme de Genlis, Mademoiselle de La Fayette ou Le Siècle de Louis XIII (Paris, 1813), II, p. 84.
¹⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 214-215.
¹⁴² Mme de Genlis, Les Chevaliers du Cygne, I, p. 188.
¹⁴³ Mme de Genlis, La Duchesse de La Vallière, II, pp. 307-310.
¹⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 305.
As Mademoiselle de La Fayette was entering the Convent of the Filles Sainte-Marie, she looked back and saw only "une mer orageuse parsemée d'écueils, presque inévitables; ..." The only memory she would have of the King in her cell was a wooden stool that she had seen him setting on when he surprised her by going to the cottage of a poor widow whom he had learned Mademoiselle de La Fayette was aiding.

The Comtesse de Rosmond, after disclosing the true parents of her child, left Léocadie in the hands of her adoptive mother and prepared to enclose herself in the Convent of the Ursulines.

... je ne vois plus devant moi qu'un chemin semé de fleurs immortelles, qui ne peuvent se faner et qui n'ont point d'espines!

Gertrude, La Femme philosophe, after an unsuccessful attempt at suicide, confined herself to an austere retreat.

Chercher l'obscurité, l'obtenir et l'aimer, c'est la véritable expiation des crimes causés par l'orgueil.

Edelie, a widow, was a prisoner during the Revolution. Before the death of her husband she had been interested in another whom she was now free to marry. However, while in prison, she vowed to visit the Holy Land before remarrying. While in the Holy Land, she reflected on the relationship she had had with her husband and decided that her

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116 Ibid., p. 236.
118 Mme de Genlis, L'Epouse impertinente par air suivi du Mari Corrupteur et de La Femme philosophe, p. 195.
destiny was to repent and expiate her error. Thus, she, too, pronounced her vows.

Isidore, the atheist who had been unsuccessful in seducing his sister-in-law, became a Trappist and asked that his story be made public.

When Sainville realized that Constance could not return his love, he went to Malta to take up the cross.
PART IV

We have seen that in the majority of instances, Madame de Genlis moralized for those of her own sex. In concluding the discussion of her as a moralist, then, it is fitting to describe the moral qualities and attributes that the Genlis ideal woman would possess in view of her lot in life and the position she was to occupy in the home.

Although the functions to be fulfilled by women and the perfection expected of them were almost superhuman, Madame de Genlis contended that woman's destiny was preferable to man's because she has only "devoirs de sentiment."\(^{153}\) Her honor consists primarily of the purity of her morals,\(^{154}\) while her perfection lies in love of her family and attention to her duties:

... la perfection pour elle est d'aimer ses devoirs, le travail et sa maison, et d'être sans cesse occupée du soin d'apaiser, d'adoucir, de concilier, et d'entretenir l'union et la tranquillité dans sa famille et dans sa société intime; enfin elle doit être dans tous les temps un ange de paix.\(^{155}\)

Her power is only to be delegated to her by her husband whom she must always obey.\(^{156}\) A woman should be educated only so that she can carry out her husband's will and direct her children. A woman should be prevented from entering such professions as that of a professor, or

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\(^{154}\) Ibid., p. 332.

\(^{155}\) Mme de Genlis, Dictionnaire critique..., I, p. 352.

\(^{156}\) Mme de Genlis, Palmyre et Flaminie, II, p. 237.
that of a doctor. For by placing herself before the public, a woman would lose her greatest charm—modesty.\(^{157}\) It was, however, permissible for a woman to become a writer provided she observed certain rules: (1) She should never rush to have her productions appear; (2) All her writing should show a profound respect for religion and for the principles of an austere morality; (3) She should not respond to the critics unless she were falsely quoted.\(^{158}\)

While the implication in regard to Madame de Genlis' heroines was that moral beauty rather than physical beauty comprised their greatest virtue, all the heroines, with only one exception, were described by Madame de Genlis as girls or women possessing great natural physical beauty in addition to the spiritual qualities and personality traits which Madame de Genlis considered the making of a moral woman.

The physical aspects of her heroines' beauty were rarely described in detail; rather, Madame de Genlis chose to say only that she was of a "beauté parfaite,"\(^{159}\) that "sa fraîcheur est celle d'une rose blanche,"\(^{160}\) or, when speaking of her figure, "il n'y en a point de mieux proportionnée."\(^{161}\) The simplicity of her dress completed the


\(^{158}\) Mme de Genlis, *De l'Influence des femmes sur la littérature française, comme protectrices des lettres et comme auteurs; ou Précis de l'histoire des femmes françaises les plus célèbres* (Paris: Maradan, 1811), I, p. xxxviiij-xxxix.

\(^{159}\) Mme de Genlis, *Mademoiselle de Clermont*, p. 3.


\(^{161}\) Ibid.
physical description of the heroine.\textsuperscript{162} It was her virtue which accounted for her true beauty:

\[ \ldots c'est \text{la pureté de son âme qui donne à son regard, à son sourire, à sa physionomie ce charme enchanteur} \ldots \text{.} \textsuperscript{163} \]

She possessed the gift "si précieux pour une femme"—that of pleasing "sans éclat et sans bruit."\textsuperscript{164} Without being pedantic she was a cultivated person who knew how to respond briefly, to the point, and in good taste.\textsuperscript{165} Her hours would be fixed after marriage just as before so that her studies would continue.\textsuperscript{166} Any talents which she possessed (and most Genlis heroines drew, painted, sang, and played one or more instruments) would be used for the "agrément de sa famille."\textsuperscript{167} She was further characterized by her wisdom, piety, and candor and by tenderness towards her parents.\textsuperscript{168} She had as much reason as charm; she was, to sum it up, "paisible, admirée, sans passions, sans faiblesses, heureuse."\textsuperscript{169}

The heroine who lacked physical beauty, but who proved to be perhaps more morally beautiful than the others, was Jeanne de France.

\textsuperscript{162}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{164}Mme de Genlis, \textit{Mademoiselle de La Fayette}, I, p. 23.
\textsuperscript{165}Mme de Genlis, \textit{Les Vœux téméraires}, I, p. 136.
\textsuperscript{166}Mme de Genlis, \textit{Les Mères rivales}, I, p. 191.
\textsuperscript{167}Mme de Genlis, \textit{Sainclair ou La Victime des sciences et des arts} (Paris: Maradan, 1808), p. 3.
\textsuperscript{168}Mme de Genlis, \textit{Les Petits émigrés}, II, p. 363.
\textsuperscript{169}Mme de Genlis, \textit{Mademoiselle de Clermont}, p. 3.
Louis, her husband, who had chosen not to live with her as a spouse, was finally drawn to her by her goodness.

Bonté touchante et naturelle,
Qui ne se démentit jamais!
Elle se cache et répand des bienfaits:
Ah! je la reconnais! c'est elle.170

Besides the charity which she practiced in the name of her husband, Jeanne de France represented a type of Christian generosity on the part of one woman towards another who could legitimately be her worst enemy—namely, the rival for her husband's love. When she became aware of Louis' affection for Anne de Bretagne, she concluded that such a union could be useful to her country and that she must therefore sacrifice her love. Having divorced Louis and having retired to a convent founded by herself, she wrote to the king-to-be:

Vous serez le meilleur des rois, elle sera le modèle des reines... Puis-je être a plaindre en emportant de telles pensées... ma vie entière n'a été qu'un sentiment et qu'une seule pensée dont vous avez été l'unique objet...171

According to Madame de Genlis, Madame de Maintenon was unselfish with her influence on King Louis XIV just as Mademoiselle de La Fayette had been with the favor shown her by King Louis XIII. Madame de Maintenon generously pardoned one who had tried to turn the King against her.172 And, subsequently, she did all in her power to bring Louis XIV back to the Church and to draw him closer to the Queen.173 Mademoiselle de La Fayette requested that Louis XIII recall her rival,

170 Mme de Genlis, Jeanne de France, p. 165.
171 Mme de Genlis, Jeanne de France, pp. 195-196.
172 Mme de Genlis, Madame de Maintenon, I, p. 100.
173 Ibid., pp. 116-117.
Mademoiselle de Hautefort, to the court. She, too, wished to strengthen the bonds between the King and the Queen. When the latter gave birth to an heir, she recognized that the titles and rights of a wife and mother were above all others. She then withdrew from the court to enter a religious order.

One last quality of a Genlis heroine, which illustrates the degree of perfection she tried to achieve, will be mentioned. Pauline, who had suffered unjust claims for sixteen years in spite of her virtuous conduct, triumphed by turning the other cheek. After having been accused of being the mother of an illegitimate daughter whom she had raised and adopted, she learned that the child was the offspring of her husband and another woman. Instead of condemning her husband and her enemies, she gained their respect by her reaction.

... l'heureuse Pauline au milieu de ce groupe intéressant goutoit un bonheur qui la dédommageoit pleinement de seize ans de souffrances.
CHAPTER IV

MADAME DE GENLIS AND THE PHILOSOPHES

Sainte-Beuve classified the last phase of Madame de Genlis' writing career—i.e., under the Restoration—as the one during which she posed as the "adversaire à mort de Voltaire." While it is true that Voltaire was the philosophe most severely criticized by Madame de Genlis, none of the members of the secte encyclopédique, as she called them, escaped her violent attacks. Voltaire was accused by Madame de Genlis of creating the eighteenth century which she considered corrupt:

M. de Voltaire ne pouvait dominer et régner que sur un siècle corrompu, il le formait !

The "frightening" influence which the encyclopédistes had exerted was due, she felt, only to the "prodigious number" of those who belonged to that group. Concerning their collaborated work, L'Encyclopédie, Madame de Genlis wrote that it was:

... le plus volumineux, le plus mal fait & le plus dangereux qu'on ait composé dans aucun siècle.

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1 Sainte-Beuve, p. 30.
3 Mme de Genlis, Les Soupers de la Maréchale de Luxembourg, I, p. 115.
4 Mme de Genlis, Précis de la conduite..., p. 274.
It was Faguet's belief that because Madame de Genlis had con­tended against the philosophy of the eighteenth century throughout forty years, she had been

... depreciated deliberately by a mob of authors, serious, frivolous, violent, satirical, ... and it is from this depreciation, as unjust as many of her own attacks, that we must lift her up a little.  

Monsieur Demonceaux, a lawyer, collected Madame de Genlis' thoughts and maximes on various subjects and dedicated his work to young people in the hope that they would serve as a guide against the influence of the philosophes.

Quand les opinions de la secte philosophique ont bouleversé toutes les têtes; quand une génération presque entière s'est laissée insensiblement entraîner à de faux systèmes, il importe de présenter au moins à celle qui s'élève un guide sur qui l'empêche de s'égarer dans le labyrinthe des passions humaines, ...

We observed in Chapter III that for Madame de Genlis, religion, or to be more specific, Christianity, served as the basis for morality. Voltaire and the rest of the philosophes isolated morality from religion. Morality for the philosophe was:

... the best way to the fulfillment of human nature which in society involves its proper regulation.

5 Harmand, see preface by Faguet, pp. ix-x.


8 Ibid., p. 394.
Morality, according to Madame de Genlis' point of view, was essentially a matter of pleasing God. For most of the philosophes Christian ethics was inefficacious because it was against nature. Madame de Genlis believed that only religion could give man

... des principes assurés, des consolations efficaces, une fermeté inébranlable, la paix de l'âme, & des lumières certaines sur sa destination & des devoirs.

It is therefore to be expected that a cleavage would result between her and the predominating thinkers of the eighteenth century.

The larger number of the philosophes stressed the resemblance of man to animal rather than the superiority of man. To support the fact that the opposite is true, Madame de Genlis wrote:

C'est que l'homme lui-même ne doit pas sa supériorité à sa conformation ... c'est la seule pensée, qui établit cette distance infinie qui se trouve entre l'homme et les animaux.

Works produced by the arts proved, according to Madame de Genlis, that man was more intelligent and therefore superior to the animals. For she believed as Buffon concerning man:

... que son corps n'est pas la partie la plus essentielle de sa nature.

But how inferior, thought Madame de Genlis, the pyramids and the other man-made wonders were compared to the beauty offered by nature. It

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9 Ibid., p. 379.
10 Madame de Genlis, La Religion considérée..., p. 409.
11 Crocker, pp. 81, 98.
12 Madame de Genlis, La Religion considérée..., pp. 20-21.
13 Ibid., p. 19.
14 Ibid., p. 97.
was by studying nature, by reflecting on the "immutable" course of the stars and the perpetuation of life, and by contemplating the marvels of nature that Madame de Genlis proved the existence of God.\textsuperscript{15} The mysteries of religion and of the universe were God's affair and should remain beyond human understanding.\textsuperscript{16} Involvement with metaphysics, then, which was inescapable for the philosophes,\textsuperscript{17} was not of concern to Madame de Genlis.

Madame de Genlis attacked her own century, which she scornfully called "ce siècle philosophique,"\textsuperscript{18} by comparing it to the preceding one. Lauding the auteurs immortels of Louis XIV's time and mocking her contemporaries, she wrote:

\[\ldots\text{ ils n'avoient besoin ni de ménager le vice et d'autoriser les passions, ni d'attaquer la Religion & de renverser tous les principes de la morale.}\textsuperscript{19}\]

The philosophes, she believed, had counted on the superficiality of the public which does not go deeply into anything, and which adopts errors and false ideas as long as they are presented in a "seductive" manner.\textsuperscript{20} She contended that if philosophy is understood to mean the "love of wisdom," an eighteenth century philosophe could not enlighten men and make them better since he did not base his principles on the

\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., p. 8.
\textsuperscript{16}Ibid., p. 87.
\textsuperscript{17}Crocker, p. 3.
\textsuperscript{18}Madame de Genlis, \textit{La Religion considérée...}, p. 375.
\textsuperscript{19}Ibid., p. 253.
\textsuperscript{20}Ibid., p. 263.
The writings of the philosophes had united two things which seemed to Madame de Genlis to be "fort opposées:" Epicurean morality and misanthropy. She did not feel that the eighteenth century had produced anything in literature or art that was superior to the works of the seventeenth century. The seventeenth century, in her opinion, had left admirable models in all the genres despite the fact that it had found no models from the sixteenth century to follow.22

Madame de Genlis, who knew some of the philosophes personally, did not criticize them in only one of her works, La Religion considérée..., but in most of her works. Indeed, it would be difficult to name one work read by the author which did not contain anti-philosophe sentiments.

After spending nine hours with Voltaire at Ferney,23 she formed this opinion of him:

Quand il n'est question ni de la religion, ni de ses ennemis, sa conversation est simple et naturelle, sans nulle prétention, et par consequent (...), parfaitement aimable. ...

L'amour-propre de M. de Voltaire est... singulièremment irritable, ...

Rousseau, whom she saw every day during several months of her life, enjoyed having her play the harp and sing airs from his Devin du village. Her personal attacks on him, however, did not cease even after Rousseau's death. When Eugene and Antonine, the young couple in

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21 Ibid., p. 357.
22 Ibid., p. 375.
23 Madame de Genlis, Les Souvenirs de Félicie I***, p. 198. Of this experience she jested that having arrived too soon, she was sure to have cost Voltaire "une ou deux pages."
Les Voyages poétiques visited Rousseau's tomb and read the inscription—
"Ici repose l'homme de la nature et de la vérité—" Eugene explained to his wife how inappropriate this inscription was.

... et il fut très dénature, car il mit tous ses enfants à l'hôpital des Enfants-Trouvés. ... Au reste, cet homme de la nature avait fixé son domicile dans la rue la plus bruyante de Paris.  

An example of personal vengeance on the part of Madame de Genlis against another of the philosophes may be cited by her action after returning to France during the Restoration. Having moved to the rue Helvétius, she immediately had the name of the street changed to the rue Sainte-Anne which had been its name before the Revolution.  

Of d'Alembert, who had criticized her Theatre à l'usage des jeunes personnes, and who became one of her most ardent enemies upon the publication of Adèle et Théodore, she said that as a man of letters he had "aucun génie, et n'étoit qu'un fort médiocre écrivain."

When Madame de Genlis did not criticize the philosophes personally or directly, she showed in her novels either how the reading of their works had corrupted a certain individual, or how a wise and virtuous person would be wary of their works.

The Comtesse de Lisberg, imbued with the maximes of the philosophes and especially with Diderot's definition of philosophy—"la

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26 Mme de Genlis, Les Voyages poétiques d'Eugène et d'Antonine, p. 127.
27 Ibid.
28 Mme de Genlis, Mémoires inédits..., V, p. 371.
29 Mme de Genlis, Précis de la conduite..., p. 203.
30 Ibid., p. 274.
définition de la gaité et de la volupté, il les appelleroit philosophie—"found herself in prison for failure to pay her debts because of the dissipated life she had been leading."

Linval, another of the prisoners, after reading most of Voltaire's works, finally realized that, with the exception of his tragedies, they were unworthy reading. With that he kindled a fire into which he joyfully threw "tous ces livres corrupteurs." L'Ambitieux also kept the tragedies of Voltaire, but he exchanged the works of Diderot, d'Héreltius, d'Holbach, d'Alembert, and Raynal for works written by their adversaries and for works of seventeenth century writers.

In the short story, La Conversation et le manuscrit, the last advice given by the father to his sons when they were to go to Paris to finish their education was to remember concerning the works of the philosophes that

... ce qui a surtout manqué à ces malheureux écrivains, c'est la probité.

Friends who gathered at the Soupers de la Maréchale de Luxembourg found that fathers had a right to blame the philosophes' works for the perversity of their sons.

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32 Ibid.
33 Ibid., p. 157.
34 Ibid., p. 294.
One who was corrupted not only by the reading of the works of the philosophes—Voltaire, in particular—but by actually meeting them and hearing their ideas first-hand, was Julie, wife of the Mari corrupteur, who soon after his marriage to Julie took her regularly to dine with the philosophes. Here are some of the ideas to which she was exposed and which helped to corrupt her.

Une femme galante est beaucoup plus utile à l'état, en faisant travailler les marchandes de modes et les ouvriers, que la dévote ne peut l'être, en soignant des malades, secourant des pauvres et délivrant des prisonniers.  

La bienfaisance n'est qu'une faiblesse, à moins qu'elle ne serve à l'utilité publique.

Une grande passion est invincible.

Julie soon rejected Christianity to become a deist. Belmont, who later became her lover, was the fils naturel of her husband.

Les livres de ses maîtres l'avoient familiarisé depuis longtemps avec des idées révoltantes d'adultère et d'inceste.

Belmont was not concerned about the fact that he had committed incest for as Rousseau stated in his Discours sur l'inégalité des hommes:

37 Mme de Genlis, L'Epouse impertinente...suivi du Mari corrupteur, p. 223.

38 Ibid., p. 209. Mme de Genlis indicates that this quote is taken from Helvétius' De l'Esprit.

39 Ibid., p. 216.

40 Ibid.

41 Ibid., p. 226.

42 Ibid., p. 253.
"Fais ton bien avec le moindre mal d'autrui qu'il est possible."\(^3\)

Moreover, he felt no filial love or obligation towards his father:

\[\ldots\] un père dont on n'éprouve que des témoignages de haine, toute la distinction qu'on lui doit, c'est de le traiter en ennemi respectable.\(^4\)

Le Mari corrupteur finally realized that all had gone far enough with Julie, but it was too late. When he reproached her for her negligence in dress, she retorted with a Helvétius remark from De l'Esprit:

\[\ldots\] la pudeur n'est qu'un préjugé ou une fausseté, et que même la corruption des mœurs n'est point incompatible avec la grandeur et la félicité d'un état.\(^5\)

After she divorced the Marquis, Belmont assured her that the only conscience was the one inspired "par le temps, par l'exemple, par notre tempérament et par nos réflexions."\(^6\) Even when she was placed in prison during the Revolution where she encountered another mother who tried to bring her back to Christianity, Julie replied with an excerpt from Voltaire's Lettres:

\begin{quote}
La mort n'est rien, l'idée seul en est triste. N'y songeons donc jamais, et vivons au jour la journée; levons-nous en disant: que ferai-je aujourd'hui pour me procurer de l'amusement, c'est à quoi tout se réduit.\(^7\)
\end{quote}

\(^3\)Ibid., p. 261.

\(^4\)Ibid., p. 262. Mme de Genlis took this quote from Les Mœurs by Palissot.

\(^5\)Ibid., p. 297.

\(^6\)Ibid., p. 306. Mme de Genlis took this quote from Voltaire's Dictionnaire philosophique.

\(^7\)Ibid., p. 315.
Unlike Julie, was the Marquis who was invited to the Dîners du Baron d'Holbach. Through his discussions with the Marquis, the Baron hoped to win him over to the side of the philosophes, but all of his attempts proved fruitless. From the outset of the dialogue to the end, the two men disagreed sharply. If the Baron defined a philosophe as a man "without prejudices" and a "friend of wisdom," the Marquis could say that a "friend of wisdom" would know how to master his passions; provided one was not Christian, the Marquis agreed that the philosophes were tolerant "sans aucun effort."

The Baron, who explained that he was neither a deist nor an atheist but a skeptic, found no understanding with the Marquis who believed that

Douter de l'existence de Dieu ou n'y pas croire, revient au même ...

The Marquis attacked all of the philosophes for their formal project of corrupting the morals. For, he asked, had not Helvétius made an apology for adultery in his work De l'Esprit? The Baron then tried to compromise with the Marquis. Be a moralist, but don't attack or offend "des gens redoubtables et pleins de génie." The Marquis, however, preferring the Baron's "estime" rather than his "indulgence," ended the conversation with a cold "Adieu, donc."

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\(1^{\text{b}}\) Amé de Genlis, Les Dîners du Baron d'Holbach, p. 179.
\(1^{\text{g}}\) Ibid., pp. 195-196.
\(5^{\text{0}}\) Ibid., p. 81.
\(5^{\text{1}}\) Ibid., p. 312.
\(5^{\text{2}}\) Ibid.
Madame de Genlis, like many of the seventeenth century writers, e.g., Racine, showed in several of her works that passions which were not controlled by moderation would destroy an individual. Voltaire and d'Holbach defended passions as necessary to life. Diderot joined in the apology for the passions by declaring them the "stimulus of great art and great deeds." Vauvenargues believed that the greatest accomplishments of the mind were due to the passions, while Helvétius considered them "capable of anything." Although a second group of philosophes, including Montesquieu and d'Alembert, concluded that the passions must be "simultaneously encouraged and repressed," Madame de Genlis could agree with none of these viewpoints.

In her work, *La Duchesse de La Vallière*, Madame de Genlis stated the following as one purpose for writing it:

> Je veux peindre ... la funeste influence d'une passion coupable.

When the Duchesse tried to escape from the court to take refuge in a convent, the King pursued her. When he reached her, she was described as "gémisante, égarée, pouvant à peine se soutenir." She then

53 Crocker, p. 231.
54 Ibid.
55 Ibid., p. 232.
56 Ibid.
57 Ibid., p. 238.
59 Ibid., p. 149.
allowed herself to be taken back as a "victim." When she later saw one of the children of Louis XIV and Madame de Montespan, she became "jalouse comme amante et comme mère" because that child resembled the King while hers were like herself. With Olivier the passion of jealousy caused him to kill his wife, Gelanire. Upon seeing her with another young man—who was a brother-in-law whom he had never seen before—Oliver stabbed her and then tried to kill himself.

Antonia, the mother of twin daughters, exalted their mutual attachment to such a point that one sister died when she learned that her twin wished to marry and leave her. It was not long before the surviving twin died, and her death hastened that of their mother.

One could not, according to Madame de Genlis, love passionately and faithfully at the same time. Edmond could not love the Femme philosophe because her type of love exhausted itself quickly. When he married the widow, Madame Melrose, he found that the type of love she had was controlled and steadfast. This was the only form of love that could "embellir une femme et attacher un époux." Julie, after her

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60 Ibid.
61 Ibid., II, p. 224.
64 Mme de Genlis, L'Épouse impertinente... suivi du Mari Corrupteur et de La Femme philosophe, p. 196.
corruption, was incapable of true love since it was impossible for her to conceive that one could love with "fidelity" without loving with "furor." Isidore, the atheist who substituted his reason for the desire to "satisfy all his passions," found that one crime led him to commit another. Had he not turned to religion—he became a Trappist—he would have been destroyed by his passions.

A summary of Madame de Genlis' attack on the philosophes in general may be found in Les Soupers de la Maréchale de Luxembourg. They wanted to fathom what was meant to be impenetrable; they decided that there was no God in spite of not knowing how they themselves had come into existence, how they moved, how they reasoned; each one established a new cult at his pleasure in the hope of converting others to his "opinion désolante." In this state of delirium where everything was calculated, concluded, and known, they had reached a point of doubting the surest things; they scorned or forgot their duties; they extinguished "bons sentiments," shriveled the heart, and confused the mind so that any idea of morality and virtue was lost. As a result, they had become either useless or harmful to society; to themselves they were odious and obtrusive. Since they no longer saw but boredom and disgust in life, they had recourse to suicide as a deliverance from their interior conflicts or as a deliverance from having to live with oneself.  

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65Ibid.: Le Mari corrupteur, p. 281.
67Mme de Genlis, Les Soupers de la Maréchale de Luxembourg, I, pp. 223-224.
CONCLUSION

In considering as a whole the works by Madame de Genlis read by the author, several aspects relating to her as a writer may be mentioned.

Because of the originality of many of her ideas, Madame de Genlis would perhaps have been more successful as a writer if she had concentrated on fewer works. As Faguet wrote, "There are too many of them." Harmand, too, agreed that her "fluency carries her away," and, as a result, she did not go deeply enough into anything.

In most instances Madame de Genlis followed the rules which she prescribed for others as writers. For example, a work should not be written solely for amusement; it should have a specific purpose. Simply by scanning the preface to any of her works, we find that Madame de Genlis' purpose was either didactic or moralistic or, as in most cases, both. One might rightfully wonder, however, if some of her works, in spite of their religious and moral sentiments, were not dangerous for the adolescents or young married couples for whom they were destined, e.g., Les Athées consequens, Les Mères rivales, La Duchesse de La Vallière, and others.

The fact that she expressed a didactic or moralistic purpose for her various works did not mean that Madame de Genlis did not resort to romantic devices and ideas in her novels. In Sainte-Beuve's opinion,

\[1\text{Harmand, see preface by Faguet, p. vi.}\]
\[2\text{Harmand, p. 406.}\]

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"le romanesque" was one of the essential traits of her character, and one of the qualities which spoiled many of her works. The incredible history of Alphonsine's birth and up-bringing in the cellar, the anonymous étrennes sent to Leocadie by her real mother, one of the Mères rivales, the messages sent via the floating roses, and finally Leocadie's encounter with her mother who remains mysteriously veiled, and the plotted exchange of babies in Les Athees conséquens offer but a few examples of the romanesque found in Madame de Genlis.

Another common characteristic of her writings is frequent and excessive sensiblerie or sentimentality. The conversations between the mothers and their daughters were often too emotional; both old and young, women and men, were easily brought to tears. When Eugénie sacrifices the money she has received for a ball dress to give to an elderly, poor man, she exclaims:

"Que sa figure est imposante! Soixante-quinze ans, quel âge vénérable! ... Durant une si longue carrière, que de fatigues il a supportées!"

The old man receives the money, but he is unable to respond because...

... ses pleurs lui coupèrent la parole ...

Madame de Genlis' style also tends to be idealistic and précieux, especially if she intended at that particular moment to moralize about one of her favorite themes:

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3Sainte-Beuve, p. 22.

4Ibid., p. 29.

5Ibid., p. 278.

6Ibid., p. 281.
... on trouva une douceur inexprimable à se reposer sous une épaisse feuillée et à se coucher sur de la paille bien fraîche. Le lendemain matin, on se trouva dans la plus parfaite santé.7

At the same time one can appreciate the pure, precise, frank, and flowing qualities of Madame de Genlis' style of writing which Bonhomme summarized as being "eminently French."8

One of the genres which was first used in the eighteenth century—the epistolary novel— was also used by her. Adèle et Théodore, Les Mères rivales, Les Petits émigrés, and Palmyre et Flaminie are all novels ès lettres.

The novel genre employed most often by Madame de Genlis was the historical novel, e.g., Madame de Maintenon, La Duchesse de La Valliere, Mademoiselle de La Fayette, Jeanne de France, Annales de la vertu, Histoire de Henri le grand, Mademoiselle de Clermont, and Belisaire. However, having chosen a person or subject from history rarely meant that the details found in her novel would be faithful to history. Madame de Genlis would avow in the preface, for example, of a particular work that she had imagined the details.

We have seen that Madame de Genlis also tried her talent in verse, e.g., Herbier moral, and in drama, e.g., Théâtre à l'usage... and Théâtre de Société. She also attempted literary criticism, e.g.,

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7Ibid., II: Michel et Jacqueline, p. 269.
8Bonhomme, p. 78.
9The English writer, Samuel Richardson, with Pamela in 1740, was first to adopt the device of telling his novels through letters. See, The Encyclopedia Americana, XX.
De l'Influence des femmes sur la littérature française, and other works unavailable to the author.

Sainte-Beuve compared Madame de Genlis, as a writer, with Mademoiselle de Scudéry, and Harmand compared her with Madame de Maintenon. Faguet placed her between these two women for he thought she ranked in the "front row of women of letters of the second class." Bonhomme compared Madame de Genlis with two other women authors whom she had criticized: Madame de Staël and Madame de Cottin. In his opinion she did not have the "éclat" nor the "vigueur de pensée" of Madame de Staël, nor the "sensibilité" of Madame de Cottin. However, she won over both of them by her ability to produce abundantly without exhausting her ideas.

In the author's opinion, Madame de Genlis' greatest merit lay in the ability she possessed as a keen observer of the society of her time, her good sense, her interesting moments as a child psychologist, and her understanding of human nature.

10 Harmand, see preface by Faguet, p. x.
11 Ibid.
12 Bonhomme, p. 78.
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