be proved by her own confessions of unhappiness if not of quarrel when they were together) ; her unhesitating blindness to anything but her daughter’s interest (manifested especially in the part she took in most unjustifiable attempts of Madame de Grignan to secure her stepdaughters’ dowries and to force themselves into a convent) ; her culpable tolerance of her son’s youthful follies on the one hand and the uneven balance which she held in money matters between him and his sister on the other ; the apparent levity with which she speaks of the sufferings of Madame de Brinvilliers, of galley slaves, of the peasantry, &c. ; and the freedom of language which she uses herself and tolerates from others, —have all been cast up against her. Here the before-mentioned historic estimate sufficiently disposes of some of the objections, a little common sense of others, and a very little charity of the rest. If too much love felt by a mother towards a daughter be a fault, then certainly Madame de Sévigné was one of the most offending souls that ever lived ; but it will hardly, even with the injustice which like all excessive affection it brought in its traiu, be held damning. Indeed, the guilty lady was evidently quite aware of her weakness in this respect, and it is one of the most noteworthy things of her literary capacity that, excessive as the weakness is, it does not dis­gust or weary the reader. The singular confidences which Madame de Sévigné received from her son and transmitted to her daughter would even at the present day be less surprising in France than in England. They are only an instance, adjusted to the manners of the time, of the system of sacrificing everything to the mainten­ance of confidence between mother and son, to which the almost invariable, and to foreigners sometimes rather ludicrous, but certainly not unamiable, adoration of Frenchmen for their mothers is due. Here too, as well as in reference to the immediately kindred charge of crudity of language, and to that of want of sympathy with suffer­ing, especially with the sufferings of the people, it is especially necessary to remember of what generation Madame de Sévigné was and what were her circumstances. That generation was the generation which Madame de Rambouillet endeavoured with some success to polish and humanize, but which had barely recovered the hardening influences of the religious and civil wars when it was plunged into the Fronde. It was the generation to which belong the almost incredible yet trustworthy *Historiettes* of Tallemaut, and in which, when she herself had already reached middle life, Bussy Rabutin’s *Histoire Amoureuse* exposed him indeed to powerful resentments but did not make him lose all caste as a gentleman and man of honour. It is absurd to expect at such a time and in private letters the delicacy proper to quite different times and circumstances. Moreover, as to the charge of inhumanity not only do these considerations apply but there is more to be

pleaded than mere extenuating circumstances. It is not true that Madame de Sévigné shows no sympathy with the oppression of the Bretons ; it is very far from true, though her incurable habit of humorous expression—of *Rabutinage,* as she says—makes her occa­sionally use light phrases about the matter. But it is in fact as unreasonable to expect modern political views from her (and it is from certain modern political standpoints that the charge is usually made) as it is to expect her to observe the canons of a 19th-century propriety. On the whole she may be as fairly and confidently acquitted of any moral fault, save the one peccadillo of loving her daughter too exclusively and blindly, as she may be acquitted of all literary faults whatsoever. Her letters are wholly, what her son-in-law said well of her after her death, *compagnons délicieux*;and, far from faultless as Madame de Grignan was, none of her faults is more felt by the reader than her long visits to her mother, during which the letters ceased.

The bibliographic history of Madame de Sévigné’s letters is of considerable interest in itself, and is moreover typical of much other contemporary literary history. The 17th century was *par excellence* the century of privately circulated literature, and from Madame de Sévigné herself we know that her own letters were copied and handed about, sometimes under specified titles, as early as 1673. None of them, however, were published until her cor­respondence with Bussy Rabutin appeared, in his *Memoirs and Correspondence,* partly in the year of her death, partly next year. The remainder were not printed in any form for thirty years. Then between 1725 and 1728 appeared no less than seven un­authorized editions, containing more or fewer additions from the copies which had been circulated privately. The bibliography of these is complicated and curious, and must be sought in special works (see especially the *Grands Écrivains* edition, vol. xi.). They have, however, abiding interest chiefly because they stirred up Madame de Simiane, the writer’s only living representative, to give an authorized version. This appeared under the care of the Chevalier de Perrin in 6 vols. (Paris, 1734-37). It contained only the letters to Madame de Grignan, and these were subjected to editing rather careful than conscientious, the results of which were never thoroughly removed until quite recently. In the first place, Madame de Simiane, who possessed her mother’s replies, is said to have burnt the whole of these from religious motives ; this phrase is explained by Madame de Grignan’s Cartesianism, which is

supposed to have led her to expressions alarming to orthodoxy. In the second, scruples partly having to do with the susceptibilities of living persons, partly concerning Jansenist and other prejudices, made her insist on numerous omissions. Thirdly, and most un­fortunately, the change of taste seems to have required still more numerous alterations of style and language, such as the substitu­tion of “Ma Fille” for Madame de Sévigné’s usual and charming “Ma Bonne,” and many others. Perrin followed this edition up in 1751 with a volume of supplementary letters not addressed to Madame de Grignan, and in 1754 published his last edition of the whole, which was long the standard (8 vols., Paris). During the last half of the 18th century numerous. editions of the whole or parts appeared with important additions, such as that of 1756, giving for the first time the letters to Pomponne on the Fouquet trial; that of 1773, giving letters to Moulceau ; that of 1775, giving for the first time the Bussy letters separate from his memoirs, &c. An important collected edition of all these fragments, by the Abbé de Vauxcelles, appeared in 1801 (Paris, An IX. ) in 10 vols. ; five years later Gouvelle (Paris, 1806, 8 vols.) introduced the improvement of chronological order ; this was reprinted in 12 vols. (Paris, 1819) with some more unpublished letters which had separately appeared meanwhile. In the same year appeared the first edition of M. de Monmerqué. From that date continual additions of unpublished letters were made, in great part by the same editor, and at last the whole was remodelled on manuscript copies (the originals unfor­tunately are available for but few) in the edition called Des Grands Écrivains, which M. de Monmerqué began, but which owing to his death had to be finished by MM. Regnier, Paul Mesnard, and Sommer (Paris, 1862-1868). This, which entirely supersedes all others (even a handsome edition published during its appearance by M. Silvestre de Sacy), consists of twelve volumes of text, notes, &c., two volumes of lexicon, and an album of plates. It contains all the published letters to and from Madame de Sévigné, with the replies where they exist, with all those letters to and from Madame de Simiane (many of which had been added to the main body) that contain any interest. The sole fault to be found with this excellent edition is the omission to add to each volume a table of contents giving each letter as it comes with a brief abstract of its contents. To it, however, must be added two volumes (printed uniformly) of *Lettres Inédites,* published by M. Ch. Capmas in 1876 and containing numerous variants and additions from a MS. copy discovered in an old curiosity shop at Dijon. Of less elaborate and costly editions that in the collection Didot (6 vols., Paris, v.d. ) is by far the best, though, in common with all others except the *Grands Écrivains* edition, it contains an adulterated text.

Works on Madame de Sévigné are innumerable. The biography by Paul Mesnard is nearly exhaustive, but the most elaborate biographical book is that of Walckenaer (3d ed., Paris, 1856, 5 vols.), to which should be added the remark­able *Histoire de Mme. de Sévigné* of Aubenas (Paris and St Petersburg, 1842). In English an excellent little book by Miss Thackeray (Mrs Ritchie), Edinburgh and London, 1881, may be recommended. Most of the editions have portraits more or fewer. (G. SA.)

SEVILLE, a Spanish province—one of the eight into which Andalusia is divided—and formerly one of the four Moorish kingdoms, is bounded on the S. by Malaga and Cadiz, on the W. by Huelva, on the N. by Badajoz, and on the E. by Cordova. The superficial area is 5429 square miles, and in 1877 the population numbered 505,291. Northwards the province is broken up by low spurs of the Sierra Morena, the summits of which in the extreme north rise to a considerable height ; but in the southern and larger half the ground is flat and fertile, and the only mountainous part is the frontier line formed by the Sierra de Ronda. The Guadalquivir traverses the province from north-east to south-west and receives in its course the waters of several streams, the chief being the Genil and the Guadaira on the left, and the Guadalimar to the right. The province is one of the most productive and flourishing in Spain, and grows all kinds of grain and vegetables. Oil and wine, oranges and olives, are among its chief exports, while tobacco, leather, paper, spirits, chocolate, textile fabrics of silk and wool, soap, glass, and earthen­ware are amongst its manufactures. Sheep and oxen, horses and asses, are reared on its pastures ; and in the mountainous districts there are copper, silver, lead, iron, coal, and salt mines, and quarries of chalk and marble. Commerce has made great strides of late years owing to the opening up of the country by railways, and foreign capital has developed the natural resources of the district. The province is divided for administrative purposes into fourteen partidos judiciales and ninety-eight ayuntamientos,