fought well he was not an enthusiastic soldier, and was constantly and not often fortunately in love. He followed his father into the nets of Ninon de l'Enelos, and was Racine’s rival with Mademoi­selle Champmeslé. The way in which his mother was made con­fidante of these discreditable and not very successful loves is characteristic both of the time and of the country. In 1669 M. de Grignan, who had previously been lieutenant-governor of Languedoc, was transferred to Provence. The governor-in­chief was the young duke of Vendôme. But at this time he was a boy, and he never really took up the government, so that Grignan for more than forty years was in effect viceroy of this important province. His wife rejoiced greatly in the part of vice-queen; but their peculiar situation threw on them the expenses without the emoluments of the office, so that the Grignan money affairs hold a larger place in Madame de Sévigné’s letters than might perhaps be wished.

In 1671 Madame de Sévigné, with her son, paid a visit to Les Rochers, which is memorable in her history and in literature. The states of Brittany were convoked that year at Vitré. This town being in the immediate neighbourhood of Les Rochers, Madame de Sévigné’s usually quiet life at her country-house was diversified by the necessity of entertaining the governor, the due de Chaulnes, of appearing at his receptions and so forth. All these matters are recorded in her letters, together with much good-natured raillery on the country ladies of the neighbourhood and their ways. She remained at Les Rochers during the whole summer and autumn of 1671, and did not return to Paris till late in November. The country news is then succeeded by news of the court. At the end of the next year, 1672, one great wish of her heart was gratified by paying a visit to her daughter in her vice-royalty of Provence. Madame de Grignan does not seem to have been very anxious for this visit—perhaps because, as the letters show in many cases, the exacting affection of her mother was somewhat too strong for her own colder nature, perhaps because she feared such a witness of the ruinous extra­vagance which characterized the Grignan household. But her mother remained with her for nearly a year, and did not return to Paris till the end of 1673. During this time we have (as is usually the case during these Provençal visits and the visits of Madame de Grignan to Paris) some letters addressed to Madame de Sévigné, but comparatively few from her. A visit of the second class was the chief event of 1674. 1675 brought with it the death of Turenne (of which Madame de Sévigné has given a noteworthy account, characteristic of her more ambitious but not perhaps her more successful manner), and also serious disturbances in Brittany. Notwithstanding these it was necessary for Madame de Sévigné to make her periodical visit to Les Rochers. She reached the house in safety, and the friendship of Chaulnes protected her both from violence and from the exactions which the miserable province underwent as a punishment for its resistance to excessive and unconstitutional taxation. No small part of her letters is occupied by these affairs.

The year 1676 saw several things important in Madame de Sévigné’s life. For the first time she was seriously ill—it would appear with rheumatic fever—and she did not thoroughly recover till she had visited Vichy. Her letters from this place are among her best, and picture life at a 17th-century watering-place with unsurpassed vividness. In this year, too, took place the trial and execution of Madame de Brinvilliers. This event figures in the letters, and the references to it are among those which have given occasion to unfavourable comments on Madame de Sévigné’s character. In the next year, 1677, she moved into the Hôtel Carnavalet, a house which still remains and is inseparably con­nected with her memory, and she had the pleasure of welcoming the whole Grignan family to it. They remained there a long time; indeed nearly two years seem to have been spent by Madame de Grignan partly in Paris and partly at Livry. The return to Provence took place in October 1678, and next year Madame de Sévigné had the grief of losing La Rochefoucauld, the most eminent and one of the most intimate of her close personal friends and constant associates. In 1680 she again visited Brittany, but the close of that year saw her back in Paris

to receive another and even longer visit from her daughter, who remained in Paris for four years. Before the end of the last year of this stay (in February 1684) Charles de Sévigné, after all his wandering loves, and after more than one talked-of alliance, was married to a young Breton lady, Jeanne Marguerite de Mauron, who had a considerable fortune. In the arrangements for this marriage Madame de Sévigné practically divided all her fortune between her children (Madame de Grignan of course receiving an unduly large share), and reserved only part of the life interest. The greed of Madame de Grignan nearly broke her brother’s marriage, but it was finally concluded, and proved happy in a somewhat singular fashion. Both Sévigné and his wife became deeply religious, and at first Madame de Sévigné found their household (for she gave up Les Rochers to them) not at all lively. But by degrees she grew fond of her daughter-in- law. During this year she spent a considerable time in Brittany, first on business, afterwards on a visit to her son, and partly it would appear for motives of economy. But Madame de Grignan continued with only short absences to inhabit Paris, and the mother and daughter were practically in each other’s company until 1688. The proportion of letters therefore that we have for the decade 1677-1687 is much smaller than that which represents the decade preceding it; indeed the earlier period contains the great bulk of the whole correspondence. In 1687 the Abbé de Coulanges, Madame de Sévigné’s uncle and good angel, died, and in the following year the whole family were greatly excited by the first campaign of the young marquis de Grignan, Madame de Grignan's only son, who was sent splendidly equipped to the siege of Philippsbourg. In the same year Madame de Sévigné was present at the Saint-Cyr performance of *Esther,* and some of her most amusing descriptions of court ceremonies and experiences date from this time. 1689 and 1690 were almost entirely spent by her at Les Rochers with her son; and on leaving him she went across France to Provence. There was some ex­citement during her Breton stay, owing to the rumour of an English descent, on which occasion the Breton militia was called out, and Charles de Sévigné appeared for the last time as a soldier; but it came to nothing. 1691 was passed at Grignan and other places in the south, but at the end of it Madame de Sévigné returned to Paris, bringing the Grignans with her; and her daughter stayed with her till 1694. The year 1693 saw the loss of two of her oldest friends—Bussy Rabutin, her faithless and troublesome but in his own way affectionate cousin, and Madame de la Fayette, her life-long companion, and on the whole perhaps her best and wisest friend. Another friend almost as intimate, Madame de Lavardin, followed in 1694. Madame de Sévigné spent but a few months of this latter year alone, and followed her daughter to Provence. She never revisited Brittany after 1691. Two important marriages with their preparations occupied most of her thoughts during 1694-1695. The young marquis de Grignan married the daughter of Saint-Amant, an immensely rich financier; but his mother’s pride, ill-nature and bad taste (she is said to have remarked in full court that it was necessary now and then to “ manure the best lands, ” referring to Saint-Amant's wealth and low birth, and the Grignan’s nobility) made the marriage not very happy. His sister Pauline, who, in the impossibility of dowering her richly, had a narrow escape of the cloister, made a marriage of affection with the marquis de Simiane, and eventually became the sole representa­tive and continuator of the families of Grignan and Sévigné.

Madame de Sévigné survived these alliances but a very short time. During an illness of her daughter she herself was attacked by smallpox in April 1696, and she died on the 17th of that month at Grignan, and was buried there. Her idolized daughter was not present during her illness. But in her will Madame de Sévigné still showed her preference for this not too grateful child, and Charles de Sévigné accepted his mother’s wishes in a letter showing the good-nature which he had never lacked. But the two families were, except as has been said for Madame de Simiane and her posterity, to be rapidly broken up. Charles de Sévigné and his wife had no children, and he himself, after occupying some public posts (he was king’s lieutenant in Brittany