MADAME DE WARENS.

In his old age Rousseau wrote that the spot in the little town of Annecy where, as a youth of sixteen, he first met Madame de Warens ought to be surrounded by railings of gold, and only approached kneeling by those who revere the monuments of human salvation. Extravagant as that utterance may seem to us, we cannot doubt the magnitude of an influence which left so profound an impression even half a century afterwards, and Rousseau's estimate of his indebtedness has been endorsed by many of his modern critics. As Michelet put it, Rousseau's genius was born of Madame de Warens.

It is impossible not to feel curiosity concerning the woman who so largely moulded the man who himself was one of the chief moulding forces, not only of his own times but of the whole modern world. Every reader of the *Confessions* remembers Madame de Warens, but vivid as is Rousseau's account of her it is still imperfect and misleading. Rousseau's own knowledge of the woman whom he worshipped more or less throughout life, the real heroine of his *Nouvelle Heloise*, was indeed, as regards her history, in many respects less complete than is ours to-day. It is only within recent years that the investigations of a few men of letters and research in Switzerland and in Savoy,—more especially M. de

Montet as regards Madame de Warens' early life in the Vaud country, M. Mugnier concerning her later life in Savoy, and M. Ritter as to her religious opinions and their sources,—have finally made that history clear.

Francoise-Louise de la Tour belonged to the baronial family who possessed Chatelard, with its picturesque old castle on the hill-side overlooking the lake of Geneva, near Vevey, a familiar sight to the foreign colony now dwelling near by at Montreux and Clarens. She was born in March, 1699, the second of three children, and the only survivor. Her mother died in childbirth when Louise was still an infant, and she was educated by one of her father's sisters, who became a second mother to her. Although her father married again she remained with her aunts at Le Basset, near Chatelard, a comfortable but rather humble looking house, with a wooden gallery outside, on to which the doors and windows of the upper floor opened. This house, which was situated on the hillside some distance above the lake, and enjoyed a wide and beautiful outlook from amid its vines and trees, was destroyed a few years ago. There still remain a few of the splendid chestnuts which once formed a wood called "le bosquet de Clarens," celebrated by Rousseau in the *Nouvelle Heloïes*, and now often called "le bosquet de Julie." Madame de Warens in character, tastes, and feelings corresponds to Julie, although the heroine of the novel lives on a somewhat more magnificent scale. This was so not only because the scenes of the real girl's life had been passed through Rousseau's exalted imagi-

nation, but also because Madame de Warens herself was never absolutely accurate, even with Rousseau, in regard to the details of her early life, and was always willing to magnify somewhat the events of the past, and to leave out of account anything which might seem unfavourable to herself. It is a reticence which, like much else in her life, has not in the event proved altogether wise, for, as we shall see, it has led Rousseau, by trusting to his imagination or to gossip, to defame unduly the woman to whom he owed so much, and whom he so sincerely worshipped.

We know, however, all the essential facts of the young Francoise-Louise's life, and it is not difficult to reconstruct it. At that time it was usual for the rural aristocracy to live in this simple fashion, and they were not therefore the less considered. The ladies of Le Basset were on intimate terms with Magny, an old man of high character who enjoyed great esteem in the Pays de Vaud, although he was the leader of the pietistic movement, by no means an orthodox position in a strictly Calvinistic land. Magny, however, was in touch with the great German mystical movement of the eighteenth century, which sought to bring a new freedom, a new emotional depth, into religion. The Calvinism of her native land, we may be sure, never had the slightest attraction for Madame de Warens, but for the pietism which Magny represented, although she never strictly adopted it, she had a natural affinity. Its indifference to forms, its belief in instinct and impulse, its tendency to sum up its doctrines in the formula

embodied in Saint Augustine's saying: Love and do what you like—all these things would certainly appeal to Madame de Warens. In order to understand her attitude we may profitably re-read the "Bekenntnisse einer schonen Seele" in *Wilhelm Meister.* Goethe has here very faithfully recorded the inner life of a woman who fell under the influence of Moravian pietism. Madame de Warens would also have said, like the woman of the "beautiful soul," "Nothing appears to me in the form of a law; it is an impulse which leads me; I follow my feelings and know as little of restraint as of repentance." But the "beautiful soul" added that the impulse which led her always led her right, and that Madame de Warens could scarcely have ventured to claim; the elements of her nature were less happily tempered. But the reality of her pietism can scarcely be doubted; it remained rudimentary, but it so genuinely harmonised with her own temperament that it is probable she never realised how much of it was due to the atmosphere which Magny had created around her in youth. It would seem that she never mentioned his name to Rousseau, yet the religious ideas she taught him were those she had learnt from Magny. On the latter point Rousseau's evidence is clear. It is these German religious influences, filtered first through Magny, and then through Madame de Warens, which reappear in the "Vicaire Savoyard," and so often elsewhere in Rousseau's writings, as a mighty force which was to sweep away the cold deism of that age, and may indeed almost be said to have become in their later

transformations a part of the modern spirit.

Francoise-Louise was rather spoilt by her aunts who were charmed by her pretty face, her precociously alert intelligence, and the independence which was from the first a note of her character. She had an eager thirst for knowledge, hardly satisfied by the modicum of instruction in which a girl's education consisted, and she gratified her desires by devouring the medical and natural history books which had belonged to her grandfather, a doctor. She thus acquired that taste for chemistry and medicine which never forsook her, and later induced her to urge Rousseau to become a doctor. For housewifely duties, however, and for domestic economy, all the efforts of her aunts and her step-mother could never impart to her any aptitude, and there lay a chief source of the misfortunes she was plunged into throughout life. She lived mostly with the peasant girls of the neighbourhood; she thus acquired, and retained, the love of being surrounded by inferiors, a delight in their admiration and subservience.

She was still only a child of fourteen at her marriage in 1713, to a soldier of good family, twelve years older than herself, M. de Loys, who took the name of De Vuarens (more commonly De Warens), after a village of which he had the lordship. He was violently in love with his young wife. She brought him a *dot* equal in modern money to something over £7,000, and Magny was appointed her trustee, replacing the previous trustees who had disagreed over the marriage settlement. The young couple settled at Vevey, whither many French

Huguenots had migrated after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and spent the autumns at Chailly,—in the centre of the vine district which was part of the bride's *dot*,—in order to oversee the grape harvest. In the *Nouvelle Heloïse* the petty lordship of Vuarens is magnified into the barony of D'Etanges, and little Chailly figures as the domain of Clarens.

It is in 1715, when she was still but a girl of sixteen, that Madame first steps into public life and reveals clearly her vivid impetuous personality. By marriage she had lost her rights of citizenship at Vevey, and her husband possessed no such rights there; consequently she was unable to sell her wine in the town, for that was a privilege reserved to legalised citizens. She induced her husband to apply for these rights. But in the meanwhile, without waiting for the results of the application, —and probably without consulting her husband, whose conduct never failed in correctness,—she forthwith began to sell her wine in the town. This little episode cannot be passed over, because it is a revelation of the woman's whole nature throughout life. Her position in the town made the result of the application certain, but her eager impetuosity could never wait for events to ripen; her plans must always be carried out at once, recklessly, even, if need be, unscrupulously. The results, of course, were not usually happy. They were not so on the present occasion. The town council felt called upon to reprimand M. de Warens and to threaten more severe measures. Young Madame's pride was hurt, all the more so, doubtless, because she was in the wrong, and feeling her social

position shaken, she agreed to an old wish of her husband to settle at Lausanne,—persuading him, however, first to secure the Vevey citizenship,—in the course of 1718. De Warens was a native of Lausanne and was received with distinction. But living proved expensive at Lausanne,—as, in Madame de Warens' experience, indeed, it proved everywhere,—and the young wife persuaded her husband to secure further resources from his father. This led to quarrels and unpleasantness, and as Madame felt no attachment to Lausanne, they returned to Vevey where the husband received a high official position, and the wife distinguished herself by her generosity and philanthropy.

At this point we have to consider a difficult and delicate question which it is impossible to pass over. Rousseau states definitely in the *Confessions* that young Madame de Warens was seduced in Switzerland by a certain M. de Tavel, who to effect his object had first persuaded her that morality and modesty were merely conventions, and that she afterwards, "it is said," became the mistress of a Swiss minister, one Perret. But M. de Montet and M. Mugnier, the two chief authorities on Madame de Warens' life, throw some doubt on this statement. The question arises: How did Rousseau know? In after years he went to Vevey and the neighbourhood; during his stay there he associated mainly with the society that met in the parlours of small inns, and while such gossip as he might hear there concerning a woman who had abandoned both her husband and her religion, would certainly

be scandalous, it would certainly also be worthless. It is known that even up to her final departure from Switzerland, Madame de Warens enjoyed the highest consideration, and as a rigid puritanical inquisition then ruled at Vevey, this could not possibly have been the case had anything been publicly known of such episodes as Rousseau tells of, for in that case she would have been called before the bar of the Consistory. Her husband, in the end, had much fault to find, —with her fondness for industrial enterprises, her extravagant generosity, the vanity that led her into exaggeration and falsehood, her independence and dislike of advice, her leaning to pietism, the ease with which she made acquaintance with people who flattered her, he even called her at last "an accomplished comedian," — but he never hinted that he suspected her of infidelity. If, therefore, rumours of immorality afterwards gathered around the name of the apostate and fugitive, they could scarcely have proceeded from any reliable source. We must fall back on the supposition that Rousseau's statements are founded on the confidences of Madame de Warens herself. But here we have to remember the unquestionable fact, clearly to be seen in the *Confessions*, that, even with Rousseau, Madame de Warens was never communicative regarding those matters in her personal life, however remote, which might show her in an unfavourable light. It must be added that neither De Tavel nor Perret are unknown persons; the former was a colonel, an old friend of De Warens, but very seldom at Vevey though a native of that

place; the latter was a clergyman, twenty-five years older than Madame de Warens, and a man of high position and unspotted reputation. It seems to me most reasonable to conclude that Rousseau's statements must be regarded as an effort of constructive imagination, founded on slight data which seemed to him sufficient basis for an episode enabling him to explain Madame de Warens' character, but which, in the light of our fuller knowledge to-day, cannot be unreservedly accepted. It is probable enough that De Tavel on his visits to Vevey brought a knowledge of the new revolutionary moral maxims of Paris which the intelligent and inquisitive young woman was interested to learn, and that eventually these maxims mingled with the pietistic teaching of Magny—in a way that venerable teacher would have been far from approving—to prepare her for that indifference to conventional moral considerations which her conduct subsequently showed. But that De Tavel himself sought to teach and apply these maxims may well have been an ingenious supposition by which Rousseau sought to supplement the reticence of his informant. Had De Tavel been the cynical libertine which Rousseau's statement implies, his intimate friend, De Warens, would scarcely have regarded him as a fit associate for his wife. We know that in several cases Rousseau has, on altogether inadequate grounds, attributed acts of early misconduct to other people, whom he highly esteemed, including the original of the Vicaire Savoyard, and it must not unduly surprise us that he has done so in the case of Madame de Warens. That

he himself was a little uncertain about his statement as to De Tavel is suggested by the fact that he coupled it with the quite wanton rumour about Perret. De Tavel has so often served, even in the hands of the most serious historians, as a stock example of the depravity of the eighteenth century, that it is time to insist that the one episode by which his name survives is quite probably a legend. Statements of the kind which Rousseau attributes to De Tavel were often made during the eighteenth century by philosophers in the seclusion of their studies; one may be permitted to doubt whether they ever proved dangerous even in the eighteenth century. "On s'amuse de l'esprit d'un amant," remarks Madame de Lursay in Crebillon's *Egarements du Coeur* a few years later, "mais ce n'est pas lui qui persuade: son trouble, le difficulté qu'il trouve à s'exprimer, le désordre de ses discours, voilà ce qui le rend à craindre!"

We now reach the circumstances that led up to the central episode in the life of Madame de Warens—her abandonment of her home and her religion. In 1724 a young Frenchman, Elie Laffon, the son of a refugee French Protestant minister, had arrived at Vevey, and, in accordance with the industrial traditions of the Huguenots, he proposed to start a manufactory of silk stockings. Madame de Warens, who had once been the pupil of Laffon's sister, soon heard of the scheme and entered into it with enthusiasm. She was, as we have seen, attracted to business enterprises at a very early age, and she remained so to the end, the ardour of her commercial scheming

being always rendered more acute by her continual lack of money. Laffon needed assistance and capital, and without asking the advice of her husband Madame engaged herself to take control of the whole business. De Warens opposed the scheme from the first, but his wife's influence over him was still great; she induced him, against his own better judgment, to borrow money in all directions and to make many sacrifices. It is needless to follow the history of the silk stocking manufactory, now known in all its details; the issue could not be doubtful. Madame had no business capacity, and she even appropriated some of the money obtained for the factory to her own personal uses; Laffon, who had equally little business capacity, seems to have followed her example. Things went from bad to worse, but Madame was too proud to confess failure. At last the strain began to affect her nerves. In 1725 she had to go across the lake to Aix-les-Bains for treatment and distraction. It was a fateful visit. She felt, in passing from Switzerland into Savoy, as even to-day we feel to some degree,—though Gray's letters show that this was by no means a universal sentiment even at that time,—a delightful sense of the contrast between the asperity of the one land and its people and the larger and more cheerful atmosphere of the other. Aix, as we learn from Casanova's account of his stay there, was then on a very humble scale what it has since become on a more magnificent and cosmopolitan scale, a region supremely well fitted to be the haunt of the pleasure-seeker and the health-seeker, and Madame de Warens, with her ever

sanguine and volatile temperament, here soon recovered. She met during her stay a certain Madame de Bonnevaux, a connection of her husband, who belonged to Savoy and had remained a Catholic; by her she was taken to Chambéry for the first time, and Madame de Bonnevaux would not have failed to make her realise how different was the tolerant Catholicism of Savoy from the austere Calvinism of the Vaud country. It is not necessary to suppose that at this moment Madame de Warens formed her plans for flight,—if she had done so her impetuous nature would have led her to put them into execution at once,—but when she returned home she certainly could not help knowing that a more delightful and congenial land lay on the other side of the lake, and when the stress of her life became too hard to bear that land appeared to her as a harbour of refuge. She was not so much converted to Catholicism as to the religion of Savoy, and her husband doubtless felt this when in later years he used to refer to his divorced wife as "la Savoyarde." On reaching Vevey she openly declared how charmed she was with Savoy, and how disgusted with the Pays de Vaud. The almost hopeless confusion into which she had plunged her affairs furnished ample cause for such disgust. The strain of pretending to her husband and her acquaintances that all was going well and nothing now needed but a little more capital became more severe than ever. In the spring of 1726 she realised that the crash was approaching. Her pride would still not allow her to confess even to her husband, or to humiliate herself in

the public eye. She preferred a secret flight,—although that placed her husband in a much worse financial position than if she had stayed beside him,—and with a more or less certain expectation of honours and pensions bestowed by the King of Sardinia on distinguished converts to Catholicism she decided to cross the lake for ever. Having persuaded a doctor that she needed to visit the baths at Amphion in Savoy, she collected together as much furniture, linen, and plate as possible, together with the goods and money remaining at the manufactory, and had them conveyed to the boat; she always carried so much luggage when she travelled that this excited no attention. Her husband saw her off, one day in July, and accompanied by a servant maid she crossed the lake and went direct to Evian, where the King was then residing. At the earliest possible moment, when the King was going to mass with a few of his lords and Bishop Bernex of Annecy, she seized the prelate's cassock and falling on her knees said: "In manus tuas, Domine, commendo spirituum meum." The Bishop raised her up and after mass had a long conversation with her in his rooms. This time her plans had come off. She had left behind her Vevey and all its torturing worries, her conversion was effected; she was treated with distinction and was soon to receive a pension, while the Bishop was warmly congratulated on the brilliant conquest he had made for the Church.

Easy as it may seem to account for this conversion on merely prudential grounds, Madame de Warens was not

accustomed to be guided by prudential considerations, and we know that the step she had taken cost her much anguish and many sleepless nights. It was true that she had never been a very convinced Calvinist, her most genuine religious beliefs, though even these were very loosely held, were those of mystic pietism. Her old friend Magny, came over to see her shortly after her conversion, and declared on his return, to the astonishment of everyone, that he was entirely at rest in regard to her spiritual state; such a testimony is, at all events, to the credit of her genuine religious belief and genuine sincerity. Perhaps the remorse which she found it hard to stifle had reference more to the husband she had abandoned than to the religion she had exchanged. There had, indeed, been no children of the union, though two children had been adopted, but it could scarcely be said that the marriage was altogether an unhappy one; the couple had drifted apart simply because the husband, who having begun by idolising his wife and allowing her to rule his actions, was now realising the abyss into which her impetuous recklessness, her vanity and her business incapacity had plunged him; while she, on her side, had no real sympathy with his strict, and, as it seemed to her, narrow conceptions of honour and duty. Of conjugal infidelity there was no question. It might seem that the clever and vivacious fugitive was playing off her attractions on the King, but with all her serious failings Madame de Warens was not an adventuress, and if it is still rather a mystery by what influence she

obtained a liberal pension from a not very generous monarch; it cannot be suggested that the King was in love with her.

Her husband paid her two visits in Savoy. At the first visit, to Evian, immediately after her conversion, she refrained from mentioning that episode. She asked him to send her Bayle's Dictionary, always a favourite book with her, and with it his own English gold-headed cane to use when she went out; these commissions he fulfilled. Once more he came over to see her at the Convent of the Visitation at Annecy. She received him in bed, he wrote, to hide her confusion, and he was himself so overcome that at first he could not speak. When he began to talk of the fatal step which, as he now knew, she had taken, she pointed to a corner of the room, and on raising the tapestry he saw a little cupboard with an opening into the cloisters, and they spoke in whispers as they amicably settled their affairs before parting for ever. He noted with surprise, however, as he afterwards wrote, the slight importance which she seemed to attach to the forms of religion, the cavalier manner in which she treated him, her sudden changes from sorrow to joy, her strange proposition that since he was always tolerant in religious matters he too should become a Catholic. They parted never to meet again. De Warens returned to Vevey, and by his own skill and the goodwill of his fellow citizens, slowly retrieved his financial position; at one moment, indeed, fearing ruin, he fled to England, and wrote from Islington to his brother a long letter, detailing the history of his separation from his wife, which is,

after the *Confessions*, the most valuable document we possess in the light it throws on Madame de Warens' history and character. Finding he could not obtain in England any position suited to his rank he returned home, became tutor to a prince, and finally retired to Lausanne where he died in 1754. At the instigation of his family he had obtained a formal divorce for "malicious desertion and abjuration of Protestantism," but he never married again.

When Madame de Warens settled in the delightful little town of Annecy—in a house to the west of the present episcopal residence, overlooking the Thion canal—she was nearly twenty-seven years of age. She was, her husband remarks, a woman of great intelligence, of much strength of will, and a delightful companion. De Conzié, who first knew her at this time, speaks of her charming laughter, her vivacious eyes, her intelligence, as giving an uncommon energy to everything she said, while she was entirely without affectation or insincerity. We know from Rousseau's description that she was rather short and plump, with blue eyes and light brown hair. Various portraits have been supposed to represent her, but the only one which has good claims to authenticity is a miniature in the Salle des Ivoires of the Cluny Museum, supposed to date from some twenty years later; it represents a middle-aged woman in whom we can still detect some of the traits attributed to Madame de Warens in early life.

There is one point in regard to Madame de Warens' temperament which is of the first importance in the light it

sheds on her life and actions, though so far it has attracted no attention. De Warens mentions, briefly and incidentally, without insistence, that his wife was hysterical ("sujette aux vapeurs"). The fact is full of significance; it explains that intelligent but too impetuous and ill-regulated activity which marked her whole life; it gives us the clue to that thread of slight mental anomaly and ill-balance which was fated to plunge her into difficulties at every step. We are not entirely dependent on her husband for our knowledge of this definite constitutional peculiarity. Rousseau also, equally unsuspecting the significance of his statement as an index of abnormal nervous sensibility, mentions that at dinner she was so overcome by the odour of the dishes, that she could seldom begin till he had finished, when he would begin again to keep her company. We have always to remember that, like Rousseau himself, who was so irresistibly attracted to her, Madame de Warens, though in slighter degree, was an organically abnormal person.

We have seen that the evidence as to Madame de Warens' infidelity to her husband rests on a very weak foundation and may safely be rejected. The evidence regarding the divorced wife is less doubtful. Very shortly after settling at Annecy she was certainly living on intimate terms with her servant, the faithful steward of her affairs, Claude Anet. Rousseau has done full justice to the estimable and upright character of this young man; except his extreme devotion to his mistress no reproach has ever been cast on him. He was born at

Montreux, and belonged to a family which had long served the La Tour family. At the period we have now reached he was twenty-one years of age. It is highly probable that he already cherished a passion for Madame at Vevey; he prepared for his flight at the time that she was leaving; he left Switzerland soon afterwards to join her, and with her he abjured Protestantism. One is inclined at first to suspect (with M. Mugnier) that we here have an elopement, but on the whole the suspicion seems unnecessary. The financial ruin which hung over Madame de Warens amply accounts for her flight. It is clear that she gladly availed herself of Anet's devotion, and accepted his sacrifices at a moment when she sorely needed them. But the reward, it may well have been, came later, when she felt her loneliness in a foreign country, when she knew that by the law of her own country though not that of her new religion she was a divorced woman, and when in close association with Claude Anet she learned to feel for him a warmer emotion than that of gratitude. The relationship remained a secret; Savoy was a freer country than austere and inquisitorial Switzerland, but social feeling would not have tolerated a lady whose steward was her lover. It may be noted that the three men whom we know positively to have been Madame de Warens' lovers,—Anet, Rousseau, and Wintzen were all Swiss Protestants who had abjured their religion; they were all younger than herself, and all of lower social class. She never really changed under the influences of life; what she was in early youth she remained in age; in the mature

woman's choice of her lovers we still see the little girl at Le Basset who delighted to lord it over the peasant children around her.

Rousseau, an unpromising runaway youth of sixteen, reached Annecy on Palm Sunday in 1728, and met Madame de Warens as, with her stick in her hand—the gold-headed cane, no doubt, that we know of—she was entering the church of the Cordeliers. It was a memorable day in his life, a more memorable day in hers than she was ever to know. As regards the years that followed at Annecy, the earlier years at Chambéry, and the occupation of Les Charmettes, Rousseau's *Confessions* is the prime authority for Madame de Warens' life, and the incomparable pages which he has devoted to these years are on the whole so faithful that the story need not be told again; no reader of the *Confessions* ever forgets them, and when he visits the secluded valley of Les Charmettes and enters the little house which scarcely seems changed since Rousseau left it, he seems to be returning to a spot he had known long before.

In 1744, after Rousseau had finally left Savoy to settle in Paris, the Spaniards had come to occupy Chambéry; Madame de Warens for a time lost her pension, and with her usual energy and skill in initiative she started a soap manufactory and also, it appears, a chocolate manufactory, sending some of both products as a present to Rousseau. At the same time she began coal-mining and iron-mining operations, trying to establish a company. But, as we know, she could never

carry through the schemes she was so clever in planning, and these new enterprises went through all the same stages to ruin as the silk stocking manufactory of twenty years earlier. Rousseau, himself struggling with difficulties of all kinds, sent her small sums from time to time. In 1754 she writes to him reproachfully that she is in the state mentioned in the *Imitation* wherein that fails us on which we have placed our chief hopes. "Malgré tout cela," she concludes, "je suis et je serai toute ma vie votre véritable bonne mère." Less that a month later she writes to the Court of Turin that she is "without bread and without credit," and solicits a loan from the King as her pension is engaged by her industrial obligations. In the same year, as Rousseau tells us, he came with Thérèse to see her at Chambéry; he was afflicted at her condition, and made an impracticable proposition that she should live with them in Paris. Of her jewels but one ring was now left, and this she wished to place on Thérèse's hand. It was the last time Rousseau ever saw her. In 1761 the *Nouvelle Heloise* appeared and fascinated the attention of the world. By this time the woman who was its real heroine was old, poor, forgotten; some years before she had become a chronic invalid; we do not know whether she ever read the famous novel she had inspired, or even heard of its fame. The year afterwards she died, and it was some months before Rousseau received the news of her death in a letter from her friend, De Conzié; she had left nothing behind her, wrote De Conzié, but the evidences of her piety and her poverty. Sixteen years later, Rousseau

also died. The last words he ever wrote, the concluding lines of his *Reveries*, were devoted to the memory of his first meeting, exactly fifty years earlier, with the woman to whom he owed those "four or five years wherein I enjoyed a century of life and of pure and full happiness."

Madame de Warens has seemed to many who only knew her through the *Confessions*, an enigma, almost a monstrosity. When all the facts of her life are before us, and we have patiently reconstructed them—and, where we cannot reconstruct, divined—we realise that little that is enigmatic remains. She was simply a restless, impetuous, erring, and suffering woman, of unusual intelligence, and somewhat hysterical—less so than some women who have played a noble part in practical affairs, than many women whom we revere for their spiritual graces. Her life, when we understand it, was the natural outcome of her special constitution in reaction with circumstances. The explanation of the supposed enigma becomes therefore an interesting psychological study.

But Madame de Warens is something more than a mere subject for psychological study such as we might more profitably exercise nearer home. She is the only person who can claim to be the teacher of the man who was himself the greatest teacher of his century. When he went to her he was a vagabond apprentice in whom none could see any good. She raised him, succoured him, cherished him, surrounded him with her

conscious and unconscious influence; she was the only education he ever received. When he left her he was no longer the worthless apprentice of an engraver, but a supreme master of all those arts which most powerfully evoke the ideals and emotions of mankind. We seldom open Rousseau's books now; the immortal *Confessions*, and for some few readers *Emile*, alone remain. Nevertheless Rousseau once moved the world; when the curious critic takes up innumerable counters from among our current sentiments and beliefs, and seeks to decipher the effaced image and superscription it is the pupil of Madame de Warens that he finds. She failed, it is true, to live her own life nobly. But she has played a not ignoble part in the life of the world, and it is time to render to her memory our small tribute of reverence.

HAVELOCK ELLIS.