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Sommario/riassunto

In presenting to the public the Memoirs of Queen Hortense exactly as she recorded them, in exposing it to scholars--with an intrinsic and absolute respect for the integral historical accuracy of the text--these intimate revelations as set down by her royal hand, Prince Napoleon did a service not only to history but also to the memory of a princess too often harshly criticized eminently French in her heart and mind, to the memory of an unfortunate Queen, to the memory of an exquisite woman. Like the Emperor, one of whose shadows she was and whose touching and affectionate farewell smile she received as he was leaving France for the last time, the Queen of Holland has nothing to lose by having all her acts and even her mistakes fully revealed. This becomes very clear as one peruses these volumes where she took care not to avoid any of the difficulties of her task. She knew what society said about her; she was aware of the reproaches, justified and unjustified, of which she was the object. Frequently, reading between the lines one is conscious of the care her pen took to refute certain implications,

sometimes with disdain but never without courage.
