

Broadway Translations

CYRANO DE BERGERAC

VOYAGES TO THE MOON AND
THE SUN

Translated by

RICHARD ALDINGTON

With an Introduction and Notes

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THE MOON AND THE SUN ***

VOYAGES TO THE MOON AND THE SUN

By CYRANO DE BERGERAC

Translated by
RICHARD ALDINGTON

With an Introduction and Notes

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Broadway Translations

*"Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale
Her infinite variety."*

À FRÉDÉRIC LACHÈVRE

TÉMOINAGE D'ADMIRATION ET DE RECONNAISSANCE

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CYRANO DE BERGERAC

I

THE LEGEND OF CYRANO

The legend of Cyrano de Bergerac began, one might say, during his life; but it was strongly founded by his friend Henry Le Bret who edited *The Voyage to the Moon* with an introduction, in 1657, two years after Cyrano's death. The 'Préface' of Le Bret is one of the chief sources of information about Cyrano. It is no discredit to Le Bret that he drew as favourable a portrait of his friend as he could, but we cannot accept literally everything he says and we are forced to read between the lines of his panegyric. Le Bret is largely responsible for the moral legend of Cyrano. He says:

"In fine, Reader, he always passed for a man of singular rare wit; to which he added such good fortune on the side of the senses that he always controlled them as he willed; in so much that he rarely drank wine because (said he) excess of drink brutalizes, and as much care is needed with it as with arsenic (with this he was wont to compare it) for everything is to be feared from this poison, whatever care is used; even if nothing were to be dreaded but what the vulgar call *qui pro quo*, which makes it always dangerous. He was no less moderate in his eating, from which he banished *ragoûts* as much as he could in the belief that the simplest and least complicated living is the best; which he supported by the example of modern men, who live so short a time compared with those of the earliest ages, who appear to have lived so long because of the simplicity of their food.

"He added to these two qualities so great a restraint towards the fair sex that it may be said he never departed from the respect owed it by ours; and with all this he had so great an aversion from self-interest that he could never imagine what it was to possess private property, his own belonging less to him than to such of his acquaintance as needed it. And so Heaven, which is not unmindful, willed that among the large number of friends he had during his life some should love him until death and a few even beyond death."^[1]

It will be seen later that many of these virtues were probably necessities arising from an unheroic cause; but this moral character given by Le Bret was very useful to the 19th-century builders of the Cyrano legend.

Other 17th-century writers give a very different impression of Cyrano de Bergerac: where Le Bret saw a noble, almost austere genius, they went to the opposite extreme and saw a madman. An anecdote in the *Historiettes* of Tallemant des Réaux gives us another Cyrano:

"A madman named Cyrano wrote a play called *The Death of Agrippina* where Sejanus says horrible things against the Gods. The play was pure balderdash (*un vray galimathias*).^[2] Sercy, who published it, told Boisrobert that he sold out the edition in a twinkling. 'You surprise me', said Boisrobert. 'Ah, Monsieur', replied the bookseller, 'it has such splendid impieties'.^[3]

The implication that the success of the play was due to its "impieties" is repeated in an anecdote of the *Menagiana* quoted by Lacroix, to the following effect: When the pious people heard there were impieties in *The Death of Agrippina*, they went prepared to hiss it; they passed over in silence all the tirades against the Gods which had caused the rumour, but when Sejanus said:

"Frappons, voilà l'hostie",^[4]

they interrupted the actor with whistling, booing and shouts of:

"Ah! the rascal! Ah! The atheist! Hear how he speaks of the holy sacrament!"

I cannot find this anecdote in my own copy of the *Menagiana*, but since my edition is 1693 and Lacroix quotes that of 1715, I presume his is an addition. In my edition I find another anecdote of Cyrano which I give here both for its rarity and because it shows 17th-century contempt for Cyrano at its most virulent:

"What wretched works are those of Cyrano de Bergerac! He studied at the Collège de Beauvais in the time of Principal Grangier. They say he was still in his 'rhetoric' when he wrote *The Pedant Outwitted* against his headmaster. There are a few passable things in this play but all the rest is very flat. When he wrote his *Voyage to the Moon* I think he had one quarter of

the moon in his head. The first public sign he gave of his madness was to go to mass in the morning in trunk hose and a night cap without his doublet. He had not one *sou* when he fell ill of the disease from which he died and if M. de Sainte-Marthe had not charitably supplied all his necessities he would have died in the poor-house."^[5]

More 17th-century anecdotes of Cyrano will be found in the *Life*; those cited will at least show the early tendency to attach anecdotes to him and the curious conflict of contemporary opinion. During the second half of the 17th century Cyrano remained popular and his works were frequently reprinted. The 18th century saw a great decline in reputation and in editions; Voltaire repeated the accusation: "A madman!" No edition of Cyrano's works appeared in Paris between 1699 and 1855: the last of them before the revival of the 19th century was the Amsterdam edition of 1761. For a century there was no edition of Cyrano. He dropped out of sight almost entirely; but in the 19th century he was destined to be revived as an increasingly legendary figure, culminating in the heroic apotheosis of Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac*.

Strangely enough the revival began in England in 1820 with an article in the *Retrospective Review*.^[6] This article shows some acquaintance with Cyrano's originals as well as with the translation reviewed. The anonymous writer says:

"Cyrano de Bergerac is a marvellously strange writer—his character, too, was out of the common way. His chief passion appears to have been duelling; and, from the numerous affairs of honour in which he was concerned in a very short life and the bravery he displayed on those occasions, he acquired the cognomen of 'The Intrepid'. His friend Le Bret says he was engaged in no less than one hundred duels for his friends, and not one on his own account. Others however say, that, happening to have a nose somewhat awry, whoever was so unfortunate or so rash as to laugh at it, was sure to be called upon to answer its intrepid owner in the field. But however this may be, it is indisputable that Cyrano was a distinguished monomachist and a most eccentric writer."^[7]

Seventeen years later that amiable man of letters, Charles Nodier, resuscitated Cyrano in his *Bonaventure Desperiers et Cyrano de Bergerac*.

Before this Nodier had incidentally defended Cyrano in his *Bibliographie des Fous*:

"As to this book (*The Voyage to the Moon*), which he wrote when *he was already mad* (according to Voltaire), would you not be astonished if you were told that it contained more profound perceptions, more ingenious foresight, more anticipations in that science whose confused elements Descartes scarcely sorted out, than the large volume written by Voltaire under the supervision of the Marquis du Châtelet? Cyrano used his genius like a hot-head, but there is nothing in it which resembles a madman."^[8]

Nodier is responsible for that portion of the Cyrano legend which makes him an innovator, plagiarized from, and persecuted to an early grave.

"It seems that a man who opened up so many paths to talent and who went so far in all the paths he opened, ought to have left a name in any literature....

"There was once a wooden horse which bore in its flanks all the conquerors of Ilion, yet had no part in the triumph. This begins like a fairy-tale ... and yet it is true.

"Poor wooden horse! Poor Cyrano!"^[9]

But, if Charles Nodier carried on the legend, he did little more than open the way for Theophile Gautier, whose famous *Grotesque* is filled with every conceivable error of fact and yet is obviously one of Rostand's chief sources. *Les Grotesques* appeared in 1844 and contained ten pseudo-biographical sketches of "romantic" personalities in French literature chiefly of the 17th century. The book itself is an interesting by-product of the romantic movement, but here we are only concerned with the sixth sketch, *Cyrano de Bergerac*. This opens with a fantastic divagation upon noses, perhaps the most exaggerated development of the legendary Cyranesque appendage. If the reader will examine Cyrano's portraits, without prejudice and with particular attention to the nose, he will scarcely be prepared for this outburst:

"This incredible nose is settled in a three-quarter face [portrait], the smaller side of which it covers entirely; it forms in the middle a mountain which in my opinion must be the highest mountain in the world after the Himalayas; then it descends rapidly towards the mouth, which it largely obumbrates,

like a tapir's snout or the rostrum of a bird of prey; at the extremity it is divided by a line very similar to, though more pronounced than, the furrow which cuts the cherry lip of Anne of Austria, the white queen with the long ivory hands. This makes two distinct noses in one face, which is more than custom allows, ... the portraits of Saint Vincent de Paul and the deacon Paris will show you the best characterized types of this sort of structure; but Cyrano's nose is less doughy, less puffy in contour; it has more bones and cartilage, more flats and high-lights, it is more heroic."

Cyrano de Bergerac.

We then learn that Cyrano was a wonderful duellist, that he revenged any insult to his nose with a challenge; after more disquisition on noses we read that Cyrano was "born in 1620, in the castle of Bergerac, in Périgord"^[10], that he was unable to endure the pedantry of his schoolmaster and so that good country gentleman, his father, allowed him to go to Paris, where at eighteen he threw himself into fashionable life with the greatest success. Then comes a highly-coloured picture of the contrast between life in Paris in 1638 and the Bergerac family in their "tranquil and discreet house, sober and cold, well ordered and silent, almost always half-asleep in the shadow of its pallid walnut trees between the church and the cemetery." This is followed by a defence of Cyrano against the charge of atheism with a quotation from *The Death of Agrippina*. Next we hear that this Gascon gentleman joined the Gascon company of guards with Le Bret and of his numerous prowesses with the sword, and this slides into a description of Cyrano's early slashing style, with quotations from *The Pedant Outwitted* and the story of the actor whom Cyrano forbade to play. This is followed by several pages of excited panegyric, paraphrased from Le Bret; we get Cyrano's wounds, his love of study, his disinterestedness, his love of freedom and scorn of serving *les grands*, his subsequent service with the duc d'Arpajon, the falling timber on his head and his death; then we hear of his simple habits, his brilliant friendships and his study under Gassendi. The

essay ends with several pages, dealing with Molière's famous plagiarism from *The Pedant Outwitted* and containing a most exaggerated account of Cyrano's writings, extremely loose in expression, showing that Gautier can have had but a superficial acquaintance with Cyrano's books.

If this essay of Gautier's were meant as biography and criticism, one can only say that it is likely to be misleading; if as fiction, that the form is not well chosen. Nevertheless, this and Nodier's article stimulated curiosity in Cyrano sufficiently to cause his works to be reprinted in 1855. Lacroix in 1858 issued another edition and wrote an enthusiastic preface (from the point of view of an ardent free-thinker), making Cyrano a great predecessor of the 18th-century *philosophes* and adding more legend.

After this, the legend of Cyrano smouldered for some forty years and then broke out in a final conflagration in 1897, with Edmond Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac*. Everything picturesque which fancy and rumour had attached to the name of Cyrano during the centuries was taken up by Rostand, exaggerated, idealised almost to infinity—and the world believed, and doubtless still believes, that this is the "real" Cyrano de Bergerac. Strangely, Rostand apparently shared this illusion; for a French savant, M. Emile Magne, wrote a pamphlet pointing out some of Rostand's worst errors, and Rostand replied with a letter, claiming that his play was historically correct.

Rostand's play is a pleasing, if belated, specimen of the French romantic drama; its dramatic quality is undeniable, its appeal to the sentiments irresistible, its verse skilfully handled; it is characteristically, delightfully, absurdly French; it deserved its popularity. A man who cannot enjoy Rostand's *Cyrano* has taste too fastidious for his own good. But when he has watched the heroic lover of Roxanne fight his duels to the accompaniment of a ballade, promenade his huge nose about the stage, exhibit the remarkable delicacy of his sentiments and finally die a Gascon death—"mon Panache!"—this imaginary spectator must not tell us that this is "the real" Cyrano de Bergerac. It is an amusing Cyrano one would prefer not to lose; but Rostand's invention has nothing to do with the man who wrote the tragedy of *The Death of Agrippina* and *The Voyages to the Sun and Moon*; this is not the young man who enlisted in M. de Casteljaloux's company of guards; this is not the follower of Gassendi and Rohault; and this delicate lover is—alas!—not that Savinien de Cyrano, self-styled de

Bergerac, who died miserably in the prime of his age not so much from the effects of the falling piece of timber as probably of venereal disease.

II

THE LIFE OF CYRANO DE BERGERAC

The family of Cyrano was not Gascon and was not noble. The first Cyrano of whom anything was known in France is Savinien I de Cyrano, of Sardinian origin, bourgeois of Paris and a merchant of fish. Doubtless the prejudice of noble birth is antiquated, yet when one has been brought up on Rostand's Cyrano the discovery is a shock, rather like finding that Sir Philip Sidney's grandfather was a London fishmonger. But this is only the first of the disagreeable surprises modern investigators prepare for us.

This Savinien, grandfather of the poet, became notary and '*secrétaire du Roy*' in 1571. He was wealthy, he owned a large house in the rue des Prouvaires, various annuities, the fiefs of Boiboisseaux, Mauvières, and Bergerac, the last two bought in 1582. These purchases represent a familiar scene in the eternal social comedy of the rise and fall of families; the genuine old de Bergerac family had disappeared but their memory lingered on and no member of the Cyrano family ventured to call himself de Bergerac at Bergerac. Indeed the poet was the only member of the family who used the name either during the fifty-four years they possessed the fief or afterwards. In any case this Bergerac is not the Dordogne or Gascon Bergerac but a little estate not very far from Paris in the modern department of Seine et Oise.^[11] So much for the noble Gascon of Gautier and Rostand.

This Savinien I de Cyrano married Anne Le Maire; their eldest son, Abel I de Cyrano, '*avocat au Parlement de Paris*,' married Espérance Bellenger on the third of September 1612.^[12] An inventory of their goods shows that Cyrano's father was an educated man who read Greek, Latin, and Italian. Abel de Cyrano had six children; the eldest surviving son was Savinien II, the poet, baptised on the sixth of March 1619 in Paris.

In 1622 Abel de Cyrano left Paris for his house at Mauvières, where young Savinien de Cyrano remained "until he was old enough to read". He was then sent to a small private school kept by a country parson, where he met his lifelong friend and posthumous panegyrist, Henry Le Bret. Savinien did

not like his tutor; and this is not the first or the last time in history when there has existed a mutual hatred between a pert boy of talent and some plodding pedagogue. The boy complained so continually to his father that he was taken away from the parson and sent to the Collège de Beauvais in Paris.

These meagre details are all we know positively of Cyrano's childhood except that his godmother left him six hundred *livres* in 1628. How much of the rebelliousness of his temper in later years was due to hatred of this pedagogical parson is a matter of pure conjecture, but Cyrano's dislike of pedants and priests might plausibly be attributed at least in part to this man's clumsy usage. We may also surmise that access to his father's extensive library gave him that precocity for which he was remarkable, and that the years of childhood spent at Mauvières created in him a genuine love of nature. Numerous passages might be quoted from his writings to show that he really liked out-of-doors life, enjoyed the beauty of the country, and felt that kinship with wild living things—animals, birds, plants—which is supposed to be a wholly modern sentiment. This sentiment may be seen in the *Letters*, expressed with a good deal of affectation; but unmistakably in those pages of *The Voyage to the Sun* which describe the talking birds and trees.

The head-master of Beauvais was at that time Jean Grangier, described by some as an excellent pedagogue, by others as brutal, superstitious, violent, and vicious. Apparently he was one of those pedagogues who, in Ben Jonson's words, "swept their livings from the posteriors of little children"; and therefore was very unpopular with Cyrano, who made him the hero of *The Pedant Outwitted*. Flogging will always drive a sensitive and high-spirited boy to revolt; and when we find a truculent and sometimes offensive mood of revolt a main feature of Cyrano's work, we should remember before condemning him that a large portion of his childhood was passed under the birch of two bigoted pedants.

Cyrano left Beauvais in 1637, when he was eighteen. In the preceding year Abel de Cyrano had sold the fiefs of Mauvières, and Bergerac and had returned to Paris. This sale of land only fifty-four years after the purchase by the first Savinien de Cyrano shows how rapidly the affairs of the family declined financially. It would be interesting to know more of Cyrano's life in the period between his leaving school and joining the guards. Le Bret

tells us that "at the age when nature is most easily corrupted", and when Cyrano "had liberty to do as he chose", he (Le Bret) stopped him "on a dangerous incline". It will easily be conjectured that the change from a flogging school to complete liberty in the Paris of 1637 would not incline a precocious youth to the monastic virtues. Many fantastic pictures of Paris under Louis XIII have been drawn by novelists and essayists; whether it were quite as picturesque as they make out may be doubted, but that its taverns were filled with riot, excitement and debauch is certain; and Cyrano frequented the taverns. The famous *Pomme de Pin*, the *Croix de Lorraine*, the *Boisselière*, the *Pressoir d'Or*, and a dozen other taverns were crowded with heterogeneous sets of courtiers, gentlemen, gossips, poets, atheists, duellists, rogues of all sorts, talking, laughing, drinking, writing, whoring, gambling and brawling. From Gaston d'Orléans, the King's brother, downwards, the greater part of the nobility, gentry and the learned at some time of their lives frequented these commodious taverns, rubbed shoulders with knaves and bawds and poets and held high carouse.

"Mordieu! comme il pleut là dehors!
Faisons pleuvoir dans nostre corps
Du vin, tu l'entens sans le dire,
Et c'est là le vray mot pour rire;
Chantons, rions, menons du bruit,
Beuvons ici toute la nuit,
Tant que demain la belle Aurore
Nous trouve tous à table encore."^[13]

Into that society of revellers, unscrupulous, heedless, coarse, irreligious, but brave, witty, chivalrous, talented and merry, came a young man of eighteen, the owner of a curious nose "shaped like a parrot's beak", talented, witty and brave himself, already a brilliant swordsman, scatter-brained, vain with all the vanity of young men in Latin countries, eager for knowledge but filled with hatred for the theology and pedantry of his early masters. Imagine the London of James the First's reign so vividly and delightfully sketched in *The Fortunes of Nigel*, adding to it that freedom of speech, morals and speculation which Scott largely left out; transfer it to the turbulent Paris of 1637 and throw into that *milieu* not a sober Scotch laird,

but a hot-headed young Frenchman. Is it not almost hypocritical to expect that he would do anything different from what he apparently did do: Drink, gamble, blaspheme, whore, talk atheism, play mad pranks and slit men's throats in duels?

From this wild cabaret life Cyrano was rescued by Le Bret just about the time when Abel de Cyrano threatened seriously to cut off supplies. At nineteen Cyrano entered the company of guards commanded by the "triple Gascon", M. de Carbon de Casteljaloux.

Cyrano de Bergerac was a good soldier, but that does not mean he was free from the ordinary vices of soldiers. If the "dangerous incline" from which Le Bret rescued his friend was gambling, he chose a curious remedy; for gambling is inevitably one means of dispelling the crushing ennui of military life. Another, almost universal, military amusement is drinking; one would not expect to find teetotallers among the Gascon guard. It seems probable that the "dangerous incline" was atheism or a serious love affair; for the military life is dulling to the affections and fatal to thought. Certainly, the mess and guard-room of M. de Carbon de Casteljaloux's company would not greatly differ from a noisy cabaret. One hardly sees what moral advantages were gained by the change, except that military discipline and comradeship probably steadied Cyrano if they failed to correct the extravagance of his character and behaviour. Casteljaloux's company consisted almost entirely of Gascons, and this fact has helped to propagate the myth of Cyrano's noble birth; and doubtless he assumed the Gascon-sounding name of de Bergerac to increase the illusion. But he must have possessed some other merit than that of an assumed name to enable him to enter the guards; this was of course his swordsmanship.

Duelling in France in the first half of the 17th century was more than a fashionable mania, it was a real danger to the state. The fashion was at its height in the reigns of Henry IV and Louis XIII. During eight years of the former reign no less than two thousand gentlemen lost their lives in duels. Even the great Cardinal Richelieu only succeeded in diminishing, not in crushing the habit. The duelling in Rostand's *Cyrano* is the most accurate part of the play; indeed it would be difficult to exaggerate the fantastic nature of these duels. Men fought for the merest trifles; not so much for honour as for the love of fighting, of prestige and notoriety. Successful duelling was then a sure means to those commonly desired ends. The thirst

for "monomachy" was so ardent that the seconds were not content to regulate the combat but must needs take part in it; so that a girl's ribbon might be the pretext for six men to pull out their rapiers in mortal combat, with the result perhaps of several wounds and more than one death. Cyrano de Bergerac was a brilliant swordsman, a talent which gave him a position comparable to that of an aeroplane "ace" during the European war. The stories told of his duelling sound fabulous and are probably exaggerated, but certainly have a foundation in fact. Le Bret tells us:

"Duels, which at that time seemed the unique and most rapid means of becoming known, in a few days rendered him so famous that the Gascons, who composed nearly the whole company, considered him the demon of courage and credited him with as many duels as he had been with them days."

The most remarkable thing about these duels, and a point very much in Cyrano's favour, was that he fought over a hundred as second to other men and not on his own account. He was no Bobadil. Brun tries to argue that Cyrano must have fought on his own account, but even M. Lachèvre, who is hostile to Cyrano, denies it. Moreover, we have Cyrano's own declaration: "I have been everybody's second."

Casteljaloux's company was ordered for active service in 1639. The company was besieged in Mouzon by the Croats of the Imperial Army. Cyrano has described part of the siege in the twenty-fourth of his *Lettres Diverses*. The garrison was short of provisions and during one of the numerous sorties Cyrano was shot through the body. He had not recovered when the garrison was relieved by Chatillon on the twenty-first of June 1639. Next year Cyrano was again on active service. He was wounded a second time by a sword-thrust in the throat at the siege of Arras, sometime before the ninth of August 1640. He had served this campaign in Conti's gendarmes.

Two severe wounds in fourteen months are "cooling cards" even to a pseudo-Gascon. Cyrano determined to retire from the service.

"The hardships he suffered during these two sieges," says Le Bret, "the inconveniences resulting from two severe wounds, the frequent duels forced upon him by his reputation for courage and skill, which compelled him to act as second more than one hundred times (for he never had a quarrel on

his own account), the small hope he had of preferment, from the lack of a patron, to whom his free genius was incapable of submitting, and finally his great love of learning, caused him to renounce the occupation of war which demands everything of a man and makes him as much an enemy of literature as literature makes him a lover of peace."

Cyrano, then, returned to his studies. Hitherto he had been unfortunate in his instructors, but he now made the acquaintance of several scholars and men of letters who had a strong influence on him, whose ideas he adopted and copied in his works. The celebrated Gassendi, who revived the philosophy of Epicurus and opposed both the Aristotelians and Descartes, came to Paris and lectured to a small number of selected students. Nicéron makes the unlikely assertion that Cyrano forced his way into this learned society at the sword's point. It is certain that Cyrano sat at Gassendi's feet and picked up from his lectures those fragments of Epicurean physics he afterwards scattered through his works. There most probably he met Molière, Rohault, Bernier, Chapelle and the younger La Mothe Le Vayer. Cyrano was therefore a member of a distinguished literary group which contained one eminent philosopher and a dramatist of supreme genius.

Philosophy and the society of men of letters did not cause Cyrano to abandon his sword. Two documents are extant, dated October 1641, showing Cyrano's arrangements to take lessons in dancing and fencing. It is in these years 1641-43 that he began seriously to write and at the same time performed his most famous feats with the sword.

The battle of the Porte de Nesle, more authentic and even more heroic than the feats of Horatius celebrated by Lord Macaulay, has been related by every writer on Cyrano, from Le Bret to Rostand, from Gautier to M. Emile Magne. What happened, as far as one can make out, was this. A friend of Cyrano's, the Chevalier de Lignières, had been rash enough to banter the conjugal infelicities of a great lord who, sensible of the affront to his person and rank, hired a set of fellows to fall upon Lignières and to crop his ears in the public highway. Lignières heard of this, took refuge with Cyrano and remained with him until night, when they set out together for Lignières's home with Cyrano as escort and two officers of Conti's regiment as witnesses, in the rear. At the Porte de Nesle the *bravi* were ambushed to catch Lignières on his way to the Faubourg Saint-Germain; Le Bret says there were a hundred of them. In any event there was a crowd. Incredible as

it seems, the fact is well attested that Cyrano attacked them all single-handed, killed two, wounded seven and put the rest to flight.^[14]

The battle of Brioché's monkey is less creditable to Cyrano and far less authentic. The evidence is the unreliable one of an anonymous work, *Combat de Cyrano de Bergerac avec le Singe de Brioché, au Bout du Pont-Neuf*, almost certainly written by Dassoucy, a friend with whom Cyrano had quarrelled. Dassoucy fled to Italy when the pamphlet was published. The gist of the pamphlet is as follows:

One Brioché exhibited a marionette show near one end of the Pont-Neuf. Among the troupe was a live monkey.

Cyrano came along, and some thirty or forty lackeys, waiting for the puppet show, began to hustle him and to make fun of his singular appearance; one of them actually flipped him on the end of his nose. Out came that deadly rapier in a flash, and the intrepid little "fiery whoreson," rushed at them, driving the whole mob of them before him. Brioché's monkey, "making a leg" for a *sou*, got in Cyrano's way and the gallant swordsman, not unnaturally mistaking it for one of the rabble, pierced it effectually with his rapier. Brioché brought an action against Cyrano to recover fifty *pistoles* damages.

"Bergerac defended himself like Bergerac, that is, with facetious writings and grotesque jokes. He told the judge he would pay Brioché like a poet, or 'with monkey's money' (*i.e.* laugh at him); that coins were an article of furniture unknown to Phœbus. He vowed he would immortalise the dead beast in an Apollonian epitaph."

It is possible that Dassoucy was merely parodying the battle of the Porte de Nesle; none of the facetious writings referred to is extant; but they may have perished with the elegy Le Bret saw Cyrano writing in the guard-room and the *Story of the Spark* and Cyrano's *Lyric Poems*.

The third anecdote attached to this period relates to the actor Mondory or Montfleury, the latter of whom is satirised in Cyrano's letter *Against a Fat Man*. The 1695 edition of the *Menagiana* gives the story as follows:

"Bergerac was a great sword-clanker. His nose, which was very ugly, was the cause of his killing at least ten people. He quarrelled with Montdory, the comedian, and strictly forbade him to appear on the stage. 'I forbid you to

appear for a month', said he. Two days later Bergerac was at the play. Montdory appeared and began to act his part as usual; Bergerac shouted to him from the middle of the pit, with threats if he did not leave, and for fear of worse Montdory retired."^[15]

The year 1645 in several respects opens a new phase in Cyrano's life. His mother was dead, he began to suffer from poverty—due to gambling it is said—and contracted a disease. There is a mystery about the death of Cyrano de Bergerac and the "*maladie*" which preceded it. M. Lachèvre has discovered a document showing the payment of four hundred *livres* to a barber-chirurgien by Cyrano and, from circumstantial evidence we need not repeat, M. Lachèvre asserts that this was venereal disease. If so, the moral philosopher created by Le Bret disappears as completely as the delicate lover invented by Rostand.

It is a remarkable fact that Cyrano did not make a serious appearance in print until the year before his death, 1654. He wrote earlier and published prefaces and commendatory poems; he scribbled a few pamphlets and libels during the Fronde; but his reputation as a writer during his lifetime must have been based on the circulation of his writings in manuscript. The letters were not published until 1654, but they must have been written much earlier; *The Pedant Outwitted* does not seem to have been played, and *The Voyage to the Moon* was circulated in manuscript for some years before it was published.

The fact is we know very little about the last ten years of Cyrano's life. Abel de Cyrano died in January 1648 and the poet's share of the inheritance rescued him at least for a time from the poverty into which he had fallen. In February 1649 there appeared an anti-Mazarin pamphlet in verse, entitled *Le Ministre d'Etat Flambé*, signed D. B. This was followed by several prose pamphlets directed against Mazarin: *Le Gazetier des Interressé*, *La Sybille Moderne ou l'Oracle du Temps*, *Le Conseiller fidèle*. Some have denied that these were Cyrano's work; others are convinced to the contrary. If he did write them he soon changed his political opinions; for in 1651 he published his pro-Mazarin *Contre les Frondeurs*. One biographer thinks Cyrano was bribed by Mazarin to change his politics; another biographer thinks that since Cyrano undoubtedly wrote for Mazarin he could never have written against him.

There is a legend that about this time Cyrano visited England, but there is no confirmation of this.

Hitherto Cyrano had been too independent to enter the service of any nobleman. We have noticed his refusal of the offers made him by Marshal Gassion. Subjection to the whims of some wealthy person of note was a misery endured by many authors of the 17th century; Cyrano de Bergerac avoided it as long as he could, but about the end of 1652 he entered the service of the duc d'Arpajon. Saint-Simon in his usual contemptuous way calls this nobleman "Un bonhomme"; he was a good soldier, religious, vain and probably not very intelligent. Under his patronage Cyrano's works were printed in two handsome quartos in 1654. They contained *The Death of Agrippina*, *The Pedant Outwitted*, and *The Letters*. There was a dedication to the duke and a charming sonnet to his daughter. The success of these writings was considerable and their popular vogue lasted at least half a century.

The death of Cyrano de Bergerac is surrounded with mystery. He was only thirty-five when he died. Was this early death the result of a disease, as M. Lachèvre asserts; or was it, as other commentators say, the result of a blow on the head from a falling beam? If he were hit by a piece of timber, was this an accident, or was it revenge? Had Cyrano's very free philosophical speculations anything to do with it? It is impossible to answer these questions definitely; each commentator has replied to them according to his own prejudices.

The accident, if there were an accident, happened early in 1654. For some unknown reason Cyrano was turned out of the Hôtel d'Arpajon about this time. In June 1654 Cyrano was received into the house of M. des Bois Clairs, with whom he remained for fourteen months until a few days before his death. He then begged to be moved to a house at Sannois, belonging to his cousin Pierre de Cyrano, where he died on the 28th of July 1655. He was not buried in the convent of the Filles de la Croix as the reference books say (this was his brother Abel), but in the church of Sannois. He was converted to Christianity on his death-bed, presumably by his sister, who was a nun, and his friend Le Bret, the canon. A document is in existence stating that "Savinien de Cyrano, escuier, sieur de Bergerac," died a good Christian; it is dated the 28th of July 1655, and signed by the parish priest, who owned the curious name of Cochon. That Cyrano, like most of his

contemporaries, yielded to a death-bed repentance is probably true; it is equally true that he spent most of his life as a free-thinker.

III

CYRANO'S FRIENDS

Among Cyrano's military friends were two senior officers, M. de Bourgogne (*mestre de camp* of the Prince de Conti's infantry) and Marshal Gassion. They of course would know him simply as a brave soldier in a company of dare-devils. More intimate soldier friends, of a rank approaching his own, were Cavoye, brother of the celebrated Cavoye killed at Lens; Hector de Brisailles, ensign in the Gendarmes de Son Altesse Royale; Saint Gilles, captain in the same regiment; Chasteaufort, whom Cyrano may have parodied in *The Pedant Outwitted*. He also knew Le Bret's brother, a captain in Conti's regiment; Duret de Montchenin and de Zeddé "braves de la plus haute classe", and de Chavagne.

Le Bret also mentions the Comte de Brienne, M. des Billettes, M. de Morlière.

The Comte de Brienne was the son of Louis XIII's minister; he was a secretary of state, then an Oratorian; and he died mad. Gilles Fileau des Billettes, brother of the Abbé de la Chaise, was "one of the most learned men of his day." Adrien de Morlière was a famous genealogist. Longueville-Gontier, also mentioned by Le Bret, was a "Conseiller au Parlement". Cyrano appears to have been friendly with the translator, Michel de Marolles, who has recorded in his *Mémoires* the fact that Cyrano sent him copies of *The Death of Agrippina* and *The Voyage to the Moon*.

After these respectable gentlemen we come to a more varied group of Cyrano's friends, most of whom are not mentioned by Le Bret, but who interest us more. Some of them were perhaps picked up in taverns; others he met in the course of his studies; others were congenial men of letters.

Three especially influenced Cyrano in his serious studies, particularly in philosophy and physics, and confirmed his natural tendency towards rationalism and scepticism by furnishing him with the knowledge and arguments he lacked. Chief among these was the celebrated Gassendi, who was born in 1592 and died in the same year as Cyrano, 1655. Gassendi was

trained as an Aristotelian, but drew away from the school and followed with special interest the researches of Galileo and Kepler. He opposed Descartes. He is principally remembered for his revival of Epicurus, of the Epicurean physics and morals, and of Lucretius. Three translations of Lucretius were made as a result of his influence, one by Molière, one by Chapelle, one by Dehénault (all three friends of Cyrano) and, remarkably enough, all three of these translations have disappeared. Gassendi exerted a considerable influence over all the intellectual freethinkers of his age, and Cyrano de Bergerac was especially indebted to him. Gassendi's exposition of the Epicurean theory of atoms, his own ideas about "calor vitalis" and "anima mundi", will be found freely copied in *The Voyages*; while Gassendi's favourite principle "nihil in intellectu quod non prius fuerit in sensu" made a deep impression upon Cyrano's mind.

Gassendi's lessons in physics were supported in Cyrano's memory by his friendship with Jacques Rohault (1620-75). Rohault was a mathematician, a pupil of Gassendi, but strongly influenced by Descartes. He wrote a treatise on physics which has so much in common with the fragments of Cyrano's treatise and the ideas expressed in *The Voyages* that at one time Rohault was supposed to have plagiarised from Cyrano. It is now almost conclusively proved that the opposite is true.

It is difficult to say what relations Cyrano had with the elder La Mothe Le Vayer (1583-1672). We know that he met his son at Gassendi's lectures. Old Le Vayer was a famous sceptic and in many ways a remarkable personality. Like many sceptics he lived to be immensely old, was highly respected for his erudition and, though he never seems to have been worried by the clergy, was the reverse of orthodox. His position in 17th-century Paris is interesting; he was one of the very few survivors of the great Humanist movement of the 16th century, and, as such, carried with him an air of enthusiasm, learning and freedom which must have been very stimulating in days when learning had been interrupted by civil disturbances and the stifling influence of the Catholic reaction was increasing.

A learned controversy has shaken a large amount of dust over the "problem" of Molière's relations with Cyrano. It has been denied that Molière studied under Gassendi, that he plagiarized two scenes from Cyrano's Comedy. It seems more probable that both are true.

Jean Dehénault (1611-1682), another literary friend of Cyrano's, was a melancholy sceptic, consistently unsuccessful in life; he wrote a certain amount of verse and a prose piece, which had the honour of being attributed to Saint-Evremond.

Bernier, Chapelle, Lignières, Dassoucy, Tristan l'Hermite, Royer de Prade were also among Cyrano's friends.

François Bernier (?-1688) became a doctor, travelled in the East and is remembered by his still readable *Philosophie de Gassendi*. Chapelle (1626-1686) wrote a *Voyage* in collaboration with Bachaumont and furnished Sainte-Beuve with material for a delightful *Lundi*. François Payot, Chevalier des Lignières (1628-1704), was chiefly concerned in the Porte de Nesle episode. He was a minor poet of the epigrammatic kind; Boileau called him "le poète idiot de Senlis." There is a book on him by M. Magne. Dassoucy was one of the innumerable burlesque poets of the time, for whom Cyrano wrote a preface and a madrigal; later they quarrelled and libelled each other. Tristan l'Hermite (1601-1655) was "an epicure of the cabarets, a hare-brained duellist, a gambler, a libertin, a beggar"; as a youth he was exiled for killing a man. Cyrano praises him as the greatest man of the age! Finally, Royer de Prade and Henry Le Bret were Cyrano's oldest and most faithful friends. Henry Le Bret was the son of Nicholas Le Bret; born 1617; soldier, lawyer, then priest; canon in 1659. He lived to be ninety-three. De Prade was a historian and tragic poet, known to his friends as "le Corneille Tacite des Français". Cyrano wrote a preface to the 1650 edition of de Prade's works and the latter wrote a sonnet on *The Voyage to the Moon*.

IV

THE LIBERTIN QUESTION

To write of Cyrano de Bergerac and not to mention the "libertin question" is to shirk a difficulty. A "libertin" in French means a free-thinker in religion, generally but not necessarily, a man of free or even criminal morals. It is particularly applied to a whole mass of sceptical or at any rate non-Christian French writers of the 17th century. To draw an English parallel: Marlowe, Greene in his unregenerate days, Rochester, Sedley, even Wycherley and Hobbes would be libertins; but Hume and Gibbon would be philosophes.

The father of the libertins was Montaigne; great, adorable Montaigne, whose divine common-sense emerges from the churning floods of metaphysical quiddities and the gross clouds of popular errors like a glittering marble rock. *Super hanc petram* the French libertins founded their temple of incredulity, but from lack of unanimity the edifice remains incomplete. It is the habit of official commentators to insist upon the Stoic element in Montaigne. It is there, because Montaigne had absorbed the wisdom of the Ancients; but one might as legitimately insist upon the Epicurean or the Sceptical aspect of his book. That, at least, is what the libertins did. They took the sceptical wisdom of Montaigne and tempered it with the mirth of Rabelais. Sometimes the wisdom was not very apparent and the mirth was very Rabelaisian. Sometimes the mixture was happy. Molière was a libertin; so were Saint-Evremond and his friend Ninon de L'Enclos and the cardinal de Retz and Théophile and Saint-Amant and Boisrobert and Cyrano and Chapelle and scores more. The degree of "libertinism" runs from the mere sparkle and freedom from cant of Molière and the fastidiousness of Saint-Evremond to the brutal orgies of the "goinfres" and the criminality of Claude le Petit, who was burned for blasphemy, murder and sodomy. Cyrano began towards the brutal end and developed towards the gentler standard.

There are two current theories of libertinism. One is particularly espoused by M. Frédéric Lachèvre, the erudite editor of the *Libertins*, whose work is

indispensable to a correct understanding of this period of French literature. This theory refuses the libertins coherence of thought or any real intellectual importance. It puts aside as "sceptiques" those writers whose polite manners and respectable morals make it difficult to disparage them, and concentrates upon those whose lives show dubious or even criminal episodes. From an immense mass of facts and skilfully arranged historical conjectures this critic argues that the libertins are not to be considered as honourable and talented men seeking truth, but as undisciplined egotists, lacking coherence of thought and seriousness of purpose; who attacked institutions from vanity, who cultivated sedition and irreligion because by proclaiming such ideas they became involved in that stir of publicity for which paltry vanity craves.

The other theory regards the libertins as expressing more or less coherently a great trend of thought in French intellectual life, as the heterodox tradition of France, as an exuberant product of the French critical spirit. This spirit shows itself not in works of formal criticism alone, but in a general temper of the mind, a disposition to examine institutions and ideas critically, a readiness to laugh at what had seemed terrible or oppressive, to jest down tyranny with a bawdy song; a spirit co-existent with French literature, already strong in the 13th century, when England intellectually was a mere Norman province. The chansons de geste and the tales of chivalry are parodied in satirical fabliaux; courteous love is mocked by innumerable voices; the crusades are barely over and the great cathedrals still unfinished when Rutebeuf writes:

"Papelart et Béguin
Ont le siècle honni."

We see a Louis IX set off by a Joinville—don Quixote and Sancho Panza 350 years before Cervantes. François Villon follows Charles d'Orléans; Rabelais is the contemporary of Calvin; Racine is followed by Voltaire. The précieux movement is followed by the burlesque; the hard thought of Voltaire by the softness of Bernadin de Saint-Pierre; the Romantics by the Naturalistes. The heterodox tradition from Le Roman de Renart (12th century) and the Fabliaux (13th century) can be traced throughout French literature to Anatole France and Remy de Gourmont. French literature is

like a great double stream which constantly winds and branches out and reabsorbs side channels. We can see the 17th-century libertins as an episode in a great intellectual struggle and Cyrano de Bergerac as a minor, but not unimportant, actor, in that episode. In any case Cyrano is not an exception in French literature in spite of a few eccentricities; he is one example of a perfectly recognizable intellectual type and so far from being the complete "original" he is made out to be, he has little to offer which cannot be found in his contemporaries and immediate predecessors.^[16]

V

THE WORKS OF CYRANO DE BERGERAC

The extant writings of Cyrano de Bergerac are: (1) A few poems, including the libel on Mazarin; (2) Three or four political pamphlets (doubtful); (3) *Entretiens Pointus*; a set of quibbling jokes; (4) Three sets of Letters; (5) A prose comedy, *Le Pédant Joué*; (6) A verse tragedy, *La Mort d'Agrippine*; (7) *Les Estats et Empires de la Lune et du Soleil*; (8) *Traité de Physique*, fragmentary.

The first three are unimportant. The best of Cyrano's few short poems is the sonnet to Jacqueline d'Arpajon. The political pamphlets interest the researcher and are not certainly Cyrano's. The *Entretiens Pointus*, or *Merry Conceited Jests* are verbal quibbles and jokes, supposedly memories of conversation in the Gassendi group.

With the letters we come to the first of Cyrano's works of literary value and are at once met with a difficulty which makes the study of Cyrano's work so troublesome. Whenever there exists a MS. of any of his writings the differences between this and all the printed editions before that of Gourmont (1908) is so considerable that in many cases the whole intention of the work is different. Most of the passages omitted in the printed editions are philosophical or satirical arguments or sarcasms directed against the Church and religion and were omitted in the 17th century for obvious reasons. No editions of Cyrano show the MSS. texts prior to 1908; the editions of Gourmont and particularly of Lachèvre have shown us a different Cyrano.

The Cyrano created by Gautier and Rostand was, of course, a chimera; but there was something curious in his work which gave some support to the theory that he was mad or at least very eccentric. He was not mad, he was simply heavily censored. Essential words, sentences, paragraphs, whole pages were omitted; always modifying the meaning, sometimes making it absurd.

These Letters belong to a confused period of French literature, a sort of interregnum between the age of Rabelais and Montaigne and the age of Louis XIV. The literary influences in Cyrano's time were the précieux, the satyriques and the burlesques. The letters of Guez de Balzac (1594-1654) and Voiture (1598-1648) made polite letter-writing fashionable. The libels of the Fronde, the satire of Regnier's disciples, the burlesque of Sorel and Scarron formed, in the first half of the century, the opposition to the Italianated schools of preciousness and politeness—Marini, the Scudérys, Voiture, the Rambouillet salon. Cyrano's Letters are a curious hotch-potch of these conflicting styles. These fifty odd letters are Amorous, Descriptive and Satirical, sometimes at the expense of real persons. Most of them are rhetorical exercises; a few are serious. Nothing could be more creditable to Cyrano than his letter *Against Sorcerers*. It is a vigorous and well-expressed protest against the stupid belief in sorcery, the grotesque legal proceedings and the barbarous sentences carried out upon nervously hallucinated or innocent people. It is a wonderfully just attack upon ignorance and superstition and contains his famous saying:

"Not the name of Aristotle (more learned than I), not that of Plato, nor that of Socrates, shall ever convince me if my judgment is not convinced by reason that what they say is true."

The *Love-Letters* are made of clever and wholly frigid conceits, which glitter and clink like chains of icicles; nothing could be farther from the language of genuine feeling. The Satirical Letters are abusive and filled with "clenches." They do not denounce types, they blackguard individuals. The *Lettres Diverses* are mostly descriptive pieces on themes like the seasons, a lady with red hair, a country house; written in the highly conceited vein then affected by Cyrano. Some of them are vigorous and well-expressed. They are well translated as to style by the anonymous person who published *Bergerac's Satirical Characters* in 1658. The first edition of these Letters is dated 1654, but one of them was published as early as 1648; others may have been written earlier. They were probably rewritten before publication and were certainly censored.

Cyrano de Bergerac is the author of a comedy, *Le Pédant Joué*, written 1645, published 1654, probably never played; and of a tragedy, *La Mort*

d'Agrippine, written in 1646, published 1654, played in 1653 or 1654 and revived for one performance on the 10th November 1872.

These plays alone would provide a theme for a very long essay; but here I must necessarily be brief.

Corneille, Racine, and Molière were not isolated literary phenomena without predecessors and contemporaries; any more than Shakespeare. There is a large pre-Corneille and pre-Molière drama.^[17] Du Ryer, Rotrou, Gombaud, Scudéry, Hardy, Théophile de Viau, Boisrobert, are some of the best known dramatists of the thirties and forties of the seventeenth century. Among them was Cyrano de Bergerac. I cannot wholly share the contempt expressed by official French criticism for early French drama, though my acquaintance with it is superficial; I certainly cannot agree with the contemptuous estimates of Cyrano's plays. The fact that the plot of *The Pedant Outwitted* is taken from Lope de Vega seems very unimportant, when one considers the amazing gusto and energy Cyrano put into his uncouth comedy. Here his curious fustian style of ranting hyperbole serves him admirably; in *The Pedant Outwitted* bombast, exaggeration and caricature are carried to a superlative degree. Nothing could be more pedantic than Granger, the pedant, or more bombastic than the bragging poltroon, Chasteaufort. Some of the best scenes, situations and scraps of dialogue in *The Pedant Outwitted* have been appropriated by more famous dramatists, particularly by Molière. This may be seen in *Le Dépit Amoureux*, *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, and particularly in *Les Fourberies de Scapin*, where the whole of the famous "Que diable allait-il faire dans cette galère" scene is imitated from Cyrano.

The theme of the comedy is the outwitting of Granger by his son, Charlot. Both wish to marry Genevotte; Granger attempts to send his son away from Paris, and on various pretexts Charlot remains; by the device of a play within a play Charlot marries Genevotte before Granger's eyes. The whole is quite incredible, but amusing. The character Cyrano most enjoyed was Granger, a caricature of his old schoolmaster. It must be admitted that the long speeches of Granger and Chasteaufort, ingenious and fertile as they are, grow somewhat tedious in a play; all the characters, even the heroine, are infected with preciousity and burlesque. Extraordinary hyperbolic epithets are piled one upon another until the whole heap topples to absurdity; as for the rant of Chasteaufort, it leaves that of Tamburlaine a

mild understatement; Bobadil and Bessus are realistic sketches in comparison with this. With all its faults the play is a remarkable piece of work and ought to interest anyone who likes Elizabethan drama.

The tragedy *The Death of Agrippina* provides us with another surprise. Whereas *The Pedant Outwitted* seems extremely archaic for 1645, *The Death of Agrippina* has been compared favourably with Corneille's minor tragedies. All the "precious" affectations of style, the recondite allusions which make *The Pedant Outwitted* a test of one's knowledge of old French, all the oddities, the quiddities, the "humours", disappear and we have a formal French tragedy written in good Alexandrines, moving according to the rules and containing a well-concerted action as well as good subsidiary scenes. Nothing could better illustrate the versatility of Cyrano's literary personality; the plays seem to have been written by two totally different persons. The subject of the tragedy is the conspiracy of Sejanus against Tiberius; Sejanus is in love with Agrippina, Livilla with Sejanus; Agrippina takes part in the conspiracy to avenge herself upon Tiberius with the hope of destroying Sejanus afterwards; the conspiracy is revealed by Livilla and both Sejanus and Agrippina lose their lives. There is one very fine scene at the end, where Sejanus is taunted by Agrippina; this contains the "horrible impieties" complained of by Tallemant; but why Sejanus should have talked like a Christian not even Cyrano's severest censors have yet explained. The play is well-written and impressive.

Cyrano's fragmentary treatise on Physics needs only the remark that it is almost identical with Rohault's similar work and was either derived from it or from a common source. It was in part to popularize these studies and the sceptical ideas they inspired in him that Cyrano wrote his famous *Voyages to the Moon and Sun*, so often reprinted in France.

The Moon is supposed to have been written as early as 1648; *The Sun* was begun about 1650 and was left unfinished. Two versions of *The Moon* exist. One is contained in the MSS. of Paris and Munich and the other in the first edition, on the last of which all editions before Gourmont's incomplete reprint were founded. The MSS. undoubtedly contain the work as Cyrano wrote it and privily circulated it. The 1657 edition was heavily censored by Henry Le Bret, who was afraid to publish many passages reflecting upon the Church, of which he was a comfortably settled pillar. The early editions—and consequently all previous English translations—mark the places of

some of these omissions with dots or the word "hiatus". The effect of this expurgation was in some cases to make nonsense; in most to destroy the point of Cyrano's sarcasm. Apart from merely variant readings and single words or phrases (which often, by the way, greatly alter the point of a passage), there are no less than fourteen out of a total of ninety-six pages in M. Lachèvre's edition omitted by Le Bret, and these are precisely the most daring and satirical parts of the whole work. The last four pages are different in MSS. and in the printed editions; I have given the MSS. These MSS. have only been recently available in France and have never before been translated into English. Thus, if the reader were familiar with Lovell's (1687) version and had also read the French Bibliothèque Elzvirienne or Garnier editions, he would yet find that about one-seventh of the matter given in this translation of *The Moon* would be new to him.

The MS. of *The Sun* has disappeared; were it ever discovered we should no doubt find that the printed editions had been mutilated, while if the lost *Story of the Spark* were recovered, we might find a still more daring satire on Christianity. The first printed edition of *The Voyage to the Sun* appeared in 1662.

These imaginary voyages are often described by French writers as 'Utopias'; they are no more Utopias than *Pantagruel* and *Gulliver's Travels*. They lack the political system of the Utopian romance, whose purpose is to recommend speciously some abominable form of tyranny under the pretext of making everybody happy. At different times I have read the *Republic* of Plato, the *Utopia* of Sir Thomas More, Campanella's *Città del Sole*, William Morris's *News from Nowhere*, and Hudson's *A Crystal Age*; and I am bound to say, with all reverence to these great men, that Morris's *Nowhere* sounded least unendurable, while the rest were nightmares, visions of meddlesome cranks. I have a deep reverence for Plato so far as I am able to comprehend him, but I think I would rather die than be enslaved by his ideal state.

Now, Cyrano de Bergerac had no intention of creating one of these ideally unpleasant tyrannies. His purpose was similar to that of Rabelais and Swift. He wanted to satirise existing institutions, humbugs and prejudices; he wanted to mock at a literal belief in the Old Testament; he wanted to hold up to odium the fundamental villainy of man; and he wanted to convey amusingly a number of quasi-scientific and philosophical ideas which it was highly dangerous then to publish and still more dangerous to try to

popularise. Even then Cyrano dared not publish the book in his lifetime; and it was mutilated when it appeared after his death. The censorship of the *ancien régime* was almost exactly the antithesis to the police interference of to-day; great licence in morals and personalities was allowed, obscenities and even blasphemies were tolerated, but when an author, however eminent and serious, trenched upon the authority of the Church or the State, or offered new ideas which seemed likely to prove subversive, he was certain of persecution and punishment. Both systems have their defects. The tremendous hubbub raised against *Tartuffe*, the self-exile of Descartes,^[18] the prosecution of Théophile de Viau, the outcry against Cyrano, the fact that Gassendi's *Syntagma* did not appear in print until after his death; all show the working of the ancient censorship and the prejudices it appealed to in the populace. One feels that many of the deplorable traits in Cyrano's character are the result of a deliberate and high-spirited revolt against what he thought was oppressive. He attacked the Church and war and paternal authority as fiercely and recklessly as he attacked the *bravi* at the Porte de Nesle.

Even in Cyrano's time there was nothing original in a fanciful voyage to the Moon. Brun quotes a formidable list of predecessors—most of whom one has never heard of—whose work Cyrano may or may not have known. All probably derive directly or indirectly from Lucian of Samosate. It is certain that Cyrano copied Rabelais, that he took whole paragraphs and many ideas from Sorel's *Francion* and several hints from Bishop Godwin's *Man in the Moon*. Campanella furnished him with numerous hints. The philosophic and quasi-scientific passages came from Descartes, Gassendi, and Rohault. Cyrano is a Gassendist in *The Moon* and a Cartesian towards the end of *The Sun*. To trace these in detail would be laborious; it is sufficient to say that the theory which made Cyrano the predecessor of Rohault is now wholly disproved, while those who have compared Cyrano with Gassendi and Rohault declare that the author of the *Voyages* advances little that cannot be found in their works. M. Juppont's endeavour to prove that Cyrano was a marvellous scientific genius anticipating modern discoveries will hardly bear investigation; to make his points he has to attribute to Cyrano ideas derived from others and to wrest his language from the scientific jargon of one period into the worse jargon of another. After translating the *Voyages*, which implies a certain familiarity with them, I conclude that when Cyrano attempts to be scientific he often fails to understand thoroughly what he is

talking about. As soon as he begins to discourse of atoms, or attraction, or the magnet, his language becomes vague, involved and hesitating; he is metaphorical at the moment he should not be, and the thought obviously is not his own; the lack of clarity in his speech suggests that he failed to comprehend the ideas he pretends to expound, that he did not think them for himself but was indoctrinated with them by others. He makes use of the anacoluthon too often for a translator's comfort; for though the practice may be defended in poetry, sermons and other inspired works, it is unsuitable to the logical exposition of science. Finally, a certain lack of common-sense often precipitates him into absurdity; he chooses grotesque illustrations, wrecks ingenious ideas by some incongruity he might easily have avoided. It is significant that when great men like Molière and Swift have borrowed from Cyrano they improve on him chiefly by purging him of what is grotesque and absurd.

I must confess I view Cyrano's plagiarisms more coolly than recent French commentators; for Cyrano criticism has violently revolted from the theory that he was a perfect, beplumed hero, the most original man of his age, to the other extreme of a theory that he had no originality whatever, that he was affected, vain, debauched, dirty, hypocritical; ending up with a sort of Johnsonian "let us hear no more on't". Cyrano deserves some severity in the matter of plagiarism on account of his own stupid boast that he only read books to detect the plagiarisms of the authors. We are all plagiarists; every word we use is the creation of a poet; and a completely original author would probably be completely incomprehensible. This scientists' prejudice about priority of ideas is out of place in literature; we are engaged in creating a temper of the mind, in civilizing, not in riding an intellectual steeplechase. In works intended for amusement what matters plagiarism? Cyrano took an idea, say, from Sorel; Cyrano amuses us, Sorel bores us; are we not to read Cyrano because he plagiarized? And, in any event, these sarcasms of his which are merely amusing to-day were perilous matters then; if Cyrano had published an unexpurgated *Moon* in 1650, exile, imprisonment or some other torture might easily have been his lot. The ideas in the *Voyages* are derived indeed, but they were then new and worth circulating. Cyrano has been sneered at because, when he had written these dangerous matters, he evaded the possibility of martyrdom by refraining from publication; I confess I think he was wise; Naaman bowed himself in

the house of Rimmon, and there is no obligation upon any man to sacrifice his life for his opinions.

Moreover, when we read an author whose purpose is "to instruct by entertaining" we care little for the origins of the instruction so long as the entertainment be there. Examined from this point of view the *Voyages* emerge very well. In spite of all their faults, real and alleged, they are entertaining. One would certainly rather spend an evening with Cyrano than with his enemy, Father Garasse, that terrific old bore, the "flail of the libertins". Moreover, the dullest passages in *The Voyages* are those he stole from his scientific friends and the most entertaining those he took from Rabelais or Godwin or Sorel or invented himself. By far the best part of *The Voyages* is contained in the early pages of *The Sun*, where Cyrano relates the persecutions and inconveniences supposed to arise from the publication of *The Moon*, together with his adventures with the police. The whole thing bustles along admirably, reminding one of the adventures of the boys in the *Satyricon*, and it is a dismal moment when Cyrano produces an "icosahedron mirror" and we know we are in for some more quasi-science. The satire on mankind in the story of the birds is very happy and furnished Tom d'Urfey with an opera. The talking trees are quite good until they get on to loadstones and iron filings and the poles and such trash.

A large part of the opening of *The Moon* is occupied with a parody of the Old Testament, which Cyrano and his friends probably found more amusing than we do. The influence of the burlesque school on Cyrano has been noticed. Travesties then were a kind of craze; Virgil, Ovid, all the classics were burlesqued. There was one book it was dangerous to parody and Cyrano with his usual impetuosity rushed into a burlesque of the Old Testament. Here indeed he may claim to have given Voltaire several hints for his wickedly witty *Romans*.

It is not my intention to discuss *The Voyages* at greater length. The reader has here the full text before him and will form his own opinion. He has in the introduction sufficient information to understand at least in outline the writer of the book and his work, the *milieu* in which it was produced, the intellectual movement which helped to create it and its historical position.

The text used for the translation is that printed by M. Lachèvre in his *Œuvres Libertines de Cyrano de Bergerac*, 2 vols., Champion, Paris, 1921.

I wish to thank M. Lachèvre for the generosity with which he has allowed me to make use of his book and his kindness in answering my queries and supplying me with information. I am also indebted to the work of Brun, Gourmont, Perrens, Lacroix, Juppont, Magne and of course Cyrano's friend Le Bret. The only English work I have examined is an essay by Henry Morley, which should be read with great caution.

RICHARD ALDINGTON

Title-page to Lovell's expurgated translation.

VOYAGE TO THE MOON

The moon was full, the sky clear, and the clocks had just struck nine as I was returning with four of my friends from a house near Paris.^[19] Our wit must have been sharpened on the cobbles of the road for it thrust home whichever way we turned it; distant as the moon was she could not escape it. The various thoughts provoked in us by the sight of that globe of saffron diverted us on the road and our eyes were filled by this great luminary. Now one of us likened her to a window in Heaven through which the glory of the blessed might be faintly seen; then another, inspired by ancient fables, imagined that Bacchus kept a tavern in Heaven and had hung out the Full Moon for his sign; then another vowed that it was the block where Diana set Apollo's ruffs; another exclaimed that it might well be the Sun himself who, having put off his rays at night, was watching through a hole what the world did when he was not there. For my part, said I, I am desirous to add my fancies to yours and without amusing myself with the witty notions you use to tickle time to make it run the faster, I think that the Moon is a world like this and that our world is their Moon. The company gratified me with a great shout of mirth.

"Perhaps in the same way", said I, "at this moment in the Moon they jest at some one who there maintains that this globe is a world."

But though I showed them that Pythagoras, Epicurus, Democritus and, in our own age, Copernicus and Kepler had been of this opinion, I did but cause them to strain their throats the more heartily.

This thought, whose boldness jumped with my humour, was strengthened by contradiction and sank so deep in me that all the rest of the way I was pregnant with a thousand definitions of the Moon of which I could not be delivered. By supporting this fantastic belief with serious reasoning I grew well-nigh persuaded of it. But hearken, reader, the miracle or accident used by Providence or Fortune to convince me of it:

I returned home and scarcely had I entered my room to rest after the journey when I found on my table an open book which I had not put there. I

recognised it as mine, which made me ask my servant why he had taken it out of the book-case. I asked him but perfunctorily, for he was a fat Lorrainer, whose soul admitted of no exercises more noble than those of an oyster. He swore to me that either the Devil or I had put it there. For my own part I was sure I had not handled it for more than a year.

I glanced at it again; it was the works of Cardan^[20]; and though I had no idea of reading it I fell, as if directed to it, precisely upon a story told by this philosopher. He says that, reading one evening by candle-light, he perceived two tall old men enter through the closed door of his room and after he had asked them many questions they told him they were inhabitants of the Moon; which said, they disappeared. I remained so amazed to see a book brought there by itself as well as at the time and the leaf at which I found it open that I took this whole train of events to be an inspiration of God urging me to make known to men that the Moon is a world.

"What!" quoth I to myself, "after I have talked of a matter this very day, a book, which is perhaps the only one in a world that treats of this subject, flies down from the shelf on to my table, becomes capable of reason to the extent of opening at the very page of so marvellous an adventure and thereby supplies meditations to my fancy and an object to my resolution. Doubtless", I continued, "the two old men who appeared to that great man are the same who have moved my book and opened it at this page to spare themselves the trouble of making me the harangue they made Cardan. But", I added, "how can I clear up this doubt if I do not go there? And why not?" I answered myself at once, "Prometheus of old went to Heaven to steal fire!"

These feverish outbursts were followed by the hope of making successfully such a voyage.

I shut myself up to achieve my purpose in a rather lonely country-house where, after I had flattered my fancy with several methods which might have borne me up there, I committed myself to the heavens in this manner:

I fastened all about me a number of little bottles filled with dew, and the heat of the Sun drawing them up carried me so high that at last I found myself above the loftiest clouds. But, since this attraction caused me to rise too rapidly and instead of my drawing nearer the Moon, as I desired, she seemed to me further off than when I started, I broke several of my bottles until I felt that my weight overbore the attraction and that I was falling

towards the earth. My opinion was not wrong; for I reached ground sometime later when, calculating from the hour at which I had started, it ought to have been midnight. Yet I perceived that the Sun was then at the highest point above the horizon and that it was midday. I leave you to conjecture my surprise; indeed it was so great that not knowing how to explain this miracle I had the insolence to fancy that in compliment to my boldness God had a second time fixed the Sun in Heaven to light so glorious an enterprise. My astonishment increased when I found I did not recognise the country I was in, for it appeared to me that, having risen straight up, I ought to have landed in the place from which I had started. Encumbered as I was I approached a hut where I perceived some smoke and I was barely a pistol-shot from it when I found myself surrounded by a large number of savages. They appeared mightily surprised at meeting me; for I was the first, I think, they had ever seen dressed in bottles. And, to overthrow still more any explanation they might have given of this equipment, they saw that as I walked I scarcely touched the ground. They did not know that at the least movement I gave my body the heat of the midday sun-beams lifted me up with my dew; and if my bottles had been more numerous I should very likely have been carried into the air before their eyes. I tried to converse with them; but, as if terror had changed them into birds, in a twinkling they were lost to sight in the neighbouring woods. Nevertheless I caught one whose legs without doubt betrayed his intention. I asked him with much difficulty (for I was out of breath) how far it was from there to Paris, since when people went naked in France and why they fled from me in such terror. This man to whom I spoke was an old man, yellow as an olive, who cast himself at my knees, joined his hands above his head, opened his mouth and shut his eyes. He muttered for some time but as I could not perceive that he said anything I took his language for the hoarse babble of a dumb man.

Cyrano's first attempt.

Sometime afterwards I saw coming towards me a band of soldiers with drums beating and I noticed that two left the main body to reconnoitre me. When they were near enough to hear I asked them where I was.

"You are in France", replied they, "but who the Devil put you in this condition? How does it happen that we do not know you? Has the fleet arrived? Are you going to warn the Governor of it? Why have you divided your brandy into so many bottles?"

To all this I replied that the Devil had not put me in that condition; that they did not know me because they could not know all men; that I did not know there were ships on the Seine; that I had no information to give Monsieur de Montbazon^[21] and that I was not carrying any brandy.

"Oh! Ho!" said they taking me by the arm, "you are pleased to be merry! The Governor will understand you!"

They carried me towards their main body as they spoke these words and I learned from them that I was indeed in France, but not in Europe, for I was in New France.

I was brought before the Viceroy, Monsieur de Montmagnie. He asked me my country, my name and my rank, and when I had satisfied him by relating the happy success of my voyage, whether he believed it or only feigned to believe it, he had the kindness to allot me a room in his house. I was happy to fall in with a man capable of lofty ideas, who was not scandalised when I said that the earth must have turned while I was above it, seeing that I had begun to rise two leagues from Paris and had fallen by an almost perpendicular line in Canada.

That evening just as I was going to bed he came into my room.

"I should not have interrupted your rest", said he, "had I not believed that a man who travels nine hundred leagues in half a day can easily do so without being weary. But you do not know", added he, "the merry dispute I have just had on your behalf with our Jesuit Fathers?^[22] They are convinced that you are a magician and the greatest mercy you can obtain from them is to pass for no more than an impostor. And, after all, this movement you assign to the Earth is surely some neat paradox? The reason I am not of your opinion is that although you may have left Paris yesterday you could still have reached this country to-day without the Earth having turned. For the

Sun, which bore you up by means of your bottles, must have drawn you hither since, according to Ptolemy, Tycho Brahe,^[23] and modern philosophers it moves in a direction opposite to that in which you say the Earth moves. And then what probability have you for asserting that the Sun is motionless when we see it move, and that the Earth turns about its centre with such rapidity when we feel it firm beneath us?"

"Sir", replied I, "here are the reasons which oblige us to suppose so: First it is a matter of common sense to think that the Sun is placed in the centre of the Universe, since all bodies in Nature need this radical fire, which dwells in the heart of the Kingdom to be in a position to satisfy their necessities promptly; and that the cause of procreation should be placed in the midst of all bodies to act equally upon them: In the same way wise Nature placed the genitals in the centre of man, pips in the centre of apples, kernels in the centre of their fruit; and in the same way the onion shelters within a hundred surrounding skins the precious germ whence ten million others must draw their essence. The apple is a little universe by itself whose core, which is warmer than the other parts, is a Sun spreading about it the preserving heat of its globe; and the germ in the onion is the little Sun of that little world which heats and nourishes the vegetable salt of the mass. Granted this, I say that since the Earth needs the light, the heat and the influence of this great fire, she turns about it to receive equally in every part this strength which conserves her. For it would be as ridiculous to hold that this great luminous body turns about a point of no importance to it as to imagine when we see a roasted lark that it has been cooked by turning the hearth about it.^[24] Otherwise, if the Sun were made to perform this labour it would seem that the doctor needs the patient, that the strong must yield to the weak, the great serve the small, and that instead of a ship coasting the shores of a country we must make the country move around the vessel. And if you find it hard to believe that so heavy a mass can move, tell me, I pray you, are the stars and the Heavens that you make so solid any lighter? And it is easy for us who are convinced of the roundness of the earth to deduce its movements from its shape; but why suppose the sky to be round since you cannot know it and since if, of all possible shapes it has not this shape, it certainly cannot move? I do not reproach you with your eccentrics, your concentrics and your epicycles,^[25] all of which you can only explain very confusedly and from which my system is free. Let us speak only of the

natural causes of this movement. On your side you are compelled to invoke the aid of intelligences to move and direct your globes! But without disturbing the tranquillity of the Sovereign Being, who doubtless created Nature quite perfect and whose wisdom completed it in such a way that by fitting it for one thing He has not rendered it unfit for another—I, on my part, find in the Earth herself the power which makes it move. I declare then that the sun-beams, together with the Sun's influence, striking upon the Earth in their motion, make it turn as we turn a globe by striking it with the hand, or that the vapours which continually evaporate from the Earth's bosom on that side where the Sun shines, are repulsed by the cold of the middle regions, rush back on the Earth and, of necessity being only able to strike it obliquely, make it dance in this fashion.

"The explanation of the two other movements is still less intricate. Consider I beg of you...."

At these words the Viceroy interrupted me.

"I prefer", he said, "to excuse you from that trouble (I have myself read several books of Gassendi on the subject) provided that you will listen to what I heard one day from one of our Fathers who shared your opinion. 'Truly', said he, 'I imagine that the Earth turns, not for the reasons alleged by Copernicus but because the fire of Hell (as we learn from Holy Scripture) being enclosed in the centre of the Earth, the damned souls, flying from the heat of the fire to avoid it, clamber upwards and thus make the Earth turn, as a dog makes a wheel turn when he runs round inside it.'"

We praised the good Father's zeal and, having finished the panegyric, the Viceroy said he greatly wondered the system of Ptolemy should be so generally received, considering how little probable it is.

"Sir", I replied, "most men judge only by their senses, are convinced only by their eyes; and just as a man in a ship sailing by the coast thinks himself stationary and the shore moving, so men, turning with the Earth around the sky, believe that the sky itself turns around them. Add to this the intolerable pride of human beings, who are convinced that Nature was made for them alone—as if it were probable that the Sun, a vast body four hundred and thirty-four times greater than the Earth,^[26] should have been lighted only to ripen its medlars and to head its cabbages. For my part, far from yielding to their impertinence, I believe that the planets are worlds around the Sun and

that the fixed stars are suns too with planets around them, that is to say, worlds, which we cannot see from here because they are too small and because their borrowed light cannot reach us. For, in good faith, how can we suppose that globes so spacious are only huge desert countries and that ours, because we grovel on it before a dozen proud-stomached rogues, should have been made to command them all? What! Because the Sun measures our days and our years, does that mean it was created only to save us from breaking our heads against the wall? No! If this visible God lightens man it is accidental, as the King's torch accidentally lightens a porter passing in the street."

"But", said he, "if, as you assert, the fixed stars are so many suns we may deduce thence that the universe is infinite since it is probable that the people in the worlds about a fixed star, which you take to be a sun, perceive above them other fixed stars which we cannot see from here and that it continues in this manner to infinity."^[27]

"Doubt it not", replied I, "as God was able to make the soul immortal so could He make the World infinite, if it be true that Eternity is nothing else than duration without bounds and the infinite, space without limit. And then God Himself would be finite if we believe the world not to be infinite, since He could not be where there is nothing and since He could not increase the size of the World without adding something to His own extent, by beginning to be where He had not been formerly. We must believe then that as we see Saturn and Jupiter from here we should perceive, if we were in one or the other, many worlds we do not perceive from here and that the universe is constructed in this manner to infinity."

"Faith!" replied he, "you may well talk but I cannot comprehend infinity."

"Why, tell me," said I, "do you understand better the nothing which is beyond it? Not at all. When you think of this nothing you imagine at least something like wind, something like air, and that is something; but if you do not comprehend infinity as a general idea you may conceive it at least in parts, for it is not difficult to imagine beyond the earth, air and fire that we see, more air and more earth. Infinity is simply a texture without bounds. If you ask me how these worlds were made, seeing that Holy Scripture speaks only of one created by God, I reply that it speaks only of ours because this is the only world God took the trouble to make with His own hand and all

the others, whether we see them or do not see them, hanging in the azure of the universe, are dross thrown off by the suns.^[28] For how could these great fires continue if they were not united with matter to feed them? Well, just as fire casts off the ashes which choke it, just as gold in the crucible severs itself from the marcasite which lessens its purity, and just as our heart frees itself by vomiting from the indigestible humours which attack it; so the suns disgorge every day and purge themselves of the remnants of that matter which feeds their fire. But when these suns have altogether used up the matter which maintains them, you cannot doubt but that they will spread out on all sides to seek new fuel and will fall upon all the worlds they had thrown off before and particularly upon the nearest ones: Then these great fires again burning up all these bodies will again throw them off pell-mell on all sides as before, and being purified little by little they will begin to act as suns to these little worlds which they engender by casting them out of their spheres; doubtless it was this which made the disciples of Pythagoras predict an universal conflagration. This is not a ridiculous fancy; New France, where we are, produces a very convincing proof. This vast continent of America is one half of the Earth, and though our predecessors had sailed the ocean a thousand times they never discovered it. At that time it did not exist, any more than many islands, peninsulas and mountains which rise on our globe, until the rusts of the Sun being cleaned off and cast far away were condensed into balls heavy enough to be attracted towards the centre of our world, either little by little in small parts or perhaps suddenly in one mass. And this is not so unreasonable but that Saint Augustine would have applauded it had this country been discovered in his time, for this great personage whose genius was enlightened by the Holy Ghost asserts that in his time the Earth was as flat as an oven and that it swam upon the water like half of a cut orange; but if ever I have the honour to see you in France I will prove to you, by means of a very excellent perspective glass I have, that certain obscurities which from here seem to be spots are worlds in process of formation."

My eyes were closing as I said this, which obliged the Viceroy to bid me good-night. The next and following days we had conversations of the like nature; but since some time afterwards the press of business in the Province interrupted our philosophizing I fell back the more eagerly on my plan of reaching the Moon.

As soon as the Moon rose I went off among the woods meditating on the contrivance and issue of my undertaking. At length on Saint John's Eve when those in the fort were debating whether or no they would aid the savages of the country against the Iroquois, I went off by myself behind our house to the summit of a little hill, where I acted as follows.

With a machine I had constructed, which I thought would lift me as much as I wanted, I cast myself into the air from the top of a rock; but because I had taken my measures badly I was tumbled roughly into the valley. Injured as I was I returned to my room without being discouraged. I took beef-marrow and greased all my body with it, for I was bruised from head to foot; and after I had comforted my heart with a bottle of cordial I returned to look for my machine, which I did not find, seeing that certain soldiers who had been sent into the forest to cut wood for the purpose of building a Saint John's fire to be lighted that evening, had come upon it by chance and carried it to the fort. After several hypotheses of what it might be they discovered the device of the spring,^[29] when some said they ought to bind around it a number of rockets because their rapid ascent would lift it high in the air, the spring would move its great wings and everyone would take the machine for a fire-dragon.

I sought it for a long time and at last I found it in the middle of the market-place of Quebec just as they were lighting it. The pain of seeing the work of my hands in such peril affected me so much that I rushed forward to grasp the arm of the soldier who was about to fire it. I seized his slow-match and cast myself furiously into the machine to break off the fire-works which surrounded it; but I came too late, for I had scarcely set my two feet in it when I was carried off into the clouds. The fearful horror that dismayed me did not so thoroughly overwhelm the faculties of my soul but that I could recollect afterwards all that happened to me at this moment. You must know then that the flame had no sooner consumed one line of rockets (for they had placed them in sixes by means of a fuse which ran along each half-dozen), when another set caught fire and then another, so that the blazing powder delayed my peril by increasing it. The rockets at length ceased through the exhaustion of material and, while I was thinking I should leave my head on the summit of a mountain, I felt (without my having stirred) my elevation continue; and my machine, taking leave of me, fell towards the Earth. This extraordinary adventure filled me with a joy so uncommon that

in my delight at finding myself delivered from certain danger I was impudent enough to philosophize about it. I sought with my eyes and intelligence the reason for this miracle and I perceived that my flesh was still swollen and greasy with the marrow I had rubbed on it for the bruises caused by my fall. I knew that at the time the Moon was waning and that during this quarter she is wont to suck up the marrow of animals; she drank the marrow I had rubbed on myself with the more eagerness in that her globe was nearer me and that her strength was not weakened by any intervening clouds.^[30]

When I had traversed, according to the calculation I have since made, more than three-quarters the distance which separates the Earth from the Moon, I suddenly turned a somersault without my having stumbled at all; in fact I should not have perceived it had I not felt my head burdened with the weight of my body. I realised then that I was not falling towards our world, for although I was between two Moons and could see very well that I drew further from the one as I approached the other, I was certain that the larger was our Earth since after a day or two of travelling the distant reflection of the Sun confounded the diversity of bodies and climates and therefore it appeared to me like a large gold platter, similar to the other. From this I supposed I was descending upon the Moon and I was confirmed in this opinion when I remembered that I had only begun to fall when I had passed three-quarters of the distance. For, said I to myself, the Moon's mass being less than ours the sphere of its activity must be less extended and consequently I felt the attraction of its centre more tardily.

After I had been long falling, as I supposed, for the violence of my fall prevented me from observing it, I remember no more than that I found myself under a tree, entangled with three or four rather large branches which I had snapped off in my fall and my face moistened with an apple which had been crushed against it.^[31]

As you shall know very soon, this place was happily the Earthly Paradise and the tree I fell on precisely the Tree of Life. You may well suppose that without this miraculous chance I should have been dead a thousand times. I have often reflected since on the vulgar notion that a man who throws himself from a great height is suffocated before he reaches the ground; but from my adventure I conclude this to be false, or else this fruit's powerful juice trickling into my mouth must have recalled my soul which was yet

near my warm corpse and ready to perform the functions of life. In fact as soon as I was on the ground my pain departed before it had even limned itself in my memory and I had but a slight recollection of having lost the hunger that had so tormented me during my voyage.

I got up and I had scarcely noticed the banks of the largest of the four great rivers, which there form a lake, when the spirit or invisible soul of the herbs which breathe out over that land delighted my nostrils. The little stones were neither hard nor rough except to the sight; they were soft when walked on.

I came first of all to a place where five avenues met and the oaks which formed them were so extremely tall that they appeared to support in the heavens a high garden-plot of greenery. Glancing from the root to the top and then from the summit to the foot I wondered whether the Earth bore them up or whether they themselves did not rather carry the Earth hanging from their roots. It seemed as if their heads, so proudly lifted, were bowed by force under the burden of the celestial globes and that they groaned as they supported this weight; their arms extended towards the sky seemed to embrace it and to ask from the stars the pure benignity of their influences which they receive before they lose any of their innocence in the bed of the elements. There, on all sides the flowers with no gardener but Nature exhale a wild breath which awakens and satisfies the sense of smell; there, the incarnate of a rose on the eglantine and the bright blue of a violet under the brambles leave no liberty of choice and make you think that each is more beautiful than the other; there, every season is spring; there, no poisonous plant grows but that its existence betrays its safety; there, the rivulets relate their journeys to the pebbles; there, a thousand little feathered voices make the forest ring with the sound of their songs and the flattering assembly of these melodious throats is so general that every leaf in the wood seems to have taken the tongue and form of a nightingale; Echo delights so much in their songs that to hear her repeat them one would think she wished to learn them by heart. Beside this wood two meadows are to be seen whose continuous happy green formed one emerald to the horizon. The confused mixture of colours which the Spring attaches to a hundred little flowers mingles the tints together and these waving flowers seem running to escape the caresses of the wind. This meadow looks like an ocean but, since it is a sea without shore, my eye, terrified at having wandered so far without

discovering a limit, quickly sent my thought over it; and my thought wondering if it were not the end of the world would have convinced itself that so charming a scene had perhaps compelled Heaven to join itself to Earth. In the midst of this vast perfect carpet flow the silver bubbles of a rustic fountain whose banks are crowned with turf enamelled with daisies, buttercups and violets, and the crowding of these flowers all about appears as if each were thrusting forward to be the first reflected. The stream is still in its cradle, it is but just born and its young smooth face shows not one wrinkle; the large curves it makes, returning upon itself a thousand times, show how regretfully it leaves its native country, and, as if it had been ashamed to be caressed too near its mother, it repulsed murmuring the hand I put forth playfully to touch it; the animals that came there to drink, more reasonable than those of our world, showed their surprise at seeing it was full day above the horizon while yet they saw the Sun in the Antipodes and scarcely dared to lean over the brink lest they should fall into the firmament.^[32]

I cannot choose but admit that the sight of so many fair objects tickled me with those agreeable pangs the embryo is said to feel when the soul is infused in it! My old hair fell out and was replaced by thicker and finer tresses; I felt my youth re-lighted, my face grow rosy, my natural heat mingle gently once more with my radical moisture; in fine, my age diminished some fourteen years.

I had walked half a league through a forest of jasmine and myrtles when I perceived something that moved, as it lay in the shade; it was a young man whose majestic beauty compelled me almost to adore him. He arose to restrain me.

"'Tis not to me", he exclaimed loudly, "but to God, that you owe these acts of submission!"

"You see me", I replied, "amazed with so many miracles that I know not how to begin the expression of my wonder. First I come from a world which you here no doubt take to be a Moon; and I thought to reach another, which the people of my country call the Moon, and I find myself in Paradise at the feet of a God who refuses to be adored, of a stranger who speaks my language."

"Except for the attribute of God", he replied, "what you say is true; this Earth is the Moon which you see from your Globe and the place where you walk is Paradise, but it is the Earthly Paradise into which only six people have ever entered: Adam, Eve, Enoch, Myself who am old Elijah, Saint John the Evangelist and you. You know very well how the two first were banished hence but you do not know how they came to your World. Know then that when they had both tasted the forbidden apple, Adam, fearful lest God should be further irritated by his presence and increase his punishment, considered the Moon, your Earth, as the sole refuge wherein he could shelter from the vengeance of his Creator. Well, at that time man's imagination was so strong, being not yet corrupted by debaucheries, by coarse foods or by the weakening of diseases, that when he was excited by a violent desire to reach this refuge his whole body became lightened through the fire of this enthusiasm and he was uplifted just as certain philosophers, whose imagination has been greatly moved by something, have been carried into the air by transports which you call ecstatic. Eve who was weaker and not so hot, because of the infirmity of her sex, doubtless would not have possessed an imagination able to conquer by the mere strength of its will the weight of matter, but since she had been but a little time made out of her husband's body the sympathy which still bound this portion to the original whole carried her after him as he went up, just as amber is followed by a straw, as the loadstone turns to the north from whence it has been torn. And Adam attracted this part of himself as the sea attracts the rivers which are made out of her. When they reached your Earth they took up their abode between Mesopotamia and Arabia; the Hebrews knew him by the name of Adam and the idolaters by the name of Prometheus, feigned by their poets to have stolen fire from Heaven, because the progeny he begot were endowed with a soul as perfect as that which God had filled him with; thus the first man left this world deserted to inhabit yours, but the All-Wise willed that so happy a dwelling-place should not remain uninhabited and a few centuries later he granted Enoch permission to leave the company of mankind, whose innocence had become corrupted. This holy personage considered that no retreat was secure against the ambition of his relatives (who were already cutting each other's throats for the possession of your world) except that happy land whereof Adam, his grandfather, had formerly talked so much. Yet how was he to get there? Jacob's Ladder was not yet invented! The grace of the Most High supplied the deficiency by causing

Enoch to observe that the fire from Heaven descended upon the sacrifices of the just and of those who were acceptable before the face of the Lord, according to the word of His mouth: 'The savour of the just man's sacrifices has reached me.' One day when this divine flame was fiercely consuming a victim which he offered to the Eternal, he filled two large vessels with the vapour it gave off, sealed them hermetically and attached them under his arm-pits. The smoke immediately had a tendency to rise straight up to God and, not being able to penetrate the metal save by a miracle, bore the vessels upwards and in the same way carried with them this holy man.^[33] When he reached the Moon and looked upon this fair garden an almost supernatural out-pouring of joy showed him that it was the Earthly Paradise wherein his grandfather had formerly dwelt. He promptly loosened the vessels which he had bound like wings on to his shoulders and did so with so much good fortune that he was scarce four toises in the air above the Moon when he took leave of his bladders. However he was sufficiently high up to have been sadly hurt had not the wind borne up the ample skirts of his robe.^[34] The ardour of the fire of charity sustained him also. As to the vessels they continued to rise until God set them in the Heavens and they are what you to-day call the Balance, showing us every day that they are still full of the odours of a just man's sacrifice by the favourable influences they exert on the horoscope of Louis the Just, who had the Balance as his ascendant.

"Enoch nevertheless was not yet in this garden; he arrived there some time later. This was during the flood when the waters which engulfed your world rose to so prodigious a height that the Ark swam in the Heavens beside the Moon. The human beings within saw this globe through the window but the light reflected from this great opaque body was weakened because they were so near that they shared it and so each of them thought it was a part of the Earth not yet flooded. One daughter of Noah, named Achab, alone maintained tooth and nail that it was positively the Moon, perhaps because she had noticed they had approached this body as the ship rose. They pointed out to her that the sounding-line marked but fifteen fathoms of water; she only replied that the lead must have touched the back of a whale which they took for Earth and that for her part she was well assured it was the Moon in person they were about to board. In fine, since each one follows the opinion of his like, all the other women in turn grew convinced

of it and in spite of the men's prohibition they launched the skiff on the water. Ahab was the most daring and desired to be the first to affront the peril. She threw herself gaily into the boat and would have been followed by all those of her sex had not a wave separated her from the ship. They called to her, said she was a hundred times lunatic, vowed that through her every woman would one day be reproached for having a quarter of the Moon in her head—she did but flout them. There she was sailing outside the world. The animals followed her example, for most of the birds, impatient at the first prison that had ever restrained their liberty, flew thither if they felt their wings strong enough to risk the journey. The boldest of the quadrupeds even began to swim. More than a thousand got out before Noah's sons could shut the stables which were kept open by the crowd of animals rushing through. Most of them reached this new world. As for the skiff, it grounded upon a very pleasant hill where the courageous Ahab landed. Delighted at having recognised that this Earth was indeed the Moon she was unwilling to embark again and join her brothers. She spent some time in a cave and one day as she was walking out, debating whether she were sorry or very glad to have lost the company of her relatives, she saw a man knocking down acorns. The joy of such a meeting made her fly to embrace him, and she received the like from him, for it was still longer since the old man had seen a human face. It was Enoch the Just. They lived together, begat posterity and had he not been obliged to withdraw into the woods by the original sin of his children and the pride of his wife, they would have passed the remainder of their days together with all the comfort God bestows as a blessing upon the marriage of the Just. There, every day in the wildest retreats of these terrible solitudes he offered up to God with a purified spirit his heart as a sacrifice. One day the Tree of Knowledge, which as you know is in this garden, dropped an apple in the river on whose bank it is planted and the fruit was carried out of Paradise by the waves to a place where poor Enoch was fishing to gain his scanty subsistence. This beautiful fruit was caught in his net and he ate it. Immediately he knew where the Earthly Paradise was and he came to live in it by secret means which you cannot conceive if you have not eaten, as he did, the Apple of Knowledge.

"Now I must tell you the manner in which I came here myself. You have not forgotten, I suppose, that my name is Elijah, for I told you so just now. You must know then that I was in your world and that I dwelt with Elisha, a

Hebrew like myself, on the banks of the Jordan where I spent among books a life pleasant enough not to make me regret that it was continually passing away. However, as the enlightenment of my spirit increased, the knowledge of the enlightenment I did not possess increased also. Whenever our priests reminded me of Adam I could not forbear sighing at the recollection of that perfect Philosophy he had possessed. I despaired of being able to acquire it, when one day, after I had sacrificed to expiate the sins of my mortal Being, I fell asleep and the Angel of the Lord appeared to me in a dream. As soon as I awoke I failed not to labour at those things he had commanded me; I took of loadstone two square feet and cast it into a furnace, and when it was purged, precipitated and dissolved, I drew out the attractive principle, calcined the whole elixir and reduced it to the bulk of a medium-sized ball.

"Following upon these preparations I had made a very light chariot of iron and some months later, all my engines being completed, I entered my ingenious cart. Perhaps you will ask what was the use of this appliance? Know then that the Angel told me in my dream that if I desired to acquire the perfect knowledge I wished for I should rise from the world to the Moon, where I should find the Tree of Knowledge in Adam's Paradise and as soon as I had tasted its fruit my soul would perceive all the truths a created mind can perceive. For this voyage I had built my chariot. I got into it and when I was well and firmly seated in it I cast the loadstone ball high into the air. Now I had expressly made my iron machine thicker in the middle than at the ends and so it was lifted immediately in perfect equilibrium because it moved always more eagerly in that part. Thus, directly I arrived where the loadstone had drawn me I threw up the ball again in the air above me."

"But", I interrupted, "how did you throw the ball so straight above your chariot that it never went sideways?"

"I see nothing astounding in this adventure", said he, "for when the loadstone was cast into the air it attracted the iron straight to it and consequently it was impossible that I should rise sideways. I must tell you that I held the ball in my hand and continued to rise because the chariot rushed always towards the loadstone which I held above it; but the movement of the iron to join with the ball was so vigorous that it bent my body double and I dared not attempt the new experiment more than once. In truth it was a very surprising spectacle to behold, for I had polished the steel

of this flying house carefully and it reflected on all sides the light of the Sun so keenly and sharply that I myself thought I was being carried away in a chariot of fire. At length after I had many times thrown the ball upwards and had flown after it, I arrived (as you did) at a place where I began to fall towards this world; and because at that moment I happened to be holding the loadstone ball tightly in my hands my chariot pressed against me to approach the body which attracted it and therefore did not leave me. All I had to fear now was breaking my neck, but to preserve myself from that I threw up the ball from time to time so that my machine, feeling itself attracted back, would rest and so break the force of my fall. Finally, when I was about two or three hundred toises above the ground I threw the ball out on either side level with the chariot, sometimes in the one direction and sometimes in the other, until my eyes discovered the Earthly Paradise. Immediately I failed not to throw my loadstone above it and, when the machine followed, I let myself fall until I saw I was about to be hurled against the ground; then I threw the ball upwards a foot only above my head and this little cast diminished altogether the speed I had acquired in falling so that my descent was no more violent than if I had jumped down my own height. I will not describe to you my amazement at the sight of the marvels which are here, because it was very similar to that which I perceive has just perturbed you.

"You must know, however, that the next day I came upon the Tree of Life, by whose means I prevented myself from growing old. Age very soon disappeared and the serpent went up in smoke."

At these words I said: "Venerable and holy Patriarch, I should be happy to know what you mean by this serpent which disappeared."

With a laughing face he replied thus: "I forgot, O my son, to reveal to you a secret which could not hitherto have been imparted to you. You must know then that after Eve and her husband had eaten the forbidden apple, God punished the serpent that had tempted them by confining it in man's body. Since then in punishment for the crime of the first father every human being who is born nourishes in his belly a serpent, the issue of the first one. You call this the bowels and think them necessary for the functions of life, but learn that they are nothing else than a serpent coiled upon itself in several folds. When you hear your guts rumble, it is the serpent that hisses and, according to that gluttonous nature with which he formerly incited the first

man to eat too much, asks for food himself. God, to punish you, desired to make you mortal like other animals, and caused you to be possessed by this insatiable beast, to the intent that if you feed him too much you choke yourself or, if you refuse him his pittance when the starveling gnaws your stomach with his invisible teeth, then he rumbles, he rages, he pours out that venom which doctors call bile and so heats you with the poison he pours into your arteries that you are soon destroyed by it. Finally, to show you that your bowels are a serpent you have in your body, remember serpents were found in the graves of Æsculapius, Scipio, Alexander, Charles Martel and Edward of England, still feeding upon the corpses of their hosts."

"Truly", said I, interrupting him, "I have observed that since this serpent is always trying to escape from man's body his head and neck may be seen projecting from the lower part of our bellies. But God did not permit man alone to be tormented by it, he willed that it should rise up against woman to cast its venom upon her and that the swelling should last nine months after she had been bitten. And to prove to you that I speak according to the word of the Lord, He said to the serpent (to curse it) that though it might make woman fall by rising up against her, she would make it lower its head."

I would have continued these trifles but Elijah prevented me: "Remember", said he, "that this place is holy." He then remained silent some time as if to recollect the place in which he dwelt, and continued in these words: "I only taste the Fruit of Life every hundred years. The taste of its juice somewhat resembles spirits. I think it was the apple that Adam had eaten which caused our earliest forefathers to live so long, because something of its energy had flowed into their seed and was only extinguished in the waters of the flood. [35] The Tree of Knowledge is planted opposite. Its fruit is covered with a rind which produces ignorance in anyone who tastes it and preserves under the thickness of this peel the spiritual virtues of that learned food. After Adam was expelled from this blessed land God rubbed his gums with this peel, lest he should find the way back to it again. For more than fifteen years after this time he doted and forgot everything so completely that neither he nor his progeny down to Moses remembered the creation. But the remains of the power of this weighty peel were finally dissipated by the warmth and light of that great Prophet's genius. Happily I began on one of

the apples which was so ripe it had shed its skin and my saliva had scarcely dampened it when universal Philosophy took me by the nose. It seemed to me that an infinite number of little eyes sank into my head and I knew at once how to converse with the Lord. Afterwards when I reflected upon this miraculous removal I felt that I could not have overcome merely through the occult virtues of a simple body the vigilance of the Seraph whom God placed on guard over this Paradise. But since it pleases Him to make use of secondary causes I thought He had inspired me with this means of entering it as He had made use of Adam's ribs to create a woman, although He could have formed her out of earth as well as the man.

"I remained for a long time in this garden walking without a companion. But at last, as the Angel at the Gate of the place was my principal host, I felt a desire to speak to him. An hour's walking ended my journey, for at the expiration of this time I reached a country where a thousand flashes of lightning confounding themselves into one formed a blinding daylight which served but to make darkness visible.

"I had not yet recovered from this adventure when I saw a fair young man before me. 'I am', said he, 'the Archangel you are seeking and I have just read in God that He had suggested to you the means of coming here and that He desires you to await His pleasure.' He conversed with me on several subjects and among other things told me that the light at which I had seemed frightened had nothing formidable about it, that it lighted up almost every evening when he was making his rounds because, in order to avoid the artifices of sorcerers, who enter everywhere without being seen, he was forced to indulge in broad sword play with his flaming brand all round the Earthly Paradise and that this light was caused by the flashing of his steel. 'Those which you perceive from your World', he added, 'are produced by me. If you see them sometimes afar off, that is because the clouds of a distant country, being disposed to receive this impression, reflect on to you these light images of fire, just as vapour differently placed is disposed to make a rainbow. I will not tell you any more, because the Apple of Knowledge is not far from here and as soon as you have eaten of it you will be as learned as I. But above all take care of this mistake; most of the fruits which hang on that plant are covered with a rind and if you taste it you will descend beneath Man, whereas the inner part will uplift you as high as the Angels.'"

Elijah had reached this point in the instructions the Angel had given him when a little man joined us. "This is the Enoch of whom I have spoken", whispered my guide. As he spoke, Enoch presented us with a basket filled with I know not what fruits, similar to pomegranates, which he had discovered that day in a retired grove. I put some of them in my pockets at Elijah's command, when Enoch asked who I was.

"'Tis an adventure which merits a longer conversation", answered my guide, "this evening when we go to bed he will tell us himself the miraculous details of his journey."

As he said this we reached a kind of hermitage made of palm branches ingeniously interwoven with myrtles and orange-trees. There I perceived in a little corner several heaps of a certain thread so white and so fine that it might have passed for the spirit of snow. I saw also spindles lying here and there. I asked my guide what they were used for and he replied, "To spin. When the good Enoch wishes to unbend from his meditations, sometimes he dresses the thread, and sometimes he weaves the linen which serves to make chemises for the eleven thousand virgins. You must have met sometimes in your world with something that floats through the air in the autumn about harvest-time. The peasants call it, 'Our Lady's cotton', but it is really the waste which Enoch clears off the linen as he makes it."

We went away without taking leave of Enoch, who lived in this hut, and we were obliged to depart from him so soon, because he prays every six hours, and that time had fully elapsed since his last orison.

As we went along I besought Elijah to conclude the story of the assumptions he had begun, and I told him that I thought he had broken off at the story of Saint John the Evangelist.

"Since you have not the patience", said he, "to wait until the Apple of Knowledge teaches you all these things far better than I can, I will tell you. Know then that God...."

At this word I know not how the Devil interfered, but I could not prevent myself from interrupting him waggishly:

"I remember", said I, "God was one day informed that the soul of this Evangelist was so detached that he only retained it by clenching his teeth. The Eternal Wisdom was mightily surprised at so unexpected an accident,

exclaiming: 'Alas! He must not taste death. He is predestined to rise up to the Earthly Paradise in his flesh and bones. Yet the hour wherein I had foreseen he should be uplifted has almost expired! Just Heavens! What will men say of Me when they know I have been mistaken?' Thus to cover up His mistake the Eternal was constrained in His irresolution to cause him to be there without having the time to make him go there."

All the time I was speaking Elijah gazed at me with eyes that would have killed me had I been in a condition to die of anything but hunger.

"Abominable wretch!" said he, recoiling from me, "you have the impudence to banter holy things and assuredly it would not be with impunity if the All-Wise did not wish to leave you as a famous example of His pity to all nations. Hence, thou impious fellow, go from here, publish in this little world and in the other (for you are predestined to return there) the irreconcilable hatred of God to Atheists."

He had scarcely finished this imprecation when he seized hold of me and began to drag me roughly towards the gate. When we came near a large tree, whose branches were weighed almost to the ground by their burden of fruit, he said: "That is the Tree of Knowledge from which you would have drawn inconceivable enlightenment had you not been so irreligious."

He had not finished speaking when, pretending to faint with weakness, I stumbled against a branch from which I nimbly stole an apple. I had still several steps to make before I should get out of this delightful park but I was so violently attacked by hunger that I forgot I was in the hands of an angry prophet, pulled out one of the apples I had put in my pocket and thrust my teeth into it. But instead of taking one of those which Enoch had given to me, my hand fell on the apple I had picked from the Tree of Knowledge, which unfortunately I had not peeled.

I had scarcely tasted it when a thick night descended upon my soul; I did not see my apple any more nor Elijah beside me and my eyes did not recognise a single trace of the Earthly Paradise in the whole hemisphere, yet I did not cease to remember all that had happened to me there.

Afterwards, reflecting on this miracle, I supposed that the rind of this fruit did not wholly stupefy me, because my teeth went through it and felt a little of the inner juice, whose energy dispelled the malignities of the peel.

I was vastly surprised to find myself all alone in the midst of a land I did not know. I turned my eyes about me and gazed over the country, but no living thing presented itself to console me. At last I resolved to walk forward until Fortune brought me into the company of some creature or of death. She heard me favourably, for at the end of a half-quarter of an hour I met with two very large animals, one of which stayed before me while the other ran swiftly towards its den; at least I thought so, because a little time later I saw it return with more than seven or eight hundred of the same species, who surrounded me. When I could examine them near at hand I perceived that their body and face were like ours. This adventure made me remember the stories I had heard my nurse tell formerly about sirens, fauns and satyrs; from time to time they set up such furious shriekings, caused no doubt by their wonder at seeing me, that I almost thought I had become a monster.

One of these beast-men seized me by the neck, as wolves do when they carry off a sheep, cast me upon his back and took me to their town. I was greatly astounded when I saw that they were indeed men and yet every one I met walked on four legs. When the people saw me pass, seeing I was so small (for most of them are twelve cubits high) and that my body was supported by two feet only, they could not believe I was a man; for they hold that as Nature has given men two arms and two legs like the beasts, they ought to use them in the same way. And indeed, musing on this subject afterwards, I have thought that this position of the body was not so extravagant, for I recollected that our children walk on four feet when they are taught by Nature alone and only rise on two feet through the care of their nurses who set them in little carts and tie them with straps to prevent their falling on four feet, which is the only position wherein the shape of our body tends to repose.

At that time they said (according to the interpretation made to me afterwards) that I was certainly the female of the Queen's little animal. As this or as something else I was carried to the town hall, where I noticed from the buzz and the gestures made by the people and the magistrates that they were arguing together about what I might be. When they had talked together for a long time a certain citizen who kept rare beasts begged the aldermen to lend me to him until the Queen sent for me to live with my male. No objection was made. This mountebank took me to his home; he

taught me to play the buffoon, to throw somersaults, to make grimaces and in the afternoon he took money at the door for showing me.^[36]

At length Heaven, moved by my misfortunes and displeased to see the Temple of its Master profaned, willed that one day when I was tied to the end of a cord with which the mountebank made me leap to amuse the mob, one of those looking on gazed at me very attentively and at length asked me in Greek who I was. I was vastly surprised to hear him speak there as in our world. He questioned me for some time; I replied and told him afterwards in general terms what I had undertaken and the success of my voyage. He consoled me and I remember that he said: "Well, my son, you suffer the penalties of the failings of your world at last. Here, as there, exists a mob which cannot endure the thought of things to which it is not accustomed, but know that you receive a reciprocal treatment, for if someone from this earth should rise to yours and have the boldness to call himself a man, your learned men would have him smothered as a monster or as an ape possessed by a Devil." He promised me afterwards that he would inform the Court of my disaster; he added that as soon as he looked at me his heart told him I was a man, because he had formerly travelled to the world whence I came, that my country was the Moon, that I was a Gaul and that he had once lived in Greece, where he was called the Demon of Socrates and that after the death of this philosopher he had directed and instructed Epaminondas at Thebes; that afterwards he had passed over to the Romans, where Justice had attached him to the party of the younger Cato; then, that after his death he had devoted himself to Brutus; that since these great personages had left nothing behind them in the world but the phantom of their virtues, he retired with his companions sometimes to the temples, sometimes into solitude. "At last", he added, "the people of your world became so stupid and so gross that my companions and I lost all the pleasure we once had in teaching them. You must inevitably have heard us spoken of. They called us Oracles, Nymphs, Genii, Fairies, Hearth-gods, Lemures, Larvae, Lamias, Hobgoblins, Naiades, Incubi, Shades, Ghosts, Spectres, Phantoms. We left your World in the reign of Augustus a little after the time when I appeared to Drusus, the son of Livia, who was waging war in Germany, and forbade him to proceed further. It is not long since I returned thence for the second time. During the last hundred years I was instructed to travel there, I wandered about in Europe and conversed with persons whom you may have known. One day I appeared to Cardan as he was reading; I instructed him in

many things and in recompense he promised me that he would bear witness to posterity that I was the person from whom he obtained knowledge of the miracles he proposed to write. I saw Agrippa, Abbot Trithem, Doctor Faust, La Brosse, César^[37] and a certain group of young men, known to the uninitiate by the name of Knights of the Rosy-Cross, to whom I imparted a number of artifices and natural secrets which no doubt will have caused the people to consider them great magicians. I knew Campanella^[38] also. When he was in the inquisition at Rome it was I who advised him to conform his face and body to the usual grimaces and postures of those whose inner mind he needed to know, so that he might excite in himself by a similar position the thoughts which this same situation had called up in his adversaries; because he would treat better with their soul when he knew it. At my request he began a book, which we called *De Sensu Rerum*. Similarly in France I frequented La Mothe Le Vayer and Gassendi^[39]: the second is a man who has written as much philosophy as the first has lived. I know there are numbers of other men whom your age considers divine, but I found nothing in them save a vast deal of chatter and pride.

"When I left your country for England to study the manners of its inhabitants I met a man who is the shame of his country; for certainly it is a shame to the great men of your state who recognize in him, yet fail to adore, the virtue of which he is the throne. To cut short his panegyric; he is all Wit, he is all Heart, and if by giving both these qualities (one of which formerly sufficed to mark a hero) to one person were not as good as naming Tristan L'Hermite,^[40] I should not have mentioned his name, for I am sure he will not forgive me for this indiscretion. But as I do not expect ever to return to your World I desire to bear witness to this truth for my conscience's sake. Truly I must tell you that when I saw so high a virtue I feared that it was not recognized; for this reason I tried to make him accept three phials. The first was full of oil of Talc, the second of the powder of projection, and the third of potable Gold, that is to say, the vegetable salt whose eternity is promised by your chemists. But he refused them with a disdain more generous than that with which Diogenes received the compliments of Alexander who came to visit him in his tub. Finally I can add nothing to the praise of this great man except that he is the only Poet, the only Philosopher and the only free Man that you have. These are the eminent persons with whom I have

conversed; all the others, at least those I knew, are so far below men that I have seen beasts who were above them.

"For the rest, I am not an inhabitant of your earth nor of this; I was born in the Sun; but because our world is sometimes overpeopled on account of the long life of its inhabitants and the fact that it is practically free from wars and diseases, our rulers from time to time send out colonies to the surrounding worlds. I was ordered to go to your Earth and declared leader of the expedition sent out with me. Since then I have come to this world for the reasons I told you; and I remain here because these men are lovers of truth; there are no pedants to be seen here, the philosophers allow themselves to be convinced by reason alone and neither the authority of a learned man nor numbers can overwhelm the opinion of a corn-thresher if the corn-thresher reason powerfully. In short the only madmen recognised in this country are the sophists and the orators."

I asked him how long they lived; he replied, "Three or four thousand years", and continued in this manner: "To render myself visible as I am now, when I feel the corpse I dwell in almost used up or when the organs do not exercise their functions perfectly, I breathe myself into a young body that has recently died.

"Although the inhabitants of the Sun are not so numerous as those of this World, nevertheless the Sun is often overcrowded, because the people are of a very hot temperament and consequently restless, ambitious and voracious.

"What I tell you ought not to seem a marvellous thing; for, although our globe is very vast and yours small, although we only die at the end of four thousand years and you after half a century, learn that, just as there are not so many pebbles as earth, nor so many insects as plants, nor so many animals as insects, nor so many men as animals; so there cannot be so many demons as men, because of the difficulties to be met with in the generation of so perfect a composition."

I asked him if they were bodies like us. He replied that, yes, they were bodies, but not like us nor like anything that we consider such, because we call vulgarly a body that which can be touched; for the rest, there was nothing in Nature that was not material,^[41] and although they were material themselves, when they wished to be seen by us they were forced to take bodies such as our senses are capable of perceiving.

I assured him that many in the world thought the stories told of them were only an effect of the fancy of feeble-minded individuals, seeing that they only appeared at night. He replied that, since they were forced to build themselves hastily the bodies they had to make use of, they often had only time enough to fit them for a single sense, sometimes hearing, as the voices of Oracles; sometimes sight, as Will-o'-the-Wisps and Spectres; sometimes touch, as Incubi and Nightmares; and that this mass being only thickened air, the light destroyed it with its heat just as we see it disperse a fog by expanding it.

All these things he explained to me aroused in me the curiosity to question him about his birth and death; if in the country of the Sun the individual saw the day by the means of generation, and whether he died through the disintegration of his mind or the breaking down of his organs.

"There is too little connection", said he, "between your senses and the explanation of these mysteries. You imagine that what you cannot comprehend is spiritual or that it does not exist; the inference is false, but it is a proof that the universe contains perhaps a million things, to know which you would require a million different organs. Thus, I conceive through my senses the cause of the loadstone's turning to the north, the cause of the tides, and what an animal becomes after death; but you cannot rise to these high conceptions because there is nothing in you related to these miracles, any more than a child born blind can imagine the beauty of a landscape, the colouring of a picture, the tints of the rainbow; rather he will imagine them at one time as something palpable, then as something to eat, then as a sound, then as an odour. So if I tried to explain to you what I perceive through senses which you lack you would conceive it as something which can be heard, seen, touched, smelled or tasted, when it is nothing of the kind."

He was at this point of his discourse when my mountebank saw the company was growing weary of our jargon, for they could not understand it and mistook it for an inarticulate grunting. He began to pull heartily at my cord and made me gambol until the spectators had their fill of mirth and vowed I was nearly as clever as the animals in their country, and so went off to their homes.

The harshness of my master's bad treatment was softened by the visits of this obliging demon; I could not converse with those who came to see me, since they took me for an animal deeply rooted in the category of brutes; I did not know their language, they did not know mine! Judge then what relation there was between us.

You must know that two idioms are used in that country, one of which serves the nobles while the other is peculiar to the people.

The language of the nobles is simply different tones not articulated, very much like our music when no words have been added to it. Certainly it is an invention altogether useful and agreeable, for when they are tired of speaking, or when they disdain to prostitute their throats to this usage, they take a lute or some other instrument, with whose aid they communicate their thought as easily as by the voice; so that sometimes fifteen or twenty of them may be met with debating a point of theology or the difficulties of a law case in the most harmonious concert that could tickle one's ears.^[42]

The second, which is used by the people, is carried out by movements of the limbs, though perhaps not precisely as you imagine, for certain parts of the body mean a whole speech. For example, the movement of a finger, of a hand, of an ear, of a lip, of an arm, of a cheek, will make singly a discourse or a sentence; others are only used to designate words, such as a wrinkle in the forehead, different shiverings of the muscles, turnings of the hands, stampings of the foot, contortions of the arm, so that, as it is their custom to go quite naked, when they talk their limbs (which are accustomed to gesticulate their ideas) move so briskly that it does not seem a man talking but a body trembling.

The demon came to visit me almost every day and his marvellous conversation helped me to endure the miseries of captivity without repining. One morning a man whom I did not know came into my lodging, and having well stroked me for a long time, gently lifted me up under the arm-pit; then, holding me with one hand lest I should be hurt, cast me upon his back, where I found myself seated so softly and so comfortably that although I was afflicted to find myself treated like a beast I had no desire to escape. Moreover these four-footed men move with a swiftness different from ours, since the heaviest of them can catch a running deer.

I was vastly perturbed at having no news of my courteous demon and on the evening of the first day's journey, after I had reached the inn, I was walking in the courtyard waiting for supper when my carrier, whose face was young and handsome, came up to me, laughing before my nose, and cast his two forefeet around my neck. After I had gazed at him for a while he said to me in French: "What! Do you not know your friend?" I leave you to imagine what I then felt. My surprise was so great that thereafter I imagined that the whole globe of the Moon, all that happened to me there, everything that I saw there, were an enchantment. The man-beast who had served me as a steed continued to speak in these words: "You had promised that the favours I did you would never leave your memory."

I protested that I had never seen him. At last he said: "I am that demon of Socrates who entertained you during the time of your captivity. As I had promised you, I left yesterday to inform the King of your misfortune and I covered three hundred leagues in eighteen hours, for I arrived at midday to await you...."

"But", I interrupted, "how can all this be, seeing that yesterday you were extremely tall and to-day you are very short; yesterday you had a weak broken voice and to-day it is strong and clear; in short, yesterday you were a hoary old man and to-day you are a young man? What! While in my country we travel from birth to death, do the animals of this land go from death to birth; do they grow younger the older they are?"

"When I had spoken to the Prince", said he, "and had received his order to bring you to him, I felt the body I inhabited so worn out with lassitude that all its organs refused their functions. I inquired the way to the hospital, went there, and as soon as I entered the first room found a young man who had just given up the ghost. I approached the body and feigning to have recognised movement in it I protested to all present that he was not dead, that his disease was not even dangerous, and without being perceived I skilfully breathed myself into him. My old body immediately fell backwards; and I rose up in this young one.^[43] They exclaimed at the miracle, but without arguing with any one I went off promptly to your mountebank, where I took you up."

He would have told me more but they came to fetch us for supper. My conductor led me into a magnificently furnished room but I saw nothing

prepared to eat. Such a lack of meat when I was perishing of hunger forced me to ask him where the table was laid. I did not hear what he replied, for three or four young boys, the host's children, came up to me at that instant and with great civility undressed me to the shirt. This new ceremonial vastly astonished me, but I dared not ask its reason of my handsome attendants; and when my guide asked how I should like to begin I know not how I was able to reply with these two words: "A soup". Immediately I smelt the odour of the most succulent simmering that ever hit the nose of a rich sinner. I tried to get up from my place to track down with my nose the source of this agreeable vapour, but my guide prevented me: "Where are you going?" said he, "we will take a walk soon, but this is the time to eat; finish your soup and then we will have something else."

"But where the devil is the soup?" cried I in a rage. "Have you made a wager to banter me all day?"

"I thought", he replied, "that you had seen at the town whence we came either your master or someone else taking his meals; that is why I did not tell you of their methods of eating in this country. But since you are still ignorant of it, let me tell you that here they live on nothing but vapour. The art of cookery here is to enclose in large, specially moulded vessels the fumes which rise from meats and, having collected several kinds and several tastes, according to the appetite of those they entertain, they open the vessel which holds this odour and then another and then another until the company is quite satisfied. Unless you have already lived in this manner you will never believe that the nose unassisted by the teeth and throat can perform the office of the mouth in feeding a man; but I will make you see it by experience."

He had scarcely finished his promise when I smelled successively as they entered the room so many agreeable and nourishing vapours that I felt myself completely satisfied in less than a half-quarter of an hour. When we had risen he said: "This should not cause you a great deal of surprise, since you cannot have lived so long without having noticed that in your world cooks and pastry-cooks, who eat less than people of other occupations, are nevertheless fatter than they are. Whence is their fatness derived, unless it be from the smell of the food that perpetually surrounds them, penetrates their bodies and nourishes them? People in this world enjoy a more vigorous and less interrupted health, because their food causes hardly any

excrements, which are the origin of almost all diseases. You were surprised perhaps when they undressed you before the meal, because the custom is never employed in your country, but here it is, and it is done in order that the animal may imbibe the vapour more easily."

"Sir", said I, "what you say appears very probable and I myself have just experienced something of it, but I must confess I cannot de-brutalise myself so promptly, and I should be very glad to have a solid morsel under my teeth."

He promised it, but only for the next day, because he said that to eat so soon after a meal would give me indigestion. We continued talking some time and then went up to our room to go to bed.

At the top of the staircase we were met by a man who gazed very attentively upon us and then conducted me to a cabinet whose floor was covered with orange flowers to the depth of three feet; and took my demon into another filled with carnations and jasmine. Seeing that I appeared amazed at this magnificence he told me this was the method of making beds in that country. At last we each lay down in our chamber and as soon as I was stretched out on my flowers I perceived by the light of thirty large glow-worms enclosed in a crystal (for they use no other candle) the three or four young boys who had undressed me at supper, one of whom began to tickle my feet, another my thighs, another my flanks, another my arms, so delicately and nicely that in less than a moment I fell asleep.

Next morning my demon entered with the sun. "I have kept my word", said he, "you shall break your fast more substantially than you supped last night." At these words I got up and he led me by the hand to a place behind the inn garden where one of the host's children awaited us with a weapon in his hand very like one of our guns. He asked my guide if I should like a dozen larks, because baboons (that is what he took me for) fed on this meat. I had scarcely answered yes, when the sportsman fired in the air and twenty or thirty well-roasted larks fell at our feet. There! thought I at once, and we have a proverb in our world about a land where the larks fall ready roasted! Doubtless someone who had come from here.

"You have but to eat", said my demon, "they are skilful enough to mix with their powder and shot a composition which kills, plucks, roasts and seasons their game."

On his recommendation I picked up and ate some of them, and truly I had never in my life tasted anything so delicious.

After breakfast we prepared to depart and with a thousand grimaces, which they use to show their politeness, the host accepted a paper from my demon. I asked him if this were a note of hand for the amount of the bill. He answered, no, he owed him nothing, and that the paper contained verses.

"Verses!" I answered, "are the tavern-keepers here so fond of rhymes?"

"'Tis the money of the country ", replied he, "and our expenses at this place came to a sixain, which I have just given him. I was not afraid of being short of money, for even though we feasted here for eight days we should not spend a sonnet, and I have four on me, with nine epigrams, two odes and an eclogue."

Ha! said I to myself, that is precisely the money which Sorel makes Hortensius use in "Francion" I remember.^[44] Doubtless he stole it from here; but how the devil can he have learnt it? It must have been from his mother, for I have heard it said that she was Lunatic.

I asked my demon then if these verses served always as money, as often as they were copied out; he said they did not and continued thus: "When an author has composed some verses he carries them to the mint, where the sworn poets of the kingdom hold their sessions. There the verifying officers

test the pieces and if they are judged to be of a good alloy they are estimated, not according to their weight, but according to their wit, and so no one dies of hunger except the blockheads, and men of wit live in perpetual good cheer."

I wondered in a kind of ecstasy at the judicious polity of that country and he went on in this way: "There are other people who keep inns in a very different way. When you leave them they ask of you, according to your expenses, a note of hand for the Next World; and when they have it they enter it in a tall ledger, which they call their account with God, much in this way:

Item: The value of so many verses delivered on such a day
by such an one which God must repay me from the first
funds that come in on presentation of this note of hand.

When they feel themselves ill and in danger of dying they have these registers torn into pieces and swallow them because they think that unless they are digested God cannot read them."

This conversation did not prevent us from continuing our journey, that is, my carrier went on all fours underneath me and I rode astride. I will not particularise any further the adventures which delayed us until we arrived at last at the King's residence. I was taken straight to the Palace. The Nobles received me with much more moderate surprise than the people had done when we passed through the streets, but their conclusion was the same, to wit, that I was without doubt the female of the Queen's little animal. My guide interpreted it thus, but he himself did not understand the enigma and did not know what the Queen's little animal was. We were soon enlightened on this point, for the King some time after commanded him to be brought thither. About half an hour afterwards a little man about my own size, walking on two legs, came in, accompanied by a troupe of monkeys wearing ruffs and Spanish slops. As soon as he saw me he accosted me with a "Criado de vuestra merced"; and I replied to his courtesy in similar terms.^[45] Alas! they had no sooner seen us speak to each other than they all believed their prejudice had been truth, and this meeting produced no other result, for the opinion of the spectator most favourable to us was that our conversation was merely that we were grunting with joy at being coupled, and that a natural instinct made us hum. The little man told me he was an

European, a native of old Castile, that by means of birds he had conveyed himself to the world of the Moon wherein we now were, that he fell into the Queen's hands and she had taken him for a monkey, because it happens they dress their monkeys in Spanish clothes, and that when she found him dressed in this manner on his arrival, she had not doubted he belonged to the species.

"We must suppose", I replied, "that after having tried all other kinds of clothes, they found none more ridiculous, and so they dressed them in this fashion, since they only keep these animals to amuse themselves."

"You do not understand", he said, "the dignity of our nation, since the universe only produced men for the purpose of giving us slaves, and for us Nature can only engender subjects of mirth."^[46]

He then besought me to tell him how I had dared to rise to the Moon in the machine of which I had spoken to him. I replied that this was because he had taken away the birds on which I had intended to go. He smiled at this jest and about a quarter of an hour afterwards the King commanded his monkey-keeper to take us away, with strict orders to make the Spaniard and me lie together to multiply our species in his kingdom. The Prince's command was carried out in every point and I was very glad of it because of the pleasure I took in having some one to converse with during the solitude of my brutification. One day my male (they took me for the female) told me that the real reason that had obliged him to wander all over the earth and finally to abandon it for the Moon, was that he could not find a single country where even the imagination was free.

"Observe", said he, "unless you wear a square cap, a chaperon or a cassock, whatever excellent things you may say, if they are against the principles of these diplomaed doctors, you are an idiot, a madman or an atheist. In my own country they tried to put me into the Inquisition because I maintained to the very beard of these pig-headed pedants that there is a void in Nature and that I knew no matter in the world heavier than another."

I asked him with what probabilities he supported an opinion so little received, and he replied: "To understand that, you must suppose there is only one element; for although we see water, earth, air and fire separate, we never find them so perfectly pure but that they are mingled with each other. When, for example, you look at fire, it is not fire, it is nothing but air

greatly expanded; air is only very extended water, and water is only melted earth; while the earth itself is nothing but very contracted water. Thus, by examining matter seriously you will find it is but one substance, which like an excellent actor plays many parts in many kinds of dresses here below. Otherwise we should have to admit as many elements as there are sorts of bodies. And if you ask me why fire burns and water cools, seeing that they are the same matter, I reply that this matter acts by sympathy according to the disposition it is in at the time it acts. Fire, which is nothing but earth still more expanded than it is when it makes air, tries to change all it meets with into itself by sympathy. Thus, the heat of coal, which is the most subtle fire and the most fit to penetrate a body, glides between the pores of our mass, at first makes us expand, because it is a new matter filling us and making us give off sweat; this sweat, expanded by the fire, changes into vapour and becomes air; this air, still further melted by the heat of the antiperistasis or of the globes that are neighbours to it, is called fire, and the earth, abandoned by the cold and by the damp which bind together all our parts, falls down as earth. On the other hand, water, although it only differs from the matter of fire in that it is more closely packed, does not burn us, because as it is contracted it sympathetically requires the bodies it meets to contract; so the cold we feel is nothing but the effect of our flesh, which retires upon itself through the neighbourhood of earth or water compelling it to resemble them. Hence dropsical patients, filled with water, change into water all the food they take; and similarly those who are bilious change into bile all the blood formed by their liver. But if you suppose that there is only one element it is very certain that all bodies, each according to its quality, incline equally to the centre of the earth.

"But you may ask why gold, iron, metals, earth and wood fall more rapidly to the centre than a sponge, if not because the last is filled with air which tends naturally upwards! That is not the reason at all and I reply to you in this way: Although a stone falls with more rapidity than a feather, both have the same inclination to fall; but, if the earth were pierced right through, a cannon-ball would fall more rapidly to the centre than a bladder filled with air. The reason for this is that this mass of metal is a great deal of earth squeezed into a small space and that this air is a very little earth expanded into a great deal of space; for all the particles of matter which reside in this iron, interlocked as they are with each other, increase their strength by union, because by being compact they form many fighting against few,

since a portion of air equal in size to the bullet is not equal to it in quantity; and so, yielding under the burden of those more numerous than itself and as impatient, it allows itself to be broken through in order to give them free way.

"Not to prove this with a string of reasons: tell me truly how are we wounded by a pike, a sword or a dagger if it is not that steel is a matter whose particles are nearer together and more pressed against each other than those of our flesh, whose pores and whose softness show that it contains a very little matter spread through a wide space, and that the iron point which pierces us is an almost innumerable quantity of matter directed against a very little flesh, and so forces it to yield to the stronger party, just as a compact squadron pierces a whole line of battle which is widely extended? Why is a red-hot steel ingot hotter than a burning block of wood, if it is not because the ingot contains more fire in less space attached to all the particles of the piece of metal than there is in a log, which is very spongy and consequently contains a great deal of void; and, since void is simply the absence of Being, it cannot be susceptible to the form of fire? But, you will object, to me: 'You suppose a void as if you had proved it, and that is the very matter we are disputing!' Well! I will prove it to you, and although this difficulty is the sister of the Gordian knot, my arms are strong enough to be its Alexander.

"Let the stupid vulgar who only think they are men because a Doctor has told them so, answer me, I beg them. Admit there is only one matter, as I think I have proved: how does it happen that it expands and contracts according to its desire? How does it happen that a piece of earth by continually condensing becomes a pebble? Have the particles of this pebble entered into each other, in such a manner that where one grain of sand was placed, there, in the very same point, lodges another grain of sand? No, that cannot be, even according to their own principles, since bodies do not penetrate each other; but this matter must have drawn closer together and, if you will, have grown smaller by filling up the void space of its habitation.

"To say that it is incomprehensible for there to be nothing in the world and that we should be partly composed of nothing—eh! why not? Is not the whole world enveloped in nothing? Since you admit this point, confess that it is as easy for the world to have nothing inside it as nothing outside.

"I see very well that you are about to ask me why water, restrained by frost in a vase, bursts it, if not to prevent there being a void? But I reply that this only happens because the air above, which tends to the centre just as much as earth and water, meeting with a vacant lodging on the high-road to this country, goes to take up its abode there; if it finds the pores of this vessel, that is to say the roads which lead to this void room, too narrow, too long and too tortuous, by breaking the vase it satisfies its impatience to arrive more speedily at the resting-place.

"But, without wasting my time in answering all their objections, I dare to say that if there were no void there would be no movement, or we must admit the penetration of bodies; for it would be too ridiculous to believe that when a fly agitates a portion of air with its wing this portion drives another before it, this other portion drives another, and that thus the movement of a flea's little toe makes a bump beyond the world. When they are at their wits' end they take refuge in rarefaction; but, in good faith, when a body rarefies how can one particle of the mass draw away from another particle without leaving a void between them? Would it not have been necessary that these two bodies, which have just separated, should have been at the same time in the same place where this third was, and so that all three should have penetrated each other? I am quite prepared for you to ask me why we draw up water against its inclination through a tube, a syringe or a pump; but I reply that the water is compelled and that it does not turn from its road because of its fear of a void but because it is joined with the air by an imperceptible link and so is lifted up when we lift the air which holds it.

"This is not a thorny matter to understand for those who know the perfect circle and delicate chain of the Elements; for if you consider attentively the mud made by the marriage of earth and water you will find that it is neither earth nor water but that it is the medium of the contract of these two enemies; in the same way water and air reciprocally send out a mist which leans to the humours of both to procure their peace, and air reconciles itself with fire by a mediating exhalation which unites them."

I think he would have gone on talking but they brought us our food, and since we were hungry I shut my ears and he his mouth to open our stomachs.

I remember that when we were philosophizing on another occasion, for neither of us liked to converse of frivolous or low things, he said: "I am sorry to see a wit like yours infected with vulgar errors; you must know, in spite of the pedantry of Aristotle which rings to-day through all the classrooms of your France, that all is in all; that is to say that in water, for example, there is fire, in fire there is water, in air there is earth, and in earth there is air. Although this opinion would make the *Scolares* open their eyes as wide as salt-cellars, it is easier to prove it than to get it accepted.

"First of all I ask them whether water does not engender fish. When they deny it I shall order them to dig a ditch and to fill it with syrup of water-jug which, if they like, they may pass through a sieve to escape the objections of the blind and if after some time they find no fish in it I will drink all the water they have put there; but if, as I do not doubt, they do find fish there, it is a certain proof that it contains salt and fire; consequently it is not a very difficult enterprise to find water in fire. Let them select a fire the most detached from matter, like comets, there is always a quantity of water in it; for if the unctuous humour which engenders them, reduced to sulphur by the heat of the antiperistasis which lights them, did not find an obstacle to its violence in the damp cold which tempers and combats it, it would be consumed in a flash. They will not deny that there is now air in the earth, or else they have never heard of the dreadful shakings which agitate the mountains of Sicily; moreover, we see that the earth is porous down even to the grains of sand which compose it. However, nobody has yet said that these hollows are filled with void; it will therefore not be thought objectionable to say that they contain air. It remains for me to prove that there is earth in the air; but I scarcely deign to take the trouble, since you may convince yourself of it as often as you see falling upon your heads those legions of motes, so numerous that they stifle arithmetic.

"But let us pass from simple to composite bodies. They will supply me with many more frequent subjects to prove that all things are in all things; not that they change into each other as your Peripatetics twitter, for I will maintain to their beards that first principles mingle, separate and mingle once more; so that what has once been created water by the wise Creator of the World will be so always; and I do not advance any maxim that I do not prove, as they do.

"Take, I beseech you, a log or some other combustible matter and set fire to it. When it is burnt up they will say that what was wood has become fire. But I maintain the contrary, and say that there is no more fire now when it is in flames than before a taper had been put to it; but the fire which was hidden in the log, prevented by cold and damp from expanding and acting, was supported by the foreign light, rallied its forces against the moisture which stifled it and took possession of the field occupied by its enemy. Thus it triumphs over its gaoler and shows itself without impediment. Do you not see how the water retreats by the two ends of the log, still hot and smoking from the fight? The upper flame you see is the most subtle fire and the freest from matter and therefore the most ready to return home; however, it unites in a pyramid up to a certain height in order to break through the thick dampness of the air resisting it. But as it mounts and frees itself little by little from the violent company of its enemies, it roves freely because it meets nothing hostile to its passage, and this negligence is often the cause of a second prison, for the fire, travelling separately, will lose itself sometimes in a cloud and if it meets there with a sufficiently large number of other fires to make head against the vapour they join together, they rumble, they thunder, they lighten and the death of innocent creatures is often the effect of the excited anger of dead things. If the fire is embarrassed by the importunate crudities of the middle region and is not strong enough to defend itself against them, it yields itself to the discretion of the cloud which, being constrained by its weight to fall back upon the earth, takes its prisoner with it and so this unhappy fire, enclosed in a drop of water, may perhaps find itself at the foot of an oak, whose animal fire will invite the poor wanderer to lodge with it. And thus it returns to the same state it left a few days before.

"But let us look at the fate of the other elements which compose this log. The air retreats to its quarters still confused with the vapour because the angry fire sharply drove them out pell-mell. There it is tossed by the winds like a bladder, gives breath to animals, fills the void made by nature and perhaps will be enveloped in a drop of dew, sucked in and digested by the thirsty leaves of the very tree to which our fire has retired. The water, which the flame had driven from its throne and the heat had raised to the cradle of the meteors, will fall back as rain upon our oak as likely as upon another. And the Earth, made ashes, cured of its sterility by the nourishing warmth of a dung-hill upon which it has been cast or by the vegetable salt of

neighbouring plants or by the fertile water of rivers, perhaps will also find itself beside this same oak, the natural heat of whose germ will draw it up and make it a particle of the whole oak.

"In this manner all these four elements return to the same state they had left some days earlier; and in the same way a man has in him everything necessary to make up a tree, and there is in a tree everything necessary to make up a man. Finally, in this way all things are met with in all things, but we lack a Prometheus to draw from the bosom of Nature and make sensible to us that which I wish to call 'primary matter'."

These are approximately the things with which we passed the time, and truly this little Spaniard had a pretty wit. Our conversation took place only at night, because from six o'clock in the morning until the evening, the crowds of people who came to look at us in our lodging prevented it. Some threw stones at us, some nuts, some grass; there was no talk but of the King's beasts. They fed us every day at regular hours and the King and Queen themselves often were pleased to touch my belly to find out if I were not pregnant, for they burned with an extraordinary desire to have a race of these little animals. I do not know whether I was more attentive to their grimaces and intonations than my male, but I learned to understand their language and to use it a little. Immediately the news ran through the whole kingdom that there had been found two wild men, smaller than others because of the poor nourishment solitude had furnished us with, who from some defect in their fathers' seed possessed fore-legs too weak to walk upon.

This belief would have taken root by circulating had not the priests of the country opposed it, saying this was a horrible impiety to believe that not only beasts but monsters were of their species.

"It is far more likely", proceeded the least impassioned, "that our domestic animals should share the privilege of humanity and consequently of immortality, since they are born in our land, than a monstrous beast which says it was born somewhere in the Moon. Then consider the difference to be noted between us and them: we walk on four feet because God did not wish to confide so precious a thing to a position less firm, He feared some accident might happen to man; that is why He Himself took the trouble to set man upon four columns, so that he should not fall, but disdaining to

interfere in the construction of these two beasts He abandoned them to the caprice of Nature, who, not considering the loss of so slight a thing, set them upon two feet only.

"The very birds", they said, "were not so badly treated as these, for at least they have received feathers to make up for the weakness of their feet and to cast themselves into the air when we turn them out of our houses; but by taking two feet from these monsters Nature has put them in the position of being unable to escape our justice.

"Moreover, observe how their heads are turned up towards Heaven! They are placed in this position through the scarcity of all things which God has imposed upon them, for this posture of supplication shows that they seek Heaven to complain to Him who created them and to ask His permission to make shift with our scraps. But we have our heads turned downwards to contemplate the good things whereof we are lords and as having nothing in Heaven for our happy condition to envy."

Every day in my lodging I heard the priests make up these or similar tales. At length they so directed the people's conscience in the matter that it was decreed I should at best be held for nothing more than a plucked parrot; and they confirmed those already persuaded by the fact that I had only two feet like a bird. I was put in a cage by a special order of the upper council.

There the Queen's falconer came every day to whistle to me as we do with starlings. I was happy in that my cage did not lack food; and from the follies with which the spectators deafened my ears I learned to speak like them.

When I understood the idiom sufficiently to express the greater part of my conceptions I showed them how I could talk. Already in gatherings people were speaking of nothing but the prettiness of my jests; and the esteem for my wit grew to such a point that the Clergy were forced to publish a decree forbidding any one to believe that I possessed reason, with a very strict command to all persons of whatever rank and condition they might be to believe that any intellectual thing I did was only through instinct.

However, the definition of what I was divided the Town into two factions; the party which took sides in my favour increased every day. At length in spite of the anathema and the excommunication of the Prophets who tried in

this way to terrify the people, my supporters demanded an assembly of the Estates of the realm to resolve this religious hitch. It was a long time before they could agree on the choice of judges, but the arbitrators pacified animosity by making the judges consist of an equal number from each party.

They carried me openly to the court of justice, where I was severely treated by the examiners. Among other things they asked me my philosophy. In all good faith I showed them what I had formerly been taught by my Master, but they had no difficulty in refuting me with numerous reasons, which were in truth very convincing. When I found myself wholly refuted, so that I could not reply, as a last refuge I alleged the Principles of Aristotle, which were no more useful to me than his Sophisms, for they showed me their falsity in a few words.

"Aristotle", said they, "fitted principles to his philosophy instead of fitting his philosophy to principles. And at least he ought to have proved these principles to be more reasonable than those of other sects, which he could not do. For this reason the good man must not complain if we agree to differ from him."

At last when they saw that I kept bawling this and nothing else, save that they were not more learned than Aristotle, and that I had been forbidden to argue with those who denied his Principles, they concluded with one accord that I was not a man but perhaps some sort of ostrich, seeing I carried my head upright like that bird; and so the falconer was ordered to take me back to the cage. I passed my time amusingly enough, for my possessing correctly their language was a cause that the whole Court diverted itself by making me chatter. Among others the Queen's ladies-in-waiting always thrust some scraps of food into my basket, and the prettiest of them all conceived a certain friendship for me. Once when we were alone I discovered to her the mysteries of our religion and I discoursed principally of our bells and our relics; she was so transported with joy that she vowed with tears in her eyes that if ever I were able to fly back to our world she would gladly follow me.

One day I woke up early with a start and saw her tapping against the bars of my cage. "I have good news for you!" said she, "yesterday the council declared for war against the great King ; and I hope, with the bustle of

preparation and the departure of our Monarch and his subjects, to find an opportunity to set you free."

"War!" I interrupted immediately, "do the Princes of this world quarrel among themselves like those of ours? Tell me, I beseech you, how they fight."

"The Umpires elected by the consent of both parties", she replied, "fix the time allowed for arming, the time of marching, the number of combatants, the day and place of the battle; all with such impartiality that neither army has a single man more than the other. On each side the maimed soldiers are enrolled in one company and on the day of battle the Generals are careful to send them against the maimed soldiers on the other side. The giants are opposed by the colossi, the fencers by the nimble, the valiant by the courageous, the weak by the feeble, the unhealthy by the sick, the robust by the strong; and if someone should strike any but his prescribed enemy he is found guilty of cowardice unless he can clear himself by showing it was a mistake. After the battle they count the wounded, the dead and the prisoners, for none is ever seen to run away. If the losses are equal on each side they draw lots as to who shall be proclaimed the victor. But although a King may have defeated his enemy in open war he has achieved little; there are other less numerous armies of men of wit and learning, upon whose disputes depends wholly the real triumph or servitude of States. A man of learning is opposed to another, men of wit and judgment are set against their like; and the triumph gained by a State in this way is considered equal to three victories of brute force. When a nation is proclaimed victorious, they break up the assembly and the conquering people chooses for its King either their own or that of their enemies."

I could not forbear laughing at this scrupulous manner of making war and as an example of a far stronger policy I alleged the customs of our Europe, where the Monarch takes care to omit no opportunity of conquest; and she answered me in this way:

"Tell me", said she, "do your Princes justify their arms by anything save the right of force?"

"Yes indeed", replied I, "with the justice of their cause."

"Why then", she continued, "do not they choose arbitrators above suspicion to reconcile them? And if there is as much right on the one side as on the other let them stay as they were or let them play a hundred up at piquet for the Town or Province about which they are disputing. And yet, while they are the cause that more than four millions of better men than themselves get broken heads, they are in their cabinets joking over the circumstances of the massacre of these poor boobies. But I am wrong to blame the courage of your brave subjects; they do well to die for their country; 'tis an affair of importance, a matter of being the vassal of a King who wears a ruff or of a King who wears falling bands."

"But", I replied, "why all these circumstances in your manner of fighting? Is it not enough for armies to be equal in numbers?"

"Your judgment is all astray", she replied. "On your faith now, do you think that if you overcome your enemy in the field face to face, that you have beaten him in fair warfare if you wear mail and he does not? If he has only a dagger and you a rapier? Finally, if he is one-armed and you have both your arms? Yet with all the equality you recommend so much to your gladiators, they never fight on equal terms; one will be tall, another short; one skilful, the other will never have handled a sword; one will be strong, the other weak. And even if these proportions are equalised, if they are equally tall, equally nimble and equally strong, they will still not be on an equal footing, for one of the two will perhaps be more courageous than the other. And because a brutal fellow will not consider the peril, will be bilious and will have more blood, will have a heart more set with the qualities which make for courage (as if this were not an arm his enemy does not possess, just like a sword!), he will rush violently upon his adversary, terrify him and deprive of life a poor man who saw the danger, whose vital heat was stifled in phlegm and whose heart is too large to collect the spirits necessary to get rid of that ice we call poltroonery. So you praise a man for having killed his enemy when he had him at an advantage, and by praising his boldness you praise him for a sin against Nature, since boldness tends to its own destruction."^[47]

"You must know that a few years ago a Remonstrance was sent up to the council of war, demanding a more circumspect and more conscientious regulation of combats. The philosopher who sent up the notice spoke in these words:

"You imagine, gentlemen, that you have equalised two combatants when you have chosen them both hardy, both tall, both active, both courageous, but this still is not enough; the conqueror must win by skill, by force or by chance. If it were by skill, he has doubtless struck his adversary in a place he has not expected, or more quickly than seemed likely; or, feigning to attack him on one side, he paid him home on the other. This is finesse, deceiving, betraying. And such finesse, such deceit, such treason should not contribute to the fair fame of a true gentleman. If he has triumphed by force, will you consider his enemy beaten because he has been overwhelmed? No, doubtless; any more than you would say that a man had lost the victory if he should be overwhelmed by the fall of a mountain, since it was not in his power to gain it. Moreover he has not been overcome, because at that moment he was not disposed to be able to resist the violence of his adversary. And if he has beaten his enemy by chance, you should crown Fortune, not him, for he has contributed nothing; and the loser is no more to be blamed than a dice-player who sees eighteen thrown when he has cast seventeen."

It was admitted that he was right, but that it was impossible in all human probability to remedy it and that it was better to yield to one small inconvenience than to give way to a thousand of greater importance.

She did not say any more on that occasion, because she was afraid to be found alone with me at so early an hour. In that country unchastity is no crime; on the contrary, except for condemned criminals any man may take any woman, and similarly a woman may cite a man before the law-courts if he has refused her. But she dared not frequent me publicly, according to her own account, because at the last sacrifice the priests had declared that the women chiefly reported I was a man to hide under this pretext the execrable desire which burned them to mingle with beasts and to commit shamelessly sins against Nature with me. For this reason I remained a long time without seeing her or any of her sex.

Somebody must have re-lighted the quarrels about the definition of what I was, for just as I was resigned to die in my cage they came for me again to examine me. I was interrogated in the presence of a number of courtiers on several points in physics, but I do not think my responses were satisfactory; since the president of the court in a manner the reverse of dogmatic gave me at length his opinions on the structure of the world. They seemed to me

ingenious and I should have found his philosophy much more reasonable than ours had he not gone back to the origin of the world, which he maintained was eternal. As soon as I heard him support a fantasy so contrary to what faith teaches us, I asked him what he could reply to the authority of Moses and that this great patriarch expressly declares that God created the world in six days. Instead of answering me the ignorant fellow only laughed. I could not prevent myself from saying then that since he took this attitude I began to think their world was only a Moon.

"But", said they all, "you see here earth, forests, rivers, seas; what is all that?"

"No matter", I replied, "Aristotle asserts that it is only the Moon; and if you had asserted the contrary in the classes where I made my studies, you would have been hissed."

At this there was a great shout of laughter. No need to ask whether it were the result of their ignorance! And I was taken back to my cage. The priests were told, however, that I had dared to say the Moon whence I came was a World and theirs was only a Moon. They believed this furnished them with a sufficient pretext for having me condemned to the water (which is their method of exterminating atheists); and with this purpose they went in a body to complain to the King, who promised them justice. It was ordered that I should be interrogated once more.

For the third time I was taken out of my cage and the Great Pontiff himself spoke against me. I do not remember his speech, because I was too frightened to receive the expressions of the voice without disorder and also because in declaiming he made use of an instrument whose noise deafened me; it was a trumpet which he had chosen on purpose so that the violence of its martial tone should heat up their minds for my death and by this emotion prevent reason from performing its office; as in our own armies, where the clamour of trumpets and drums prevents the soldier from reflecting on the importance of his life.

When he had spoken, I got up to defend my cause, but I was freed from this trouble by the occurrence you are about to hear. As I opened my mouth, a man who had forced his way with great difficulty through the crowd fell at the King's feet and for a long time lay on his back. This action did not surprise me; I had long known that they assumed this posture when they

desired to discourse in public. I simply pocketed my speech and here is the one we had from him:

"Just judges, hear me! You cannot condemn this Man, this Monkey or this Parrot for having said that the Moon is a World whence he came. If he is a man; even though he did not come from the Moon, every man is free and is he not free to imagine what he wishes? What! Can you force him to have no fancies but yours? You may easily compel him to say he believes the Moon is not a World, nevertheless he will not believe it; for, in order to believe something, there must be presented to his imagination certain possibilities leaning rather to the Yes than to the No of this thing. So unless you furnish him with this probability or unless it spontaneously offers itself to his mind he may say he believes it, but for all that he will not believe it.

"I have now to prove to you that he should not be condemned if you put him in the category of beasts. Admitted that he is an animal without reason—then what reason have you yourselves to accuse him for having sinned against reason? He has said that the Moon is a World. Well, brute beasts act only by Nature's instinct; therefore it is Nature says it, not he. To believe that this wise Nature who made the Moon and this World does not know herself what it is, while you, who know nothing save what you get from her, should know it more certainly, would be very ridiculous. But even if passion should make you abandon your first principles and you should suppose that Nature does not direct animals, blush at least at the uneasiness caused you by the whimsies of a beast. Truly, gentlemen, if you met a man of ripe age who devoted himself to policing an ant-hill, giving a blow to one ant who had made his companion fall, imprisoning another for stealing a grain of corn from his neighbour, prosecuting another for abandoning its eggs, would you not consider such a man senseless to attend to things too much beneath him and to desire to subject to reason animals which do not use it? Venerable Pontiffs, what should you call the interest that you take in the whimsies of this little animal? Just judges, I have spoken."

As soon as he had finished a loud music of applause echoed through the hall; and after the opinions had been discussed for a long quarter of an hour, the King pronounced the following sentence:

"That henceforth I should be considered a man; as such set at liberty, and that the punishment of being drowned should be modified into making a

'shameful amends' (for there is no 'honourable amends' in that land), in which amends I should publicly disavow having taught that the Moon was a World, and this on account of the scandal the novelty of the opinion might have caused the souls of the weaker brethren."

When this sentence was pronounced I was taken out of the Palace. As a mark of ignominy I was dressed very magnificently; I was borne along on the seat of a superb chariot; and I was drawn by four Princes, who were attached to the pole and at every crossroads in the town I was obliged to declare as follows:

"People, I declare to you that this Moon is not a Moon, but a World; and that World is not a World but a Moon. For your priests think good that you should believe this."

After I had cried the same thing in the five principal squares of the city, I perceived my defender holding out his hand to help me to get down. I was vastly surprised to recognise him when I looked in his face, for he was my demon. We embraced each other for an hour.

"Come away home with me", said he, "for if you return to Court you will be frowned upon after a shameful amends. Moreover I must tell you that you would still be with the Monkeys, like your friend the Spaniard, if I had not published abroad the vigour and strength of your wit and secured in your favour the protection of the nobles against the prophets."

I had barely finished thanking him when we reached his lodging. Before our meal he told me of the wheels he had set in motion to force the priests to let me be heard, in spite of all the specious scruples with which they had wheedled the people's conscience. We sat before a large fire, because the weather was cold, and I think he was going on to tell me what he had done during the time I had not seen him, when they came to inform us that supper was ready.

"I have invited", he went on, "two professors from the academy of this town to eat with us this evening. I will bring them round to the subject of the philosophy taught in this world. You will also see my host's son. I have never met a young man so full of wit and he would be a second Socrates if he could regulate his knowledge and not stifle in vice the grace with which God continually visits him and cease to affect impiety out of mere

ostentation. I have taken up my lodging here to find some occasion for instructing him."

He was silent as if to give me an opportunity of speaking in my turn; then he made a sign that they should divest me of the shameful ornaments with which I was still brilliant. Almost at the same time the two professors we were waiting for entered and we all four went off to the dining-room, where we found the young man he had spoken of already eating. They made him profound bows and treated him with a respect as deep as that of a slave for his lord. I asked my demon the reason of this, and he replied that it was on account of his age, because in that world the old render every deference and honour to the young. And more: the fathers obey their children, as soon as the latter have attained the age of reason in the opinion of the Senate of philosophers.

"You are surprised", he continued, "at a custom so contrary to that of your country? But there is nothing contrary to right reason in it for, tell me on your conscience, when a warm young fellow is most apt to imagine, to judge and to execute, is he not more capable of governing a family than an infirm man of sixty? The poor dullard, whose imagination is frozen by the snow of sixty winters, acts from the experience of fortunate successes, yet it was not he but his fortune which made them so, against all the rules and the whole management of human prudence.

"As to judgment he has just as little, although the common opinion of your world makes it a prerogative of old age. To remove this error, it must be known that what in an old man is called prudence is simply a panic apprehension, a mad fear of undertaking anything, which becomes an obsession. And so, my son, when he has not risked a danger by which a young man has been ruined, it was not because he foresaw the catastrophe but because he lacked fire to kindle those noble ardours which make us dare; and in that young man boldness was, as it were, a pledge of the success of his plan, because that spirit which gives promptitude and facility of execution is precisely that which urged him to undertake it.

"As to his carrying things out, I should be wronging your wit did I labour to convince it by proofs. You know that youth alone is fit for action; and if you are not fully persuaded of this, tell me, I beg you, when you respect a brave man is it not because he can avenge you upon your enemies or your

oppressors? Why then should you still consider him such, except from habit, when a battalion of seventy Januaries has frozen his blood and killed with cold all the noble enthusiasms which inflame young persons in the cause of justice? When you defer to the strong man is it not in order that he may be obliged to you for a victory which you could not dispute? Why then should you submit to him, when idleness has melted his muscles, weakened his arteries, evaporated his spirits and sucked the marrow from his bones?

"If you adore a woman, is it not because of her beauty? Why then continue your genuflections when old age has made her a phantom menacing the living with death? In fine, when you honour a witty man it is because through the liveliness of his genius he grasps a tangled affair and unravels it, because he delights the most distinguished assembly with his talk, because he digests the sciences into a single thought, and a noble soul will never form a more violent desire than to resemble him; and yet you continue to pay homage to him when his outworn organs render his head imbecile and heavy and his silence in company makes him rather like the statue of a Household God than a man capable of reason. Resolve yourself, my son, it is better that young men should be given the control of families than old men. Certainly, you would be very weak to think that Hercules, Achilles, Epaminondas, Alexander and Caesar, who all died before they were forty, were persons to whom one would owe no more than ordinary courtesies, while bringing incense to a doting old fool simply because the Sun had ninety times looked upon his harvest.

"'But', you will say, 'all the laws of our world are careful to repeat this respect which we owe to the aged.' It is true. But all who introduced these laws were old men and they were afraid the young men would dispossess them of the authority they had usurped; and so, like the legislators of false religions, they made a mystery of what they could not prove.

"'Yes but,' you will say, 'this old man is my father and Heaven promises me a long life if I honour him.'

"My son, if your father commands nothing contrary to the inspirations of the Most High, I grant it. If not; tread upon the belly of the father who engendered you, stamp on the bosom of the mother who conceived you, for I see no likelihood that your supposing this cowardly respect wrenched

from your weakness by vicious parents would be agreeable to Heaven will lengthen the thread of your life.

"What! That doffing your hat, which so tickles and nourishes your father's pride, will it break an abscess you have in your side, will it renew your radical moisture, will it cure a rapier wound in your stomach, will it disperse a stone in your bladder? If this is so, doctors are grievously wrong. Instead of the infernal potions with which they poison men's lives, let them prescribe for smallpox with 'three congees fasting', four 'humble thanks' after dinner and twelve 'good night, father and mother', before going to bed. You will retort that without him you would not be at all. It is true, but he himself would never have been without your grandfather, nor your grandfather without your great-grandfather, and without you your father could not have a grandson. When Nature brought him forth it was on condition that he should return that which she lent him; so when he begot you he gave you nothing, he merely paid a debt! Moreover I should very much like to know if your parents were thinking of you when they begot you? Alas, not at all! And yet you think yourself obliged to them for a present they made you without thinking!

"What, because your father was so lascivious he could not resist the charms of some baggage, because he made a bargain to satisfy his desire and you were the masonry which resulted from their puddling, you are to revere this sensual fellow as one of the seven wise men of Greece? What, because a miser purchased the rich goods of his wife by means of a child, must that child only speak to him on its knees? In this way your father acted well when he was bawdy and the other when he drove a hard bargain, for otherwise neither of you children would ever have been; but I should like to know whether he would not have pulled the trigger just the same, if he had been certain that his pistol would miss fire? Good God! What the people in your world can be made to believe.

"My son, your body alone comes from your mortal architect, your soul came from Heaven and might just as well have been sheathed in some other scabbard. Your father might have been born your son as you were born his. How do you know even that he did not prevent you from inheriting a crown? Perhaps your spirit set out from Heaven with the purpose of animating the King of the Romans in the Empress's womb; on the way it chanced to meet your embryo and to shorten the journey took up its abode

there. No, no, God would not have blotted you from the sum He had made of men if your father had died as a little boy. But who knows whether you might not have been to-day the work of some valiant captain who would have shared with you his glory as well as his goods! So you are perhaps no more beholden to your father for the life he gave you than you would be to a pirate who had put you in irons because he fed you. And suppose he had begotten you a King—a present loses its merit when it is made without consulting the person who receives it. Caesar was given death; it was given likewise to Cassius; but Cassius was under an obligation to the slave from whom he obtained it, but not Caesar to his murderers because they forced him to take it. When your father embraced your mother did he consult your wishes? Did he ask you if you thought it good to see this century or to wait for another? If you were content to be the son of a fool or if you had the ambition to proceed from an honest man? Alas! in a matter which concerned you alone, you were the only person whose opinion was not consulted! Perhaps if you had then been enclosed somewhere in the womb of Nature's ideas and it had been in your power to control your birth, you might have said to Fate: 'My dear lady, take someone else's life spindle. I have been in nothingness for a very long time and I prefer to remain another hundred years without existing than to exist to-day and to repent it to-morrow.' However you had to endure it; you might whimper as you would to return to the long black house from which you had been torn, they simply pretended to think you were asking to suckle.

"My son, these are approximately the reasons for the respect which fathers give their children. I know I have leaned to the children's side more than justice asks and that I have argued in their favour a little against my conscience. But I desired to correct that insolent pride with which fathers insult over the weakness of their offspring, and therefore I was obliged to act like those who straighten a crooked tree; they pull it to the other side so that between the two twistings it grows straight again. In the same way I have made the fathers pay that tyrannical deference they had usurped from others and I took from them much which is due them, so that hereafter they should be content with what they really deserve. I know my apology will have shocked all old men, but let them remember that they were sons before they were fathers and that I must have spoken to their advantage too, since they were not found under a gooseberry bush. But whatever happens, even

if my enemies attack me, I shall be safe because I have served all men and injured only half of them."

With these words he ceased speaking and our host's son began as follows:

"Permit me", said he, "since by your care I am informed of the Origin, History, Customs and Philosophy of this little man's world, to add something to what you have said and to prove that children are under no obligation to their fathers for being begotten because their fathers were conscientiously obliged to beget them.

"The narrowest Philosophy of their world admits that it is more desirable to die than not to have been, because one must have lived in order to die. Well, if I do not give being to this nothing, I place it in a worse state than death, and in not producing it I am more guilty than if I killed it. You would think, my little man, you had committed an unpardonable parricide if you had throttled your son. Truly, it would be an enormity; however it is more execrable not to give being to that which could receive it, for the child you deprive of light has nevertheless had the satisfaction of enjoying it a certain time. Moreover we know that it is only deprived of light for a few centuries; but there are forty poor little nothings, which you might make into forty good soldiers for your King, and you maliciously prevent them from seeing the daylight, letting them grow corrupt in your loins at the risk of being stifled by an apoplexy.

"Do not answer me with panegyrics of virginity. This virtue is only a smoke, for all the respect with which it is commonly idolised is, even among you, merely an advice, not to kill, but to refrain from making, one's son; and hence to make him more unfortunate than a dead man. It is a commandment; but since in the world whence you come chastity is considered so preferable to carnal propagation I marvel that God did not cause you to be born like mushrooms from the dew of May, or, at least, like crocodiles from thick mud heated by the sun. Yet it is only by accident that He sends eunuchs among you and He does not tear the genitals from your monks, your priests or your cardinals. You will say these were bestowed on them by Nature. Yes, but He is Nature's Master and if He had recognised that this piece was harmful to their salvation He would have ordered them to cut it off, as by the old law He commanded the Jews to cut off their foreskins. But these fancies are too ridiculous. On your honour, is there any

part of your body more sacred or more profane than another? Why should I be a sin when I touch my centre-piece and not when I touch my ear or my heel? Is it because there is a tickling sensation? Why then I should not purge myself in the privy, for that cannot be done without some sort of pleasure; and pious men should not raise themselves to the contemplation of God, since thereby they enjoy a great pleasure in the imagination. Truly, seeing how much the religion of your country is contrary to Nature and how jealous it is of man's enjoyments, I am surprised your priests have not made it a crime to scratch oneself, on account of the agreeable sensation one feels from it. On the other hand I have noticed that far-seeing Nature has made all great, valiant and witty persons lean towards the delicate pleasures of love, as, for example, Samson, David, Hercules, Caesar, Hannibal and Charlemagne. Was this done for them to reap this organ of pleasure with a blow from a sickle? Alas, even in a tub Nature found out and debauched Diogenes, thin, ugly, and lousy; and forced him to make the breath that cooled his carrots into sighs for Lais. Doubtless Nature acted in this way for fear lest honest men should cease in the world. Let us conclude from this that your father was conscientiously obliged to set you free to the light and, when he imagines you are greatly obliged to him for his having made you by tickling himself, he actually has only given you what an ordinary bull gives his calves ten times every day for his amusement."

"You are wrong", interrupted my demon, "to try to regulate God's wisdom. It is true that He has forbidden us excess in this pleasure, but how do you know that He has not so willed it in order that the difficulties we find in compassing this passion may fit us for the glory He is preparing for us? How do you know that it was not to sharpen appetite by forbidding it? How do you know that He did not foresee that if youth gave itself up to the impetuosities of the flesh, too frequent enjoyment would enfeeble their seed and bring about the end of the world at the grandsons of the first man? How do you know He did not wish to prevent too many hungry generations from finding the fertility of the earth insufficient for their needs? Finally, how do you know He has not willed to act against all appearance of reason in order to reward fully those who have believed in His word against all appearance of reason?"

It seemed to me that this reply did not satisfy our young host, for he shook his head two or three times; but our mutual instructor was silent, because

the meal was about to be carried in. We stretched ourselves out upon very soft mattresses covered with wide embroideries, where the vapours came to us as they had done before at the inn. A young servant took the elder of our two philosophers and led him into another little room. "Come back to us here", cried my instructor, "as soon as you have eaten." He promised to do so.

This fantasy of eating alone gave me the curiosity to ask the reason.

"He does not taste", said he, "the odour of meat or even of herbs unless they have died naturally, because he thinks them capable of pain."

"I am not greatly surprised", I replied, "that he should abstain from flesh and everything which has a sensitive life. In our world the Pythagoreans and even certain holy Anchorites observed this regime. But it seems to me altogether ridiculous not to cut a cabbage, for example, for fear of hurting it."

"For my part", replied my demon, "I see a good deal of probability in his opinion. Is not the cabbage you speak of as much a creation of God as yourself? Have you not both equally God and want for father and mother? Has not God's intellect been occupied from all eternity with its birth as well as yours? Moreover it seems He has provided more necessarily for the birth of vegetable than of reasonable life, since He has committed the generation of man to the caprice of his father, who can beget or not beget at his pleasure. But God has not treated the cabbage with such rigour, for He seems to have been more concerned lest the race of cabbages should perish than the race of men, and instead of permitting the father the option of begetting the son He forces them willy-nilly to give birth to others. And while men can at most beget a score in their lifetime, cabbages produce four hundred thousand a head. And to say that God loves man more than a cabbage is to tickle ourselves to make ourselves laugh; He is incapable of passion and therefore cannot love or hate anybody; and if He were capable of love He would rather feel tenderness for the cabbage you are holding (which cannot offend Him) than for a man when He already has before His eyes the wrongs the man is fated to commit. Add to this that a man cannot be born without sin, for he is a part of the first man who rendered him guilty, but we know very well that the first cabbage did not offend its Creator in the Earthly Paradise. Will it be said that we are made in the

image of the Sovereign Being and that cabbages are not? Suppose that were true, by polluting in ourselves the soul whereby we resembled Him we have effaced the resemblance, for nothing is more contrary to God than sin. Then if our soul is no longer His portrait, we no more resemble Him through our hands, our feet, our mouth, our forehead and ears than a cabbage through its leaves, its flowers, its stalk, its heart and its head. If this poor plant could speak when you cut it do you not think it would say:

"Man, my dear brother, what have I done to you to merit death? I grow only in your gardens, I am never found in wild places where I should live safely; I scorn to be the work of any hands but yours and I have scarcely left them when I lift myself from the ground to return to them. I spread out, I hold out my arms to you, I offer you the seeds my children, and to reward my courtesy you have my head cut off!"

"This is what a cabbage would say if it could express itself, and, because it cannot complain, does that mean that we have the right to do it all the ill it cannot prevent? If I find a wretch in fetters am I guiltless if I kill him, merely because he cannot defend himself? On the contrary, my cruelty is rendered worse by his weakness; however poor, however lacking in all advantages this hapless cabbage may be, it does not merit death on that account. What! Of all the goods of life it has none but that of vegetating and we deprive it of this? The sin of murdering a man is not so great as to cut a cabbage and to deprive it of life, because one day the man will live again while the cabbage has no other life to hope for. By killing a cabbage you annihilate its soul; but by killing a man you simply make him change his domicile. And I go further. Since God, the common Father of all things, cherishes equally all His works, is it not reasonable that He should have shared His benefits equally between us and plants? True, we were born first, but in God's family there is no right of primogeniture. If then cabbages did not share with us the fief of immortality, doubtless they received some other advantage, the briefness of whose existence is compensated for by its grandeur. This may be an universal intellect, a perfect knowledge of all things in their causes; for this reason it may be that the wise Contriver did not fashion them organs like ours, whose effect is only a simple, weak and often deceitful reasoning, but gave them organs that are stronger, more numerous and more skilfully elaborated to serve the purposes of their speculative conversations? Perhaps you will ask me why they have never

communicated these great thoughts to us? But tell me, have you ever been taught by the Angels any more than by them? Since there is no proportion, no relation and no harmony between man's imbecile faculties and those of these divine creatures, these intellectual cabbages may try their best to make us understand the hidden cause of all miraculous events, we still lack senses capable of perceiving these fine points.

"Moses, the greatest of all philosophers, since according to what you say he gathered his knowledge of Nature from the source of Nature itself, indicated this truth when he spoke of the Tree of Knowledge. Under this enigma he wished to teach us that plants possess perfect philosophy. Remember then, O proudest of all animals, that although the cabbage you cut says not a word, it thinks none the less. The poor vegetable has no organs like ours to howl, to wriggle and to weep, but it has others to complain of the trick we play upon it, to draw down upon us the vengeance of Heaven. And if you ask me how I know that cabbages have these fine thoughts I ask you how you know that they do not have them? And how do you know that they do not say at night when they close up, in imitation of you: 'Master Curly-cabbage, I am your most humble servant, Savoy-Cabbage.'"

He was at this point of his discourse when the young man who had carried off our philosopher brought him back. "What! Already dined?" exclaimed my demon. He answered that he had, except for dessert, as the *Physionome* had permitted him to taste ours. Our young host did not wait for me to ask him the explanation of this mystery.

"I perceive", said he, "that this manner of living astonishes you. Know then that although health is regulated more carelessly in your world, the regime in this is not to be scorned. In every house there is a *Physionome* supported by the state who is approximately what would be called with you a doctor, except that he only treats healthy people and that he decides upon the different methods of treating us from the proportion, shape and symmetry of our limbs, from the features of the face, the colour of the flesh, the delicacy of the skin, the agility of the whole body, the sound of the voice, the complexion, the strength and hardness of the hair. Did you not notice just now a rather short man who gazed at you so long? He was the *Physionome* of this house. Be sure that he has varied the fumes of your dinner according to his observation of your appearance. Notice how far from our beds he

placed the mattress for you to lie on. No doubt he decided your constitution was very different from ours, since he was afraid the odour which flows from these little taps under your nose should spread to us or that ours should smoke in your direction. To-night you will see he chooses the flowers for your bed with the same precautions."

While he was speaking I signed to my host to try to bring these philosophers on to speaking about some part of the science which they professed. He was too much my friend not to create an opportunity at once. I will not tell you the talk or the requests which were the ambassador to this treaty, the transition from the ridiculous to the serious was too imperceptible to be imitated. The last-comer of these doctors, after touching on other matters continued thus:

"It remains for me to prove to you that there are infinite worlds in an infinite world. Conceive, then, the Universe as a large animal, the stars (which are Worlds) as other animals within it, which in turn serve as worlds to other creatures, like ourselves, horses and elephants; in our turn we are also the worlds of certain yet smaller creatures, like boils, lice, worms, and mites. And these are the earth of other imperceptibles, just as we appear a great world to these little things. Perhaps our flesh, our blood and our vital principles are nothing but a texture of little animals holding together, lending us movement from their own and blindly allowing our will to drive them like a coachman, yet drive us too and all together produce that action we call life. Tell me, I beseech you, is it very hard to believe that a louse takes your body for a World, and that when one of them has travelled from one of your ears to the other, his companions should say of him that he has been to the ends of the world or that he has passed from one pole to the other? Yes, no doubt this little nation takes your hair for the forests of its country, the pores full of moisture for fountains, pimples for lakes and ponds, abscesses for seas, fluxions for deluges; and when you comb your hair backwards and forwards they take this movement for the ebb and flow of the ocean. Does not itching prove what I say? Is the mite which produces it anything but one of these little animals which has detached itself from civil society to set itself up as a tyrant in its country? If you ask me how it is that they are larger than other little imperceptibles, I ask you why elephants are larger than we are, and Irishmen than Spaniards? As to the breaking-out and the scabs, whose cause you do not know, they must happen either from

the corruption of the bodies of enemies massacred by these little giants, or because the plague produced by the scarcity of food which these rebels have devoured has left heaps of bodies decaying in the country, or because the tyrant, having driven away from him his companions, whose bodies stopped up the pores of our body, has thus opened a passage to the moisture which has become corrupted by extravasation from the sphere of the circulation of our blood. Perhaps you will ask me why one mite produces a hundred others. That is not difficult to understand, for, as one revolt awakens another, so each of these little creatures, urged by the bad example of their rebellious companions, aspires to rule, and kindles everywhere war, slaughter and famine. But, you will say, some persons are much less subject to itch than others, yet each of us is equally filled with these animals if, as you declare, they make life. It is true, as we perceive, that phlegmatic subjects are less liable to the itch than those of a bilious temperament, because this people sympathises with the climate it inhabits and is more sluggish in a cold body than another which is heated by the temperature of its region, ferments, moves about and cannot remain in one place. Thus, a bilious man is more delicate than a phlegmatic, because he is stimulated in many more parts, and as the soul is only the action of these little beasts, he is able to feel in every place where these cattle are moving, while the phlegmatic is only hot enough to make them act in a few places. And to prove this universal mitedom you have only to consider how the blood flows to a gash when you are wounded. Your doctors say that it is guided by far-seeing Nature, who wishes to succour damaged parts. But this is chimerical. For there would have to be besides Soul and Spirit a third intellectual substance in us with its own functions and organs. It is much more probable that these little animals, feeling themselves attacked, send to their neighbours for help; they pour in from all sides: the country cannot contain so many people, and so they die stifled in the throng, or of hunger. This mortality happens when the abscess is ripe. To show that these animals of life are then extinguished, notice that corrupted flesh becomes insensible; and if cupping, which is ordered for the purpose of averting the fluxion, is successful, the reason is that these little animals have had heavy casualties in trying to close this opening, and therefore refuse to assist their allies, having only a mean strength to defend themselves."

He ceased speaking and when the second philosopher perceived our eyes were directed upon him and were urging him to speak in his turn, he said:

"Men, I see you are anxious to teach this little animal, who resembles us, something of the science we profess. I am at present dictating a treatise which I should be very glad to show him because of the light it throws upon the understanding of our physics. It is an explanation of the eternal origin of the world, but I am in a hurry to work my bellows; for to-morrow without fail the Town moves off. You will excuse me this time if I promise that as soon as the Town arrives at its destination, I will satisfy you."

At these words the host's son called for his father, and when he came the company asked him the time; the goodman answered that it was eight o'clock. His son then said in a rage:

"Hey! Come hither, varlet, did I not order you to warn us at seven? You know that the houses are going to-morrow, that the walls have already left, and yet your idleness even locks up your mouth."

"Sir", replied the goodman, "it has just been announced, while you were at table, that it is strictly forbidden to start until after to-morrow."

"No matter", replied he, lending him a buffet, "you should obey blindly, not try to understand my orders, but simply remember what I have bidden you. Quick, go and get your effigy."

When he had brought it, the young man seized it by the arm and whipped it for a long quarter of an hour.

"Now, rascal", he continued, "as a punishment for your disobedience you shall be a laughing stock to everybody for the rest of the day and so I order you to walk on two feet only all day."

The poor old man went out very mournfully and his son continued: "Gentlemen, I beseech you to excuse the rogueries of this hot-head. I hoped to make something good of him, but he takes advantage of my kindness. For my part I think the rogue will be the death of me; indeed on more than ten occasions I have been on the point of giving him my malediction."

Although I bit my lips I had great difficulty to keep myself from laughing at this world upside down. To break off this burlesque pedagogy, which no doubt would have made me burst forth in the end, I begged him to tell me what he meant by the journey of the Town he had just spoken of, whether the houses and the walls could move. He replied:

"My dear friend, our cities are divided into the mobile and the sedentary. The mobile, like that in which we are now, are constructed as follows: the architect builds each palace, as you see, of very light wood and inserts four wheels underneath it. In the thickness of one of the walls he places large and numerous bellows, whose nozzles pass in a horizontal line through the upper story from one gable to the other. When it is desired to move the town somewhere (for we change our air at every season), each one hangs out a number of large sails from one side of his house in front of the bellows; then he winds up a spring to make them play and in less than eight days the continuous blasts vomited by these windy monsters against the sails carry their houses, if they wish, more than a hundred leagues.

"The architecture of the second kind, which we call sedentary, is as follows: the houses are almost like your towers, except that they are made of wood and that in the middle they have a large strong screw which goes from the cellar to the roof to raise or lower them at will. Well, the earth underneath is hollowed out as deep as the building is high, and the whole thing is constructed in this manner so that when the frosts begin to fall cold from the sky, they can lower their houses to the bottom of the hole by turning them; and then they cover the tower and the hollow part about it with large skins and so shelter themselves from the inclemency of the air. But as soon as the soft breath of Spring makes the air milder, they return to the daylight by means of the large screw of which I spoke."

I think he wished to stop speaking there, but I began thus:

"Faith, sir, I should never have thought so expert a mason could be a philosopher, did I not have you as witness. For this reason, since we are not going to-day, you will have plenty of leisure to explain to us this eternal origin of the world with which you entertained us just now. In recompense, I promise you that as soon as I return to the Moon, whence my instructor"—I pointed to my demon—"will prove to you that I came, I will disseminate your fame by relating the fine things you tell me. I see that you laugh at this promise, because you do not believe the Moon is a world and still less that I am one of its inhabitants. But I can assure you that the people of that World take this one for a Moon and will laugh at me when I say their Moon is a World, that it has fields and inhabitants."

He only replied by a smile, and then he began to speak as follows:

"When we try to go back to the origin of this Great All we are forced to run into three or four absurdities, and so it is reasonable to take the path which makes us stumble least. The first obstacle that stops us is the Eternity of the World. Men's minds are not strong enough to conceive it and, because they are not able to imagine that so vast, so beautiful, so well regulated an Universe could have made itself, they take refuge in Creation. But, like one who plunges into a river for fear of being wet with rain, they run from the arms of a dwarf to the pity of a giant; and they do not even escape the difficulty, for they give to God the eternity they took from the world because they could not understand it. As if it were easier to imagine it in the one than in the other! This absurdity, then, or this giant of which I spoke, is Creation; for, tell me truly, has it ever been conceived how something could be made from nothing? Alas! There are such infinite differences between Nothing and one single atom that the acutest brain could not penetrate them. To escape this inexplicable labyrinth you must admit a Matter co-eternal with God, and then it is unnecessary to admit a God, since the World could have existed without Him. But, you will say, even if I grant you this Eternal Matter, how did this chaos become order of itself? Well, I shall explain it to you.

"My little Animal, after you have mentally separated each little visible body into an infinity of little invisible bodies, you are to imagine that the infinite Universe is composed of nothing but these infinite atoms which are very solid, very incorruptible, and very simple. Some are cubes, some parallelograms, some angular, some round, some pointed, some pyramidal, some hexagonal, some oval, and all act differently according to their shape. And to prove this, place a very round ivory ball upon a very smooth surface; and at the slightest movement you give it, it will be a half-quarter of an hour before it stops; to which I add that if it were as perfectly round as some of the atoms of which I speak, it would never stop. Then if art is capable of inclining a body to perpetual motion, why should we not believe that Nature can do it? It is the same with other shapes; one, like the square, demands perpetual rest; others, a movement sideways; others, a half-movement like palpitation. When the round, whose nature is to move, joins with the pyramidal, it perhaps makes what we call fire, because fire not only moves without resting but pierces and penetrates easily. Moreover, fire produces different effects according to the size and quantity of the angles where the round shape is joined; the fire of pepper is different from the fire

of sugar, the fire of sugar from that of cinnamon, the fire of cinnamon from that of cloves, and this in turn from the fire of a faggot. Well then, fire, which is the constructor and destructor of the parts and of the whole of the Universe, gathers into an oak the quantity of shapes necessary for the composition of that oak. But, you will say, how could mere chance collect in one place all the things necessary to produce this oak? I reply that it is not extraordinary that matter so placed should make an oak, but it would have been very much more marvellous if an oak had not been formed when matter was thus disposed. Had there been a little less of certain shapes, it would have been an elm, a poplar, a willow, an elder-tree, heather or moss; a little more of certain other shapes and it would have been a sensitive plant, an oyster in a shell, a worm, a fly, a frog, a sparrow, a monkey, a man. When you throw three dice on the table and they all turn up twos; or three, four, five; or two sixes and a one; do you say: 'What a miracle! each die has turned up the same number, when so many other numbers might be turned up; what a miracle! Three dice have turned up three successive numbers; what a miracle! Two sixes and the opposite of the other six has turned up!' I am certain that a man of wit like you would not make these exclamations, for since there are only a certain quantity of numbers on the dice, it is impossible but that one of them should turn up. You are surprised that this matter, mixed up pell-mell by chance, should have built up a man, since so many things are necessary to the construction of his being. But you do not know that this matter, moving towards the design of a man, has stopped a hundred million times on the way to form sometimes a stone, sometimes lead, sometimes coral, sometimes a flower, sometimes a comet, according to the excess or deficiency of certain shapes necessary or unnecessary to compose a man. It is not marvellous that an infinite quantity of matter changing and moving continually should have met together to make the few animals, vegetables and minerals which we see, any more than it is marvellous for a royal pair to turn up in a hundred throws of the dice; and it is impossible but that something should be made from this movement. This thing will always be wondered at by a scatterbrain who will not comprehend how nearly it was not made at all. When the large river turns a mill, moves the works of a clock, and the little rivulet does nothing but run and sometimes overflow, you will not say the river has intelligence, because you know it has met with things so placed as to cause all these masterpieces. If a mill had not been placed in its path, it would not have

ground the corn; if it had not met the clock it would not have marked the hours; and if the rivulet I spoke of had met the same things it would have performed the same miracles. It is the same with fire, which moves by itself; for when it found organs proper for the agitation necessary to reason, it reasoned; when it found those proper to feel only, it felt; when it found those proper to vegetation, it vegetated. And to prove this, tear out the eyes of a man who is enabled to see by this fire or this soul, and he will cease to see, just as our river will not mark the hours if the clock is destroyed.

"In fine, these first and indivisible atoms make a circle upon which the most embarrassing difficulties of physics roll without difficulty. Even the operation of the senses, which nobody yet has been able to understand, I explain very easily with these little bodies. Let us begin with sight, which, as the most incomprehensible, deserves our first attention. As I suppose, the coverings of the eye, whose openings are like those of glass, transmit the fire-dust we call visual rays, which is stopped by some opaque matter making it rebound; for this fire-dust meets on the way the image of the object which repulses it and, as this image is simply an infinite number of little bodies continually thrown off in equal superficies from the subject looked at, the image thrusts back the rays to our eyes.

"You will not fail to object to me that glass is an opaque and closely-packed body; yet instead of throwing back these other little bodies it allows them to pierce it. But I reply that the pores of glass are made in the same shape as these atoms of fire which pass through it; and just as a wheat-sieve is not fit to sift oats, nor an oat-sieve to sift wheat, so a deal box thin enough to transmit sound is not penetrable by sight and a piece of transparent crystal which allows itself to be pierced by sight is not penetrable by hearing."

I could not prevent myself from interrupting: "But how do you explain by these principles, sir, the fact that we are reflected in a mirror?"

"It is very easy", he replied, "you must suppose that the rays of our eyes pass through the glass and meet behind it a non-diaphanous body which casts them off; they return the way they came and they find spread out upon the mirror the little bodies that move in equal superficies from our own and carry them back to our eyes. Our imagination, which is hotter than the other faculties of the soul, attracts the most subtle of them, with which it makes a reduced portrait.

"The operation of hearing is no more difficult to understand. To be more succinct, let us consider it only in harmony. Suppose then a lute touched by the hands of a master of the art. You will ask me how it happens that I perceive a thing I do not see, so far from me? Do sponges go out of my ears to suck up this music and bring it to me? Or does this lute player beget in my head another little player with another little lute, who has been ordered to sing me the same airs? No. This miracle is caused by the vibrating chord striking the little bodies which compose the air and so driving them into my

brain and gently piercing it with these little corporeal nothings. When the string is stretched, the sound is high, because it drives the atoms more vigorously; and the organ so penetrated gives the fantasy sufficient of them to make its picture. If there is not enough, our memory does not complete its image and we are forced to repeat the same sound to it, so that for example it may take from the materials given it by the strains of a saraband enough to complete the portrait of that saraband. But this operation is almost nothing. The wonderful thing is that by this means we are moved sometimes to joy, sometimes to rage, sometimes to pity, sometimes to reflection, sometimes to pain. This happens, I imagine, when the movement received by these little bodies meets within us other little bodies moving in the same way or, on account of their shape, capable of the same motion. The new-comers excite their hosts to move with them and so, when a violent tune meets the fire of our blood (which is disposed to the same movement) it incites this fire to thrust its way out. This is what we call the ardour of courage. If a sound is gentler and has only strength enough to raise a slighter, more wavering flame (because the matter is more volatile), it moves along the nerves, membranes and channels of our flesh and excites the tickling we call joy. The ebullition of the other passions happens in the same way according to whether the little bodies are thrown against us more or less violently, whether they receive movement by meeting other vibrations, and according to what they find to move within us.

"The demonstration of touch is not more difficult. There is a perpetual emission of little bodies from all palpable matter; the more we touch it the more they are evaporated, because we squeeze them out of the object we handle like water from a sponge when we compress it. Hard bodies report to the organ their solidity; supple bodies, their softness; the rough, their harshness; the burning, their heat; the frozen, their cold. And as a proof of this, observe that hands hardened by labour are not so sensitive in discerning by the touch, and this is because of the thickness of the callus, which is neither porous nor animated and therefore transmits with great difficulty these fumes of matter. Some will desire to know where the organ of touch resides. For my part, I think it extends over all the superficies of our mass, since it happens through the agency of our nerves; and our skin is merely an imperceptible and continuous texture of nerves. I imagine, however, that the nearer to the head the limb with which we touch, the sooner we perceive. You may make the experiment as follows: if we close

our eyes and touch something with the hand we discover what it is immediately, but if on the contrary we touch it with the foot we are some time in finding out what it is. The reason for this is that our nerves, whose matter is no more compact than that of our skin (which is everywhere pitted with little holes), lose many of these little atoms on the way through the small channels of their texture before the atoms reach the brain, the end of their journey.

"It remains for me to prove that smell and taste are caused also by the agency of these same little bodies. Tell me, then, when I taste a fruit, is it not through the moisture of my mouth melting it? Admit then that since there are different salts in a pear, which by being dissolved are split up into little bodies differing in shape from those making the taste of a plum, they must pierce our palate in a different way; just as the gash made by a pike piercing me is unlike that which I endure from a pistol-bullet, and as a pistol-bullet causes me a pain different from that of a steel arrow-head.

"I have nothing to say about smell, since even your philosophers admit that it takes place through a continual emission of little bodies cast off from their mass which strike our noses as they pass.

"On this principle I will now explain to you the creation, the harmony and the influence of the celestial globes with the immutable variety of meteors."

He was about to continue when our old host entered and turned our philosopher's thoughts toward departure. He brought with him crystals filled with glow-worms to lighten the room, but these little fire-insects lose much of their light when they are not freshly gathered and as these were ten days old they hardly shone at all. My demon did not wait for the company to be inconvenienced by this; he went up to his room and returned immediately with two fire balls, so brilliant that we were all surprised he did not burn his fingers.

"These incombustible torches", said he, "will serve us better than your clusters of worms. They are sun-rays which I have purged of their heat; otherwise the corrosive qualities of its fire would have dazzled and hurt your sight. I have extracted the light and shut it in these transparent balls I am holding. This should not be a matter of great surprise to you; I was born in the Sun and so it is no more difficult for me to condense the rays which

are the dust of that world than for you to collect the dust or atoms which are the pulverised earth of this world."

When we had finished praising this child of the Sun, it was late, and the young host sent his father home with the two philosophers, with a dozen balls of glow-worms hanging from his four legs. The rest of us, that is to say, the young host, my Instructor and I, went to bed by order of the Physionome. This time he put me in a room of violets and lilies and had me tickled in the usual way to send me to sleep. The next morning about nine o'clock my demon came in and told me he had just returned from the palace, whence he had been sent for by , one of the Queen's waiting-women. She had inquired after me and said she still persisted in keeping her word, which is to say that she would gladly follow me if I would take her with me to the other World.

"I was greatly edified", he continued, "when I found that the principal motive for her journey was directed towards making herself a Christian. I have promised to help her design with all my ability and for this purpose to invent a machine capable of holding three or four persons, in which you can rise up together. From to-day onwards I shall apply myself seriously to the execution of this project. To amuse you during my absence here is a book which I brought from my native land. It is called *A Voyage to the Sun*. I am also giving you another, which I rate more highly, the *Great Works of the Philosophers*, composed by one of the greatest Wits of the Sun. He proves in it that all things are true and shows the way to unite physically the truths of each contradiction; for example, that white is black and black is white, that you can be and not be at the same time, that there can be a mountain without a valley, that nothing is something and that all things which exist do not exist. But notice that he proves these unheard-of paradoxes without any sophistry or captious reasoning. When you are tired of reading you can take a walk or converse with your companion, our young host. His mind has many charms; but what displeases me in him is his impiety. If he scandalizes you or shakes your faith by his reasoning do not fail to come at once and tell them to me; I will resolve the difficulties for you. Another would tell you to leave his company directly he began to philosophize on these matters, but he is extremely vain and I am certain he would take your flight for a defeat and would imagine your belief to be contrary to reason if you refused to listen to his reasons. Remember to live free."

With this phrase he left me, for in that country it is the method of leave-taking; and, in the same way, "Good day," or "Your servant, sir", is expressed by the compliment: "Sage, love me, since I love you."

He had scarcely left me when I began to examine attentively my books. The boxes, that is to say their covers, seemed to me admirable for their richness; one was carved from a single diamond incomparably more brilliant than ours, the second appeared to be a monstrous pearl cleft in two. My demon had translated these books into the language of that world; but as I have not yet spoken of their printing, I will explain the construction of these two volumes.

At the opening of the box I found something in metal almost similar to our clocks, filled with an infinite number of little springs and imperceptible machines. It is a book indeed, but a miraculous book without pages or letters; in fine, it is a book to learn from which eyes are useless, only ears are needed. When someone wishes to read he winds up the machine with a large number of all sorts of keys; then he turns the pointer towards the chapter he wishes to hear, and immediately, as if from a man's mouth or a musical instrument, this machine gives out all the distinct and different sounds which serve as the expression of speech between the noble Moon-dwellers.^[48]

When I had reflected on this miraculous invention in book-making I was no longer surprised that the young men of that country possessed more knowledge at sixteen or eighteen than grey-beards in our World. Since they know how to read as soon as they speak, they are never without reading. Indoors, out of doors, in town, travelling, on foot, or on horseback, they can have in their pocket or hanging from their saddle-bows as many as thirty of these books, and they have only to wind up a spring to hear a chapter, or several chapters, if they are in the mood to hear a whole book. In this way you have continually about you all great men, living or dead, and you hear them viva voce.

This present occupied me for more than an hour, and then hanging them upon myself like earrings I went out to walk in the town. I had not passed out of the street which ran opposite our house when towards the other end I met a large number of mournful people. Four of them carried on their shoulders a sort of coffin wrapped in black. I asked a bystander what was

the meaning of this procession so similar to a funeral in my own country. He replied that the wicked, whose name was expressed among the people by a blow on the right knee, had been convicted of envy and ingratitude: yesterday he had died and the Parliament had condemned him more than twenty years ago to die a natural death in his bed and to be buried after his death. I began to laugh at this reply and he asked me: "Why?"

"You surprise me", I replied, "by telling me that a long life, a peaceful death and a pompous burial which in our World are signs of benediction, serve in this as an exemplary punishment."

"What! You consider burial a mark of benediction?" retorted this man. "On your honour now, can you conceive anything more terrible than a corpse moving under swarms of worms, at the mercy of toads which gnaw its cheeks; in fine, the plague dressed in a man's body. Good God! The mere thought that even when dead my face should be wrapped in a cloth and I should have five feet of earth on my mouth makes it difficult for me to breathe! That wretch you see carried there, in addition to the infamy of being cast into a pit, was condemned to have his funeral accompanied by a hundred and fifty of his friends, and as a punishment to them for having loved a man who was envious and ungrateful they were bidden to appear at his burial with mournful faces. Had it not been for the mercy of the judges who imputed his crimes in part to his lack of intelligence, his friends would have been commanded to weep. Except for criminals every one here is burned. And this is a very decent and a very reasonable custom, for we think that fire separates the pure from the impure. Moreover, its heat draws to it by sympathy that natural heat which composed the soul and gives it the power to rise continually until it reaches some star, the earth of people more immaterial than we and more intellectual, because their temperament must correspond to and participate in the purity of the globe they inhabit. This radical flame, being rectified still more by the subtlety of that world's elements, finally composes one of the citizens of that burning country.

"However, this is not our best method of burial. When one of our philosophers comes to an age where he feels his mind grow weak and the ice of years impede the movements of his soul, he gathers his friends together for a sumptuous banquet. Then he puts before them the motives which have made him resolve to take leave of Nature, the small hope he has of being able to add anything to his good actions: they either grant him the

favour, that is they order him to die, or they severely command him to live. When the majority have placed the disposition of his life in his hands, he announces the day and place to his dearest friends. They purge themselves and fast for twenty-four hours. When they come to the sage's house, they sacrifice to the Sun and enter the room where the hero awaits them lying upon a ceremonial bed. Each one in turn flies to embrace him. When it comes to his best friend, the friend kisses him tenderly, leans upon his stomach, joins mouth to mouth, and with his right hand, which he keeps free, bathes a dagger in his heart. The Lover does not remove his lips from those of his Beloved until he feels he is dead. He then withdraws the steel from his breast, places his mouth on the wound, and drinks his blood and continues to suck until he can swallow no more. Another succeeds him immediately and they carry the first to a bed; when the second is satiated he is taken away to a bed and gives place to a third. Finally, when they are all satiated, after about four or five hours, they bring to each a girl of about sixteen or seventeen. During the next three or four days they enjoy the pleasures of love and they are fed exclusively on the dead man's flesh, which they eat raw, so that if anything is born from these embraces they may be almost sure it is their friend who lives again."

I did not give this man the opportunity of discoursing further, for I left him there and continued my walk. Although I cut it short, the time I spent on the peculiarities of the sights and in visiting certain districts of the town made me arrive more than two hours after dinner was ready. They asked me why I came so late.

"It is not my fault", I replied to the cook, who was complaining of it, "several times in the street I asked what time it was, but they only answered by opening the mouth, clenching the teeth and writhing the face askew."

"What!" cried everybody, "you did not know they were telling you the time that way?"

"Faith", I replied, "they might show their great noses to the Sun all they would before I should have learnt it."

"'Tis a convenience", said they, "which permits them to dispense with a watch. With their teeth they make so exact a dial that when they wish to tell someone the time they simply open their lips and the shadow of their nose falling upon them marks the hour as if upon a dial. Now, in order that you

may know why every one in this land has a large nose, learn that as soon as a woman is delivered the midwife carries the child to the Prior of the Seminary. And, at the end of a year his nose is measured before the assembly of experts by the Syndic, and if by this measure it is found too short, the child is reputed a Snub-nose and handed over to the priests, who castrate him. You will perhaps ask the reason of this barbarity and how it happens that we, among whom virginity is a crime, establish continence by force? Learn then that we act in this way from thirty centuries of observation showing that a large nose is a sign over our door that says, 'Here lodges a witty, prudent, courteous, affable, generous and liberal man', and that a small nose is the sign-post of the opposite vices. That is why we make eunuchs of our snub-nosed children, for the Republic prefers to have no children from them than children like them."

He was still talking when a man came in completely naked. I immediately sat down and put on my hat to do him honour, for in that country these are marks of the greatest respect one can show a man.

"The Kingdom", said he, "desires that you will advertise the magistrates before leaving for your country because a mathematician has just promised the council that if, when you reach your world, you will construct a certain machine which he will show you corresponding to another which he will have ready here, he will draw your world to him and join it to our globe."

As soon as he was gone I asked the young host: "I beg you will tell me what is meant by that bronze, shaped like our parts of shame, which hung from that man's belt? During the time that I lived at the court in a cage I saw quantities of them, but as I was almost always surrounded by the Queen's waiting-women I feared I should be lacking in respect to their sex and rank if I directed the conversation to so homely a matter in their presence."

He replied: "Here the females no more than the males would be so ungrateful as to blush at the sight of that which made them; the virgins are not ashamed to respect upon us, in memory of their mother Nature, the one thing which bears her name. Know then that the scarf with which this man is honoured and upon which hangs like a medal the shape of a virile member, is the symbol of a gentleman and the mark which distinguishes a noble from a commoner."

I protest this paradox seemed to me so extravagant that I could not keep from laughing.

"This seems to me a most extraordinary custom", said I to my young host, "since in our world to wear a sword is the mark of nobility."

He was not moved by this but exclaimed: "My little man, the nobles in your world are mad to parade an instrument which is the mark of a hangman, which is only forged for our destruction and is indeed the sworn enemy of everything that lives! And just as mad on the contrary to hide a member without which we should be in the category of things that are not, the Prometheus of every animal and the indefatigable repairer of Nature's weaknesses! Woe to the country where the marks of generation are ignominious and where those of destruction are honourable! You call that member, 'the parts of shame', as if there were anything more glorious than to give life and anything more infamous than to take it away."

During this discourse we continued to dine and as soon as we arose from our beds we went into the garden to take the air. The diversity and the beauty of the place delayed our conversation for some time. But since the noblest desire which then moved me was to convert to our religion a soul so uplifted above the vulgar mob, I exhorted him a thousand times not to smirch with matter the fair genius with which Heaven had endowed him, to draw out of the throng of animals a spirit capable of the Beatific Vision, in fine, to think seriously of uniting some day his immortality with pleasure rather than with pain.

"What!" replied he, with a peal of laughter, "you think your soul immortal to the exclusion of that of beasts? My dear friend, without exaggeration your pride is very insolent! And, I beseech you, whence do you deduce this immortality to the prejudice of the Beasts? Is it because we are gifted with reason and they not? To begin with, I deny that and whenever you please I will prove to you that they reason like ourselves. But even if it were true that reason has been granted us as a prerogative and that it was a privilege reserved to our species alone, does that mean that God must enrich man with immortality when He has already squandered reason upon him? I suppose I should give, in that case, a *pistole* to a beggar because I gave him a *crown* yesterday? You yourself see the falsity of the argument and that, on the contrary, if I am just, I ought to give a *crown* to another rather than a

pistole to the first, since the other has had nothing from me. We must conclude from this, my dear friend, that God, who is a thousand times more just than we are, will not have given everything to some and nothing to others. To allege as an example the case of the eldest sons in your world, whose share engulfs almost all the property of the family, is simply a weakness of fathers, who are desirous of perpetuating their names and fear they may be lost or dissipated by poverty. But God is not capable of error, and has been careful not to commit one so great; then, since there is neither before nor after in God's eternity, with him the younger sons are no younger than the elder."

I do not dissimulate that this reason shook me.

"Permit me", said I, "to break off upon this matter, for I do not feel myself strong enough to reply to you. I shall go seek a solution of this difficulty from our mutual Instructor."

Without waiting for his reply I immediately went to the room of this able demon, and waiving any preliminaries I put before him the objections to the immortality of our souls which I had just heard, and this is what he replied:

"My son, this young hot-head is desirous of persuading you that it is unlikely man's soul should be immortal because God, who has called Himself the common Father of all beings, would be unjust if He had favoured one species and abandoned generally all the others to annihilation or misfortune. It is true these reasons glitter a little at a distance. Although I might ask him how he knows that what is just to us is also just to God, how he knows that God measures with our measuring-rod, how he knows that our laws and customs, instituted only to remedy our own disorders, serve also to cut out pieces from the omnipotence of God; I will pass over all these things together with all that has been so divinely answered on this point by the fathers of your Church and I will discover to you a mystery not yet revealed.

"My son, you know that a tree is made from earth, a pig from a tree and a man from a pig. May we not then believe, since all creatures in Nature tend to become more perfect, that they aspire to become men, whose essence is the result of the finest and best imagined mixture in the world and the sole link between the life of brutes and of angels? Only a pedant would deny that these metamorphoses occur. Do we not see that an apple-tree sucks up

and digests the surrounding turf by means of the heat of its germ as if through its mouth; that a pig devours its fruit and thereby converts it into a part of itself; and that a man by eating this pig reheats this dead flesh, joins it to himself, and so causes this animal to live again in a more noble species? Thus the Great Pontiff upon whose head you see a tiara was a bunch of grass in my garden sixty years ago. Since God is the common Father of all His creatures and should love them all equally, is it not most credible that by a metempsychosis more reasonable than that of the Pythagoreans all sensible life, all vegetable life, in fine, all matter, will pass through man and then the great day of Judgment will come, to which the prophets direct the secrets of their philosophy?"

Fully satisfied I returned to the garden and began to repeat to my companion what our Master had taught me, when the Physionome arrived to take us to dinner and to the dormitory. I shall not particularize these, because I ate and went to bed as on the preceding day.

The next morning as soon as I was awake I went to arouse my antagonist. "'Tis as great a miracle", said I when I reached him, "to find a great wit like yours buried in sleep, as to see fire without movement."

He was annoyed by this clumsy compliment. "But", cried he in a passionate rage, "will you never free your mouth as well as your reason from these fabulous expressions of miracles? Such words disgrace the name of philosopher. Since the wise man sees nothing in the world which he does not understand or which he considers incapable of being understood, he ought to abominate all these expressions like miracles, prodigies, supernatural events, invented by the stupid to excuse the weaknesses of their minds."

I then felt conscientiously obliged to say something to disabuse him.

"Although you do not believe in miracles", I replied, "they do not cease to occur, and many of them. I have seen them with my own eyes. I have seen more than twenty sick people miraculously cured."

"You say", he interrupted, "that these people were cured miraculously, but you do not know that the power of the imagination is able to combat all maladies, because there is a certain natural balsam extended through our bodies containing all the qualities contrary to all those of every disease that

attacks us. Our imagination is warmed by the pain and seeks in its place the specific remedy to oppose the venom, and so cures us. For this reason the ablest doctor in our world advises a patient rather to take an ignorant doctor whom he thinks very skilful than to take a very skilful doctor whom he thinks ignorant, because he believes that our imagination works for our health and when only slightly aided by remedies is capable of curing us, but that the most powerful remedies are too weak when not applied by the imagination! You are surprised that the first men in your world lived so many centuries without having any knowledge of medicine? Their constitution was strong and this universal balm had not been dissipated by the drugs with which your doctors undermine you. To become convalescent they had only to desire strongly and to imagine they were cured; immediately their clear, vigorous and taut imagination plunged into this vital oil, applied the active to the passive and almost in a twinkling they were as well as formerly. Even to-day these astonishing cures continue, but the populace attributes them to a miracle. For my part, I do not believe in a miracle at all and my reason is that it is more easy for all these talkers to be wrong than for the thing to happen. Let me ask them this: A man has a fever and he has been cured. It is clear that during his illness he wished very ardently to recover his health and so made vows; it necessarily followed, since he was ill, that he should die, that he should remain ill or that he should get better. If he had died they would have said God had rewarded him for his pains; they might have maliciously equivocated by saying that He had cured the sick man of all his ills according to his prayers. If his infirmity had persisted they would have said he lacked faith; but because he recovered it is a visible miracle! Is it not far more likely that his fantasy, excited by a violent desire for health, achieved this end? I admit that many of these gentlemen who make vows recover; but how many more do we see who have perished miserably with their vows?"

"But at least", I replied, "if what you say of this balsam is true, it is a proof that our soul is reasonable, since without making use of our reason and without leaning on the support of our will it knows of itself how to apply the active to the passive as if it were outside us. Well, if it is reasonable when it is separated from us we must necessarily conclude that it is spiritual; and if you admit it is spiritual I conclude that it is immortal, since death only happens to animals through those changes of form whereof matter alone is capable."

The young man then sat up in bed and making me sit down also, spoke in much these terms:

"I am not surprised that the souls of beasts (which are corporeal) should die, since they are probably only a harmony of the four qualities, the strength of the blood, a relationship of well-proportioned organs; but I am very surprised that our incorporeal, intellectual and immortal soul should be constrained to leave us for the same reasons that make an ox perish. Has the soul made an agreement with our body that, when the body receives a sword thrust in the heart, a leaden bullet in the brain, a musket shot through the trunk, it will abandon immediately its ruined house? But the soul often breaks this contract, for some die of a wound which others escape; and so every soul must make a separate bargain with its body. Truly this soul which, as they make us believe, is so clever, is very foolish to leave its lodging when it sees that by leaving this place it will find its apartment marked out for it in Hell. And if this soul were spiritual and reasonable by itself, as they say, if it were as capable of intelligence when separated from our body as it is when invested by the body, how is it that those born blind, with all the advantages of this intellectual soul, are not able to imagine what sight is? Why do the deaf not hear? Is it because they are not yet deprived of all their senses by death? What! I cannot then make use of my right hand because I have a left as well? To prove that the soul cannot act without senses although it is spiritual, they allege the case of a painter who cannot make a picture without brushes. Yes, but that is not to say that when a painter, who cannot work without brushes, has lost his colours, his pencils, and his canvases as well, he can then do better. On the contrary, the more obstacles are opposed to his work the more impossible it will be for him to paint. However, they maintain that this soul, which can only act imperfectly when it has lost one of its tools in the course of life, can work perfectly when it has lost them all after our death. If they repeat to us that the soul does not need these instruments, I shall repeat to them that they ought to whip the blind who pretend they cannot see."

"But", said I, "if our soul dies, as I see you wish to deduce, the resurrection you expect would be only a chimera, for God would have to recreate our souls and that would not be resurrection."

He interrupted me and shook his head.

"Hey! Faith!" cried he, "who has deluded you with that fairy-tale? What! You? What! I? What! My maid-servant be resurrected?"

"This is not an amusing tale", I replied, "it is an indubitable truth which I will prove to you."

"And I", said he, "will prove to you the contrary. To begin with, suppose that you ate a Mohammedan; you convert him consequently into your own substance! Is it not true that when you have digested this Mohammedan he is changed partly into flesh, partly into blood, partly into seed? You embrace your wife and with the seed drawn entirely from this Mohammedan's body you cast the mould of a pretty little Christian. I ask; will the Mohammedan have his body at the resurrection? If the earth yields it up to him, the little Christian will not have his body, since it is only a part of the Mohammedan's. If you tell me that the Christian will have his, God will have to take from the Mohammedan that which the little Christian only received from the Mohammedan's body. And so inevitably one or the other will be without a body! You will reply perhaps that God will reproduce from matter a body to furnish the one who is without a body? Yes, but another difficulty stops us. Suppose the damned Mohammedan is resurrected and God gives him a new body, because the Christian has stolen his old one, since the body alone does not make the man, any more than the soul alone, but the two joined together in one person, and since the soul and the body each departed from the man whole, if God then makes the Mohammedan another body, it is no longer the same individual. So God damns a man who is not the man who has merited Hell. One body has whored, it has criminally abused all the senses and, to punish this body, God casts into the fire another, which is virgin and pure, and has never lent its organs to the performance of the slightest crime. And what is even more ridiculous is that this body will have deserved both Hell and Paradise; for, in so far as it is Mohammedan, it must be damned, and in so far as it is Christian, it must be saved. Thus God cannot put it in Paradise without being unjust and rewarding with glory instead of with the damnation it deserved as Mohammedan; and He cannot cast it into Hell without being unjust and rewarding with eternal death instead of the blessedness it deserved as Christian. Then, if He wishes to be just, He must both save and damn this man eternally."

"I have nothing to reply", I answered, "to your sophistic arguments against the resurrection; God has said it and God cannot lie."

"Not so fast", he retorted, "you are still at 'God has said'; you must first prove there is a God, which for my part I wholly deny."

"I shall not waste my time", said I, "by repeating to you the obvious demonstrations used by philosophers to prove it; I should have to reiterate all that has ever been written by reasonable men. I simply ask you what harm there is in believing it; I am assured you cannot discover any. Then if nothing can be derived from it but what is useful, why do you not accept it? If there is a God, and you do not believe in Him, you will not only be mistaken but you will have disobeyed the precept which bids you believe in Him; and if there is no God, you will be no better off than we!"

"On the contrary", he replied, "I shall be better off than you, for if there is no God, you and I will be equal. But if, on the contrary, there is a God, I shall not have offended against something which I believed did not exist, since to sin one must either know or will. Do you not see that even a rather foolish man would not think that a porter had injured him if the porter had done it accidentally, or had taken him for someone else, or if he had been drunk? How much more then should God, who is wholly steadfast, forbear to grow angry with us for not having known Him since He Himself has refused us the means of knowing Him. On your honour now, little animal, if belief in God were so necessary to us, if it were a matter of our eternity, would not God Himself have inculcated in us all a light as clear as that of the Sun which hides itself from no one? To feign that He plays hide-and-seek with men, says like children, 'Cuckoo, there he is!' that is to say sometimes hides Himself, sometimes shows Himself, disguises Himself to some and reveals Himself to others—that is to make oneself a God who is either silly or malicious, for if I have come to know Him through the strength of my genius, the merit is His and not mine, since He might have given me an imbecile soul or imbecile organs which would have made me incapable of knowing Him. And, on the contrary, if He gave me a mind incapable of understanding Him, it is not my fault but His, since He could have given me a mind so keen that I should have comprehended Him."

These ridiculous and devilish opinions made me shudder from head to foot. I began to look at this man with a little more attention and I was startled to

notice in his face something indefinably frightful which I had not yet perceived. His eyes were small and deep-set, his complexion swarthy, his mouth large, his chin hairy, his nails black. O God! thought I at once, this wretch will be damned after this life and he may even be the anti-Christ so much spoken of in our World.

I did not wish to let him know what I thought, because of the esteem I had for his wit, and truly the favourable aspects of Nature towards his cradle had made me conceive some friendship for him. Yet I could not so wholly contain myself but that I broke out into imprecations which menaced him with a bad end. But, throwing back my anger at me, he exclaimed: "Yes, by death...." I do not know what he meant to say but at this moment there was a knock at the door of our room and a large, black, hairy man came in. He approached us, seized the blasphemer by the middle and carried him off up the chimney. My pity for this wretch's fate obliged me to clasp him in order to drag him from the Ethiopian's claws, but he was so powerful that he carried us off both and in a moment we were up among the clouds. I was obliged to grasp him tightly now, not from love of my neighbour but from fear of falling. After passing I know not how many days in travelling through the sky, without knowing what would become of me, I saw I was approaching our world. Already I could distinguish Asia from Europe and Europe from Africa. And now I was so near that I could not lift my eyes beyond Italy, when my heart told me that this Devil was no doubt carrying my host to Hell, body and soul, and that he was passing by way of our earth, because Hell is in its centre. I wholly forgot this thought and all that had happened to me since the Devil had been our carriage, through the fear I was cast into by the sight of a flaming mountain which I almost touched. The sight of this burning spectacle made me cry out "Jesus Maria!" I had scarcely finished the last letter when I found myself lying upon the grass at the top of a little hill with two or three shepherds around me reciting litanies and speaking to me in Italian.

"Oh!" cried I, "praised be God! At last I have found Christians in the world of the Moon. Tell me, my friends, in what province of your world I am now?"

"In Italy", they replied.

"What", I interrupted, "is there an Italy in the world of the Moon also?"

I had still reflected so little on this accident that I had not yet perceived they were speaking to me in Italian and that I was replying in the same tongue.

When I was altogether disabused and nothing further prevented me from recognising that I was once more in this world, I let myself be taken where these peasants wished to lead me. But I had not arrived at the gates of ——, when all the dogs in the town came rushing upon me and had not my fear caused me to rush into a house and shut the door against them I should infallibly have been devoured.

A quarter of an hour afterwards, while I was resting in this house, all the dogs of the Kingdom I verily believe could be heard in a turmoil outside. All kinds from the bulldog to the lapdog could be seen howling with a most terrible fury as if they were keeping the anniversary of their first Adam.

This adventure caused no little surprise to all people who saw it; but as soon as I had directed my reflections upon this circumstance, I imagined at once that these animals were infuriated with me because of the world whence I came. "For", said I to myself, "since they are accustomed to bay the Moon on account of the pain she causes them from so far, no doubt they would have thrown themselves upon me because I smell of the Moon, whose odour annoys them."

I exposed myself to the Sun stark-naked on a terrace, to cleanse myself from this bad air. I dried myself some four or five hours, at the end of which I went down and the dogs no longer smelling the influence which had made me their enemy all returned home.

At the port I inquired when a ship would leave for France and when I was embarked my mind was wholly occupied in ruminating on the wonders of my voyage. A thousand times I admired the providence of God, which had placed those naturally impious men in a situation where they could not corrupt His chosen, and had punished them for their pride by giving them up to their own self-conceit. And I do not doubt that so far He has put off sending someone who preached them the Gospel, because He knew they would abuse the occasion and that this resistance would only serve to make them merit a harsher punishment in the next world.

Frontispiece to Lovell's expurgated edition.

VOYAGE TO THE SUN

At last our vessel reached Toulon harbour, and after returning thanks to the winds and stars for a prosperous voyage, we embraced on the wharf and said farewell. In my case, because money was among the fabulous stories of the World of the Moon whence I came and I had practically lost all memory of it, the skipper paid himself for my passage with the honour of having carried in his ship a man fallen from the sky. Nothing then prevented me from proceeding to Toulouse to a friend's house. I was burning to see him, for the joy I hoped to give him with the recital of my adventures. I shall not be so troublesome as to relate here all that happened on the way; I grew tired, I rested, I was thirsty, I was hungry, I drank, and I ate among twenty or thirty dogs which made up his pack.^[49] Although I was in a very bad state, thin and swarthy with sunburn, he did not fail to recognise me. In a transport of joy he flung himself on my neck, kissed me more than a hundred times, and trembling with pleasure led me into his house, where as soon as his tears gave place to his voice he exclaimed:

"At least we live and shall live, in spite of all the accidents by which Fortune has shaken our lives. But, Good Gods! it is not true then that you were burned in Canada in the great firework display you had invented? And yet two or three people worthy of credit among those who brought me this sad news swore they had seen and touched the wooden Bird in which you were carried off. They told me that unluckily you had got into it at the moment it was fired and that the impetus of the rockets burning all around carried you so high you were lost to sight. And they vowed you were so completely consumed that when the machine fell back only a few of your ashes were found."

"Those ashes", I replied, "sir, were those of the fire-works themselves, for the fire did not hurt me in the least. The rockets were fastened on outside and consequently their heat could not trouble me. You know that as soon as the powder was exhausted, the swift ascent of the rockets ceased to raise the machine, which then fell to the ground. I saw it fall and when I expected nothing but to fall with it, I was surprised to feel myself rising towards the

Moon. But I must explain to you the cause of an effect which you will take for a miracle.... The day of this accident I had rubbed all my body with marrow on account of certain bruises. But the Moon was then waning and at that period draws up marrow; it absorbed so gluttonously the marrow rubbed on my flesh, especially when my box rose above the middle region, where there were no intervening clouds to weaken its influence, that my body followed the attraction; and I protest it continued to suck me up so long that at last I reached that world we call the Moon."

I then related at length all the details of my voyage and Monsieur de Colignac was so ravished at hearing such extraordinary things that he implored me to set them down in writing. I enjoy repose and therefore resisted him for a long time, because of the visits such a publication would probably have attracted; but at length, shamed by the reproaches he continued to attack me with, I resolved at last to satisfy him. I therefore took pen in hand and as soon as I finished a sheet he went to Toulouse to vaunt it in the best company, for he was more anxious for my reputation than his own; he was considered one of the greatest minds of his century^[50] and by making himself the indefatigable echo of my praises he made me known to everyone. Already, without having seen me, the engravers had cut my portrait and from every square the town echoed with pedlars shouting at the top of their voices from hoarse throats: "Portrait of the author of *The Voyage to the Moon*." Among those who read my book were numerous ignoramuses who turned over its pages. To counterfeit great wits they applauded like the others and clapped their hands at every word, for fear of a mistake, exclaiming joyously "How excellent he is!" at all the passages they did not understand. But superstition disguised as conscience, whose teeth are very sharp under a fool's shirt, so gnawed at their hearts that they preferred rather to give up the reputation of philosophers (which suited them like ill-fitting clothes) than to have to answer for it at the Judgment Day.

This was the other side of the question and each was then in a hurry to recant. The work they had so highly prized was now simply a *pot-pourri* of ridiculous stories, a mass of disconnected fragments, a collection of fairy tales to lull children to sleep; and those ignorant even of syntax condemned the author to carry a candle to Saint Mathurin.^[51] This contest of opinion between the men of wit and the idiots increased its reputation. Very soon

manuscript copies were being sold secretly.^[52] Everyone, in and out of society, from the gentleman to the monk, bought the book and the women even took sides. Each family was divided and the interested in this quarrel went so far that the town was divided into two factions, the Lunar and the Anti-Lunar.

We were still engaged in the skirmishes of the battle when one morning there came into Colignac's room nine or ten grey-beards in long robes, who spoke to him as follows:

"Sir, you know that there is not one among us who is not your relative, your kin or your friend, and consequently that anything shameful which happens to you falls equally upon us. And yet we are credibly informed that you shelter a sorcerer in your house."

"A sorcerer!" cried Colignac, "Good Gods! Tell me his name. I will deliver him into your hands; but we must take care this is not a calumny."

"How now, sir", interrupted one of the most venerable of them, "is there any *parlement* so competent in the matter of sorcerers as ours? But, my dear nephew, not to keep you any longer in suspense, the sorcerer we accuse is the author of *The Voyage to the Moon*; he cannot deny that he is the greatest magician in Europe after what he has admitted himself. Why! he could only have gone to the Moon with the aid of ... I dare not name the beast; and, tell me, what was his object in going to the Moon?"

"Well asked", interrupted another, "he went to take part in a Witches' Sabbath, which no doubt was held that day; and, indeed, you may see he grew acquainted with the demon of Socrates. After this are you surprised that, as he says himself, the Devil should have brought him back to this world? But however that may be, so many Moons, so many chimneys, so many travels through the air are worth nothing, nothing at all I say; and between you and me"—at these words he placed his mouth nearer my friend's ear—"I never saw a sorcerer but had dealings with the Moon."

After these worthy sentiments they were silent and Colignac was so astounded at their common extravagance that he could not say a word. Seeing this, a venerable blockhead who had not spoken said:

"You see, cousin, we know where the shoe pinches. The magician is a person you love, but have no fear, things will go easily with respect to you."

You have only to deliver him into our hands, and out of love for you we pledge our honour to have him burned without scandal."

At these words Colignac could no longer restrain himself, although he was thrusting his fists into his ribs; he burst out laughing, which offended in no little degree the gentlemen, his relatives, to such an extent that it was out of his power to reply to a single point of their speech except by Ha! Ha! Ha! or Ho! Ho! Ho! so that our gentlemen, mightily scandalized, went off so affronted that they were still enraged when they reached Toulouse. When they had gone I drew Colignac aside into his study and as soon as I had shut the door I said:

"Count, it seems to me these hairy ambassadors are a kind of shaggy comets; I apprehend that the noise they broke out with is the thunder of the storm set in motion before falling. Although their accusation is ridiculous, and doubtless the result of their stupidity, I shall be none the less dead when a dozen men of wit who have seen me grilled observe that my judges are fools. All their arguments proving my innocence will not resuscitate me and my ashes will remain as cold in a grave as in a drain. For this reason, subject to your approval, I should be very happy to yield to the temptation which suggests to me that I leave nothing but my portrait in this province; for it would be doubly annoying to die for something in which I have not the slightest belief."

Colignac had scarcely the patience to wait for me to end before he replied. First of all he bantered me; but when he saw I took the matter seriously, he exclaimed with a troubled countenance:

"Sdeath! They shall not touch the hem of your cloak until I, my friends, my vassals and all who respect me have perished. My house is so strong it cannot be carried without artillery; it is very advantageously placed and well covered on the flanks. But I am mad to guard against parchment thunders."

"Sometimes", I replied, "they are more dangerous than the thunders of the middle region."

Thereafter, however, we spoke of nothing but our amusements. One day we hunted, another day we took a walk, sometimes we received visitors and

sometimes we went to see others; in fine, we abandoned each amusement before that amusement could bore us.

A neighbour of Colignac's, the Marquis de Cussan, a man who understood the good things of life, was usually in our company and we went from Colignac to Cussan and returned from Cussan to Colignac to render the places we stayed at more agreeable by change. Those innocent pleasures of which the body is capable are only a slight part of those the mind takes in study and conversation, whereof we lacked none; and our libraries, united like our minds, brought all the learned into our society. We mingled reading with conversation, conversation with good cheer, and that with fishing or hunting, when we went out; in a word we enjoyed, so to speak, both ourselves and all that is most agreeably produced by Nature for our use; we placed no limits to our desires save those of reason. Meanwhile my reputation, the enemy of my repose, circulated among the neighbouring villages and even the towns of the province; everyone, attracted by these rumours, found some pretext for visiting the Seigneur to see the sorcerer. When I went out of the castle the children and women and even the men looked upon me as upon the Devil, above all the parson of Colignac,^[53] who either from malice or ignorance was secretly the worst of my enemies. This man was apparently simple and his gross, almost childish mind was infinitely amusing in its *naïvetés*, but he was actually very malicious. He was vindictive to the point of madness; a backbiter, excelling even a Norman; and so able a trickster that trickery was his ruling passion. After a long law-suit against his Seigneur, whom he hated the more for having successfully resisted his attacks, he grew afraid of his resentment and to avoid it desired to change his benefice; but either he had changed his plan or he had simply deferred it to avenge himself on Colignac in my person, while he remained on the estate; for he tried to persuade us he had changed his mind although his frequent expeditions to Toulouse made us suspect the contrary. He circulated a thousand ridiculous tales of my sorceries, and the voice of this malicious man joined with those of simple and ignorant people caused my name to be held in execration; I was spoken of as no other than a new Cornelius Agrippa, and we learned that there had even been an information lodged against me at the suit of the *Curé*, who had been tutor to his children. We were informed of this by several persons friendly to Colignac and the Marquis; and although this ignorant whimsey of a whole countryside was a matter of surprise and merriment to us, I could not fail to

be apprehensive in secret when I considered more narrowly the unpleasant results which might follow upon this error. Doubtless this apprehension was inspired in me by my good genius, who enlightened my reason with all these perceptions to make me see the precipice towards which I was falling; and, not content with this tacit warning, showed itself still more decidedly in my favour.

One of the most disagreeable nights I had ever spent followed one of the most agreeable days we had had at Colignac. I got up at dawn and to throw off the apprehensions and clouds which still oppressed my mind, I went into the garden where the green leaves, the flowers and fruits, Art and Nature, enchanted the soul through the eyes. At the same moment I perceived the Marquis walking alone in a large path which cut the grass-plot in two. His step was slow and his face thoughtful. I was very surprised to see him up so early, contrary to his custom, and I increased my pace to ask him the reason. He replied that he had been disturbed by some disagreeable dreams, which had forced him to come out earlier than usual to get rid in the daylight of a trouble the night had caused him. I confessed to him that a similar difficulty had prevented me from sleeping, and I was about to relate it to him in detail, but just as I opened my mouth we perceived Colignac walking rapidly round the corner of the hedge at an angle to ours. He exclaimed as he perceived us:

"You see a man who has just escaped the most horrible visions, the sight of which might turn one's brain. I barely took the time to put on my doublet when I went down to tell you about them, but neither of you was in his room; and so I ran down to the garden, supposing you would be there."

The poor gentleman was indeed almost out of breath, and as soon as he had recovered it we begged him to get rid of a thing, which, however light in one sense, does not fail to weigh heavily in another.

"That is my purpose", he replied, "but first of all let us sit down."

A jasmine-covered summer-house suitably offered us its freshness and its seats; we retired to it and when everyone was comfortably seated Colignac went on as follows:

"You must know that after fitful dozing, during which I felt myself greatly troubled, I fell into another doze about dawn and dreamed that my dear

guest there was between the Marquis and myself, who held him closely embraced, when a great black monster, composed of nothing but heads, suddenly came to tear him from us. I even think the monster was going to cast him into a fire kindled near-by; for it held him suspended already over the flames. But a girl like that Muse we call Euterpē threw herself before the knees of a woman whom she besought to save him. This woman had the deportment and attributes used by our painters to represent Nature. She had scarcely had time to hear the request of her follower when she exclaimed in astonishment: 'Alas! He is one of my friends!' Immediately she put to her mouth a kind of trumpet and blew so hard through the tube under my dear guest's feet that she made him fly up into the sky and so saved him from the cruelties of the hundred-headed monster. I think I shouted after him for a long time and besought him not to go away without me, but an infinite number of little round angels calling themselves children of the dawn bore me up to the same country towards which he seemed to have flown, and showed me things I shall not repeat to you because I consider them too ridiculous."

We begged him not to refrain from telling us.

"I imagined", he continued, "that I was in the Sun and that the Sun was a world. I should not yet be disabused had it not been for the neighing of my horse, which woke me and made me see I was in bed."

When the Marquis saw that Colignac had finished he said: "And what was your dream, Monsieur Drycona?"^[54]

"Although mine was uncommon", I replied, "I consider it a mere empty tale. I am bilious and melancholy and so, ever since I have been in the world, my dreams have always been of caverns and fire. In my youth it seemed to me when I slept that I became very light and sped up to the clouds to avoid the rage of a band of assassins pursuing me; but after a very long and very vigorous effort and after flying over many walls I always met one at the foot of which I never failed to be stopped, worn out with the strain; or else I imagined I flew straight up and when I had swum with my arms for a long time in the sky I always found myself near land and, contrary to all reason, without my seeming to become either weary or heavy, my enemies had only to stretch out their hands to seize me by the foot and to draw me to them. Ever since I can remember all the dreams I

have had have been like these, except last night, when, after flying as usual for a long time and often escaping from my persecutors, I seemed at last to lose sight of them and to continue my journey with a body delivered from all weight under a clear, very bright sky until I reached a Palace composed of heat and light. No doubt I should have noticed many other things, but my excitement in flying had brought me so near the edge of the bed that I fell down beside it, with my naked belly on the floor and my eyes wide open. This, gentlemen, was the whole of my dream, which I consider to be simply the effect of the two qualities which predominate in my temperament; for although this dream differs a little from those which usually happen to me, in that I flew up to the sky without falling back, I attribute this alteration to the diffusion of my blood by the joy of our pleasures yesterday, and since this was more extensive than usual it penetrated the melancholy and by uplifting it took from it that weight which before made me fall. But, after all, this is a science in which little can be discovered."

"Faith!" said Cussan, "you are right; it is a *pot-pourri* of everything we think of when we are awake, a monstrous chimera, an assembly of confused mixtures, presented to us in disorder by our fancy which in sleep is no longer guided by reason, and yet by twisting them about we always think we shall squeeze out their true sense and derive a knowledge of the future from dreams as from oracles; but, on my faith, I see no resemblance between them, except that dreams like oracles cannot be understood. However, you may judge the value of all other dreams from mine, which is not in the least extraordinary. But, without torturing my brain with explanations of these dark enigmas, I will explain their mystic sense to you in two words: and they are, that Colignac is a place where we have bad dreams and in my opinion we should try to have better ones at Cussan."

"Let us go then", said the count, "since this mar-feast so wills it."

We agreed to go off that very day. I begged them to set out before me, because I wished to take some books with me since we had agreed to stay there a month. They assented and were in the saddle immediately after breakfast. Meanwhile, I made up a bundle of books which I imagined were not in the library at Cussan, placed them on a mule and set off about three o'clock, mounted on a good trotting horse. I advanced slowly in order to be near my little library and to enrich my soul at more leisure with the gifts of sight.

Hearken now to a surprising adventure. I had proceeded more than four leagues when I came to a piece of country I felt certain I had seen somewhere else. I urged my memory so much to tell me how it was I knew this landscape that the presence of the objects excited their images and I remembered that this was precisely the place I had seen in a dream the night before. This curious coincidence would have occupied my attention for a longer time had I not been roused by a strange apparition. A spectre—at least I took him for one—appeared before me in the middle of the road and seized my horse by the bridle. This phantom's height was enormous and from the little I could see of his eyes their expression was depressed and coarse. I cannot say whether he was ugly or handsome; a long gown made from the leaves of a book of plain-song covered him down to his nails and his face was hidden by a card on which was written the *In principio*.

The first words spoken by the phantom were as follows: "Satanus Diabolas", cried he in terror, "I conjure you by the great living God...."

At these words he hesitated. He continued to repeat his "great living God" and with a troubled visage sought for his pastor to give him the cue for the rest; but when he perceived that his pastor did not appear, no matter in what direction he turned his eyes, he was seized with such fearful trembling that half his teeth fell out with chattering and two-thirds of the music which covered him fell off like curl-papers. He then turned to me and said with a look neither rough nor gentle, from which I perceived his mind was unable to resolve whether it would be better to grow irritated or calmer:

"Ho!" said he, "Satanus Diabolas, By *Sangué*! I conjure you in the name of God and of Master Saint John not to oppose me, for if you stir hand or foot, Devil take me if I don't pull your guts out!"

I began to pull my horse's bridle away from him, but I was so suffocated with laughter that I had no strength left. Add to this that about fifty villagers emerged from behind a hedge grovelling on their knees and making themselves hoarse by singing *Kyrie Eleison*. When they came near, four of the strongest dipped their hands in a holy water stoop brought on purpose by the servant of the vicarage and seized me by the collar. I was scarcely arrested when Messire Jean^[55] appeared and devoutly taking out his stole bound me in it, whereupon a mob of women and children sewed me into a great cloth in spite of my resistance and I was soon so bound up that only

my head was visible. In this plight they carried me to Toulouse as if they had been taking me to my grave. At one time one of them would exclaim that there would have been a famine if I had not been captured, because when they met me I was assuredly about to cast a spell upon the corn; at another time I heard another complaining that the sheep-pox had begun in his fold on a Sunday, when I had tapped him on the shoulder as he came out from vespers. But above all I was tickled with a desire to laugh in spite of my disaster by the terrified scream of a young peasant girl at her betrothed, otherwise the Phantom, who had taken my horse (for you must know the lout was already astride it) and was spurring it as boldly as if it were his own.

"Wretch!" howled his beloved, "are you wall-eyed? Don't you see the magician's horse is blacker than coal—it is the Devil in person to carry you off to a Witches' Sabbath!"

Our peasant fell back in terror over the crupper and my horse took to the fields. They debated as to whether they should seize the mule and decided that they would. They undid the packet and the first volume they opened chanced to be the *Physics* of *Monsieur Descartes*. When they perceived all the circles by which this philosopher has traced the movement of each planet, they all with one voice bawled out that these were the magic circles I drew to call up Beelzebub. The man who held the book dropped it in terror and unfortunately as it fell it opened at the page on which the action of the magnet is explained; I say unfortunately, because at the place I speak of there is a drawing of this metallic stone where the little bodies which detach themselves from its mass to seize the iron are represented as arms. Hardly had one of these fellows perceived it when I heard him roar out that this was the toad they found in the trough of his cousin Fiacre's stable when his horses died. At this, those who had appeared the most excited sheathed their hands in their bosoms or regloved them in their pockets. Messire Jean, for his part, bawled at the top of his voice not to touch anything, that all these books were a sorcerer's and the mule a Satan. The terrified mob then allowed the mule to go off in peace. But I noticed master *Curé's* servant, Mathurine, driving him towards the parsonage stable to make sure the beast should not pollute the dead men's grass in the graveyard.

It was quite seven o'clock at night when we reached a small town, where to repose me they dragged me into a gaol; for the reader would not believe me

if I said they buried me in a hole. And yet that is so true that in one pirouette I visited the whole of it. In fine, anyone who saw me there would have taken me for a lighted candle under a chimney. Before my gaoler threw me into this cavern I said:

"If you give me this stony garment as a suit it is too large, but if as a grave it is too narrow. There the days can only be counted by nights and of my five senses only two are left me, smell and touch; one to let me smell the stinks of my prison and the other to make it palpable. Truly, I confess to you, I should think I were damned if I did not know that there are no innocent folk in hell."

At the word "innocent" the gaoler burst out laughing. "Faith!" said he, "you are one of our people, I see. I have never had anyone under lock and key who was not innocent."

After other compliments of this nature the fellow took the trouble to search me, I know not for what purpose, but from the diligence he displayed in it I conjecture it was for my own good. His researches were fruitless, because I had slipped my gold into my boots during the battle of *Diabolos*, but when after a very close examination he remained with hands as empty as before, I was as near dying of fear as he of despite.

"Ho! Body o' me!" cried he, foaming at the mouth, "I saw he was a warlock at first glance, he is penniless as the devil. Away, comrade, take good heed to your conscience."

He had scarcely finished these words when I heard the peal of a bunch of keys from which he was selecting those of my cell. His back was turned and so, for fear he should avenge himself on me for the failure of his search, I nimbly drew three *pistoles* from their hiding-place, and said to him:

"Master Gaoler, here is a *pistole*; I pray you bring me some food, for I have had nothing to eat for eleven hours."

He received it most graciously and vowed that my misfortune touched his heart. When I saw I had softened his bosom I went on:

"And here is another to compensate for the trouble I am ashamed of giving you."

He opened his ears, his heart and his hand; and, counting him out three instead of two, I added that by the third I begged him to send one of his men to keep me company, because the unhappy are bound to dread solitude. Ravished by my prodigality, he promised me everything, embraced my knees, declaimed against the Law, said he perceived now I had enemies, but that I should come out of it all with honour, that I should keep up my courage and, in short, he pledged himself I should be free before three days had passed. I thanked him most gravely for his courtesy and, after he had nearly strangled me with a thousand embraces, this dear friend locked and double-locked the door.

I remained alone and very melancholy, my body hunched up on a bundle of crumbled straw, which was not yet so small but that more than fifty rats were still gnawing it. The roof, the walls and the floor were composed of six tombstones so that, having death above, beneath and about me, I might be in no doubt of my interment. The cold slime of slugs and the sticky venom of toads dripped on to my face; the lice had teeth longer than their bodies. I saw myself tormented by the stone, which though external was none the less painful. In fine, I think I needed only a wife and a broken pot to play the part of Job.

Nevertheless I overcame there the duration of two very difficult hours when the noise of twelve dozen keys added to that of the bolts on my door drew me from the consideration of my miseries. Following upon this clatter a stalwart knave appeared in the light of a lamp. He set down an earthen pot between my legs.

"There, there!" said he, "comfort yourself, that's cabbage soup, and when it is ... in sooth 'tis our good dame's own soup; and faith! there's not a drop of fat lost, as they say."

So speaking he thrust his five fingers down to the bottom of the pot to invite me to do likewise. I laboured after his example, for fear of discontenting him, and with a joyful eye—

"*Morguiene!*" cried he, "you are a lad of mettle! They say you have detractors, *jerniguay!* they are traitors; ay, *testiguay!* they are traitors. Hey! Let them come and see. Well, well, so it is, dancers always move."

This rusticity filled my throat twice or thrice with laughter, but I was fortunate enough to choke it back. I saw that Fortune seemed to offer me a chance of freedom through this clodhopper and therefore it seemed to me very necessary to cultivate his favour; for, as to escaping by other means—the architect who built my prison made several entrances but forgot to make a way out. These divers considerations led me to sound him as follows:

"My dear friend, you are poor, are you not?"

"Alas! sir", the clown replied, "if you came from the fortune-teller's you could not hit the mark more surely."

"Here, then", I went on, "take this *pistole*."

I found his hand so trembled, when I put the *pistole* in it, that he could scarce shut it. This beginning seemed to me of evil omen, but I soon discovered from the fervour of his thanks that he was only trembling with joy, and therefore I went on:

"If you were the man to share in the accomplishment of a vow I have made, twenty *pistoles* (as well as your soul's salvation) would be as much yours as your hat; for you must know that about a quarter of an hour since, just before you arrived, an angel appeared to me and promised to make known the justice of my cause, provided that I go to-morrow to have Mass said for Our Lady of this town at the high altar. I tried to excuse myself because I am too narrowly warded, but the angel answered that there would come to me a man, sent by the gaoler to keep me company, and I had only to bid this man in the angel's name convey me to church and bring me back to prison; I am to warn him to be secret and to obey without question on pain of dying within the year; and if he doubts my word I am to tell him for a token that he is a Member of the Scapulary." The reader must be informed that I had noticed a scapulary through the opening of his shirt and this at once suggested to me the whole fabric of the apparition.

"Ay, ay, master", said he, "I'll do what the angel bids us, but it must be nine o'clock, because our gaffer will be at Toulouse then for the betrothal of his son to the daughter of the hangman. Marry, the hangman has a name as well as a louse; they say her father will give her crowns enough for a king's ransom for her wedding. She's rich and beautiful, but such bits never fall to a poor man. Alas, good master, you must know...."

I failed not to cut him short at this point; for by this induction I foresaw a long series of cock-and-bull stories. Well, when we had worked out our plot, the knave took leave of me. Next morning he was there to disinter me precisely at the hour promised. I left my clothes in the prison and wrapped myself in rags; we had agreed upon this the night before as a means of disguise. As soon as we were in the air I did not forget to count him out his twenty *pistoles*. He looked at them hard, with his eyes almost starting.

"They are gold and unclipped", said I, "on my word."

"Hey, sir", he replied, "'tisn't of that I'm thinking, but I'm thinking big Macé's house is for sale, with the meadow and the vineyard. I can get it for two hundred *francs*, but it will take a week to knock up the bargain and I beseech you, good master, if it is your will and pleasure, not to let your *pistoles* change into oak leaves until big Macé holds them well and truly counted in his chest."

The knave's rusticity made me laugh. However, we continued on our way to church and soon arrived there. Some time afterwards High Mass began, but as soon as I saw my gaoler rise in his turn for the offertory, I traversed the nave in three steps and in as many more nimbly lost myself in an unfrequented alley. Out of the many thoughts which then agitated my mind I chose that of reaching Toulouse, from which this town was only half a league distant, with the purpose of taking post. I soon reached the suburbs; but I was so ashamed to see that everyone was looking at me that I was put out of countenance. Their astonishment was caused by my appearance; for I was but a novice in beggary and my rags were arranged so fantastically, my gait was so unsuitable to my clothes, that I seemed rather a masquer than a beggar, and in addition I passed people quickly, with my eyes on the ground, asking no alms. Finally I realised that to be the object of so general a curiosity exposed me to dangerous consequences and, overcoming my repugnance, I held out my hand as soon as I perceived someone looking at me. I even besought the charity of those who did not look at me; but observe how often by adding too many precautions to a plan in which Fortune will have her share we ruin it by irritating her vanity. I make this reflection on my adventure here; for seeing a man dressed as a small shopkeeper with his back turned to me, I said to him as I plucked his sleeve:

"Sir, if compassion can touch...."

I had not begun the word which was to follow when the man turned his head. Gods! How he changed! And O ye Gods, how I changed! The man was my gaoler. We were both struck with amazement to see each other where we were. I was the sole object of his eyes, he filled the whole of my sight. Finally our own interests, although so different, drew us both from the surprise into which we were plunged.

"Ah! Wretch that I am", cried the gaoler, "shall I be caught thus?"

This ambiguous word "caught" immediately suggested to me the following stratagem:

"Help, gentlemen, help in the name of the Law!" cried I as loud as I could screech. "This thief has stolen the Countess of Mousseaux's jewels—I have been seeking him a year. Gentlemen", I continued warmly, "a hundred *pistoles* to the man who arrests him!"

I had scarcely uttered these words ere a party of the mob fell upon the poor amazed devil. The astonishment into which he was cast by my impudence, joined with his supposition that I could only have escaped from my cell by penetrating the unbroken wall like a hand of glory, so staggered him that for a time he was beyond himself. At last he came to himself and the first words he used to disabuse the crowd were to take care not to mistake he was a man of honour. He was undoubtedly about to reveal the mystery, but a dozen fruit-women, lackeys and chairmen, desirous to serve me for my money, closed his mouth with their punches. And as they supposed their reward would be measured out according to the extent they outraged this poor dupe, each pressed in to earn it with foot or hand.

"Hear the man of honour!" howled the mob, "yet he could not prevent himself from saying he was caught, as soon as he saw the gentleman."

The cream of the comedy was that my gaoler was in his best clothes, he was ashamed to admit he was the Hangman's assistant and was afraid he would be worse beaten if he admitted it. For my part I took to my heels during the hottest of the scuffle. I entrusted my safety to my legs and they would soon have brought me off happily but, unluckily, the looks which everybody once more turned on me, threw me afresh into my former fears. If the sight of a hundred rags, which danced around me like a maypole-dance of the rabble, caused some gaper to stare at me, straightway I apprehended that he

read upon my forehead that I was a prisoner at large. If a saunterer put out his hand from beneath his cloak, I imagined a catchpole stretching out his hand to arrest me. If I noticed another striding along without lifting his eyes upon me I was convinced he was pretending not to see me in order to grasp me from the rear. If I saw a tradesman enter his shop I said: "He is taking down his halberd." If I passed through a district more crowded than usual I thought, "So many people have not met here without a purpose." If another part was deserted, "They are watching for me here." Was there some impediment to my flight, "They have barricaded the streets to surround me." At last my fear debauched my reason and I imagined every man was an archer, every word "arrest" and every noise the unendurable creaking of the bolts in my late prison.

Hag-ridden by this panic terror I resolved to beg once more, in order to pass through the remainder of the town to the posting station without suspicion, but as I feared my voice might be recognized, I added to the exercise of begging the device of counterfeiting dumbness. I therefore went up to those who, as I perceived, were looking at me; then I pointed a finger above my chin, then above my mouth and gaped it wide with an inarticulate cry to make it understood by my grimace that a poor mute was asking alms. Sometimes I was charitably given an eleemosynary shrug; sometimes I felt some oddment thrust into my hand; and sometimes I heard women say that it might well be that I had been martyred in this way in Turkey. In short I learned that begging is a large book which teaches us the manners of people far more cheaply than all those great voyages of Columbus and Magellan.

This device nevertheless failed to weary the obstinacy of my fate or to win over its evil disposition; yet what other course could I adopt? For, in crossing a town like Toulouse, where my engraving had made me familiar even to the fish-wives, dressed as I was in rags as motley as Harlequin's, was it not probable that I should be observed and immediately recognized? And that the counter-spell to this danger was to play the beggar, whose part is played by all manner of faces? And even if this ruse were not devised with all the necessary caution, I still think that amid so many unhappy circumstances I showed strong judgment by not losing my head entirely.

I continued thus on my way when on a sudden I found myself obliged to return on my steps; for my venerable gaoler, with some dozen archers of his acquaintance, who had delivered him from the hands of the rabble, were up

in arms and patrolling the whole town in search of me, and unhappily crossed my path. As soon as they saw me with their lynx eyes with one accord they rushed upon me full speed and I fled away at the top of mine. I was so sharply pursued that every moment my liberty felt at my neck the breath of the tyrants who would oppress it; but it seemed the air they puffed out as they ran behind me blew me before them. At last Heaven or fear gave me a space of four or five turnings in front of them. My pursuers lost track and scent of me and I lost the sight and turmoil of this troublesome chase. Certainly those who have not experienced similar agonies at first hand will hardly understand with what joy I trembled when I found I had escaped. But since my safety demanded all my attention, I resolved to employ most carefully the time which would elapse before they caught up with me. I daubed my face, rubbed my hair with dust, put off my doublet, loosened my breeches, threw my hat in a ventilator; then I spread out my handkerchief on the pavement with a little stone at each corner, like those who are sick of the plague, lay beside it with my belly on the ground and began to groan very grievously in a piteous tone. I had scarcely done this when I heard the noise of this hoarse-throated populace long before the sound of their feet; but I had enough self-control to remain in the same position in the hope of not being recognized; in this I was not deceived, for they all took me to be plague-smitten and passed me very nimbly, holding their noses and most of them throwing a farthing into my handkerchief.

The storm over, I went down an alley, put on my clothes again and abandoned myself to Fortune once more, but I had run so hard she was weary of following me. I suppose this was the case: the glorious Goddess was not accustomed to walk so quickly, and as I went through squares and crossroads, through and across streets, to conceal my way the better, she let me fall blindly into the hands of the archers who were pursuing me. At meeting me they uttered so furious a yell that I was deafened. They seemed to think they had not enough arms to arrest me, so they used their teeth and even then were not sure they had me; one dragged me along by the hair, another by the collar, while the more temperate went through my pockets. This search was more successful than that in the prison; they found the rest of my gold.

While these charitable physicians were occupied in curing the dropsy of my purse, a great clamour arose; the whole square echoed with the words "Kill,

kill!" and at the same time I saw the glitter of swords. The gentlemen who were haling me along exclaimed that these were the Grand Provost's archers who wanted to rob them of their prey. "But", said they to me, dragging me harder than ever, "beware of falling into their hands, you will be condemned in twenty-four hours and the King himself cannot save you." At last, however, they grew apprehensive as the scuffle involved them and they abandoned me so completely that I was standing alone in the middle of the street while the aggressors dispatched everyone they met.

I leave you to imagine whether I took to my heels, I who had reason to fear both parties equally. In a little time I drew away from the hubbub, but as I was asking the way to the posting station, a torrent of people running from the brawl dashed into my street. I was unable to resist the crowd, so I went with it, and growing angry at so much running I reached at length a small very dark door into which I rushed pell-mell with other fugitives. We bolted it behind us and when everyone had recovered breath one of the group said:

"Comrades, if you will take my advice, we shall go through the two gates and hold firm in the prison-yard."

These terrible words hit my ears with so astounding a pain that I thought I should fall dead on the spot. Alas! I perceived immediately, but too late, that instead of escaping to a refuge as I had thought, I had merely cast myself into prison, so impossible is it for any man to escape the influence of his star. I looked at this man more attentively and I saw he was one of the archers who had so long pursued me. A cold sweat rose to my forehead and I became pale and ready to swoon. Those who saw me so ill were moved by compassion and called for water; everyone drew near to help me, unhappily that accursed archer was one of the first and he no sooner cast his eyes upon me than he recognised me. He made a sign to his companions and at the same time greeted me with a "I take you prisoner in the King's name." They had not far to go to my cell.

I remained in the lower prison until evening, when each of the warders, one after the other, by means of an exact and critical examination of all the parts of my face drew my picture on the canvas of his memory.^[56]

As seven o'clock struck, the noise of a bunch of keys gave the signal for bed. I was asked if I wished to be shown into the one-pistole room; I replied with a nod. "The money then!" replied my guide. I knew I was in a place

where I should have to swallow many more insults. I therefore prayed him, if his courtesy could not bring him to trust me until the morning, to ask the gaoler from me to return the money which had been taken from me.

"Ho! By my faith", responded the rascal, "our master has a stout heart, he never returns anything. Do you think your lovely nose.... Hey, off with you, into the black dungeons!"

With these words he showed me the way with a savage blow from his bunch of keys, whose weight overthrew me and tumbled me from top to bottom of a dark flight of stairs down to the foot of a door which stopped me; I should not have known it was one without the sparks from the shock with which I struck it, for I had lost my eyes, they remained at the top of the stairs in the shape of a candle held twenty-four steps above me by my hangman of a warder. This man came down gradually, opened some thirty large locks, undid as many bolts, pushed the door a little and with a blow of his knee hurled me into this hole, whose horrors I had not time to see, he closed the door so quickly. I was standing in mud up to the knees. If I tried to reach the side I sank up to the waist. The awful croaking of frogs as they squatted in the mud made me long to be deaf; I felt lizards wandering along my thighs and snakes twining about my neck; I perceived one by the sombre glow of its glinting eye-balls darting a three-pronged tongue from its venom-blackened throat, while its brusque movement made it seem like a thunderbolt with the look of the eyes for the flash.

I am completely unable to express the remainder; it surpasses all belief and I dare not attempt to recollect it, so much do I fear that my present certainty of having escaped this prison may turn out to be a dream from which I shall awake. The hand on the dial of the great tower pointed to ten before anyone knocked at my tomb, but about that time when the anguish of a bitter grief began to grip my heart and to disturb that equilibrium which makes life, I heard a voice bidding me grasp a rod that was held out to me. After groping for some time in obscurity to find it I touched the end, grasped it with emotion, and my gaoler, pulling it towards him, fished me out of the bog. I suspected my affairs had taken a turn for the better, because he offered me profound civilities, only spoke to me with his head uncovered and told me that five or six people of quality were waiting in the courtyard to see me. This savage brute who had shut me in the dungeon I have described had the impudence to accost me. Having kissed my hands, with one knee on the

ground, he plucked out with one paw a quantity of slugs which had stuck in my hair and with the other he pulled off a great heap of leeches which masked my face. After this exquisite courtesy he said:

"You will at least remember, good master, the care and trouble taken of you by fat Nicholas. Pardi, even if it had been for the King, it isn't to be grudged you."

Enraged by the rogue's effrontery, I made a sign that I would remember. By a thousand terrifying windings I reached the light at last and then the courtyard, where as soon as I entered I was grasped by two men I could not recognize, because they threw themselves on me at once and each kept his face pressed against mine. For some time I did not know who they were, but when their transports of friendship were a little abated I recognised my dear Colignac and the brave Marquis. Colignac had his arm in a sling and Cussan was the first to emerge from his ecstasy.

"Alas!" said he, "we should never have suspected such a disaster, had it not been for your horse and the mule which arrived last night at the gates of my house; their breast-pieces, their saddle, girths and their cruppers were all broken, which made us anticipate something of your misfortune. We got to horse at once and had ridden but two or three leagues towards Colignac, when the whole countryside, alarmed by the accident, described to us what had happened. We galloped off immediately to the town where you were imprisoned, but learning there that you had escaped and hearing a rumour that you had gone in the direction of Toulouse, we came on at full speed with the servants we had with us. The first person whom we asked for news of you said you had been recaptured. We turned our horses towards this prison, but other people assured us you had vanished from the hands of the police. And as we pushed on we heard the bourgeois relating to each other the story that you had become invisible. At length by continually making inquiries we learned that after you had been taken, lost and retaken I know not how many times, you were being carried to prison in the Large Tower. We intercepted your archers and with a good fortune more apparent than real we met them, attacked them, fought them and put them to flight, but we failed to learn even from the wounded we had captured what had become of you, until this morning, when we were informed that you had blindly come to prison of your own accord for safety. Colignac is wounded in several places, but very slightly. For the rest, we have arranged for you to be lodged

in the best room here. Since you like fresh air we have furnished a little room for you alone at the top of the Large Tower, where the terrace will serve you as a balcony; your eyes at least will be at liberty, in spite of the body which confines them."

"Ah! My dear Drycona", cried the Count, taking his turn to speak, "we were very unlucky not to have taken you with us when we left Colignac. Through a blind depression whose cause I did not know, my heart warned me of something terrible; but no matter, I have friends, you are innocent and in any case I know how men die with glory. One thing alone troubles me. That rascal whom I designed to feel the first blows of my vengeance (you may easily divine I am speaking of my *Curé*) is no longer in a condition to feel them; the wretch has given up the ghost. This is how he died. He and his servant were running to drive your horse into his stable when the animal, with a fidelity increased perhaps by the secret enlightenment of instinct, began to plunge so successfully that in three kicks with which that brute's head came in contact he rendered his benefice vacant. No doubt you fail to understand the reasons for the madman's hatred; I will tell you them. Know then, to begin with, that this holy man, Norman by race and a pettifogger by trade, cast his eyes upon the curacy of Colignac, and in spite of all my efforts to retain the possessor in his just rights, the scoundrel wheedled the judges so well that in spite of everything he became our parson.

"At the end of a year he sued me also, because he claimed that I should pay tithes. It was in vain to show him that from time immemorial my land was exempt, he continued his suit and lost it, but in the course of the proceedings he brought up so many other incidents that a swarm of more than twenty law-suits grew out of the first and are now hung up, thanks to your horse, whose hoof was harder than M. Jean's head. That is all I can conjecture of our parson's giddiness. But observe with what foresight he governed his madness. I have just been informed that when he took into his head this unhappy design of getting you into prison, he secretly exchanged the curacy of Colignac for another in his own district, whither he meant to retire as soon as you were taken. His servant even said that when he saw your horse near his stable he murmured to himself that it would help to take him somewhere he was not expected to be."

After this, Colignac warned me to be on my guard against the visits and offers which a very powerful personage (whom he named) might make me,

and told me that it was through this person's influence Messire Jean had won the case about his benefice, and that this person of quality had acted on his behalf to repay the services rendered by the good priest, when he was an usher, to his son at school.

"And so", Colignac went on, "since it is very difficult to go to law without bitterness and without there remaining in the mind a certain enmity which never wholly disappears, although we have been reconciled he is always secretly looking for opportunities to thwart me. But, no matter, I have more relatives in the law than he, and I have plenty of friends, and at the worst we can secure the intervention of the King."

After Colignac had finished, they both attempted to console me, but it was by means of so tender a grief that my own was increased. At this moment the gaoler returned to tell us that the room was ready.

"Let us go and look at it", said Cussan. He started off and we followed him. I found it well fitted up.

"There is nothing else I want", said I, "except books."

Colignac promised to send me next day all that I marked on a list. When we had looked about and had recognised from the height of the Tower, from the flat-bottomed moat which surrounded it and from the whole arrangement of my room that it was an enterprise beyond human power to rescue me, my two friends gazed upon each other, then turned their eyes upon me and began to weep. But suddenly, as if our grief had moved Heaven, a rapid joy took possession of my soul; joy brought hope, hope brought secret insight which dazzled my reason as with a powerful emotion against my will which seemed ridiculous even to me.

"Go", said I, "go and wait for me at Colignac, I shall be there in three days; and send me all the mathematical instruments I usually work with; moreover, you will find in a large box a number of crystal glasses cut in different ways, do not forget them; but I had better specify in writing the things I need."

They took the note I wrote for them without being able to discover my intention. After which I sent them away. When they had gone I could do nothing but reflect on how to carry out the things I had determined upon and I was still reflecting in the morning, when I was presented in their name

with everything I had marked on the list. One of Colignac's footmen told me that his master had not been seen since the day before and that nobody knew what had become of him. This did not distress me, for it occurred to me at once that he might have gone to Court to solicit my release; and therefore without troubling myself I took my work in hand. For eight days I hammered, I planed, I glued and at last constructed the machine I am about to describe to you. It was a large very light box which shut very exactly. It was about six feet high and about three wide in each direction. This box had holes in the bottom, and over the roof, which was also pierced, I placed a crystal vessel with similar holes made globe shape but very large, whose neck terminated exactly at and fitted in the opening I had made in the top. The vessel was expressly made with several angles, in the shape of an icosahedron, so that as each facet was convex and concave my globe produced the effect of a burning mirror. Neither the gaoler nor the warders ever came into the room without finding me occupied with this work; but they were not surprised, on account of all the pleasant mechanical pieces they saw in the room, of which I called myself the inventor. Among other things there were a wind-clock, an artificial eye to see by night and a sphere where the stars follow the movement they have in the sky. All this convinced them that the machine I was working at was a similar curiosity and the money with which Colignac had greased their palm made them go gently in many difficult occasions.

It was nine o'clock in the morning. My gaoler had gone down and the sky was overcast when I exposed this machine on the summit of the Tower, that is to say in the most open portion of my terrace; it closed so exactly that not a single grain of air could slip in except through the two openings. I had fitted inside a small, very light plank which served me as a seat. All being arranged in this way I shut myself up inside and remained there nearly an hour, waiting until it pleased Fortune to command me. When the Sun emerged from the clouds and began to shine on my machine the transparent icosahedron received the treasures of the sun through its facets and transmitted the light through the globe into my cell; and since this splendour was weakened, because the rays could not reach me without being several times broken, this strength of tempered light converted my shrine into a little sky of purple enamelled with gold.

The Flight to the Sun.

I was admiring in an ecstasy the beauty of so mingled a colouring when suddenly I felt my entrails stirred in the same way a man feels them stir when he is lifted up by a pulley. I was about to open the door to find out the cause of this sensation, but, as I was stretching out my hand, I looked through the hole in the floor of my box and saw my Tower already far below me; and my little castle in the air thrusting upwards against my feet showed me in a twinkling Toulouse disappearing into the earth. This prodigy surprised me, not because of the suddenness of the flight, but because of the terrible emotion of the human reason at the success of a design which had appalled me even in the imagination. The rest did not surprise me, because I had foreseen that the void which would occur in the icosahedron through the sun's rays uniting by way of the concave glasses would attract a furious abundance of air to fill it, which would lift up my box, and in proportion as I rose up the horrible wind which rushed through the hole could not reach the roof except by passing furiously through the machine and thereby lifting it up. Although my plan had been thought out with great care, I was wrong in one particular, through my not having placed sufficient faith in the power of my mirrors. I had placed around the box a little sail easily moved by a string, which I held in my hand and which passed through the glass globe; I had supposed that when I was in the air I could make use of as much wind as was needed to carry me to Colignac; but in a twinkling the sun, beating perpendicularly and obliquely upon the burning mirrors of the icosahedron, bore me up so high that I lost sight of Toulouse. This caused me drop the string and very soon after I saw through one of the windows I had made in the four sides of the machine my little sail torn off and flying away in the grip of a whirlwind.

I remember that in less than an hour I found myself above the middle region. I perceived this by noticing that it rained and hailed beneath me. I shall be asked perhaps how it happened that there was wind—without which my box could not rise—in a part of the sky which is free from meteors; but if you will hearken to me, I will satisfy this objection. I have told you that the sun beat vigorously upon my concave mirrors, and uniting

its rays in the middle of the globe drove out with ardour through the upper vent the air inside; the globe became a vacuum and, since Nature abhors a vacuum, she made it draw up air through the lower opening to fill itself. If it lost a great deal it gained as much; and in this way we should not be surprised that in a space above the middle region of the winds I should continue to rise, because the ether became wind through the furious speed with which it rushed through to prevent a vacuum and consequently was bound to force up my machine continually.

I was scarcely troubled with hunger at all, except when I traversed this middle region; for certainly the coldness of the climate made me see it at a distance. I say "at a distance," because I drank a few drops from a bottle of essence I always carried with me and this forbade it to approach. During the remainder of my journey I was not in the least attacked by it; on the contrary, the nearer I came to this flaming world the stronger I felt. I found my face was a little hot and gayer than usual; my hands appeared of an agreeable vermilion colour and an unsuspected gladness flowing with my blood took me completely out of myself.

I remember that as I reflected on this adventure I reasoned once in this way: "Hunger no doubt cannot attack me, because this pain is simply Nature's instinct, warning animals to repair with food the losses of their substance; and to-day the pure, continuous and close irradiation of the sun causes me to take in more radical heat than I lose and therefore Nature no longer gives me a desire which would be useless." I objected to these reasons that, since the composition which makes life consists not only in natural heat, but in radical moisture, to which this fire must be attached as flame to the oil of a lamp, the rays alone of that brasier of life could not make the soul unless they met with some unctuous matter to fix them. But I vanquished this difficulty immediately, after I had taken notice that in our bodies the radical moisture and the natural heat are the same thing; for, that which is called moisture either in animals or in the Sun—that great soul of the world—is merely a flow of sparks more continuous on account of their mobility; and that which is called heat is a mist of atoms of fire, which appear less liberated because of their interruption; but even if the radical moisture and the radical heat were two distinct things, it is certain that the moisture would not be necessary in order to live so near the Sun; for, since this moisture serves the living only to grasp the heat, which would evaporate too

quickly and would not feed them soon enough, I could not lack it in a region where more of these little bodies of flame which made life were united to my being than were detached from it.

Another thing may cause astonishment, and that is why as I approached this burning globe I was not consumed, since I had almost reached the full activity of its sphere. This is the reason: properly speaking it is not the fire itself which burns, but a grosser matter which the fire thrusts hither and thither by the vehemence of its mobile nature; and that powder of sparkles which I call fire, moving of itself, finds all this action possible from the roundness of its atoms; for they caress, heat or burn according to the shape of the bodies they draw with them. Thus, straw does not send out so hot a flame as wood; wood burns with less violence than iron, and the reason for this is that the fire of iron, wood and straw, although it is the same fire, nevertheless acts differently, according to the diversity of the bodies it moves; that is why in straw the fire (that almost spiritual dust) is less corrosive, because it is hindered by a soft body only; in wood, whose substance is more compact, it enters more harshly; and in iron, whose mass is almost entirely solid and bound together with angular parts, it penetrates and consumes what is cast upon it in a flash. All these observations are so familiar that no one will be surprised that I approached the sun without being burned, because that which burns is not fire, but the matter to which it is attached, and because the Sun's fire cannot be mingled with any matter. Do we not experience ourselves that joy, which is a fire, because it only moves an aery blood, whose very loose particles slide gently against the membranes of our flesh, caresses us and creates I know not what blind pleasure, and that this pleasure or rather this first step of pain, not going so far as to menace the animal with death, but making him feel his good constitution by a natural instinct, causes a movement in our minds which we call joy? Fever, which has entirely contrary effects, is a fire just as much as joy, but it is a fire enveloped in a body whose grains are horny, such as black bile or melancholy, and this fire darting its hooked points everywhere, its mobile nature carries it, pierces, cuts, flays and produces by this violent agitation what is called the burning of fever. But this chain of proofs is quite useless; the commonest experiments are sufficient to convince the most obstinate. I have no time to lose, I must think of myself; like Phaethon, I am in the midst of a career, where I cannot turn back, and in which if I make one false step all Nature together cannot help me.

I perceived very distinctly, as I had formerly suspected in travelling to the Moon, that it is indeed the Earth which turns about the Sun from East to West, and not the Sun which turns about the Earth; for I saw in succession France, the foot of the boot of Italy, then the Mediterranean, then Greece, then the Bosphorus, the Euxine Sea, Persia, the Indies, China and finally Japan pass across the hole of my box, and some hours after my elevation the whole South Sea passed by and left in its place the Continent of America. I clearly distinguished all these revolutions and I even remember that a long time afterwards I again saw Europe moving up once more on the scene, but I could not distinguish the different States, because my elevation was now too high. On my way I passed, sometimes on the left, sometimes on the right, several worlds like ours and I felt myself deflected whenever I reached the spheres of their activity. However, the rapid vigour of my upward flight overcame these attractions.

I passed near the Moon, which at that time was between the Sun and the Earth, and I left Venus on the right hand. As touching this star, the old Astronomy has so preached that the planets are spheres which turn around the Earth that modern Astronomy dare not doubt it. And yet I noticed that as long as Venus appeared on this side of the Sun, around which she turns, I saw her as a crescent; but as she continued her orbit I noticed that in proportion as she passed behind the Sun the horns drew together and her black belly became golden. This alternation of light and darkness showed very plainly that the planets, like the Moon and the Earth, are globes without light of their own and are only capable of reflecting what they borrow. Moreover, as I continued to rise, I made the same observation in the case of Mercury. I also noticed that all these worlds have other little worlds moving about them. Musing afterwards on the causes of the construction of this great Universe I have supposed that at the disentangling of chaos, after God had created matter, like bodies were joined to like bodies, through that unknown principle of love, whereby we see that everything seeks its like. Particles formed in a certain way joined together and that made the air; others, whose shape perhaps gave them a circular movement, gathered together and composed the globes we call planets, which, accumulated in the round shape we see, because of that inclination to spin on their poles to which their shape forces them; and also they cause those lesser orbs, which are met with in the sphere of their activity, to turn likewise, since these evaporate from their mass and move in their flight on a similar course. That

is why Mercury, Venus, the Earth, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn have been forced to spin and roll all together around the Sun. It is quite possible to imagine that these globes may formerly have been Suns, since, in spite of its present extinction, the Earth still retains sufficient heat to cause the Moon to turn about through the circular movement of the bodies which are detached from its mass, and Jupiter has enough to turn four. But in the course of time, owing to the continual emission of the little bodies which make heat and light, these Suns have lost so much of their heat and light that they remain a cold, dark and almost impotent residuum. We even discover that the spots in the Sun, which were not perceived by the Ancients, increase from day to day. How do we know that this is not a crust forming on its outer surface, that its mass grows fainter as the light abandons it and that, when all these mobile bodies abandon it, it will not become an opaque globe like the Earth?^[57] There are very distant centuries beyond which there appears no vestige of the human race; perhaps the Earth was formerly a Sun peopled with animals fitted for the climate, which had produced them, and perhaps these animals were the demons whereof Antiquity relates so many examples. Why not? Might it not be that these animals still inhabited the Earth for a time after its extinction and that the change in their globe did not destroy their whole race at once? In fact, their life lasted until the time of Augustus, according to Plutarch. It even appears that the sacred and prophetic Testament of our first Patriarchs meant to lead us by the hand to this truth; for, before man is spoken of, we read of the revolt of the Angels. This sequence of time observed by the Scriptures is perhaps a half-proof that Angels inhabited the Earth before us and that these proud beings, who had dwelt in our World since it was a Sun, disdaining to continue there perhaps when it was extinguished and knowing that God had placed His throne in the Sun, dared to undertake to occupy it? But God, desirous of punishing their insolence, drove them out of the Earth and to occupy their vacant place created man less perfect but therefore less proud.

At the end of about four months' travelling, at least as nearly as can be calculated, when there is no night to distinguish one day from another, I reached one of those little Worlds which fly around the Sun, called by Mathematicians "Spots". There my mirrors did not collect so much heat on account of the intervening clouds; consequently the air did not drive my cabin with so much vigour and there was only sufficient wind to break my

fall and set me down on the point of a very high mountain, where I gently landed.

I leave you to imagine the joy I felt at seeing my feet on a solid floor after having played the part of a bird so long. Words indeed are too weak to express the happiness with which I trembled when at last I perceived my head crowned with the light of the Heavens. Yet this ecstasy did not so transport me but that I remembered as I left my box to cover its top with my shirt before going away from it, because if the air became serene, as was very probable, I apprehended the Sun would relight my mirrors and I should lose my house.

By way of gorges, which traces of water showed had been hollowed out by its action, I reached the plain, where I could scarcely walk on account of the thickness of the soil with which the earth was fat; nevertheless, after walking for some time I reached a quagmire, where I met a little man entirely naked sitting on a stone to repose himself. I do not remember if I spoke the first or if he questioned me; but it is fresh in my memory, as if I had just heard him, that he discoursed to me for three long hours in a language which I know I had never heard before, which bore no relation to any in this world, yet which I understood more quickly and more intelligibly than my nurse's. He explained to me, when I inquired about so marvellous a thing, that in the sciences there is one Truth, outside which one is always distant from what is easy; that the more distant an idiom is from this truth the further it is below one's conception and the less easy it is to understand.

"In the same way", he continued, "this Truth is never met with in music but that the uplifted soul immediately moves blindly towards it. We do not see it, but we feel that Nature sees it; and without being able to understand how it is we are absorbed, it does not fail to delight us and yet we cannot tell where it is. It is just the same with languages; whoever hits upon this Truth of letters, words and sequence in expressing himself can never fall below his conception; his speech is always equal to his thought; and it is because you do not possess this perfect idiom that you hesitate, and do not know what order or what words can express what you imagine."

I told him that the first man in our world had indubitably made use of this mother-tongue, because every name he had imposed upon every thing

declared its essence. He interrupted me and continued:

"It is not merely needed to express all the mind conceives, but without it one cannot be understood by all. Since this idiom is the instinct or the voice of Nature, it ought to be intelligible to everything which lives under Nature's jurisdiction; and so if you understand it you can communicate and speak all your thoughts to beasts and the beasts all their thoughts to you, because it is the very language of Nature by which she makes herself understood by all animals. Therefore you should not be surprised by the ease with which you understand the meaning of a language that never before sounded in your hearing. When I speak, your soul meets in every one of my words that Truth it gropes for; and although your soul's reason does not understand it, the soul has in it Nature which cannot fail to understand this language."

"Ah! without doubt", I cried, "it was by means of this energetic idiom that our first Father of old talked with the animals and was understood by them; domination over all kinds had been given him and they obeyed him, because he made them obey in a language which was known to them; and this mother-tongue, being now lost, they no longer come to us when we call them as formerly, because they no longer understand us."

The little man did not appear as if he were going to reply to me but, taking up the thread of his discourse, he was about to continue when I interrupted him once more. I asked him in what world we were breathing, if it were thickly inhabited and by what sort of government order was maintained.

"I will reveal to you", he replied, "secrets which are not known in your climate. Look carefully at the ground on which we walk; a little while ago it was a confused and disordered mass, a chaos of intricate matter, a black and slimy dross thrown off by the Sun. After it had mingled, pressed and made compact these numerous clouds of atoms by the vigour of the rays still cast forth; after, I say, a long and powerful maturation had separated in this ball the most contrary bodies and united the most similar, this mass was so provoked by heat and sweated so much that it caused a deluge, which covered it more than forty days; for that space of time was fully needed by so much water to flow into the lowest and most sloping parts of our globe.

"From these united torrents of water was formed the sea, whose salt still proves that it must be a mass of sweat, since all sweat is salt. Following

upon the retreat of the waters there remained on this earth a fat and fertile mud, and when the Sun shone upon it it rose like a blister, which cannot cast out its germ on account of the cold. It then received another maturation and this maturation rectified and perfected it by a more exact mixture and thereby the germ, which was only able hitherto to vegetate, was rendered capable of sentience. But the waters, which had settled so long on the mud, had chilled it too much and the pimple did not burst; and so the Sun heated it up once more. After the third digestion this womb was so heated that the cold no longer made an obstacle to its delivery: it opened and brought forth a man who has retained in his liver (which is the seat of the vegetative soul and the place of first maturation) the power of multiplying; in his heart (which is the seat of activity and the place of the second maturation) vital power: and in the brain (which is the seat of the intellect and the place of the third maturation) the power of reasoning. Otherwise, why should we be longer in the belly of our mothers than all other animals, if it were not that our embryo must receive three distinct maturations to form the three distinct faculties of our soul, and beasts only two, to form their two powers? I know that the horse is only completed by ten, twelve or fourteen months in the belly of a mare; but since its constitution is so contrary to that which makes us men, since it is never born except in those months (notice!) which are entirely hostile to our birth, when we remain in the womb beyond the normal time, it is not surprising that Nature needs a longer time for the delivery of a mare than of a woman.^[58]

"Yes, but, someone will say, the horse remains longer in its mother's belly than we do and consequently it receives either more perfect or more numerous maturations!

"I reply that it does not follow; for without relying on the observations on the energy of numbers made by so many learned men proving that, since all matter is in movement, certain beings are completed in a certain revolution of days and destroyed in another, and without strengthening myself with the proofs, whereby they deduce (after explaining the cause of all these movements) that the number nine is the most perfect; I shall content myself by replying that the germ of man is hotter and so the Sun fashions and completes more organs in him in nine months than it sketches out in a year in that of a colt. And it cannot be doubted that a horse is much colder than a

man, since this animal only dies of a swollen spleen or other diseases which proceed from melancholy.

"Nevertheless, you will say, in our world we never see a man engendered from mud and produced in this fashion.

"I am sure that your world is now too heated; for as soon as the Sun attracts a germ from the Earth it does not meet that cold damp or, to put it better, that certain period of a completed movement which forces it to several maturations, and so it immediately forms a vegetable; or if two maturations take place, the second has no time to complete itself perfectly and so it only brings forth an insect: thus, I have noticed that the monkey, which like us carries its young nearly nine months, resembles us in so many ways that many naturalists do not distinguish the species from us; and the reason is that their seed is tempered much like ours and during this time has almost been able to complete the three digestions.

"You will undoubtedly ask me from whom I derive the story I have just told you: you will tell me that I cannot have learnt it from those who were not there. It is true that I was the only person there and, consequently, I cannot bear witness to it because it happened before I was born. That is true; but learn that, in a region so near the Sun as ours, souls are filled with fire and are clearer, more subtle and more penetrating than those of other animals in more distant spheres. Now, since even in your world there were prophets whose minds when heated by a vigorous enthusiasm presaged the future, it is not impossible that in this world, so much nearer the Sun and consequently so much more luminous than yours, some odour of the past should reach a powerful genius, that his mobile reason should move backwards as well as forwards and that it should be able to reach a cause by effects, seeing that it can reach effects by a cause."

In this way he finished what he was saying; but after a still more private conversation in which he revealed to me very hidden secrets (one part of which I shall keep silent, while the rest has escaped my memory) he told me that not three weeks before a lump of earth impregnated by the Sun had brought him forth.

"Look at that tumour."

He then pointed out to me something on the mud swollen like a molehill.

"It is", said he, "a boil or, to speak more correctly, a womb which for the last nine months has held the embryo of one of my brothers. I am waiting here for the purpose of acting as his midwife."

He would have gone on had he not perceived the earth palpitating around this clay sod. This, together with the size of the pimple, caused him to judge that the earth was in labour and that this motion was already the effort of the pains of delivery. He left me at once to run to it; and I went off to look for my cabin.

I climbed up the mountain, whence I had descended, and reached its top with some exertion. You may conceive my distress when I found my machine was not where I had left it. I was already sighing for its loss when I saw it fluttering a long way off. I rushed after it at top speed as fast as my legs permitted, and indeed it was an agreeable pastime to contemplate this new method of hunting; for, sometimes when I almost had my hand upon it there would be a slight increase of heat in the glass ball, which drew up the air with more force, and, as this air became swifter, lifted my box above me and made me jump after it like a cat at the hook where it sees a hare hanging. If my shirt had not remained on the roof, and thereby intercepted the force of the mirrors, the box would have gone off on its travels alone.

But to what end do I refresh the memory of an adventure which I cannot recollect now except with a pain such as I then felt? It suffices to know that the box bounded, ran and flew, and that I leaped, walked and strode, until at last I saw it fall at the foot of a very tall mountain. It would very likely have led me further if the shadow of this proud swelling of the earth, which darkened the sky far into the plain, had not spread half a league of darkness around it; for when my box reached these shadows, its glass no sooner felt the coolness than it ceased to create a vacuum, with wind through the hole, and consequently there was no impulse to sustain it; in so much that it fell and would have been broken into a thousand pieces had not the pool into which it fell happily yielded under its weight. I drew it from the water, repaired what was disorganized, and then grasping it with all my strength, carried it to the top of a hill which was close at hand. There, I spread out my shirt around the globe, but I could not clothe it, because the mirrors at once began their office and I perceived my cabin already wriggling to fly. I had only time to step nimbly in and to shut myself up as before.

The sphere of our World appeared to me no more than a planet about the size the Moon appears to us; and, as I continued to rise, it lessened first into a star, then into a spark and then into nothing; this luminous point grew so fine, to equalize itself with that which ended the last ray of my sight, that finally it merged into the colour of the sky. Some may perhaps be astonished that I was not overtaken by sleep during this long voyage; but, since sleep is only produced by the soft exhalation of meats evaporating from the stomach to the brain or by a need felt by Nature to knit up our soul in order to repair during rest the spirits consumed by labour, I had no need to sleep, seeing that I did not eat and that the Sun gave me much more radical heat than I expended. However, I continued to rise and as I approached that burning world I felt a certain joy flowing in my blood, which rectified it and passed into the soul. From time to time I looked up to admire the brightness of the tints which shone in my little crystal dome; and I still remember that as I directed my eyes towards the glass ball I felt with a start something heavy fly out from all the parts of my body. A whirlwind of very thick and almost palpable smoke suffocated my glass with darkness; I stood up to examine this darkness which blinded me and I saw no vessel, no mirrors, no glass, no covering to my cabin. I looked down to see what was making my masterpiece fall in ruins, but in its place and in place of the four sides and the floor I found nothing but the sky about me. What terrified me still more was to feel some invisible obstacle repulsing my arms when I tried to extend them, as if the air had been petrified. It came into my mind then that I had risen so high I must have reached the part of the firmament which certain philosophers and some astronomers have said is solid.

I began to feel I should remain enshrined there, but the horror which overwhelmed me at the strangeness of this accident was increased by those which followed; for, as my sight ranged here and there, it fell on my breast and, instead of stopping at the outer surface of my body, passed through it; then a moment afterwards I perceived that I was looking backwards with hardly any interlapse. As if my body had become nothing but an organ of sight I felt my flesh, purged of its opacity, carry objects to my eyes, and my eyes to objects by its means. At last, after striking a thousand times without seeing them, the roof, the floor and the walls of my chair, I understood that my cabin and I had become transparent, owing to some secret necessity of light at its source. Although it was diaphanous I might still have perceived it, since we clearly perceive glass, crystal and diamonds, which are also

diaphanous; but I imagine that in a region so near the Sun that luminary purges bodies much more perfectly of their opacity by arranging the imperceptible channels of matter straighter than in our world, where its strength is almost exhausted by so long a journey and is scarcely capable of transpiring its light into precious stones; yet on account of the interior equality of their superficies it causes them to cast back through their glasses (as if through little eyes) either the green of emeralds, the scarlet of rubies or the violet of amethysts as the different pores of the stone, whether straighter or more sinuous, extinguish or rekindle this enfeebled light by the quantity of the reflections. One difficulty may embarrass the reader, which is how I could see myself and yet not see my box, since I had become as diaphanous as it was. To this I reply that the Sun doubtless acts differently upon living than upon inanimate bodies, since no portion of my flesh, of my bones, or of my entrails lost its natural colour though they were transparent; on the contrary, my lungs preserved their soft delicacy in an incarnadine red; my heart, still vermilion, swung easily between the systole and the diastole; my liver seemed to burn in a fiery purple and heating the air I breathed continued the circulation of my blood; in short, I saw, touched and smelt myself the same and yet I was not the same.

While I considered this metamorphosis my journey grew continually shorter, but at that time much more slow on account of the serenity of the ether, which grew rarefied the nearer I approached the source of the daylight; for, since at this stage matter is very subtle on account of the great amount of void with which it is filled, and since this matter is consequently very idle because of the void which is not active, the air, as it passed through the hole of my box, could only produce a little wind barely able to sustain me.

I never think of the malicious caprices of Fortune, who continued to oppose the success of my enterprise with such obstinacy, but I wonder how it was my brain was not turned. But hearken now a miracle, which future ages will find it difficult to believe. Shut up in a transparent box, of which I had lost sight, with my movement so slackened that I did well not to fall back, in a state where all that the whole machine of the world encloses was powerless to aid me, I was reduced to the height of extreme misfortune; yet, just as when we are dying we are inwardly moved to desire to embrace those who gave us our being, so did I lift my eyes to the Sun, our common father. This

ardour of my will not only bore up my body, but hurled it toward the thing which it desired to embrace. My body thrust on my box and in this fashion I continued my journey. As soon as I perceived this I stiffened all the faculties of my soul with more attention than ever to attach them in the imagination to what attracted me, but the efforts of my will forced me against the roof in spite of myself and the weight of my cabin on my head so incommoded me that finally the burden forced me to grope for its invisible door. Fortunately I found it, opened it and threw myself outside; but that natural apprehension of falling, which all animals have when they find themselves supported by nothing, made me stretch out my arm suddenly to catch hold of it. I was only guided by Nature, which cannot reason, and therefore Fortune, her enemy, maliciously thrust my hand against the crystal roof. Alas! What a thunder-clap it was in my ears when I heard the noise of the icosahedron breaking into fragments! So great a disorder, so great a misfortune, so great a terror are beyond all expression. The mirrors attracted no more air, for there was no more vacuum; the air ceased to become a wind by hastening to fill it; the wind ceased to urge my box upwards; in short, soon after this breakage I saw it falling far across the vast fields of the world and in that region it regained the opaque darkness it had exhaled. Since the energetic strength of the light diminished there, the box eagerly rejoined the dark density which was, as it were, essential to it, just as we see souls long after their separation return to seek their bodies, and, in trying to rejoin them, wander about their sepulchres for a hundred years. I surmise that it lost its transparency in this way, for I saw it afterwards in Poland in the same state as it was when I first entered it. I have since learned that it fell in the Kingdom of Borneo, under the equinoctial line; that a Portuguese merchant bought it from the islander who found it and that, passing from hand to hand, it came into the possession of the Polish engineer who now flies in it.^[59]

Thus suspended in the airy regions of the sky, filled with consternation at the death I expected by my fall, I turned my sad eyes to the Sun, as I have already told you. My sight carried my thought with it and my looks fixedly attached to its globe marked out a way whose traces were followed by my will to lift my body there. This vigorous bound of my soul will not be incomprehensible to any one who will consider the most simple effects of our will; it is well known, for example, that when I wish to leap, my will, borne up by my fantasy, raises the whole microcosm and tries to carry it to

the point desired, and if it does not always reach this, the reason is that the principles of Nature, which are universal, prevail over individuals, and, since the power of will is peculiar to sentient things and that of falling to the centre is common to all matter, my leap is forced to end when its mass, having conquered the insolence of the will which surprised it, draws near the point to which it tends.

I shall say nothing more of what happened on the rest of my journey for fear of taking as long to tell it as to make it; let it suffice that at the end of twenty-two months I landed very happily upon the great plains of the day. This land is like burning snow-flakes, so luminous is it. Yet it is an incredible thing which I have never been able to understand whether, after my box fell, I rose to or descended upon the Sun. I only remember that when I arrived there I walked lightly upon it; I only touched the ground by a point and I often rolled like a ball without finding it any more uncomfortable to walk with my head than with my feet. Although my legs were sometimes turned towards the sky and my shoulders towards the ground, I felt as naturally placed in this position as if my legs had been upon the ground and my shoulders towards the sky. On whatever part of my body I placed myself, on the belly, on the back, on an elbow, on an ear, I found myself upright. By this I perceived that the Sun is a world which has no centre and that, since I was far outside the active sphere of our world and all those I had met with, it was consequently impossible that I should still weigh, since weight is only the attraction of a centre within the sphere of its activity.

The respect with which I printed my steps upon this luminous country suspended for a time my burning ardour to continue my voyage. I felt myself ashamed to walk upon the daylight; my astonished body was desirous of support from my eyes and since this transparent land which they penetrated could not support them, my instinct, having mastered my thought in spite of me, drew me to the most hollow part of a depthless light. Little by little, however, my reason undeceived my instinct; I pressed assured and not trembling steps upon the plain and I counted my strides so proudly that if men could have perceived me from their world they would have taken me for the great God who walks upon the clouds. After I had walked about fifteen days, as I believe, I reached a district of the Sun less resplendent than that from which I came. I felt deeply moved by joy and I

imagined that this joy was assuredly the result of a secret sympathy for its opacity retained by my being. The knowledge I had of it did not make me desist from my enterprise; for I was like those sleeping old men who, although they know that sleep is bad for them and that they have ordered their servants to deprive them of it, are nevertheless very annoyed at the time they are awakened. So, as my body grew darker when I reached more shaded provinces, it re-contracted the weaknesses brought by this infirmity of matter; I grew weary and sleep grasped me.

Those pleasing languors which possess us at the approach of sleep poured so much pleasure into my senses that, captured by pleasure, my senses forced my soul to thank the tyrant who chains his slaves; for sleep, that old tyrant of one half our days, who, on account of his old age, cannot endure the light or look upon it without swooning, had been forced to abandon me when I entered the brilliant climates of the Sun and had come to wait for me upon the borders of the shaded region of which I speak, where he caught me, arrested me his prisoner, and shut up his declared enemies, my eyes, under the dark vault of my eyelids; and, fearing lest my other senses should betray him as they had betrayed me and trouble him in the peaceable possession of his conquest, he tied down all of them to their beds. All this means in two words that I lay down very weary upon the sand. It was a flat plain, so bare that as far as I could see my sight did not even meet a bush; and yet when I woke up I found myself under a tree, in comparison with which the tallest cedars would seem like grass. Its trunk was of massive gold, its branches of silver and its leaves of emeralds, which, underneath the glittering green of their precious surface, reflected as in a mirror the images of the fruit which hung round about. But judge whether the fruit owed anything to the leaves: the burning scarlet of a large carbuncle formed one half of each and the other half was uncertain whether its material came from chrysolite or from a piece of golden amber; the open flowers were roses of very large diamonds and the buds were big, pear-shaped pearls. A nightingale, whose smooth plumage rendered him excellently beautiful, was perched on the summit and seemed with his melody desirous of forcing the eyes to confess to the ears that he was not unworthy of the throne upon which he was seated.

For a long time I remained amazed at the sight of so rich a spectacle and I could not be satiated with looking at it; but as I was occupying all my

thoughts in contemplating among the other fruits an extraordinarily beautiful pomegranate, whose pulp was a cluster of several large rubies, I perceived the little crown which took the place of its head was moving and stretching out until it formed a neck. Then I saw something white seething above it which, by thickening, growing, advancing and retiring the matter in different places, at last appeared as the face of a small bust of flesh. This small bust ended in a circle about the waist; that is to say, its lower parts still kept the shape of an apple. Little by little it stretched out, its stem became two legs, and each of its legs split into five toes. This humanised pomegranate loosened itself from its stem and with a light bound fell exactly at my feet. Certainly I must admit I was impressed with veneration when I saw this little reasonable apple, this little piece of a dwarf no larger than my thumb, but strong enough to create itself, walking before me proudly.

"Human animal", he said in that mother-tongue, whereof I have formerly spoken, "after I had observed you for a long time from the branch on which I was hanging I thought I read in your face that you were not an inhabitant of this world, and for that reason I have descended to be enlightened by the truth."

When I had satisfied his curiosity about all the matters concerning which he questioned me, I said to him:

"But tell me who you are; what I have just seen is so very astonishing that I despair of ever knowing the cause unless you instruct me. What! a huge tree all of pure gold, whose leaves are emeralds, the flowers diamonds, the buds pearls, and, among all this, fruits which make themselves into men in the twinkling of an eye? For my part I admit that the comprehension of such a miracle passes my capacity."

I was awaiting his reply to this explanation, when he said:

"As I am the king of the nation which makes up this tree, you will not take it ill if I call them to follow me."

When he had spoken thus I noticed that he collected himself in meditation. I do not know if he wound up the interior springs of his will and thus excited outside himself the movement, which was the cause of what you are about to hear, but it is certain that immediately afterwards all the fruits, all the

flowers, all the leaves, all the branches, in short, the whole tree, fell apart into little seeing, feeling and walking men, who began to dance around me as if to celebrate their birthday at the very moment of their birth. The nightingale alone retained its shape and was not metamorphosed; it came and perched on the shoulder of the little monarch, where it sang an air so melancholy and so amorous that the whole assembly, including the prince himself, were moved by the gentle languors of its dying voice and shed a few tears. My curiosity to learn whence this bird came caused me so extraordinary a longing to speak that I could not contain it.

"Seigneur", said I, addressing myself to the king, "if I did not fear to importune your majesty I should ask you why among so many metamorphoses the nightingale alone has kept its being?"

The little prince listened to me with a benevolence which showed his natural kindness; and, understanding my curiosity, he replied:

"The nightingale has not changed its form like us, because it could not. It is a real bird and is no more than it appears to be. But let us walk towards the opaque regions and on the way I will relate to you who I am, together with the story of the nightingale."

I had scarcely showed the satisfaction I received from his offer, when he bounded lightly on to one of my shoulders. He raised himself on his little toes to bring his mouth level with my ear; and sometimes hanging by my hair and sometimes sliding down it, he said:

"By my faith, you must excuse a person who is already out of breath. I have crowded lungs in a little body and my voice is consequently so weak that I am forced to strain to make myself heard. I hope the nightingale will speak for himself. Let him sing if he wishes, and we shall at least have the pleasure of hearing his story in music."

I replied that I was not yet sufficiently practised in the language of birds; that, indeed, a certain philosopher whom I had met on my way to the Sun had given me some general principles to understand that of the beasts, but that they were not enough to understand all words in general, nor enough for me to be moved by all the delicate points which would be met with in an adventure such as this must be.

"Well", said he, "since you will have it so, your ears shall be deprived not only of the nightingale's beautiful songs, but of almost all its adventure, whereof I can only tell you that part which has come to my knowledge; however, you must be content with this fragment, because, even if I knew it all, the brevity of our journey to its country, whither I am about to conduct you, would not permit me to take my story further."

Having spoken thus, he jumped from my shoulder to the ground. He then gave his hand to his little subjects and began to dance with them in a kind of movement which I cannot describe, because nothing like it has ever been seen. But hearken, nations of the Earth, to that which I do not compel you to believe, because it passed for a miracle in a world where your miracles are only natural effects! As soon as these little men began to dance I seemed to feel their motion in myself and my motion in them. I could not look upon this dance without being distinctly moved from where I was, as if a whirlwind agitated all the parts of my body with the same dance and the particular movement of each one; and I felt the same joy expanding upon my face which a similar movement had spread upon theirs. As the dance drew closer, the dancers became confused with a much more rapid and more imperceptible motion; it seemed that the object of the ballet was to represent an enormous giant; for as they drew nearer each other and redoubled the swiftness of their movement they became so closely mingled that I perceived nothing but a great, open and almost transparent colossus; and yet my eyes perceived them interlinked with each other. At this moment I began to be unable to distinguish any more the diversity of the movements of each, on account of their extreme rapidity and also because this rapidity shrank as it approached the centre, and thus each vortex at last occupied so little space that it escaped my sight. Yet I think these parts drew still closer together; for this once unwieldy human mass gradually reduced itself until it formed a young man of moderate height, all of whose limbs were proportioned with a symmetry to which perfection at its strongest idea could never have flown. He was beautiful beyond everything to which all painters have raised their fantasy; but what I thought very marvellous was that the connection of all the parts which completed this perfect microcosm took place within the twinkling of an eye. The most agile of our little dancers leaped up with a flourish to the height and into the position needed to form a head; others hotter and not so loose formed the heart; and others much heavier only supplied the bones, the flesh and the plumpness.

When this large, beautiful young man was entirely finished, although his rapid construction had scarcely allowed me any time to notice an interval in its progress, I saw the king of the whole people enter by the mouth, yet it seemed to me he was attracted into this body by the breathing of the body itself. All this mass of little men had not yet given any sign of life; but as soon as it had swallowed its little king, it felt itself one. He remained some time looking at me and then, as if he were grown familiar by looking, he approached me, caressed me, and giving me his hand said:

"And now without damaging the delicacy of my lungs I can converse with you about the things which you long to know; but it is reasonable to reveal to you first of all the hidden secrets of our origin. Learn then that we are animals inhabiting the luminous regions of the Sun; the most general and the most useful of our occupations is to travel through the vast countries of this great world. We note carefully the habits of the nations, the peculiarity of climates and the nature of all things that can merit our attention, from which we build up an exact science of what exists. You must know that my vassals travelled under my guidance and, in order to have leisure to observe things more curiously, we did not keep the conformation particular to our body (which your senses could not perceive), whose subtlety would have caused us to move too quickly; but we made ourselves into birds. All my subjects became eagles by my command; and for fear they should grow weary I transformed myself into a nightingale to soothe their fatigue by the charms of music. I followed the rapid flight of my people without flying, for I was perched on the head of one of my vassals. We were following our road when a nightingale, dwelling in a province of the opaque country, through which we were then travelling, astonished to see me in the power of an eagle (it could only take us for what it saw us to be), began to commiserate my misfortune. I caused my followers to halt and we descended on the tops of some trees where sighed this charitable bird. I took so much pleasure in the sweetness of its mournful songs that I would not undeceive it, in order that I might enjoy them longer and more at my ease. On the spur of the moment I invented a story, in which I related to it imaginary misfortunes which had caused me to fall into the hands of the eagle; I mixed with it such surprising adventures, wherein the passions were so skilfully aroused and the music so well suited to the words, that the nightingale was beside itself.

"One after the other we sang to each other in music the story of our mutual loves. In my airs I sang that I was not only consoled for, but that I even rejoiced in, my misfortune, since it had procured me the glory of being lamented in such beautiful songs; and this inconsolable little creature replied in its airs that it would gladly accept all my esteem for it, if it knew that this could make it merit the honour of dying in my place, but that, since Fortune had not reserved so much glory for so unfortunate a creature, it would only accept of that esteem sufficiently to prevent me from blushing for my friendship. In my turn I replied again with all the transports, all the tenderness and all the caresses of so touching a passion that twice or thrice I perceived it ready to die of love on its branch. In truth, I mingled such skill with the softness of my voice and I surprised its ear with such masterly strokes and with paths so little frequented by those of its kind, that I carried off its fair soul into all the passions by which I desired to dominate it.

"We passed twenty-four hours in this exercise and I think we should never have been tired of making love if our throats had not refused us voices. This was the only obstacle which prevented us from proceeding, but feeling that the labour was beginning to hurt my throat and that I could not go further without falling into a swoon, I made it a sign to come near me. The peril in which it thought I was in the midst of so many eagles convinced it that I was calling it to my help. It flew immediately to my aid and, wishing to give a glorious proof that it dared to brave death even to his throne for a friend's sake, it came and sat proudly on the great curved beak of the eagle on which I was perched. So great a courage in so weak an animal moved me to veneration; for, even if I had called to it as it supposed and although there is a law among animals of the same kind to help another in misfortune, yet the instinct of its timid nature ought to have made it hesitate. But it did not hesitate. On the contrary, it started so hastily that I do not know which flew the first, my signal or the nightingale. Proud at seeing the tyrant's head under its feet, happy to think that it was about to be sacrificed for love of me almost within my wings and that perhaps some fortunate drops of its blood might be sprinkled on my feathers, it looked gently towards me and, having as it were said farewell by a look, which seemed to ask my permission to die, it thrust its little beak so sharply into the eagle's eyes that I saw they were crushed rather than struck. When my bird felt it was blind it made itself new sight at once. I remonstrated gently with the nightingale on its too precipitate action and, judging that it would

be dangerous to hide from it any longer our real existence, I revealed myself to it and told it what we were; but the poor little creature, convinced that these barbarians, whose prisoner I was, forced me to feign this fable, would give no faith to anything I could say. When I perceived that all the reasons by which I tried to convince it were mere waste of breath, I whispered some orders to ten or twelve thousand of my subjects and immediately the nightingale perceived at its feet a river flowing under a boat and the boat floating upon the river. It was just large enough to hold me twice over. At the first signal I made to them my eagles flew off and I threw myself into the boat, whence I cried to the nightingale to embark with me if it could not yet resolve to abandon me so soon. As soon as it came in I commanded the river to flow towards the region where my people were flying; but since the fluidity of the water was less than that of the air and consequently the rapidity of their flight greater than that of our sailing, we remained a little behind.

"All the way I tried to undeceive my little guest; I pointed out to it that it could hope for no fruit from its passion, since we were not of the same species; that it ought to have perceived this when the eagle whose eyes it had crushed had made new eyes in its presence, and when at my command ten thousand of my vassals had metamorphosed themselves into this river and the boat in which we were sailing. My arguments were unsuccessful. The nightingale replied that as to the eagle making itself eyes as I asserted, there had been no need, because it was not blinded, since the beak had not pierced its eye-balls; and as to the river and the boat, which I said had only been created by a metamorphosis of my people, they had been in the wood since the creation of the world, only no one had noticed them. Seeing it was so ingenious in deceiving itself I agreed with it that my vassals and I would metamorphose ourselves into whatever it liked before its eyes, on condition that afterwards it would return to its own country. Sometimes it asked that this should be a tree; sometimes it wished this to be a flower, sometimes a fruit, sometimes a metal, sometimes a stone. At last to satisfy all its desires at once, when we had reached my court at the place where I had ordered it to await me, we metamorphosed ourselves before the nightingale's eyes into that precious tree, whose shape we have just abandoned, which you met with on your road.

"Now I see this little bird resolved to return into its own country, my subjects and I will renew our shape and continue our journey. But first of all it is reasonable to tell you who we are: animals, natives of the Sun in its luminous part, for there is a very remarkable difference between the nations produced by the luminous region and the nations of the opaque region. In the world of the Earth you call us Spirits and your presumptuous stupidity gave us this name because you could not imagine any animals more perfect than man, and yet you saw certain creatures perform acts above human power, and so you thought these animals were Spirits. But you are mistaken, nevertheless; we are animals like you. Although, as you have just seen, we give our matter the shape and essential form of those things into which we desire to metamorphose ourselves, whenever we please, that does not mean that we are Spirits. But hearken, and I will discover to you why it is that all these metamorphoses which seem to you so many miracles are purely natural processes. You must know that since we were born inhabitants of the bright part of this great world, where the principle of matter is action, our imagination is necessarily much more active than that of the inhabitants of the opaque regions and the substance of our bodies is also much finer. Granted this, it inevitably follows that since our imagination meets with no obstacle in the matter which composes us, it arranges that matter as it desires and since it is mistress of our whole mass it causes this mass to pass, by moving all its particles, into the order necessary to create on a large scale the thing it has formed in little. Thus each of us imagined the place and part of that precious tree into which he desired to change, and by this effort of imagination we excited our matter to the movements necessary to produce them, and therefore we became metamorphosed into them. Thus, when my eagle's eyes were crushed, to re-establish them he had only to imagine himself a clear-sighted eagle, since all our transformations occur by means of movement; for this reason, when we transmuted ourselves out of leaves, flowers and fruits into men, you saw we still danced some time after, because we had not yet recovered from the movement we had to give our matter to make ourselves into men: like bells which vibrate after they stop and continue in muffled tones the same sounds which the clapper caused by striking them. For the same reason you saw us dance before we made a large man because, in order to produce it, we had to give ourselves all the general and particular movements necessary to constitute it; so that this motion, bringing our bodies little by little closer to

each other and absorbing them one with another through its movement, should create in each part the specific movement it ought to have. You men cannot do the same things on account of the weight of your mass and the coldness of your imaginations."

He continued his proof and supported it with examples so palpable that finally I threw off a large number of badly proved opinions by means of which our pig-headed men of learning prejudice weak people's understanding. Then I began to comprehend that in very truth the imagination of these Solar people, which on account of the climate must be hotter, while for the same reason their bodies must be lighter and their entities more mobile (since in that world, unlike ours, there is no attraction from the centre to turn matter away from the movement imprinted upon it by the imagination) I conceived, I say, that without a miracle this imagination could produce all the miracles it had recently done. A thousand examples of almost similar events, witnessed by the nations of our globe, completed my conviction: Cippus, King of Italy, having witnessed a bull-fight, so filled his imagination with horns all that night that the next morning he found his forehead horned; Gallus Vitius, bending up his soul and exciting it vigorously to conceive the essence of madness, by an effort of imagination gave his matter the same movements this matter should have to constitute madness, and so became mad; King Codrus, the consumptive, fixing his eyes and his thought on the freshness of a young face and upon that flourishing happiness which the boy's youth overflowed with almost to him, and giving his body the movement by which he imagined the young man's health, became convalescent; and lastly several pregnant women made monsters of the children already formed in their wombs, because their imagination was not strong enough to give them themselves the shape of the monsters they imagined, but was strong enough to arrange the much hotter and more mobile matter of the fœtus in the order necessary for the production of these monsters. I am even convinced that, when that famous hypochondriac of antiquity imagined himself a pitcher, if his matter had not been too compact and too heavy to follow the emotion of his fantasy it would have formed a perfect pitcher out of his body, and he would really have appeared a pitcher to everyone as he appeared to himself.

So many other satisfactory examples convinced me to such an extent that I did not doubt any of the marvels related to me by the Man-Spirit. He asked

me if I desired anything more of him; I thanked him with all my heart. Afterwards he had still the kindness to advise me, since I was an inhabitant of the earth, to follow the nightingale into the opaque regions of the Sun, because they were more apt for the pleasures desired by human nature. Scarcely had he finished speaking when he opened his mouth very wide and I saw the king of these little animals fly out of his throat in the shape of a nightingale. The large man fell down at once and at the same time all his limbs flew away piecemeal in the shape of eagles. This nightingale, creator of himself, perched on the head of the most beautiful of them, whence he sang an admirable air, by which I fancy he bade me farewell. The real nightingale flew away also, but not in their direction nor so high as they. I did not lose sight of it and we travelled on at about the same pace; for since I had no idea of visiting one country rather than another I was very glad to accompany it, especially since the opaque regions of the birds were more suitable to my temperament and I hoped there to meet with adventures more answerable to my humour.

With this hope I journeyed on for at least three weeks with every sort of pleasure, if I had had only my ears to satisfy, since the nightingale did not let me lack music; when it was weary it came and rested upon my shoulder and when I stopped it waited for me. At last I reached a district in the region of this little singer, which then did not trouble to accompany me further. Having lost sight of it, I sought for it and called it; but at last I grew so weary of vainly pursuing it that I resolved to rest. For this purpose I lay down upon a lawn of soft grass which carpeted the roots of a tall rock. This rock was covered with several green leafy saplings, whose shadow charmed my tired senses most delightfully and forced me to abandon them to sleep, to repair in safety my strength in so calm and cool a place.

STORY OF THE BIRDS^[60]

I began to grow sleepy in the shade, when I perceived a marvellous bird gliding in the air above my head; it sustained itself with so light and so imperceptible a movement that I wondered several times if it were not a little universe balanced by its own centre. Nevertheless it descended little by little and at last arrived so near me that my eyes were happily filled with its image. Its tail appeared to be green, its belly of enamelled azure, its wings carnation colour and its purple head glittered, when moved, with a

golden crown whose rays sprang from its eyes. For a long time it flew in the air and I was so attentive to everything it did that my soul, being as it were folded and shortened down to the single operation of seeing, scarcely reached to that of hearing for me to perceive that the bird talked by singing.

Released little by little from my ecstasy, I noticed distinctly syllables, words and the speech it articulated. Here then, to the best of my memory, are the terms in which he arranged the fabric of his song:

"You are a stranger", sang the bird very agreeably, "and you were born in a world where I was born too. That secret inclination which draws us to our compatriots is the instinct urging me to desire that you should know my life.

"I see that your mind is trying to understand how it is possible that I can express myself to you in coherent speech, seeing that although birds imitate your words they do not understand them; but when you in turn imitate the barking of a dog or the song of a nightingale you do not understand what the dog or the nightingale means. From that you may deduce that neither birds nor men are any the less reasonable on this account.

"However, just as among you there have been found men so enlightened that they understood and spoke our language, such as Apollonius Tianeus, Anaximander, Æsop^[61] and several others, whose names I will not repeat, since you have never heard of them; so among us there are individuals who understand and speak your language. Some, indeed, only know the language of one nation; but just as there are some birds which say nothing, others which twitter, others which talk, so there are still more perfect birds able to use all sorts of idioms. For my part I have the honour to belong to that small number.

"For the rest, you must know that in every world Nature has imprinted in the birds the secret desire to fly here, and it may be that this emotion of our will is the reason for our growing wings, as pregnant women produce upon their children the shape of things they have desired; or rather, like those who, passionately desiring to swim, have been seen while they were asleep to plunge in the current of streams and to cross, with more skill than an experienced swimmer, perils which they would not even have dared to look upon when awake; or like that son of King Cræsus who, by a vehement desire to speak to save his father, suddenly learned a language; or briefly like that ancient, pursued by his enemy and surprised without arms, who

felt the horns of a bull growing on his forehead through the desire inspired in him by a fury similar to that of this animal.

"When birds reach the Sun they rejoin the republic of their race. I see that you are impatient to learn who I am. Among you I am called the phoenix; in each world there is only one at a time which lives there during the space of a hundred years; for at the end of a century, when upon some mountain of Arabia it has brought forth a large egg in the midst of the embers of its pyre, whose composition it has culled from the boughs of aloes, from cinnamon and incense, it takes wing and directs its flight toward the Sun, as a country to which its heart has long aspired. Before this it has made every effort to accomplish this voyage, but the weight of its egg, whose shell is so thick it needs a century to hatch, always delayed the attempt.

"I am sure it will be difficult for you to understand this miraculous production, and therefore I will explain it to you. The phoenix is a hermaphrodite but, among hermaphrodites there is still another very extraordinary phoenix, for...."^[62]

He remained a half-quarter of an hour without speaking and then added:

"I see that you suspect what I have just told you is false; but if I do not speak the truth may I never reach your globe without an eagle swooping down upon me."

For some time it still remained hovering in the sky and then flew away. The surprise caused me by its recital gave me the curiosity to follow it; and since it cleft the air of the heavens with a flight which was not rapid I accompanied it easily enough with my eyes and gait.

At the end of about fifty leagues I reached a land so filled with birds that their numbers almost equalled those of the leaves protecting them. I was still more surprised that these birds, instead of taking fright at meeting me flew all about me; one sang in my ear, another spread out its tail on my head, and at last, after my attention had been occupied a long time by their little gambols I suddenly felt my arms held down by more than a million of all kinds, weighing so heavily that I could not move them.

They held me in this way until four large eagles arrived, two of which grasped me by the legs in their claws, the two others by the arms, and carried me high up.

Among the crowd I noticed a magpie flying hither and thither, backwards and forwards with great alacrity. I heard it tell me to make no resistance, because its companions were already debating about plucking out my eyes. This warning prevented any resistance I might have made, and so the eagles carried me more than a thousand leagues thence to a large wood, which (according to what I was told by my magpie), was the town where their king lived.

The first thing they did was to imprison me in the hollow trunk of a large oak, while a number of the strongest birds perched on the branches, where they carried out the functions of a company of soldiers under arms. At the end of about twenty-four hours others came on guard to relieve them. While I was awaiting with a good deal of melancholy the manner in which it would please Fortune to dispose of my disasters, my charitable magpie informed me of what was happening. Among other things I remember it warned me that the bird-populace had strongly protested against keeping me so long before eating me, and they had pointed out that I was growing so thin there would be nothing on me but the bones to gnaw. The rumour very nearly caused a rebellion. My magpie had ventured to point out that it was a barbarous proceeding to put to death without trial an animal which to some extent approached their reasoning; they were ready to tear it to pieces, alleging that it would be very ridiculous to think that a completely naked animal, whom Nature herself had taken no care to furnish at its birth with the things necessary to preserve it, should be capable of reason like themselves.

"It might be different", they added, "if he were an animal approaching a little nearer to our shape, but he is the most dissimilar and the most horrible, a bald beast, a plucked bird, a chimera built up of all kinds of natures, terrifying to everyone: Man, I say, so foolish and so vain that he convinces himself we were only created for him; Man who with his marvellously clear-sighted soul cannot distinguish sugar from arsenic and who will swallow the hemlock his wonderful judgment causes him to take for parsley; Man who maintains that we only reason by means of the senses and who has the weakest, slowest and falsest senses of any creature; Man whom Nature made like a monster, in order to create all things, but in whom she inspired the ambition of commanding all animals and exterminating them."

This is what the wisest said; as to the rabble, they exclaimed that it was horrible to believe a beast whose face was not made like theirs could possess reason.^[63]

"What!" they murmured to each other; "he has neither beak, claws nor feathers, and yet his soul is spiritual? Gods! What impertinence!"

The pity felt for me by the most generous did not prevent my being subjected to a criminal prosecution. They drew up all the documents on the bark of a cypress tree, and then, after some days, I was carried before the Tribunal of the Birds. The solicitors, counsel and judges at the sitting were magpies, jays and starlings. Only those who understood my language had been chosen.

Instead of interrogating me in the dock they set me astride a stump of rotten wood; then the president of the bench, after clapping his beak twice or thrice and ruffling up his feathers majestically, asked me whence I was, of what nation and of what species? My charitable magpie had given me certain instructions beforehand, which were very useful to me, one of which was to be careful not to admit I was a man. I replied that I came from the little world called the Earth, whereof the phoenix and several others I saw in the assembly might have spoken to them, that the climate in which I was born was situated in the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere in that end of Europe called France. As touching my species, I was not a man as they supposed but a monkey; certain men had taken me from my cradle when I was very young and fed me; their evil education had thus rendered my skin delicate; they had caused me to forget my natural tongue and had instructed me in theirs; to please these ferocious animals I had accustomed myself to walk only upon two feet; in fine, since it is easier to fall than to rise in the scale of animals, the opinions, the habits and the food of these dirty beasts had acquired so much power over me that even my parents, who are monkeys of honour, would hardly recognize me now. I added in support of what I said that I was ready to be searched by experts and if they should decide I was a man I submitted myself to be obliterated as a monster.

^[64]

The Parliament of Birds.

"Gentlemen", cried a swallow in the assembly as soon as I had ceased speaking, "I hold him convicted. You have not forgotten he said the country in which he was born was France; but you know that monkeys do not breed in France; after that, judge if he is what he boasts to be."

I replied to my accuser that I had been taken from the bosom of my parents and transported to France when I was so young that I had a perfect right to call that my native country to which my earliest memories were attached. Although this reason was specious, it was insufficient. But the greater part of them, charmed to hear that I was not a man, were very glad to believe it; for those who had never seen one could not but persuade themselves that a man was something much more horrible than I appeared to be, while the most sensible of them added that a man was something so abominable it was useful to believe he was only an imaginary being.^[65]

The whole assembly clapped their wings with joy and I was immediately handed over to the Syndics for examination, with orders to produce me next day and to make a report to the committee at the opening of the Chambers. They took charge of me then and carried me off to a retired wood. While they kept me there they did nothing but gesticulate about me with a hundred different kinds of somersaults and walk about in processions with nutshells on their heads. Sometimes they clapped their feet together, sometimes they dug little ditches and filled them up again; and all this time I was surprised not to see anyone else.

The day and the night were passed in these trifles until the prescribed hour arrived next day; I was carried back at once to appear before my judges and, when the Syndics were bidden to speak the truth, they replied that upon their consciences they felt themselves bound to inform the court I was assuredly not a monkey as I boasted.

"For", they said, "we leaped, walked, pirouetted and invented a hundred tricks in his presence, whereby we meant to urge him to do the same, according to the habit of monkeys. Now, even when brought up by men, a

monkey is always a monkey, and if he had been one we maintain it would not have been in his power to forbear imitating our monkey-tricks. That is our report, gentlemen."

The judges drew together to hear each other's opinion; but it was noticed that the sky was cloudy and seemed charged with rain; and this made them postpone the sitting. I imagined that this had happened on account of the appearance of bad weather, when the solicitor-general came to tell me by order of the court that I should not receive sentence that day; that they never end a criminal prosecution when the sky is not clear, because they fear lest the bad temperature of the air might influence the good constitution of the judges' minds; lest that ill humour which comes over birds during rain should be discharged upon the case; or lest the court should visit its depression upon the prisoner. And so my sentence was put off until finer weather. I was taken back to prison and I remember that my charitable magpie did not abandon me on the way; it flew continually beside me and I think it would not have left me if its companions had not approached us.

At last I arrived at my prison, where during my captivity I had nothing to eat but the "king's bread"^[66]; by this they meant fifty worms and as many cheese-worms,^[67] which they brought me to eat every seven hours.

I thought I should be brought up again the next day and everyone thought so too; but after five or six days one of my guards told me the whole of the time had been taken up by the plea of a community of goldfinches, who demanded justice against one of their companions. I asked my guard of what crime this wretch was accused.

"Of the most enormous crime", replied the guard, "by which a bird can be blackened. He is accused.... Can you believe it? He is accused.... But, good Gods! When I only think of it, the feathers stand up on my head. He is accused of not having merited a friend for the last six years; so they have condemned him to be a king, and king of a people of another species. If his subjects had been of his kind, he might have dipped into their pleasures, at least with his eyes and his desire; but since the pleasures of one species have no relation at all to the pleasures of another species, he will undergo all the fatigues and will drink all the bitterness of royalty, without being able to taste any of its compensations. He was sent off this morning

surrounded by a number of doctors, who have to watch that he does not poison himself on the journey."

Although my guard was naturally a great talker, he dared not converse with me alone any longer for fear he should be suspected of a compact with me.

At the end of about a week I was again brought before my judges. I was placed upon the fork of a small leafless tree. The learned birds, solicitors, counsel and judges, were perched in rows according to their rank on the summit of a large cedar. The others, who were only present at the assembly from curiosity, were placed pell-mell so that all the seats were filled, that is to say, so that the cedar branches were covered with birds' feet.

The magpie, who, as I had noticed, had always been filled with compassion for me, came and perched on my tree, where it feigned to amuse itself by pecking the moss.

"It is impossible for you to know", it said, "how much your misfortune moves me; for although I am not ignorant that a man among living beings is a pest of which every civilized state ought to purge itself, yet when I remember I was brought up by them from the cradle, that I learned their language so perfectly I almost forgot my own, and that I ate such excellent soft cheeses from their hands, I cannot think of it without water coming into my eyes and mouth; I feel for you a tenderness which prevents me from inclining towards the juster party."

It had finished speaking when we were interrupted by the arrival of an eagle, which came and perched on the boughs of a tree near mine. I should have risen to get on my knees before it, thinking it was the king, if my magpie had not kept me in my former position with its foot.

"Do you suppose", it said, "that this large eagle is our sovereign? That is a supposition of men who, because they allow themselves to be commanded by the largest, strongest and most cruel of their companions, and judge all things from themselves, foolishly imagine that the eagle must command us. But our policy is very different. We choose only the weakest, the gentlest and the most peaceful for our kings; moreover, we change them every six months and we choose them weak so that the humblest individual they have wronged may be avenged upon them. We choose them gentle so that they

may neither hate nor be hated by anybody. And we desire them to be of a peaceful temper in order to avoid war, the channel of all injustices.

"Every week a parliament is held, where anyone may complain of him. If there are only three birds dissatisfied with his government he is dethroned and they proceed to a new election. During the day the parliament is held, our king is placed on the top of a tall yew on the edge of a pond, with his feet and wings bound. All the birds one after another pass in front of him, and if any one of them knows he deserves the last punishment, it may cast him into the water; but it must at once justify itself for what it has done, otherwise it is condemned to a sad death."

I could not forbear interrupting him to ask what he meant by a sad death; and this is what he replied:

"When a bird is judged culpable of a crime so enormous that death is too small an expiation, they try to choose a death which contains the pain of several; and they proceed as follows: those among us whose voices are the most melancholy and the most funereal are attached to the guilty person, who is carried to a sad cypress. There these sad musicians gather around him and fill his soul through his ears with such lugubrious and tragical songs that the bitterness of his grief disorders the economy of his organs and so presses upon his heart that he pines visibly and dies suffocated with sadness. However, such a spectacle never happens; for since our kings are very gentle they never provide anyone with the opportunity of desiring to risk so cruel a death for the sake of vengeance. The reigning monarch at present is a dove, whose temper is so peaceful that the other day when two sparrows had to be reconciled there was all the difficulty in the world to make him understand what enmity is."

My magpie could not continue so lengthy a discourse without being noticed by several of those present; and since it was already suspected of some understanding with me, the chiefs of the assembly sent an eagle of the guard to arrest him. King Dove arrived at this moment; everyone was silent and the first thing which broke this silence was the plea of the chief censor of the birds against the magpie. The King, fully informed of the scandal it had caused, asked its name and how it knew me.

"Sire", it replied in astonishment, "I am called Margot; there are many birds of quality here who will answer for me. One day in the world of the Earth

of which I am a native I learned from Coughing-Chirper there (who, hearing me calling in my cage, came to visit me at the window where I was hung) that my father was Short-Tail and my mother Crack-Nuts. I should not have known it but for him; for I had been taken from beneath my parent's wing when I was in the cradle, very young. Some time after my mother died of grief and my father, now too old to beget other children and in despair at finding himself without an heir, went off to the Jays' war, where he was killed by a beak-wound in the brain. Those who seized me were certain savage animals called swine-herds, who took me to a castle to sell, and there I saw this man whom you are now prosecuting. I do not know if he conceived good-will for me, but he took the trouble to order the servants to cut up food for me. Sometimes he had the kindness to bring me the food himself. If in the winter I was perishing with cold he carried me near the fire and lined my cage or bade the gardener warm me inside his shirt. The servants dared not tease me in his presence and I remember one day he saved me from the cat that had me in its claws, to which I had been exposed by my lady's little lackey. But it will not be inopportune to acquaint you with the cause of that barbarity. To please Verdelet (that was the little lackey's name) I was repeating one day the foolish things he had taught me. It unfortunately happened, although I always repeated my quirks in the same order, that just as he came in to deliver a false message I said: 'Silence, whoreson, you have lied.' The accused man here, knowing the rogue's lying disposition, imagined that I might have spoken prophetically and sent to the place to inquire if Verdelet had been there. Verdelet was convicted of deceit, Verdelet was whipped, and to avenge himself Verdelet would have had me eaten by the cat had it not been for this man."

The King, bowing his head, showed that he was pleased with the pity it had had for my misfortunes, but yet forbade it to speak to me again in secret. He then asked counsel if he were ready with his plea, who made a sign with his foot that he was about to speak; and here are the points upon which he insisted against me.

PLEADING MADE IN THE PARLIAMENT OF BIRDS, THE CHAMBERS ASSEMBLED,
AGAINST AN ANIMAL ACCUSED OF BEING A MAN.

GENTLEMEN,

The complainant against this criminal is Guillemette the Plump, a partridge by birth, newly arrived from the world of the Earth with its throat still open from a lead bullet shot at it by men, a suitor against the human race, and, consequently, against an animal whom I claim to be a member of that great body. It would not be difficult for us to prevent the violence he might do by killing him. However, since the safety or the loss of every living thing concerns the republic of the living, it seems to me we should deserve to be born men, that is to say degraded from the reason and the immortality we possess above them, if we resembled them in any of their injustices. Let us then examine, gentlemen, the difficulties of this case with all the keenness of which our divine minds are capable.

The main point of the case consists in discovering whether this animal is a man; and then, if we declare he is, whether he deserves death on that account.

For my part, I make no difficulty in declaring he is: first, from a feeling of horror which we all felt ourselves seized with at his sight without being able to declare the reasons; secondly, because he laughs like a madman; thirdly, because he weeps like a fool; fourthly, because he blows his nose like a vagabond; fifthly, because he is plucked of feathers like one that is mangy; sixthly, because he carries his tail in front; seventhly, because he has always a quantity of little square stones in his mouth and has not the wit to spit them out or to swallow them; and eighthly, and lastly, because every morning he lifts up his eyes, his nose and his large beak, sticks together his open hands with their flat parts together pointing to the sky and makes of them one attachment as if he were tired of having two free ones, breaks his legs in the middle so that he falls on his shanks, and then hums magic words, after which I have noticed his broken legs join up and he rises as gay as he was before. You know, gentlemen, that of all animals man alone has a soul sufficiently black to give himself up to magic and,

consequently, he must be a man. We must now examine whether he deserves death for being a man.

I think, gentlemen, that it has never been doubted that all creatures were produced by our common Mother to live together sociably. Then if I prove that man seems only to have been born to disturb this, shall I not prove that by going contrary to the end for which he was created he deserves that Nature should repent of her work? The first and fundamental law for the maintenance of a republic is equality; but man could not endure this eternally; he rushes upon us to devour us, he convinces himself that we were only made for his use. As an argument of his pretended superiority he cites the barbarity with which he massacres us and the little resistance he finds in overcoming our weakness, and yet he will not admit as his masters the eagles, condors, and griffins, by whom the strongest of them are overcome. But why should this size and position of limbs mark a diversity of species, since even among them dwarfs and giants are found?

Moreover this empire on which they flatter themselves is an imaginary right. On the contrary they are so inclined to servitude that for fear of failing to serve, they sell their liberty to each other. Thus the young are slaves of the old, the poor of the rich, the peasants of the gentlemen, princes of monarchs, and even monarchs of the laws they have established. But with all this the poor serfs are so afraid of lacking masters that, as if they feared that liberty should come to them from some unexpected quarter, they make themselves Gods everywhere, in the water, in air, in fire, under the earth. They would rather make them of wood than lack them; and I even think they caress themselves with false hopes of immortality not so much because they are terrified by the horror of annihilation as because of the fear they have of not being commanded after death. This is the wonderful effect of that fantastic monarchy and natural empire of man over the animals and ourselves; for his insolence reaches even to that point. Nevertheless, as a

consequence of this ridiculous chieftainship, he pleasantly arrogates to himself the right of life and death over us; he lies in ambush for us, he binds us, he throws us into prison, he cuts our throats, he eats us; and the power to kill those of us who remain free is made a privilege of the Nobility; he thinks the Sun was lighted to enable him to make war upon us; he thinks Nature allows us to make excursions through the sky simply for him to draw favourable or unfavourable auspices from our flight, and that when God put entrails into our bodies His only purpose was to make a book from which man might learn the science of future things.

Is not this pride utterly insupportable? Could one who entertained such a conception deserve a punishment less than that of being born a man? Yet it is not on this account that I urge you to condemn this man; since the poor beast has not the use of reason like ourselves, I excuse his errors in so far as they are produced by lack of understanding; but I ask justice on account of those which are daughters of his will. As, for example, that he kills us without being attacked by us; that he eats us when he might satisfy his hunger with more suitable food; and, which I consider the most cowardly of all, that he debauches the natural disposition of hawks, falcons and vultures, by teaching them to massacre their kind, to feed upon their like or to deliver us into his hands.

This consideration alone is so heinous that I ask the court to condemn him to extermination by a sad death.^[68]

The whole Bar shivered with horror at the idea of so great a torture; and, with the purpose of moderating it, the King made a sign to my counsel to reply. It was a starling, a great jurisconsult, who, striking his foot thrice upon the branch which supported him, spoke to the assembly as follows:

"It is true, gentlemen, that moved by pity I undertook the case of this wretched beast; but, at the moment of pleading, remorse of conscience has come to me and a kind of secret voice forbidding me to undertake so detestable an action. Thus, gentlemen, I declare to you and to the court that

for the sake of my soul's salvation I will not contribute in any fashion towards the duration of such a monster as man."

The whole populace clapped their beaks as a sign of rejoicing and to congratulate the sincerity of so worthy a bird.

My magpie presented itself to plead in his place, but silence was imposed upon it because, since it had been brought up by men and was perhaps infected by their morals, there was some fear it would approach my case with a prejudiced mind; for the Court of Birds will not hear an advocate who is more interested on behalf of one client than another, unless he can show that this preference comes from the party's right.

When my judges saw that nobody came forward to defend me they stretched out their wings, shook them and flew immediately to consultation.

I learned afterwards that the greater part insisted strongly that I should be exterminated by a sad death; but yet, when they perceived the King inclined to milder measures, they revised their opinions; thus my judges moderated themselves and instead of a sad death, which they remitted, they thought meet to fit my punishment to one of my crimes. To annihilate me by a punishment which would serve to undeceive me by challenging the pretended empire of men over birds, they ordered that I should be given up to the anger of the weakest among them; which meant that they condemned me to be eaten by flies.

At that moment the assembly rose and I heard a murmur go round that the circumstances of my suffering had not been gone into in detail, because of an accident to a bird of the party, which had fallen in a swoon just as it was about to speak to the King. They thought this had happened from the horror caused it by looking too fixedly at a man; and so the order was given for me to be taken away.

Sentence was pronounced upon me; and as soon as the osprey who filled the office of clerk of the court had finished reading it to me, I perceived the sky about me black with flies, humble-bees, midges, gnats, and fleas, buzzing with impatience. I expected to be carried off by my eagles as before, but in their place I saw a great black ostrich, which set me shamefully astride its back; for with them this position is the most

ignominious in which a criminal can be placed, and whatever offence a bird has committed it cannot be condemned to this.

The archers who took me to execution consisted of fifty condors and as many griffins; before and behind them flew very slowly a procession of ravens croaking something lugubriously and I thought I heard in the distance responses from screech-owls.

When we left the place where judgment had been pronounced upon me, two birds of paradise who had been ordered to be present at my death came and perched on my shoulders. Although my soul was greatly troubled by horror at the step I was about to take, I yet remember almost all the reasonings by which they tried to console me.

"Death", said they, with their beaks in my ear, "is certainly not a great evil, because our good mother Nature subjects all her children to it; and it cannot be an affair of great consequence, because it happens at any moment and from so small a cause; for if life were so excellent it would not be in our power to withhold it from offspring; or if death brought with it consequences so important as you persuade yourself, it would not be in our power to give it: on the contrary, there is every probability that since every animal begins in play, it ends similarly. I speak to you in this way because, since your soul is not immortal like ours, you may well suppose when you die that everything dies with you. Do not be troubled then at undergoing what some of your companions will undergo later. Their condition is more deplorable than yours; for if death is an evil, it is only an evil to those who are condemned to die; compared with you, who have only an hour between here and there, they will be fifty or sixty years a-dying. Then, you know, he who is not yet born is not unhappy. Well, you are about to resemble him who is not yet born; a twinkling of an eye after life, you will be what you were a twinkling of an eye before; and immediately after that twinkling of an eye you will be dead as long as he who died a thousand centuries ago. But in any case, granted that life is a good, the same chance which in the infinity of time made you what you are may some day cause you to exist again. May not that matter, which by constant mixing finally reached that number, that disposition and that order necessary to the construction of your being, once more by remixing reach the state required to cause you to feel again? Yes, but, you will say, I do not remember to have existed. Why! my dear brother, what do you care so long as you are conscious of existing?

And then may it not be that to console you for the loss of your life you will imagine the same reasons which I now put before you?

"These are considerations sufficiently strong to oblige you to drink this bitter cup with patience; but I have others still more urgent, which doubtless will bring you to desire it. My dear brother, you must convince yourself that, since you and other brutes are material, and since death instead of annihilating matter simply alters its economy you must, I say, believe with certainty that when you cease to be what you were you will begin to be something else. Suppose you become a clod of earth or a stone, well, you will be something less wicked than man. But I have a secret to discover to you, which I should not like any of your companions to hear from my mouth; and that is, when you are eaten, as you will be, by our little birds, you will pass into their substance: yes, you will have the honour of contributing (even though blindly) to the intellectual operations of flies, and though you do not reason yourself, you will at least share in the glory of making them reason."

At about this point of their exhortation we reached the place fixed upon for my execution.

There were four trees very close to each other and about the same distance apart, on each of which at the same height was perched a large heron. I was taken down from the black ostrich and a number of cormorants carried me to the place where the four herons were waiting for me. These birds, firmly seated each on its tree opposite each other, wound their prodigiously long necks about my legs and arms as though they were ropes, and bound me so tightly that although each of my limbs was only tied by the neck of one bird I had not the power to move it at all.

They were to remain a long time in this position; for I heard orders given to the cormorants who had lifted me to catch fish for the herons and to slide their food into their beaks. They were still waiting for the flies, because they cleft the air with a flight less rapid than ours; nevertheless we were never out of hearing of them. The first thing they undertook was to apportion my body, and this arrangement was made so cunningly that they assigned my eyes to the bees, so that I should have them stung out as they ate them; my ears to the humble-bees, so that I should have them deafened and devoured at the same time; and my shoulders to the fleas, in order that I

should have them pierced by itching bites; and so on for the rest. Scarcely had I heard these orders arranged, when suddenly I saw the insects approaching. It seemed as if all the atoms of which the air is composed had been changed into flies; for only two or three weak rays of light reached me, and these appeared to slip through to get at me, so closely were these battalions drawn up and so near my flesh were they.

But just as each one of them was choosing the place it desired to bite me, I saw them suddenly retreat; and among the confusion of a vast number of shouts, which re-echoed to the clouds, I several times made out the words: *Pardon, pardon, pardon.*

Two turtle-doves then came up to me. At their arrival all the dismal apparatus of my death disappeared; I felt my herons loose the circles of the long necks which bound me; and my body, stretched out like a Saint Andrew's cross, slipped from the top of the four trees to the foot of their roots. I expected from this fall to be shattered on the ground against a rock; but at the height of my terror I was very surprised to find myself seated on a white ostrich, which set off at a gallop as soon as it felt me on its back.

I was taken by a road different from that by which I had come; for I remember passing through a large wood of myrtles and another of terebinth trees leading to a huge forest of olive trees, where King Dove was awaiting me in the midst of all his court.

As soon as he saw me, he signed for me to be helped down. Immediately two eagles of the guard extended their feet and carried me to the Prince. I respectfully attempted to embrace and to kiss his Majesty's little spurs, but he evaded me.

"I ask you", said he, "whether you know this bird."

At these words they showed me a parrot, which began to strut and flap its wings, when it perceived I was looking at it.

"It seems to me", I exclaimed to the King, "that I have seen it somewhere, but I am so confused by fear and joy that I cannot yet tell precisely where it was."

At these words the parrot came to me, embraced my face with its two wings and said:

"What! You do not recognise Cæsar, your cousin's parrot, on whose account you have so often maintained that birds reason? Just now, during your trial, it was I who tried to declare after the session what obligations I have to you, but the pain of seeing you in so great a peril made me fall into a swoon."

His speech completed the unsealing of my sight. Having recognised him I embraced and kissed him; he embraced and kissed me.

"'Tis you, then, my poor Cæsar", said I, "whose cage I opened to return you the liberty taken from you by the tyrannical custom of our world?"

The King interrupted our caresses and spoke to me to this effect:

"Man, with us a good action is never lost; for this reason, although as a man you deserve to die simply because you were born, the Senate pardons you your life. This act of recognition may well accompany that intelligence with which Nature enlightened your instinct, when she made you suspect in us that faculty of reasoning you were incapable of comprehending. Go then in peace and live happily."

He whispered some orders and my white ostrich, led by the two turtle-doves, carried me away from the assembly. After galloping me for about half a day, the ostrich left me near a forest, into which I plunged as soon as it had gone. There I began to taste the pleasure of liberty and of eating the honey which flowed down the bark of the trees. If my body could have resisted the exertion I think I should never have finished my walk, for the agreeable diversity of the place made me continually discover something more beautiful; but when at last I found myself worn out with fatigue I sank down upon the grass. Stretched out thus under the shadow of the trees I felt invited to sleep by the soft coolness and the silence of solitude, when an indistinct noise of confused voices, which I seemed to hear fluttering about me, woke me with a start.

The ground appeared very flat and did not bristle with any bush to interrupt the sight, and mine therefore ranged far afield among the forest trees; yet the murmur which reached my ear could only have come from close beside me. Listening more intently, I distinctly heard a sequence of Greek words, and among the conversation of a number of people I heard one expressing himself as follows:

"Doctor, one of my relatives, the three-headed Elm, informs me by a Finch, which he sends me, that he is sick of a hectic fever and of a moss disease, which covers him from head to foot. I beseech you, by your friendship for me, to prescribe something for him."

I remained a little time without hearing anything, but after a short space it seemed to me I heard this reply:

"Even if the three-headed Elm were not your relative, and even if this request were made me by the most outlandish of our species, instead of by you, who are my friend, my profession would nevertheless oblige me to help him. Tell the three-headed Elm that to cure his illness he must suck up as much damp and as little dry as possible; for this purpose he must send the small threads of his roots towards the wettest parts of his soil, converse only of cheerful matters, and every day listen to the music of a few excellent Nightingales. He will then let you know how he feels after this regime; and then, according to the development of his illness, when we have prepared his humours, some Stork among my friends will give him a clyster, which will set him fairly on the road to convalescence."

After these words I did not hear the least sound, but a quarter of an hour later a voice, which I think I had not before noticed, reached my ear; this is what it said:

"Are you asleep, forked tree?"

I heard another voice reply thus: "No, fresh bark, why?"

"Because", replied the voice which had first broken the silence, "I feel disturbed in the manner we are accustomed to be when those animals called Men approach us and I should like to ask if you feel the same thing."

Some time passed before the other replied, as if he were concentrating his most secret senses upon this investigation. Then he exclaimed: "By heaven! you are right, and I swear my organs are so filled with the presence of a man that I am very much deceived if there is not one very close at hand."

Several voices then exclaimed together that assuredly they perceived a man. However much I gazed about me on all sides I could not discover whence this speech came. At last, when I had a little recovered from the horror into which this event had cast me, I replied to that voice, which I thought I had noticed asking if there were a man there, that there was one.

"But I beg you", I went on immediately, "whoever you are speaking to me, to tell me where you are."

A moment after I heard these words: "We are in your presence, your eyes behold us and you do not see us! Behold the oaks upon which we feel your sight is resting, it is we who speak to you, and if you are surprised that we should speak a language used in the world whence you come, know that our first fathers were born there; they dwelt in Epirus in the forest of Dodona, [69] where their natural kindness caused them to render oracles to those who consulted them in trouble. For this purpose they learned the Greek language, at that time the most universal, in order to be understood; and because we descend from them, from father to son, the gift of prophecy has come down to us. Well, you must know that a large eagle who was sheltered by our fathers in Dodona could not go hunting because it had broken one of its hands and therefore fed upon the acorns furnished it by their branches, when, one day, tired of living in a world where it suffered, it took flight towards the Sun and continued its voyage so happily that at last it reached the luminous globe where we are now; but the heat of the climate on its arrival made it vomit; it threw up a number of undigested acorns; these acorns germinated and from them grew the oaks which were our ancestors.

"In this way we changed our dwelling-place. But although you hear us speak a human language, it does not mean that other trees express themselves in the same way; only those oaks issued from the forest of Dodona speak as you do. As to other plants, this is how they express themselves: have you never noticed that fine gentle breeze which never fails to breathe on the outskirts of woods? That is the breath of their speech, and the little murmur or the delicate noise by which they break the silence of their solitude is actually their language. But although the sound of forests always seems the same, it is really so different that every kind of plant has its own; the birch does not speak like the maple, nor the beech like the cherry-tree. If the silly people of your world heard me as I am now speaking, they would think there was a devil imprisoned under my bark; for, far from believing that we can reason, they do not even suppose that we have a sentient soul, although every day they see that at the first blow given a tree by the wood-cutter the wedge enters four times deeper into the flesh than at the second blow; from which they ought to conjecture that the first blow assuredly surprised the tree and struck it unexpectedly, then that,

immediately it was warned by the pain, it collected itself, united its forces to resist and became as it were petrified to combat the hardness of its enemy's weapon. But my intention is not to make the blind understand light; to me an individual is the whole race and the whole race is but an individual when that individual is not infected by the errors of the race; be attentive therefore, since when I speak to you I imagine I am speaking to the whole human race.

"In the first place you must know that almost all the concerts at which the birds make music are composed in praise of trees; moreover, to repay the care they take in celebrating our worthy actions, we are careful to hide their loves; for you must not imagine when you find so much difficulty in discovering one of their nests that this is the result of the prudence with which they have hidden it; it is the tree itself which folds its boughs all around the nest to protect its guest's family from the cruelties of man. To prove that this is so, observe the nests of those which are either born for the destruction of the birds, their fellow-citizens, like sparrow-hawks, hobbies, merlins, falcons, or of those which only speak to quarrel like jays and magpies, or of those which delight to terrify us, like owls and night-jars; you will notice that their nests are exposed to everybody's sight,^[70] because the tree holds its branches away from them in order that they may be taken.

"But it is unnecessary to mention so many details to prove that trees exercise all your functions both of the body and of the soul. Is there any one among you who has not noticed in the spring, when the Sun has delighted our bark with fertile sap, that we lengthen our boughs and spread them out, covered with fruit, on the breast of the earth whereof we are amorous? The earth, on its side, opens and is warmed with the same ardour; and as if each of our boughs were a male organ she draws near to join with them; and our boughs transported with pleasure discharge into her lap the seed with which she burns to conceive. She is nine months in forming this embryo before she brings it forth; but the tree, her husband, fearing the winter cold may harm her pregnancy, casts off his green robe to cover her, while to hide a little of his own nudity he is content with an old cloak of dead leaves.

"Well, you men eternally see these things and never perceive them; still more convincing things pass before your eyes and your stupidity is not even disturbed."

My attention was closely directed to the speech I heard from this arboreal voice and I was awaiting the remainder when it suddenly ceased speaking in a tone similar to that of a person who is prevented from speaking by short breath.

When I found it altogether obstinate in its silence I conjured it by everything I thought might move it to deign to instruct a person who had risked the perils of so great a voyage only for the purpose of learning. At the same time I heard two or three voices making the same supplication for love of me and then I distinguished one, saying to it as if it had been annoyed:

"Well, since you complain so much of your lungs, take a rest, and I will tell him the 'Story of the Lover-Trees'."

"Oh you, whoever you may be", cried I, throwing myself upon my knees, "the wisest of all the oaks of Dodona, who deign to take the trouble to instruct me, know that your lesson is not wasted upon one who is ungrateful; if ever I return to my native globe I make a vow that I will publish the marvels which you do me the honour to let me witness."

As I finished this protestation I heard the same voice continue thus: "Little man, look twelve or fifteen paces to your right hand, you will see two twin trees of moderate height intertwining their branches and their roots and trying in a thousand ways to make themselves one."

I turned my eyes towards these love-plants and I noticed that the leaves of both were lightly agitated by a half-voluntary emotion, while their rustling created a murmur so delicate that it scarcely reached the ear; and yet one would have said that by this means they were trying to question and answer each other.

When the time necessary for me to notice this double plant had passed, my good friend the oak took up the thread of his discourse thus:

"You cannot have lived so long without the famous friendship of Pylades and Orestes coming to your knowledge?

"I would describe to you all the joys of a gentle passion and I would relate to you all the miracles with which these lovers have astonished their age, did I not fear that so much light would dazzle the eyes of your reason, and therefore I will only paint these two young Suns in their eclipse.

"It will suffice you then to know that one day in battle the brave Orestes sought his dear Pylades, to taste the pleasure of conquering or dying in his presence. When he perceived him in the midst of a hundred arms of iron lifted above his head, alas! what did he become? He rushed despairingly through a forest of pikes, he shouted, he howled, he foamed; but how badly I express the horror of his movements in his despair! He pulled out his hair, he gnawed his hands, he tore his wounds; and at the end of this description I am obliged to say that the means of expressing his grief died with him. When he thought to cut a path with his sword to rescue Pylades, a mountain of men opposed his passage. Yet he cut through them; and after trampling long over the bloody trophies of his victory, little by little he approached Pylades; but Pylades seemed to him so near death that he scarcely dared ward off his enemies any more for fear of surviving the thing for which he lived: to see his eyes filled already with the shadows of death one would even have said he tried to poison the murderers of his friend with his looks. At last Pylades fell lifeless; and the amorous Orestes, feeling his own life ready to leave his lips, yet retained it until his wandering sight sought and found Pylades among the dead, when, kissing his mouth, he seemed as if he would throw his soul into his friend's body.^[71]

"The younger of these heroes died of grief on the body of his friend; and you must know that from their rotting flesh (which doubtless had fertilised the earth) there sprang up among the whitening bones of their skeletons two young saplings, whose trunks and branches mingled together and seemed to hasten their growth only to twine more closely together. It was apparent they had changed their being without forgetting what they had been; for their perfumed buds leaned one upon the other and warmed each other with their breath as if to make them open more quickly. But what shall I say of the loving portioning maintained by their fraternity? Never was the juice in which nourishment resides offered to their stock but that they shared it with ceremony. Never was one of them ill-nourished but that the other was sick with weariness; both drew from the breasts of their nurse within as you suckle them from without. Finally these happy lovers produced apples, and such miraculous apples that they performed even more miracles than their Fathers. Those who ate the apples of one tree immediately became passionately in love with anyone who had eaten the fruit of the other. And this happened almost every day, because the shoots of Pylades surrounded,

or were surrounded by, those of Orestes, and their almost twin fruits could not resolve to part from each other.

"Nature, however, had differentiated the energy of their double essence so carefully that when the fruit of one of the trees was eaten by a man and the fruit of the other tree by another man, this caused a reciprocal friendship and when the same thing happened to two persons of different sex it caused love, but a vigorous love which retained the character of its cause; for although this fruit proportioned its effect to the eater's capacity, softening its virtue in a woman, it still preserved something masculine.

"It must also be noticed that he who ate more of the fruit was the more beloved. This fruit failed not to be very sweet and very beautiful, since nothing is so beautiful and so sweet as friendship; and these two qualities of beauty and goodness which are never met with in one person caused them to be in such repute. How many times have its miraculous virtues multiplied the copies of Orestes and Pylades! Since that time have been seen Hercules and Theseus, Achilles and Patroclus, Nisus and Euryalus; in short, an innumerable number, who by more than human friendships have consecrated their memory in the temple of eternity. Cuttings were taken to Peloponnesus and the drill-ground, where the Thebans trained their youth, was ornamented with them. These twin trees were planted in lines and at that season of the year when the fruit hangs upon the boughs, the young men, who went to the park every day, were tempted by the beauty of the fruit and did not abstain from eating it: usually their courage felt the effect at once. They were seen to exchange souls pell-mell; each of them became the half of the other, lived less in himself than in his friend, while the most cowardly would attempt dangerous things for his friend's sake.

"This heavenly malady warmed their blood with so noble an ardour that by the advice of the wisest men this band of lovers was enrolled for war in the same company. Since that time, on account of the noble deeds they performed, they have been called the Sacred Band.^[72] Its exploits went far beyond anything Thebes had imagined; for in battle each of these brave men dared such incredible efforts to protect his lover or to deserve his love that Antiquity saw nothing like it; and as long as that company of lovers existed, the Thebans, who before that time were considered the worst soldiers of all Greece, fought and always overcame the most warlike peoples of the earth, from even the Lacedemonians downwards.

"But among an infinite number of praiseworthy actions produced by these apples they innocently caused some which were very shameful.

"Myrrha,^[73] a young lady of quality, ate of them with Cinyrus, her father; unhappily one ate of Pylades and the other of Orestes. Love immediately swallowed up Nature and confused it to such an extent that Cinyrus could swear 'I am my son-in-law' and Myrrha 'I am my stepmother'. In short, I think it sufficient to tell you, in order that you should understand the whole crime, that at the end of nine months the father became the grandfather of those he begat and the daughter brought forth her brothers.

"But chance was not content with this crime alone; it willed that a bull, having entered the gardens of King Minos, unhappily found some apples under a tree of Orestes and devoured them; I say unhappily, because Queen Pasiphaë ate this fruit every day. They became madly in love with each other. I shall not explain their enormous pleasure; suffice it to say that Pasiphaë was plunged in a crime which hitherto had no example.

"The famous sculptor Pygmalion precisely at that time was carving a marble Venus in the palace. The Queen, who delighted in good workmen, presented him with a couple of these apples; he ate the finest; and because he chanced to lack water, which, as you know, is necessary to the cutting of marble, he moistened his statue with the juice. The marble penetrated at the same time by this juice, little by little grew soft; and the energetic virtue of the apple carrying on its labour according to the workman's plan followed within the image the features it had met with on the surface, for it dilated, warmed and coloured in natural proportions the parts it met with in its passage. Finally the marble became living and touched by the apple's passion embraced Pygmalion with all the strength of her heart; and Pygmalion, transported by reciprocal love, received her for his wife.

"In the same Province the youthful Iphis had eaten of this fruit with the beautiful Ianthë, her companion, in all the circumstances necessary to cause a reciprocal friendship. Their eating was followed by the customary effect; but because Iphis found the fruit to be of a very agreeable taste she ate so many that her friendship, increasing with the number of apples of which she was insatiable, usurped all the functions of love and this love by increasing little by little became more masculine and more vigorous; for her whole body, imbued with this fruit, burned to form the movements which

coincided with the enthusiasms of its will and moved its matter so powerfully that it fashioned itself much stronger organs, able to carry out its thought and to content its love wholly to the most virile extent; that is to say, Iphis became what is needed to espouse a woman.

"I should call this adventure a miracle if I had any other name to describe the following event:

"A very accomplished young man called Narcissus had deserved by his love the affection of a very beautiful girl, whom the poets have celebrated under the name of Echo. But, as you know, even more than those of our sex, women are never so beloved as they desire; and she, having heard the virtues of these apples of Orestes greatly commended, went about to collect them from several places; and because she was fearful and her love apprehended the apples of one tree might have less strength than those of the other, she willed him to taste of both; but he had scarcely eaten them when Echo's image was effaced from his memory, all his love turned towards the person who had digested the fruit, he was the lover and the beloved; for the substance derived from the apple of Pylades embraced within him that from the apple of Orestes. This twin fruit, extending through the whole of his blood, excited all the parts of his body to caress themselves. His heart, into which flowed their double virtue, darted its flames within; all his limbs animated by his passion desired to penetrate each other. Even his image, which burned in the coldness of pools, attracted his body to join with it; in short, poor Narcissus became madly in love with himself. I shall not be so tedious as to relate to you his deplorable catastrophe; past ages have already sufficiently spoken of it and I have still two adventures to tell you, which will better fill up the time.

"You must know that the beautiful Salmacis frequented the shepherd Hermaphrodite, but with no familiarity beyond that authorised by the vicinity of their homes, when Fortune, who delights to trouble the most peaceful lives, permitted that Hermaphrodite should win the prize for running and Salmacis that for beauty in a meeting for games, where the prizes for beauty and running were two of these apples. They had been plucked together, but from different boughs, because these amorous fruits mingle with such cunning that one from Pylades is always met with beside one from Orestes; and their appearing to be twins was the cause that they were usually plucked in pairs. The beautiful Salmacis ate her apple and the

gentle Hermaphrodite placed his in his shepherd's scrip. Salmacis, inspired by the enthusiasms of her apple, and of the shepherd's apple, which began to grow warm in his scrip, felt attracted towards him by the sympathetic ebb and flow of her apple with the other.

"The shepherd's parents, perceiving the nymph's desires, tried to preserve and to increase them, because of the advantages they perceived in this alliance; and therefore, having heard these twin apples vaunted as a fruit whose juice inclines the mind to love, they distilled some of them and found means to cause their son and his mistress to drink the purest quintessence. They had sublimated its energy to the highest degree it could attain and thereby lighted in these lovers' hearts so vehement a desire of joining together that at first sight Hermaphrodite was absorbed in Salmacis and Salmacis melted away in the arms of Hermaphrodite. They passed into each other and they composed from two persons of different sex a double 'something', which was neither man nor woman. When Hermaphrodite desired to enjoy Salmacis he found he was the nymph herself; and when Salmacis desired to be embraced by Hermaphrodite she felt she was the shepherd. Yet this double 'something' retained its unity; it begat and conceived without being either man or woman. In short, Nature here produced a marvel, which she has never since been able to prevent from being unique.

"Well, are not these astonishing stories? They are; for to see a daughter lie with her father; a young princess satisfy the desires of a bull; a man yearn to enjoy a stone; another marry with himself; to see one celebrate as a girl a marriage she consummates as a boy, cease to be a man without beginning to be a woman, become double outside the mother's womb and twin of a person who is no relative; all these are very distant from the ordinary paths of Nature. And yet what I am about to tell you will surprise you even more.

"Among the sumptuous diversity of all sorts of fruits brought from the most distant climates for the wedding banquet of Cambyzes, they presented him with a graft of Orestes, which he inserted in a plane-tree; and among other delicacies, at dessert they put before him apples of the same tree.

"The agreeable taste of the fruit led him to eat a great deal of it; and after the three digestions, which converted the substance of this fruit into a perfect germ, he formed from it in the queen's womb the embryo of his son

Artaxerxes; for all the details of his life caused his doctors to conjecture that he must have been produced in this way.

"When this prince's youthful heart was of an age to merit Love's anger it was noticed that he did not sigh for his own kind; he loved only trees, orchards and woods; but above all those to which he appeared tender, the plane-tree on which his father Cambyzes had formerly grafted the shoot of Orestes consumed him with love.

"His temperament followed so scrupulously the plane-tree's progress that he seemed to grow with the branches of that tree; every day he went to embrace it; in his sleep he dreamed of nothing else; and he transacted all his business under the curve of its green tapestry. It was perceived that the plane-tree, pierced by a reciprocal ardour, was ravished by his caresses; for suddenly, without any apparent reason, its leaves were seen to stir and as it were to thrill with joy, the branches curved down upon his head as if to make him a crown and descended so near his face that it was easy to perceive this was rather to kiss him than from a natural tendency to grow downwards. It was even noticed that the tree jealously ranged and pressed its leaves together for fear lest the rays of daylight as they glided through should also kiss him. The king for his part placed no limits to his love. He caused his bed to be made at the foot of the plane-tree and the plane-tree, not knowing how to repay such friendship, gave him the most precious thing trees have—honey and dew—which it distilled every morning upon him.

"Their caresses would have lasted longer if death, the enemy of all beautiful things, had not ended them. Artaxerxes expired of love in the embraces of his dear plane-tree; and all the Persians, afflicted at the loss of so good a prince, decreed (in order to give him some satisfaction after death) that his body should be burned with the branches of this tree, without any other wood being used to consume him.

"When the pyre was lighted its flame was seen to knit with that of the body's fat and their burning hair curled together and diminished in pyramid shape until it was out of sight.

"This pure and subtle fire did not divide; but when it reached the Sun, to which as you know all igneous matter tends, it formed the germ of the apple-tree of Orestes, which you see there on your right hand.

"Now the seed of this fruit is lost in your world and this misfortune happened as follows:

"Fathers and mothers, who, as you know, in directing their families, are governed only by interest, were angry that their children as soon as they had tasted these apples bestowed on their friend everything they possessed; and so the parents burned as many of these plants as they could discover. The extinction of the race is the reason why a true friend is no longer found.

"As these trees were consumed by fire the rains which fell on them calcined the ashes, so that the congealed juice petrified in the same way that the humour of burnt fern is metamorphosed into glass; and thus in all the countries of the Earth the ashes of these twin trees formed two metallic stones called to-day the iron and the loadstone, which, because of the sympathy of the fruits of Pylades and Orestes, whose virtue they have always preserved, aspire every day to embrace; and notice that if the piece of loadstone is larger it attracts the iron, but if the piece of iron exceeds the other in quantity it attracts the loadstone, as happened of old in the miraculous effect of the apples of Pylades and Orestes; for whoever had eaten more of one of them was the more beloved by him who had eaten of the other.

"Well, iron feeds upon the loadstone and the loadstone feeds upon iron so visibly that the one grows rusty and the other loses its strength unless they are brought together to repair what is lost of their substance.

"Have you never observed a piece of loadstone placed on iron filings? In a flash you see the loadstone covered with these metallic atoms; and they grip with such amorous ardour so suddenly and so impatiently that after they have embraced everywhere you would say there is not a grain of loadstone which does not desire to kiss a grain of iron, and not a grain of iron which does not wish to unite with a grain of loadstone; for the iron and the loadstone, when separated, continually send out from their bulk the most active small bodies in search of what they love, but when they have found it and have nothing more to desire, each terminates its travels; the loadstone spends its repose in the possession of the iron, as the iron collects all its being to enjoy the loadstone. It is therefore from the sap of these two trees that the moisture flowed from which these two metals were born. Before that they were unknown; and if you wish to know from what matter they

manufactured weapons of war—Samson armed himself with the jaw-bone of an ass against the Philistines; Jupiter, King of Crete, with artificial fire by means of which he imitated thunder and overcame his enemies; and Hercules conquered tyrants and tamed monsters with a club. But these two metals have another much more specific relation to our two trees. You must know that although this lifeless couple of lovers turn towards the pole, they never do so except in each other's company; and I will discover to you the reason of this after I have discoursed to you a little about the poles.

"The poles are the mouths of the sky by which it takes in the light, heat and influences it has diffused upon the Earth; otherwise, if all the treasures of the Sun did not return to their source it would long ago be extinct (since its light is only a dust of burning atoms shed from its globe) and would shine no more or else this abundance of small igneous bodies heaped continually upon the Earth would already have consumed it. Therefore, as I have said, the sky must have vent-holes by which the repletions of the Earth are cast out and others by which the sky can repair its losses, so that the eternal circulation of these little bodies of life may successively penetrate all the globes of this great universe. Now the vent-holes of Heaven are the poles by means of which it feeds upon the souls of everything that dies in its worlds and all the planets are the mouths and pores by whose means its spirits are exhaled afresh. And to show you that this is not so novel a fancy, observe that when your ancient poets, to whom philosophy had discovered the most hidden secrets of Nature, were speaking of a hero and desired to say that his soul was gone to dwell with the Gods, they expressed themselves thus: *'He has risen to the pole; he is seated above the pole; he has passed the pole:'* because they knew that the poles were the only entrances by which the sky receives all that has left it. If the authority of these great men does not fully satisfy you, the experience of those moderns who have travelled towards the north will perhaps content you. They have found that the nearer they approach the Bear during the six months of night, when it was thought this country was entirely black, the horizon was illuminated by a great light, which could only come from the pole, because the nearer they approached it, and consequently the farther they drew from the Sun, the larger the light became. It is therefore very probable that this light proceeds from rays of daylight and from a great heap of souls which, as you know, are made of luminous atoms alone, returning to the sky by their accustomed portals.

"After that it is not difficult to understand why iron rubbed with loadstone or loadstone rubbed with iron turns towards the pole; for since they are extracted from the bodies of Pylades and Orestes and have always preserved the propensities of the two trees, as the two trees preserved those of the two lovers, they must aspire to rejoin their soul, and so they strain towards the pole, whither they feel it has risen, with this proviso, that the iron does not turn unless it is rubbed by the loadstone nor the loadstone if it is not rubbed by the iron, because iron will not abandon a world without its friend, loadstone, nor loadstone without its friend, iron; and they cannot resolve to make this voyage without each other."

I think the voice was going to begin another discourse; but it was prevented by the noise of a loud alarm; the whole forest in disturbance echoed with the words: *Beware the plague!* and *Pass it on!*

I begged the tree, which had talked to me so long, to inform me what was the reason of this great disorder.

"My friend", it said, "in this district we have not yet received precise details of the misfortune; I can only tell you in three words that the plague by which we are menaced is what men call a conflagration; and we may well name it a plague, for among us no disease is so contagious. The remedy we shall apply to it is to hold our breath and then to blow all together on the place whence the conflagration is moving, in order to repulse this dangerous air. I think this burning fever has been brought to us by a Fire-Beast, which for some days has been wandering about these woods; for since these beasts never go without fire and cannot do without it, this one no doubt has set fire to one of our trees.

"We have sent for the Ice-Animal to come to our aid; but it has not yet arrived. But now farewell, I have no time to talk to you, I must think of the common safety; and you yourself should take to flight, otherwise you run the risk of being involved in our ruin."

I followed its advice, but without hurrying very much, because I knew my legs. However I was so ignorant of the plan of that country that at the end of ten hours' walking I found myself behind the forest I thought I was avoiding; and to increase my apprehension, a hundred terrible thunder-claps shook my brain, while the pale dismal light of a thousand flashes of lightning quenched my eye-balls.

From moment to moment they increased with such fury one would have said the foundations of the world were about to collapse; yet, in spite of it all, the sky never appeared clearer. I was unable to find reasons for this and my desire of knowing the cause of so extraordinary an event urged me to walk towards the place whence the noise seemed to come.

I walked for about four hundred *stadia*, at the end of which I perceived in the middle of a very large field what looked like two balls which, after moving round each other for a very long time with a humming noise, came together and then recoiled; and I observed that the moment of the shock was that when these great noises were heard. Drawing nearer I perceived that what at a distance had seemed to me to be two balls were two animals; one of them, although round at the base, formed a triangle from the middle, and its very high head with red hair streaming upwards narrowed off in a pyramid shape, while its body was filled with holes like a sieve and one could see through these hollow places, which served it as pores, little flames issuing forth which seemed to cover it with fiery plumage.

Walking round I met a most venerable old man looking at this wonderful combat with as much curiosity as I. He signed to me to approach; I obeyed and we sat down beside each other.

I was about to ask him what motive had brought him into this country, but he closed my mouth with these words:

"Well, you shall know the motive which brought me into this country."

And immediately he related to me at length all the details of his journey. I leave you to imagine whether or no I was astounded. But my amazement was increased, for just as I was burning to ask him what demon revealed my thoughts to him, he exclaimed:

"No, no, 'twas not a demon revealed your thoughts to me."

This new trick of divination caused me to observe him with more attention than before and I noticed he was imitating my carriage, my gestures, my appearance, placed all his limbs and disposed all the features of his face on the pattern of mine; in short, my shadow in relief would not have represented me better.

"I see", he went on, "you are anxious to know why I imitate you, and I am glad to tell you. Know then that in order to understand what goes on inside

you, I arrange all the parts of my body in an order similar to yours; for, by arranging all parts of me like you, I excite in myself by this disposal of my matter the same thought that is produced in you by this same disposal of your matter.

"You will conceive this effect to be possible if you have ever before observed that twins resembling each other have generally similar minds, passions and wills; to such an extent that two doubles were met with in Paris who had always undergone the same illnesses and the same health, had married without knowing the other's intention at the same hour of the same day, wrote each other letters, whose sense, wording and construction were the same and who composed the same sort of verses on the same subject, with the same conceits, the same turn and the same order. But you must see that if the composition of the organs of their bodies were similar in all circumstances they could only act in a similar manner, just as two equal instruments equally struck must give forth an equal harmony; and so when I model my body on yours and become, as it were, your twin, the same movement of matter must cause us both the same movement of the mind."

After this he again settled himself to imitate me and went on thus: "You are now very anxious to know the origin of the battle of these two monsters, whereof I will inform you. Learn then that the trees of the forest behind us were not able to repulse the violent efforts of the Fire-Beast with their breath and therefore sought the aid of the Ice-Animal."

"I have only heard these animals spoken of", I said, "by an oak in this country, but this was in great haste, for it was only thinking of its safety; and so I beg you will inform me."

He spoke in this way: "In this globe where we are the woods would be very scattered, on account of the desolation caused them by the large number of Fire-Beasts, but for the Ice-Animals which every day at the request of their friends the forests come to heal these sick trees; I say heal, because as soon as their icy mouth breathes upon the coals of this plague they are extinguished.

"In the world of the Earth, whence you come and whence I come, the Fire-Beast is called a Salamander and the Ice-Animal is known by the name of Remora.^[74] Well, you must know that the Remora dwells towards the extremity of the pole in the deepest part of the frozen sea, and it is the cold

which evaporates from these fishes through their scales, which in those districts freezes the sea-water, although it is salt.

"The greater part of the pilots who have sailed to discover Greenland have noticed at one season of the year that the ice which stopped them at other seasons was no longer to be met with; but although this sea was free of ice at the time when winter is at its harshest they have not failed to attribute the cause to the melting of the ice by some secret warmth; but it is much more likely that the Remoræ, which feed on nothing but ice, had absorbed them at that time. You must know then that some months after they are filled this terrible digestion makes their bellies so cold that the mere breath they exhale freezes the whole Polar Sea again. When they come out on land (for they live in both elements) they feed on nothing but hemlock, aconite, opium, and mandragora.

"In our world people wonder whence come those chilly north winds, which always bring the frosts with them; but if our compatriots knew, as we do, that the Remoræ inhabit that climate, they would understand, as we do, that these winds come from the breath wherewith these fishes attempt to repulse the heat of the Sun as it approaches them.

"That Stygian water used to poison the great Alexander, whose cold petrified his entrails, was the piss of one of these animals. In short, the Remora contains so eminently all the principles of cold that when it passes under a ship, the ship is gripped by cold and remains so benumbed it cannot move from where it is. That is the reason why half of those who have sailed northward to discover the pole never returned, because it would be a miracle if the Remoræ, whose number is so great in that sea, did not stop their vessels. So much for the Ice-Animals.

"As to the Fire-Beasts, they dwell in the earth under mountains lighted by bitumen, such as Ætna, Vesuvius and the Red Cape. The pimples you see on this one's throat, which proceed from the inflammation of its liver, are...."
[\[75\]](#)

After that we remained without speaking to watch this extraordinary duel.

The Salamander attacked with great ardour, but the Remora withstood him impenetrably. Each blow they exchanged caused a clap of thunder, as it

happens in the worlds round about where the meeting of a warm with a cold cloud excites the same noise.

At every glance of anger cast by the Salamander upon its enemy there came from its eyes a red light, which seemed to burn the air as it flew along; the beast sweated boiling oil and pissed acid.

The Remora, on its side, fat, square, and heavy, showed a body all scaly with icicles. Its large eyes looked like two crystal plates, whose glances carried with them so benumbing a light that I felt winter shiver upon every limb of my body it looked at. If I put my hand before me, it was numbed; the very air about the beast, attacked by its rigour, grew thick with snow, the earth hardened under its feet; and I could trace the footprints of the beast by the chilblains which greeted me when I walked above them.

At the beginning of the fight the Salamander had made the Remora sweat by the vigorous attack of its first ardour; but at length this sweat growing cold enamelled the whole plain with so slippery a frost that the Salamander could not join battle with the Remora without falling. The philosopher and I could easily see it was tired from falling and rising up again so often; for the thunder-claps created by the shock as it struck its enemy, which were before so terrible, were now only the dull sound of those small rumbles which mark the end of a storm; and this dull sound, diminishing little by little, degenerated into a hissing like that of a red-hot iron plunged into cold water.

When the Remora perceived the combat was drawing to an end by the weakening of the shock which now scarcely shook it, it rose up on one angle of its cube and let itself fall with the whole of its weight on the Salamander's belly so successfully that the poor Salamander's heart, in which all the remainder of its heat was concentrated, made so horrible a noise in bursting that I know nothing in Nature to compare with it.

Thus died the Fire-Beast beneath the passive resistance of the Ice-Animal.
[\[76\]](#)

Some time after the Remora had retired we approached the field of battle and the old man, having covered his hands with the earth on which it had walked as a preservative against burns, picked up the Salamander's corpse.

"With this animal's body", said he, "I shall need no fire in my kitchen; for as long as it is hung on the jack it will roast and boil everything I put on the hearth. As for the eyes, I shall keep them carefully; if they were cleansed from the shadows of death you would take them for two little suns. In our world the ancients knew how to make use of them; they called them Perpetual Lamps and they were only hung in the pompous sepulchres of illustrious persons. In excavating certain of these famous tombs our moderns have met with some of them, but broke them in their ignorant curiosity by thinking to discover behind the broken membranes the fire they had seen shining through."

The old man continued to walk and I followed him, listening to the marvels he told me. Now, as touching the combat, I must not forget the conversation we had concerning the Ice-Animal:

"I do not think", said he, "that you have ever seen a Remora^[77]; for these fishes never rise to the surface of the water and hardly ever leave the Northern Ocean. But doubtless you have seen certain animals which to some extent might be said to be of their species. I told you a little while ago that the sea about the pole is filled with Remoræ, who cast their fry on the mud like other fishes. You must know that this seed, the extract of their whole mass, contains all its cold so eminently that if a ship sails over it, the vessel contracts one or several worms which become birds, whose cold blood causes them to be placed in the order of fishes, although they have wings; and therefore the Holy Father, who knows their origin, does not forbid them to be eaten in Lent. They are what you call barnacle-geese."^[78]

I continued walking with no other purpose than that of following him, so delighted at having found a man that I dared not take my eyes from him, I was so afraid of losing him.

"Young mortal", said he, "(for I see you have not yet, like me, paid that tribute we all owe to Nature), as soon as I saw you I recognised in your face something which makes one anxious to pursue the acquaintance. If I am not mistaken, from the circumstances of your body's conformation you must be French, and a native of Paris. That town is the place where I ended my misfortunes after having carried them through all Europe.

"I am called Campanella and I am a Calabrian by birth. Since I came to the Sun I have spent my time in visiting the countries of this great globe to discover their wonders. It is divided into kingdoms, republics, states and principalities, like the Earth. Thus the quadrupeds, the birds, the plants, the stones, all have their own states; and although some of them do not allow animals of a different species to enter, particularly men, whom, above all, the birds hate with a deadly hatred, I can travel everywhere without running any risk, because a philosopher's soul is composed of particles much finer than the instruments they would use to torment him. Happily I was in the province of the trees when the Salamander's disturbances began; those great thunder-claps, you must have heard as well as I, guided me to their battlefield, where you arrived a moment afterwards. For the rest, I am returning to the province of philosophers...."

"What", said I, "are there philosophers in the Sun, too?"

"There are, indeed", replied the good man, "yes, they are the principal inhabitants of the Sun and the very same who so fill the mouth of fame in your world. You may soon converse with them, if you have the courage to follow me; for I hope to set foot in their town before three days have passed. I do not suppose you can conceive in what manner these great geniuses were transported here?"

"No, indeed", I exclaimed, "have so many other people had their eyes closed hitherto not to have found the way? Or after death do we fall into the hands of an Examiner of Spirits who, according to our capacity, grants or refuses us rights of citizenship in the Sun?"

"Nothing of the kind", replied the old man, "souls come to join this mass of light by a principle of similarity; for this world is formed of nothing but the spirits of all who die in the surrounding orbs, such as Mercury, Venus, the Earth, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn.

"Thus, as soon as a plant, a beast, a man, expire, their souls rise to its sphere, just as you see a candle flame fly there in a point, in spite of the soot which holds its feet. Now, when all these souls are united to the source of the day and purged of the gross matter which impeded them, they exercise functions far more noble than those of growing, feeling and reasoning; they are used to form the blood and vital spirits of the Sun, that vast and perfect

animal. And therefore you should not doubt that the Sun works intellectually much more perfectly than you, since it is by means of the heat of a million of these rectified souls (whereof its own is an elixir, since it knows the secret of life), that it infuses into the matter of your world the power of procreation, renders bodies capable of consciousness and, in short, is visible and makes all things visible.

"I have now to explain to you why the souls of philosophers are not essentially joined to the mass of the Sun like those of other men.

"There are three orders of spirits in all the planets, that is in the little worlds which move around this one.

"The grossest merely serve to repair the Sun's mass. The subtle insinuate themselves in the place of its rays; but those of philosophers, having acquired nothing impure during their exile, arrive complete to inhabit the sphere of day. Now, they do not become like others an integral part of its mass, because the matter which composes them at the point of their begetting is so exactly mingled that nothing can separate it; like the matter which forms gold, diamonds and the stars, whose parts are so closely mingled and intertwined, the strongest dissolvent could not loosen their embrace.

"Now the souls of philosophers are in respect to other souls what gold, diamonds and the stars are in respect to other bodies, and Epicurus in the Sun is the same Epicurus who formerly lived on the Earth."

The pleasure I received in listening to this man shortened the road for me and I often led the conversation expressly towards learned and curious matters, upon which I solicited his thought for my better instruction. And truly I have never seen kindness so great as his; for although through the agility of his substance he could have reached the kingdom of philosophers by himself in a very few days, he preferred to delay with me rather than to abandon me in those vast solitudes.

However, he was in a hurry; for I remember I asked him why he was returning before he had visited all the regions of that great world and he replied that he was obliged to interrupt his voyage, because of his impatience to see one of his friends, who had recently arrived. From subsequent parts of his talk I perceived that this friend was that famous

philosopher of our time, Monsieur Descartes, and that he was only hastening to join him.

When I asked him in what esteem he held his *Physics*, he replied that we should only read it with that respect we listen to the pronouncement of Oracles.

"The science of natural things", he added, "like other sciences, is forced to preoccupy our judgment with axioms it does not prove; but the principles of his are simple and so natural that, once granted, there are no others which more necessarily satisfy all appearances."

At this point I could not prevent myself from interrupting:

"But", said I, "it seems to me that this philosopher has always denied a void; and yet, although he was an Epicurean, in order to have the honour of giving a principle to the principles of Epicurus, that is to atoms, he established for the beginning of things a chaos of wholly solid matter, which God divided into an innumerable number of little squares, to each of which He imparted different movements. Now, he maintains that these cubes by rubbing against each other have become ground down into particles of all kinds of shapes; but how can he conceive that these square pieces could have begun to move separately without admitting that a void was formed between their angles? Must there not necessarily have been a void in those spaces which the angles of these squares were compelled to leave in order to move? And then, since these squares only occupied a certain space before moving, could they be changed into a circle without occupying in their circumference as much space? Geometry teaches us that this cannot be, that therefore half of this space must have remained void, since there were not enough atoms to fill it."

My philosopher replied that Monsieur Descartes would explain it himself and that since he was born as obliging as philosophical he would certainly be delighted to find in this world a mortal man to enlighten him on a hundred doubts, which the surprise of death had forced him to leave on the Earth from which he had departed^[79]; that for his part he did not think there was so much difficulty in replying to it according to those principles which I had only examined as far as the weakness of my mind permitted me, "Because", said he, "the works of this great man are so full and so subtle that to understand them demands an attention which calls for the soul of a

true and consummate philosopher; for which reason there is not a philosopher in the Sun but has veneration for him, to such an extent that no one would contest his occupying the first rank, did not his modesty cause him to shun it.

"To lighten the fatigue which the length of the way might bring you, we will discuss this matter according to his principles, which are assuredly so clear and seem to satisfy everything so well through the admirable light of this great genius, that it seems as if he took part in the lovely and magnificent structure of this universe.

"You remember he says our understanding is finite; and since matter is divisible to infinity it is past doubt that this is one of the things our understanding can neither comprehend nor imagine and is indeed too far above it for it to explain.

"But, although this cannot be perceived by the senses, we do not fail to conceive that this happens, through the knowledge we have of matter; and we should not, he says, hesitate to order our judgment on things whereof we conceive. Indeed can we imagine the way in which the soul acts upon the body? Yet that truth cannot be denied nor doubted; while it is a much greater absurdity to attribute to void an extension which is a property belonging to the body of space, seeing that here the idea of nothing is confounded with that of being and qualities are attributed to that which can produce nothing and cannot be the author of anything. But, poor mortal, I feel that these speculations tire you, because, as that excellent man says, 'You have never taken the trouble to purify your mind from the mass of your body, and because you have rendered it so lazy that it will no longer perform any of its functions without the help of the senses.'"

I was about to reply when he touched my arm to point out to me a valley of marvellous beauty.

"Do you perceive", said he, "that incline by which we are about to descend? It is as if the crests of the surrounding hills were expressly crowned with trees to invite passers-by to rest in the coolness of their shade.

"At the foot of one of those hills the Lake of Sleep has its source; it is made of the fluid of five springs alone. If it did not mingle with the three rivers

and thicken their waters with its weight no animal in our world could sleep."

I cannot express the impatience I felt to question him about these three rivers, which I had never heard of before. But I was contented by his promising me that I should see everything.

We soon reached the valley and almost at the same time the carpet which borders this great lake.

"Truly", said Campanella, "you are fortunate to behold all the marvels of this world before you die; it is well for the inhabitants of your globe to have produced a man who can inform them of the Sun's marvels since without you they were in danger of living in gross ignorance and of enjoying a hundred agreeable things without knowing whence they come; for it is not to be imagined what liberalities the Sun pours upon all your little globes; this valley alone scatters an infinite number of gifts through all the universe, without which you could not live nor even see the light of day. It seems to me that to have seen this country is sufficient to make you admit that the Sun is your Father and the Author of all things."^[80] The five rivulets which debouch here flow only fifteen or sixteen hours; and yet when they arrive they seem so tired they can scarcely move; but they show their weariness in very different ways. Sight narrows as it approaches the Pool of Sleep; Hearing as it debouches grows confused, wanders and is lost in the mud; Smell creates a murmur like that of a man snoring; Taste, deadened from the way, becomes wholly insipid, and Touch, formerly so powerful that it harboured all its companions, is reduced to hiding its dwelling-place. The Nymph of Peace, who lives in the midst of the Lake, receives her guests with open arms, lays them in her bed, and indulges them with such delicacy that she herself takes the trouble to cradle them to put them to sleep. Some time after they have been mingled in this vast round pond they are seen to divide again at the other end into five rivulets, which, as they leave, take up again the names they abandoned on entering. But the most impatient of the party (who worry their companions to set out again) are Hearing and Touch; as for the three others they wait for these two to arouse them, and Taste especially always lags behind the others."^[81]

"The black concave of a grotto arches over the Lake of Sleep. Quantities of tortoises walk slowly on the bank; a thousand poppy flowers reflected in the

water give it the power of putting to sleep; for fifty leagues round even the marmots come to drink of it and the whisper of the stream is so delightful that it seems to rustle over the pebbles in measure and to compose a sleepy music."

The wise Campanella no doubt saw that I should be affected by it to some extent and therefore advised me to increase my pace. I should have obeyed him, but the charms of this water had so enveloped my reason that I retained scarce enough to understand these last words:

"Sleep, then, sleep, and I will leave you; the dreams one has here are so perfect that some day you will be glad to remember what you are about to dream. I will amuse myself by visiting the rarities of the place and then I will rejoin you."

I do not think he spoke any more, or else the fumes of sleep had already placed me in a state where I was incapable of hearkening to him.

I was in the midst of the wisest and best conceived dream imaginable, when my philosopher awakened me. I will relate it to you later on, when it will not interrupt the thread of my discourse, for it is very important for you to know it, so that you may understand with what liberty the mind of an inhabitant of the Sun acts, while his senses are imprisoned by sleep.^[82] For my part I think that this Lake exhales an air which has the property of purifying completely the mind from the embarrassment of the senses; for nothing is presented to your thought by it which does not seem to perfect and instruct you; for which reason I have the greatest respect in the world for those philosophers called Dreamers, whom our ignorant people mock at.

I opened my eyes with a start. It seems to me I heard him say:

"Mortal, you have slept enough; rise up, if you wish to see a rarity which would never even be imagined in your world. For an hour since I left you, in order not to disturb your repose, I have been walking alongside the five streams, which flow out of the Pool of Sleep. You may imagine how attentively I have observed them all; they bear the names of the five Senses and flow very close together. Sight seems a forked tube filled with powdered diamonds and little mirrors, which steal and restore the images of everything that comes near, and in its course it circles the Kingdom of the lynxes; Hearing is similarly double, it turns in as many windings as a maze

and in the most hollow concaves of its bed can be heard an echo of every noise which sounds about it; I am very much deceived if I did not see foxes cleaning their ears beside it; Smell appears like the two preceding streams divided into two little hidden channels under a single arch; from everything it meets it extracts something invisible from which it composes a thousand kinds of smell, which occupy the place of water in it; on the banks of this stream may be seen many dogs purifying their noses; Taste flows in spurts, which usually only occur three or four times a day, and even then a large coral sluice-gate must be lifted up and underneath that a number of other very small ones, which are made of ivory; its fluid resembles saliva. But as to the fifth, the stream of Touch, it is so vast and so deep that it surrounds all its sisters, even lying full length in their bed, and its thick moisture is scattered far around on lawns completely green with sensitive plants.

"Now you must know that I was admiring, frozen with admiration, the mysterious turnings of all these streams when, as I walked on, I reached the place where they flow into the three rivers. But follow me, you will understand the arrangement of all these things far better by seeing them."

So potent a promise woke me completely; I held out my arm to him and we walked by the same way he had taken along the embankment which retained the five streams, each in its channel.

At the end of about a *stadium* something as shining as a lake reached our eyes. The wise Campanella had no sooner perceived it than he said to me:

"At last, my son, we are approaching. I see the three rivers distinctly."

At this news I felt myself transported with such an ardour that I felt as if I had become an eagle. I flew rather than walked, and rushed all about, with so eager a curiosity, that in less than an hour my guide and I had observed all that you are about to hear.

Three large rivers water the brilliant plains of this kindling world: the first and the widest is called Memory; the second, narrower but deeper, Imagination; the third, smaller than the others, is called Judgment.

On the banks of Memory there is heard night and day the importunate calling of Jays, Parrots, Magpies, Starlings, Linnets, Finches, and birds of all kinds, which twitter what they have learned. At night they say nothing, because they are then occupied in drinking the thick vapour exhaled from

these aquatic places. But their feeble stomachs digest it so ill that in the morning when they think they have converted it into their own substance it is seen to flow from their bills as pure as if it were in the river. The water of this river seems viscous and flows noisily; the echoes formed in its caverns repeat its speech more than a thousand times; it engenders certain monsters, whose faces are like the face of Woman. Others yet more furious are seen with square horny heads very similar to those of our Pedants. These do nothing but exclaim, and yet say nothing but what they have heard other people say.

The river of Imagination flows more gently; its light brilliant fluid sparkles on all sides; when one looks at this water composed of a torrent of damp sparks they seem to observe no certain order as they fly along. When I had observed it more attentively I took notice that the humour that flowed in its bed was pure potable gold and its foam oil of talc. The fishes it breeds are Remoræ, Sirens, and Salamanders; instead of gravel there are to be found those pebbles of which Pliny speaks, which make one heavy when touched on one side and light when applied on the other side. I noticed others again, of which Gyges had a ring, which renders invisible; but above all a large number of philosopher's stones glittered in its sands. On its banks were numerous fruit-trees, principally those found by Mohammed in Paradise; the branches swarmed with phœnixes, and I noticed seedlings of that fruit-tree whence Discord plucked the apple she cast at the feet of the three Goddesses; they had grafted on it shoots from the garden of the Hesperides. Each of these two wide rivers separated into an infinity of interlacing arms; and I observed that when a large stream of Memory approached a smaller one of Imagination the former immediately exterminated the latter; but on the contrary, if the stream of Imagination were larger, it dried up that of Memory. Now, since these three streams always flow side by side, either in their main channel or in their branches, wherever Memory is strong, Imagination diminishes, and the one increases as the other sinks.

Near at hand the river of Judgment flows incredibly slowly; its channel is deep, its fluid seems cold, and when scattered on anything dries instead of moistens. In the mud of its bed grow plants of Hellebore,^[83] whose roots spreading out in long filaments purify the water of its mouth. It nourishes serpents, and a million elephants repose on the soft grass which carpets its banks; like its two cousins it splits into an infinity of little branches; it

increases as it flows and although it always gains ground turns and returns upon itself eternally.

The whole Sun is watered with the moisture of these three rivers; it serves to dilute the burning atoms of those who die in this great world; but this deserves to be treated more at length.

The life of animals in the Sun is very long; they only die by a natural death, which never occurs until the end of seven or eight thousand years, when from the continuous excesses of mind to which their fiery temperament inclines them, the order of their matter grows confused; for as soon as Nature feels in a body that more time is needed to repair the ruins of its being than to compose a new one, she tends to dissolve it; so that from day to day the animal is seen, not to rot, but to fall into particles like red ashes.

Death only happens in this way. When he has expired, or rather, is extinguished, the small igneous bodies which composed his substance enter the gross matter of this lighted world until chance has watered them with the fluid of these three rivers; for then, becoming mobile through their fluidity, with the purpose of exercising quickly the faculties which this water has impressed upon their obscure comprehension, they attach themselves in long threads, and, by a flood of luminous points sharpen into rays and are scattered upon the surrounding spheres, where they are no sooner enveloped than they arrange the matter as far as they can in the shape proper to exercise all the functions, whose instinct they acquired in the water of the three rivers, the five fountains and the Pool; and so they allow themselves to be attracted to plants to vegetate; plants allow themselves to be cropped by animals to feel, and animals allow themselves to be eaten by men in order that by passing into their substance they may repair those three faculties of Memory, Imagination and Judgment, whose power they presaged in the rivers of the Sun.

Now, according to whether the atoms have been more or less soaked in the moisture of these three rivers, they bring the animals more or less Memory, Imagination or Judgment; and according to whether, while they were in the three rivers, they absorbed more or less of the liquid of the five fountains and of the little Lake, they elaborate in them more or less perfect senses and produce more or less sleepy souls.

This is approximately what we observed, as touching the nature of these three rivers. Their little veins are to be met with scattered here and there; but the principal arms all debouch in the province of the philosophers; and so we returned to the highway without going farther from the stream than was necessary to get on to the road. We could see the whole time the three large rivers flowing beside us; but we watched from above the five streams winding below us through the meadows. This road, although solitary, is very agreeable; one breathes a free subtle air there, which feeds the soul and causes it to reign over the passions.

At the end of five or six days' journey, while we were delighting our eyes in considering the different rich aspects of the landscape, a languishing voice like a sick person moaning reached our ears. We approached the place from which we imagined it might come and on the bank of the river Imagination we found an old man, who had fallen backwards and was uttering loud cries. Tears of compassion came into my eyes and the pity I felt for this wretch's misfortune compelled me to ask the reason.

"This man", replied Campanella, turning towards me, "is a philosopher in the death agony; for we die more than once, and since we are merely parts of this Universe we change our shape in order to take up our lives again elsewhere; and this is not an evil, but a method of perfecting one's being and of acquiring an infinite amount of knowledge. His malady is that which causes the death of nearly all great men."

His discourse made me observe the sick man more attentively and at the first glance I perceived that his head was as large as a butt and open in various places.

"Come", said Campanella, drawing me by the arm, "all the help we should think we were giving this dying man would be useless and would merely serve to disturb him. Let us go on, since his disease is incurable. The swelling of his head comes from his having over-exercised his mind; for although the elements with which he has filled the three organs or the three ventricles of his brain are very small images, they are corporeal and consequently occupy a large space when they are very numerous. Now you must know that this philosopher so swelled up his brain by piling into it image upon image that, unable to contain them any longer, it burst. This manner of dying is that of great geniuses, and is called *Bursting with Wit*."

We walked on as we talked and the first things which presented themselves to us furnished us with subjects of conversation. I should have liked to leave the opaque regions of the Sun and to return to those which are luminous; for the reader knows that all its countries are not diaphanous: some are obscure as in our world and but for the light of a Sun, which is seen there, would be enveloped in darkness. Now, in proportion as one enters these opaque regions one gradually becomes opaque and on approaching the transparent regions one sheds that dark obscurity under the vigorous irradiation of the climate.

I remember that, apropos this desire which consumed me, I asked Campanella whether the province of the philosophers were brilliant or shadowy.

"It is more shadowy than brilliant", he replied, "for since we still sympathize greatly with the Earth, our native land, which is opaque by nature, we have not been able to settle in the brightest regions of this globe. Nevertheless, when we so desire we can render ourselves diaphanous by a vigorous effort of will; and the greater part of the philosophers do not even speak with the tongue but, when they desire to communicate their thought, they purge themselves by a sally of their fantasy of a dark vapour under which their conceptions are generally hidden; and as soon as they have caused this darkness of the spleen, which darkened them, to return to its seat, their body becomes diaphanous and there can be perceived through their brain what they remember, what they imagine, what they judge; and in their liver and their heart what they desire and what they resolve; for although these little portraits are more imperceptible than anything we can imagine, yet in this world our eyes are sharp enough to distinguish easily the smallest ideas.

"Thus, when one of us desires to show his friend the affection he bears to him, his heart is seen to throw its rays as far as his memory upon the image of the person he loves; and when on the contrary he desires to show his aversion, his heart is seen to project swirls of burning sparks against the image of the person he hates and to retire as far as possible from it: similarly, when he speaks to himself the elements, that is to say, the character of everything he is meditating upon, are clearly seen either impressed or in relief, presenting before the eyes of the onlooker not an articulated speech, but a pictured story of all his thoughts."

My guide would have continued, but he was interrupted by an accident hitherto unheard of: and this was that we suddenly perceived the earth grow dark beneath our feet and the burning rays of the sky grow faint above our heads, as if a canopy four leagues square had been spread betwixt us and the Sun.

It would be difficult to tell you what we imagined at this occurrence; we were assailed by all manner of terrors, even by that of the end of the world, and none of these terrors seemed to us beyond all likelihood; for, to see night in the Sun or the air darkened with clouds, is a miracle which never happens there. But this was not all; immediately afterwards a sharp squealing noise, like the sound of a pulley turning rapidly, struck our ears and at the same time we saw a cage fall at our feet. Scarcely had it touched the sand when it opened and was delivered of a man and a woman; they dragged out an anchor, which they hooked in the roots of a rock; after which we saw them coming towards us. The woman led the man and dragged him along with menaces. When she was near us she said in a slightly excited voice:

"Gentlemen, is not this the province of philosophers?"

I answered that it was not, but that we hoped to arrive there in twenty-four hours, that the old man, who suffered me to remain in his company, was one of the principal officers of that monarchy.

"Since you are a philosopher", replied this woman, addressing Campanella, "I must unburden my heart here before going any further."^[84]

"To tell you in a few words the matter which brings me here, you must know that I come to complain of a murder committed upon the person of my youngest child; this barbarian I am holding has killed it twice, although he was its father."

We were mightily embarrassed by this discourse and so I desired to know what she meant by a child that was killed twice.

"Know, then", replied the woman, "that in our country among other statutes of Love there is a law to regulate how often a husband shall pay his debt to his wife; therefore every evening each doctor goes through all the houses of the district and, having examined the husband and the wife, he allots them so many embraces for that night, according to their good or bad health. My

husband here was allotted seven; however, piqued at some rather disdainful words I said to him as we were undressing, he did not approach me all the time we were in bed. But God, who avenges the cause of the afflicted, permitted this wretch (tickled by the thought of the kisses he had withheld from me) to waste a man in a dream. I told you that his father killed him twice, because by preventing him from existing he caused him not to exist, which was his first murder; and he caused him never to have existed, which was the second; while an ordinary murderer knows that the person he deprives of the daylight ceases to exist, but he cannot cause him not to have existed at all. Our magistrates would have made short work of him; but he cunningly excused himself by saying he would have performed his conjugal duty if he had not feared that by embracing me in the height of the anger I had put him into he would beget a frantic man.

"The senate, embarrassed by this justification, ordered us to go to the philosophers and to plead our cause before them. As soon as we received the order to go we entered a cage hung on the neck of the great bird you see there, from which we lower ourselves to the ground and hoist ourselves into the air by means of a pulley attached to it. In our province there are persons expressly employed in taming them when young and in training them for the tasks which render them useful to us. They are principally urged to yield themselves to discipline contrary to their ferocious natures, by their hunger, which is almost always unsatisfied; and so we abandon to them the bodies of all beasts which die. For the rest, when we desire to sleep (for, on account of the too continuous excesses of love which weaken us, we need repose) we send up from the country at regular intervals twenty or thirty of these birds, each attached to a cord and, as they fly up, their vast wings spread in the sky a shadow wider than the horizon."

I was very attentive to her discourse and observed in an ecstasy the enormous height of this giant bird; but as soon as Campanella had looked at it a little he exclaimed:

"Ha! Truly, it is one of those feathered monsters called condors which are seen in the island of Mandragora in our world and throughout the torrid zone; they cover an acre of ground with their wings; but since these animals become larger in proportion as the Sun, which saw their birth, is more heated, it cannot be but that they are of a fearful size in the world of the Sun.

"However", he added, turning towards the woman, "you must necessarily continue your voyage since you have to be judged by Socrates, to whom the supervision of morals has been allotted. But I beg you to tell us of what country you are, because I have only been three or four years in this world and do not yet know the map."

"We are", she replied, "from the Kingdom of Lovers; this great state is bounded on one side by the republic of Peace and on the other by that of the Just. In the country whence I come the boys at the age of sixteen enter the novitiate of Love: this is a most sumptuous palace which covers nearly a quarter of the city. As for the girls, they enter it at thirteen. There they spend a year of probation, during which the boys are only occupied in deserving the affection of the girls and the girls in making themselves worthy of the friendship of the boys. At the end of twelve months the Faculty of Medicine visits this Seminary of Lovers in a body; they examine them all one after another, down to the most secret parts of their persons, and cause them to couple before their eyes; and then in proportion as the male is found by experiment to be vigorous and suitable, he is given as his wives ten, twenty, thirty or forty girls from among those who affect him, provided the affection be reciprocal.^[85] The husband, however, may only lie with two at once and he is not allowed to embrace any of them while she is pregnant. Those women who are found to be sterile are employed as menials and impotent men are made slaves and can mingle carnally with the sterile women.^[86] For the rest, when a family has more children than it can feed the republic looks after them; but this is a misfortune which never happens, because as soon as a woman is delivered in the city, the treasury furnishes an annual sum for the education of the child according to its rank, and the treasurers of the state themselves carry the money to the father's house on a given day. But if you wish to know more, come into our basket, it is large enough for four. Since we are going the same road we will deceive the length of the way by talk."

Campanella was of the opinion that we should accept the offer. I, too, was very glad to avoid the fatigue; but when I came to help them weigh the anchor I was very surprised to find that instead of a large cable to hold it, it was hung on a thread of silk as fine as a hair. I asked Campanella how it could be that a heavy mass, such as this anchor was, did not break so frail a thing with its weight; and the good man replied that this cord did not break,

because it had been spun equally throughout and therefore had no reason to break at one point more than at another. We crowded into the basket and then pulleyed^[87] ourselves up to the bird's throat, where we seemed like a bell hung round his neck. When we found ourselves touching the pulley we fastened the cable to which our cage was hung round one of the lightest feathers of its down, which nevertheless was as thick as a thumb; and as soon as the woman had signed to the bird to start we felt ourselves cleaving the sky with violent rapidity. The condor diminished or increased its flight, rose or sank, at the will of its mistress, whose voice served it as a bridle. We had not flown two hundred leagues, when on our left hand we saw upon the ground a shadow similar to that produced underneath us by our living parasol. We asked the strange woman what she thought it was.

"It is another malefactor on his way to be judged in the province whither we are going; his bird is no doubt stronger than ours or else we have wasted a good deal of time, since he left after me."

I asked her of what crime this wretch was accused.

"He is not merely accused", she replied, "he is condemned to die, because he is already convicted of not fearing death."

"What", said Campanella, "do the laws of your country order that death should be feared?"

"Yes", replied the woman, "they enjoin it upon all except those who have been received into the College of Wise Men; for our magistrates have proved from disastrous experience that he who does not fear to lose his life is capable of taking the life of anyone also."

After some more conversation resulting from this, Campanella desired to know at more length the manners of her country. He asked her what were the laws and customs of the Kingdom of Lovers, but she excused herself from speaking of them, because she had not been born there and only half knew it; for which reason she was afraid of saying either too much or too little.

"I come indeed from that province", continued the woman, "but I and all my ancestors were inhabitants of the Kingdom of Truth; my mother was delivered of me there and had no other child. She brought me up in that country until I was thirteen, when the king, by the doctor's advice, ordered

her to take me to the Kingdom of Lovers whence I come, so that by being bred up in the place of Love, a softer and more joyous education than that of our country would render me more fertile than she. My mother took me there and placed me in the House of Pleasure.

"I had great difficulty in growing used to their customs. At first they appeared to me very uncivilised; for, as you know, the opinions we have sucked in with our milk always appear to us the most reasonable and I had only just arrived from my native land, the Kingdom of Truth.

"I did indeed perceive that this Nation of Lovers lived with much more gentleness and indulgence than ours; for although everyone averred that the sight of me wounded him dangerously, that my looks were mortal, and that my eyes sent out a flame which consumed all hearts, yet the kindness of everybody and principally of the young men was so great that they caressed me, kissed me, and embraced me, instead of avenging upon me the ill I had done them. I even grew angry with myself for the disorders of which I was the cause; and, moved by compassion, I one day revealed to them the resolution I had taken of running away. 'But, alas! how will you escape', they all cried, throwing themselves on my neck and kissing my hands, 'your house is besieged by water on all sides and the danger appears so great that without a miracle you and we shall inevitably be drowned'."

"What", I interrupted, "is the country of Lovers liable to inundations?"^[88]

"It must be so", she replied, "for one of my lovers (and this man would not have deceived me, since he loved me) wrote to me that his regret at my departure had caused him to shed an ocean of tears. I saw another who assured me that for three days his eye-balls had distilled a river of tears; and as I was cursing (out of love for them) the fatal hour when they saw me, one of those who was numbered among my slaves sent to tell me that the night before his over-flowing eyes had made a flood. I was about to take myself off from the world, so that I might no longer be the cause of so many misfortunes, but the messenger added that his master had bidden him assure me there was nothing to fear, because the furnace of his bosom had dried up the flood. You may easily conjecture that the Kingdom of Lovers must be very aquatic, since with them it is but half-weeping, unless streams, fountains and torrents flow from beneath their eyelids.

"I was greatly troubled to know by what machine I could escape all the waters flowing in upon me. But one of my lovers, who was known as the Jealous, advised me to tear out my heart and then to embark in it; he added that I should not fear it would fail to hold me, because it held so many others, nor that it would sink, because it was too light, and that all I had to fear would be burning, because the matter of such a vessel was very liable to fire; and that I should set out upon the sea of his tears, that the bandage of his love would serve me as a sail and that the favourable wind of his sighs would carry me safe to port in spite of the tempest of his rivals.

"For a long time I meditated how I could put this enterprise into execution. The natural timidity of my sex prevented me from daring it; but at last the opinion I had that no man would be so foolish as to advise it if the thing were impossible, still less a lover to his mistress, gave me courage.

"I grasped a knife, I pierced my breast; already my two hands were groping in the wound and with an intrepid gaze I sought my heart to tear it out, when a man who loved me arrived. He wrested the steel away from me against my will and then asked me the motive of an action, which he called despairing. I related what had happened; but I was very surprised when a quarter of an hour later I learned that he had handed the Jealous over to justice. But the magistrates, who feared perhaps to attach too much importance to the example or the novelty of the incident, sent the case to the parliament of the Kingdom of the Just. There he was condemned to banishment for life and to end his days as a slave in the territories of the Republic of Truth, with a prohibition to all his descendants down to the fourth generation to set foot in the Province of Lovers; moreover, he was enjoined never to use hyperboles on pain of death.

"From that time on I conceived a great affection for the young man who had preserved me; and either on account of this service or because of the passion he had shown me I did not refuse him when, on the completion of his novitiate and mine, he asked me to be one of his wives.

"We have always lived comfortably together and we should still have done so had he not, as I have informed you, killed one of my children twice, for which I am about to implore vengeance in the Kingdom of Philosophers."

Campanella and I were vastly astonished at this man's complete silence; and I was about to try to console him, judging that so profound a silence was the

daughter of a most profound grief, when his wife prevented me.

"'Tis not excess of grief closes his mouth, but our laws, which forbid every criminal awaiting his trial to speak except before his judges."

During this conversation the bird continued to advance, when I was astonished to hear Campanella exclaim, with a face filled with joy and delight:

"Welcome, dearest of all my friends; come, gentlemen, come", continued this good man, "let us meet Monsieur Descartes; let us descend, there he is not three leagues from here."

For my part I was greatly surprised by this sally, for I could not understand how he could know of the arrival of a person of whom we had received no news.

"Assuredly", said I, "you have just seen him in a dream."

"If you call a dream", said he, "that which your soul can see as certainly as your eyes the day when it shines, I confess it."

"But", I cried, "is it not a dream to think that Monsieur Descartes, whom you have not seen since you left the world of the Earth, is three leagues from here, because you have imagined it?"

As I spoke the last syllable we saw Descartes arrive. Campanella at once ran to embrace him. They talked together at length, but I could not attend to their mutual expressions of regard, so much did I burn to learn from Campanella the secret of his divination. That philosopher, reading my passion upon my face, related the incident to his friend and begged him to agree to his informing me. M. Descartes replied with a smile and my learned preceptor discoursed to this effect:

"There are exhaled from all bodies elements, that is to say, corporeal images which fly in the air. Now, in spite of their movement, these images always preserve the shape, the colour and all the other proportions of the object whereof they speak; but since they are very subtle and very fine they pass through our organs without causing any sensation there; they go straight to the soul, where they make an impression, because its substance is so delicate, and thus they cause it to see very distant things, which the senses cannot perceive; and this is an ordinary occurrence here, where the mind is

not involved in a body formed of gross matter, as in your world. We will tell you how this happens, when we have had leisure fully to satisfy the desire we both have to converse together; for, assuredly, you fully deserve that we should show you the greatest favour."^[89]

Gonsales' Voyage to the Moon

APPENDICES

1. EXTRACTS FROM GODWIN, D'URFEY AND SWIFT
2. BIBLIOGRAPHY
3. GENEALOGY
4. COAT OF ARMS

APPENDIX I

BISHOP GODWIN—TOM D'URFEY—SWIFT

To give full extracts from all the books copied by or copied from Cyrano de Bergerac would make a volume. In the notes or the introduction attention has already been called to Cyrano's greater or less indebtedness to Lucian, Rabelais, Sorel, Gassendi, Descartes, Rohault and other writers. His borrowing from Bishop Godwin's *Man in the Moon* is considerable. This pamphlet is included in the *Harleian Miscellany* (1810) vol. xi. The hero is a Spaniard, Domingo Gonsales, who manufactures a flying machine, drawn by "gansas," or wild geese, in which he is carried to the moon. There is a certain amount of scientific disquisition upon gravity and a rebuke to those who reject the Copernican system of astronomy; which corresponds with Cyrano's talk with the governor of New France. Other points in common may be tabulated:

1. Gonsales does not feel hungry on his voyage "on account of the purity of the air".
2. He sees the earth turning beneath him.
3. Everything in the moon is larger than in the earth and the people are "generally twice as high as ours"; they "live wonderful long", "a thousand years".
4. They fan themselves rapidly through the air; the "attraction" of the moon's earth is much less than ours.
5. A paragraph about sleep seems to have inspired Cyrano with his beds of flowers and tickling attendants.
6. "Their language is very difficult, since it hath no affinity with any other I ever heard, and consists not so much of words and letters, as tunes and strange sounds, which no letters can express; for there are few words but signify several things.... Yea, many words consist of tunes only without words, by occasion whereof I find a language may be framed, and easily

learned, as copious as any other in the world, only of tunes, which is an experiment worth searching after."

This pamphlet was published in England in 1638 and translated into French in 1648.

Tom d'Urfey's *Wonders in the Sun or the Kingdom of the Birds* (London, 1706) is obviously inspired by Cyrano's *Voyages* (without acknowledgment). There are characters taken from Cyrano: the main situation is the trial before the court of birds and whole slices of the prose dialogues are simply a translation. Characters are Domingo Gonzales and Diego his man; the Daemon of Socrates; all with leading parts; and King Dove. The other bird-characters are ingenious and Tom's own. Here is an extract from Act I, scene 1:

Daemon: Two thousand Years and upwards since the Death of that Philosopher I've carefully Employ'd in Art's Improvement, I first in *Thebes* Taught wise *Epaminondas*, then turning over to the *Roman* side Espous'd the Party of the younger *Cato*.

Gonzales: The world admir'd your fame, the Learned *Cardan* still doted on your Tenets.

Daemon: He had reason. I Taught him many things. *Trithmethius* too, *Cæzar*, *La Brosse* and the occult *Agrippa* were all my Pupils, beside a new Cabal of Wise young Men, vulgarly called the *Rosa-crucian* Knights, those were, should I dilate their Virtues fully, the very Keys of the locks of Nature.

Gonzales: *Gossendus* too in France, and *Campanella* were under your instruction.

That is almost word for word from the *Moon*. In the same scene occurs this:

Gonzales: Well, and pray, Sir, your Philosophers, what must they feed on?

Daemon: Steams, luscious Fumes, rich edifying Smoak.

The next scene contains a translation of Cyrano's notion of the dignity of walking on all fours. Acts II and III furnish other parallels; but in Act IV, the trial scene is very closely imitated from Cyrano's trial in the *History of the Birds in The Sun*. The speech of the prosecution is almost a word for

word translation; the sentence is the same and the prisoners are rescued by a parrot named "Cæzar"! (See *The Sun*.)

It has long been recognised that *Gulliver's Travels* owes quite as much to Cyrano de Bergerac as to any other book. The resemblance is rather one of general ideas, taken up and exploited by Swift, than of parallel passages. One passage in the *Voyage to Lilliput*, chapter VI, is taken directly from Cyrano:

"Their notions relating to the duties of parents and children differ extremely from ours. For, since the conjunction of male and female is founded upon the great law of Nature, in order to propagate and continue the species, the Lilliputians will needs have it that men and women are joined together, like other animals, by the motives of concupiscence; and that their tenderness towards their young proceeds from the like natural principle: for which reason they will never allow that a child is under any obligation to his father for begetting him, or to his mother for bringing him into the world, which, considering the miseries of human life, was neither a benefit in itself, nor intended so by his parents, whose thoughts in their love encounters were otherwise employed. Upon these and the like reasoning, their opinion is, that parents are the last of all others to be trusted with the education of their own children: and therefore they have in every town public nurseries, where all parents, except cottagers and labourers, are obliged to send their infants of both sexes to be reared and educated, when they come to the age of twenty moons, at which time they are supposed to have some rudiments of docility." (See *The Moon*.)

Chapter II of the *Voyage to Brobdingnag* has a strong likeness to those parts of Cyrano's *Moon* describing how he was showed by a mountebank. The flashing swords in chapter VII, the king's desire to "propagate the breed" in chapter VIII, even the adventure with the monkey, may have been suggested by Cyrano. As to the "Houyhnhnms", the device of satirising and shaming man by showing him to be inferior in virtues to the very beasts is a favourite one of Cyrano. The scenes with the birds and trees in the *Sun* and some of the philosophical conversations in the *Moon* may be referred to for confirmation of this. There can be little doubt that Swift read Cyrano de Bergerac closely and frequently built upon what the French writer had done or took up and developed better the hint of some idea. The unity of Swift's purpose, the even tone of his prose, the strong air of common sense, the

Defoe-like illusion of reality, are all in sharp contrast with Cyrano's wandering fancies, varying styles, extravagance and lack of common sense.

APPENDIX II

LIST OF EDITIONS

(A complete bibliography of Cyrano de Bergerac's works will be found in M. Lachèvre's edition. This list will give only editions of the Complete Works and of the *Estats et Empires de la Lune et du Soleil*, but will add all the discoverable English translations of Cyrano's work.)

ŒUVRES COMPLÈTES

Les œuvres de Monsieur de Cyrano Bergerac. Première (et seconde) partie. A Paris, chez Charles de Sercy, au Palais, au Sixiesme Pilier de la Grand' Salle, vis-à-vis la Montée de la Cour des Aydes, à la Bonne-Foy couronnée. M.DC.LXXVI. in-12.

Ditto. Rouen, 1677. 2 Vol. in-12.

Ditto. Paris, Ch. Osmont, 1699. 2 Vol. in-12.

Les œuvres diverses de monsieur de Cyrano Bergerac. Tome premier (et second). Enrichi de Figures en taille-douce. A Amsterdam, chez Daniel Pain, Marchand Libraire sur le Woorburgwal, proche du Stilsteeg. M.DC.XCIX.

Ditto. Rouen, J.-B. Besonge, 1710. 2 Vol. in-12.

Ditto. Amsterdam, Jacques Desbordes, M.DCC.X.

Les Œuvres de Monsieur de Cyrano Bergerac.... A Amsterdam, Jacques Desbordes, M.DCC.IX.

Ditto. Nouvelle édition, Paris, 1709. 2 Vol. in-12.

Les Œuvres Diverses de monsieur de Cyrano Bergerac. Tomes premier (second et troisième). A Amsterdam, chez Jacques Desbordes.... M.DCC.XII (1741 or 1761). in-8.

(Editions labelled Amsterdam actually printed at Rouen or perhaps Trévoux.)

ŒUVRES DIVERSES (containing the Voyages)

Les Œuvres diverses de Monsieur de Cyrano Bergerac. A Paris, chez Antoine de Sommaville.... Paris, M.DC.LXI. in-12.

Les Œuvres diverses de Monsieur de Cyrano Bergerac.... A Paris. Chez Charles de Sercy au Palais, dans la Salle Dauphine, à la Bonne-Foy. M.DC.LXI.

Ditto. Lyon. Christophe Fourmy.... M.DC.LXIII. 2 Vol. in-12.

Ditto. Rouen, chez Antoine Ferrand. M.DC.LXIII. 2 Vol.

Ditto. Rouen, R. Sejourne, 1676, in-12.

Ditto. A Rouen, chez Jean B. Besonge.... 1678.

L'AUTRE MONDE

Histoire Comique, par Monsieur de Cyrano Bergerac. Contenant les Etats et Empires de la Lune. A Paris, chez Charles de Sercy, au Palais, dans la Salle Dauphine, à la Bonne-Foy couronnée. M.DC.LVII. in-12.

Ditto. Paris. Sercy. M.DC.LIX. in-12.

Histoire comique, par monsieur de Cyrano Bergerac. Contenant les Etats et Empires de la Lune. A Lyon, chez Christophe Fourmy, rue Merciere, à l'enseigne de l'Occasion. M.DC.LXII. in-12.

Ditto. Lyon, 1672, in-12.

Voyages imaginaires, songes, visions et romans cabalistiques. Ornés de figures. Tome Treizième. A Amsterdam et Paris. M.DCC.LXXXVII. in-8.

MODERN EDITIONS

Œuvres de Cyrano de Bergerac, précédées d'une Notice par Le Blanc. Voyage Comique dans les Etats et Empires de la Lune, Voyage Comique dans les Etats et Empires du Soleil. Paris. Victor Lecou, et Toulouse, Librairie centrale, 1855, in-8.

Histoire Comique des Etats et Empires de la Lune et du Soleil, par Cyrano de Bergerac. Nouvelle Edition revue et publiée avec des notes et une Notice

historique. Par P.L. (Paul Lacroix) Jacob, bibliophile. Paris, Adolphe Delahays, 1858, in-8.

Voyages Fantastiques de Cyrano Bergerac. Publiés avec une introduction et des Notes par Marc de Montifaud. Paris, Librairie des Bibliophiles, 1875, in-8.

Histoire Comique de la Lune et du Soleil. Paris, Garnier, 1876, in-12.

Histoire Comique, etc. Expurgated edition, 1886.

Cyrano de Bergerac. Voyage dans la Lune. Paris, Ernest Flammarion. No date, in-8.

Cyrano de Bergerac, Œuvres Comiques, etc. Paris, Librairie de la Bibliothèque nationale, 1898.

Collection des plus belles pages. Cyrano de Bergerac.... Notice de Remy de Gourmont. Paris, Société du Mercure de France, M.CM.VIII. in-18. (A good and useful edition of very full selections.)

De Cyrano Bergerac. L'Autre Monde, etc. Illustrations de Robida. Librairie Moderne. Maurice Bauche, éditeur.... Paris, M.CM.X. in-8. (Contains a hybrid text, part from MSS. and part from ed. Lyon, 1663.)

S. de Cyrano Bergerac. Histoire Comique, etc. As above. M.CM.X.

Les Œuvres Libertines de Cyrano de Bergerac, Parisien (1619-1655). Précédées d'une notice Biographique par Frédéric Lachèvre. Paris. Librairie Ancienne Honoré Champion. 2 Vols. 1921.

(Contains the whole of Cyrano's work, except a few of the letters; the best text of the Voyages with MS. variations and notes; the notice is very full and accompanied with many unpublished documents. The edition is indispensable for any serious study of Cyrano de Bergerac. Its text has been used throughout for this translation.)

ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

Satirical Characters and handsome Descriptions, in Letters written to several persons of quality. Translated out of the French. London, 1658. (B.M.)

Σεληναρχία, or, the Government of the World in the Moon. A Comical history.... Done into English by T. St. Serf. London, 1659. (B.M.)

The Comical History of the States and Empires of the Worlds of the Moon and Sun ... newly Englished by A. Lovell. London, 1687. (B.M.)

A Voyage to the Moon.... A Comical Romance. Done from the French of M. Cyrano de Bergerac. By Mr Derrick. London, 1754. (B.M.)

Cyrano de Bergerac. The agreement. A Satyrical and facetious dream. To which is annexed the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. By J. Friendly. London, 1756. (B.M.)

(A version of Cyrano's Letter: *Un Songe*)

An expurgated version of the *Pédant Joué* is recorded from Harvard in 1900. There is no copy at the British Museum.

APPENDIX III

GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF THE CYRANO FAMILY

APPENDIX IV

Cyrano de Bergerac

La vraye et parfaite science des armoires, augmentée par P. Paillot, Dijon et Paris, 1660, folio, gives a description of the arms of Cyrano which (with apologies to heralds) I English as follows:

"Azure, a chevron or, two lion-skins or bound gules suspended in chief, a lion with a tail saltire-wise or armed gules, with a chief gules."

In spite of this imposing shield the Cyrano family failed to establish its claim to nobility at the visitations of 1668 and 1704. On the former occasion Abel de Cyrano (brother of our author) was fined 300 *livres* for claiming nobility unlawfully and on the latter occasion a cousin, J. D. de Cyrano, was fined the large sum of 3000 *livres* for the same offence.

[1] Le Bret, Préface, 1657.

[2] "Nothing could be clearer or better in style, and it is less archaic than Corneille." (Remy de Gourmont).

[3] Which means "Strike, there is the enemy", but might also mean "Strike, there is the sacrament."

[4] Tallemant des Réaux, *Historiettes*, 1858. Vol. 7: "Suite des Naifvetez, Bons Mots, etc."

[5] *Menagiana*, Amsterdam, 1693, page 199.

[6] *Retrospective Review*, 1820. Vol. I. Part 2. Art. viii. *Satyrical Characters and Handsome Descriptions in Letters, written to several Persons of Quality*, by Monsieur de Cyrano Bergerac. Translated from the French by a Person of Honour. London, 1658.

[7] The critic proceeds to sum up Cyrano's writing in the same Corinthian style. French commentators, quoting this passage, often make the mistake of dating it 1658 instead of 1820.

[8] Charles Nodier, *Bibliographie des Fous*. Quoted by F. Lachèvre.

[9] Charles Nodier, *Bonaventure Desperiers et Cyrano de Bergerac*. Quoted by Remy de Gourmont.

[10] Three errors in ten words!

[11] In Périgord there is no castle called De Bergerac. (Brun). Mauvières and Bergerac, often known as Sous-Forest, are in the commune of Saint-Forgeux, canton of Chevreuse, arrondissement of Rambouillet. (Frédé de Coubertin).

[12] The genealogical tree of the Cyrano family will be found in Appendix III.

[13] From Saint-Amant's *Le Débauche*. In English it means roughly: "Sdeath! how it rains outside | Let us make it rain wine in our bellies—you understand that without a word spoken and that's the real jest; sing, laugh, make a row, drink here all night, and to-morrow let the fair Aurora find us all here still at table."

[14] See M. Magne's *Chevalier de Lignières* (1920) for an elaborate and highly-coloured account of this affair. Marshal Gassion is said to have offered Cyrano his protection when he heard of it, which Cyrano refused.

[15] *Menagiana*. 1695. Quoted by Remy de Gourmont. The reader will remember Rostand's use of this anecdote.

[16] F. T. Perrens, *Les Libertins en France au XVII^e Siècle*, is an interesting book.

[17] See Rigal's *Le Théâtre Français avant la Période classique*.

[18] I know Descartes was patronised by Mazarin and made a visit to Paris "to be honoured"; but he soon returned to Holland.

[19] Ed. 1657: "returning from Clamard, near Paris (where M. de Cuigny the younger, who is its Seigneur, had entertained several of us....)".

[20] Girolamo Cardan, 1501-1576, Italian mathematician and astrologer, a man of remarkable scientific attainments. There is an interesting article on him in *The Retrospective Review*.

[21] Monsieur de Montbazon was governor of Paris in 1649. (Lachèvre).

[22] The word "Jesuit" is omitted in the early editions.

[23] Tycho Brahe, 1546-1601, Danish astronomer.

[24] An illustration frequently used by early followers of Copernicus.

[25] Cartesian terms.

[26] Linear diameter of sun: $109 \times$ earth's equatorial diameter = 864,000 miles. Sun's mass = $332,000 \times$ mass of the earth.

[27] M. Lachèvre says this notion is "accepted by science," but it is rejected by recent astronomers and assuredly by the Relativists.

[28] Commentators have seen in this and the following passage a hint of the "nebula theory".

[29] "Ressort". Cyrano's mechanics are vague. He may or may not have imagined some sort of propeller.

[30] This was a popular superstition of the age.

- [31] The subsequent pages satirising the book of *Genesis* were greatly mutilated in the early editions, to the great detriment of the sense.
- [32] All this long paragraph comes from an earlier work of Cyrano's, a letter called "Le Campagnard". *Œuvres Diverses*. 1654. In Jacob's edition, 1858, the title is "D'une Maison de Campagne".
- [33] Juppont considers this a premonition of the balloon.
- [34] A parachute. (Juppont).
- [35] Cyrano seems to have forgotten that the apple of Eden came from the Tree of Knowledge, not the Tree of Life.
- [36] See Appendix I. for Swift's use of this idea.
- [37] Famous sorcerers.
- [38] See Introduction.
- [39] See Introduction.
- [40] See Introduction.
- [41] This shows the disciple of Lucretius.
- [42] See Appendix I.
- [43] This idea comes from Charles Sorel's *Berger Extravagant*.
- [44] Charles Sorel's *Histoire Comique de Francion*, 1626.
- [45] This Spaniard is introduced by Cyrano because in Godwin's *Man in the Moon*, of which a French translation appeared in March 1648, one Gonzales reaches the Moon in a car drawn by gansas. See Appendix I.
- [46] Meaning, I suppose, that everything which is not Spanish is ridiculous.
- [47] This from so renowned a duellist and so brave a soldier is worth noting.
- [48] The likeness to a gramophone is obvious.
- [49] Something seems to have been omitted in this sentence.
- [50] Cyrano had the true coterie spirit towards his friends. Compare his description of poor, drunken, gambling Tristan in *The Moon*.
- [51] Patron of madmen.
- [52] It is thought *The Moon* circulated in MS. before publication; this explains the entry in Marolles's memoirs.
- [53] Note that Cyrano's worst persecutor in this *Voyage to the Earth* is a country parson. See Introduction.
- [54] Drycona = D. Cyrano.
- [55] Cyrano's eleventh satirical letter is addressed to Messire Jean; in the MS. of the Bibl. Nat. its title is *Apotheosis of an Ecclesiastical Buffoon*.
- [56] Mr Pickwick in the Fleet, "sitting for his portrait"!
- [57] These ideas and speculations are remarkable for 1650.

[58] This sentence is so obscure that I do not understand it either in French or English.

[59] It has been held that this refers to the "flying dragon" experimented with by Buratini at Warsaw in 1648. The evidence that Cyrano himself had visited Poland is very flimsy.

[60] See Appendix I, for a brief account of Tom d'Urfey's opera derived from this part of Cyrano's *Voyages*.

[61] Apollonius of Tyana (1st cent. A.D.), Greek neo-Pythagorean. Anaximander (611-547 B.C.), Greek philosopher. Æsop (620-560 B.C.), Greek fabulist.

[62] There has perhaps been a censor at work here.

[63] "The Abbé de Saint-Yves supposed that a man who was not born in France possessed no common sense." Voltaire, *L'Ingénu*.

[64] This would be "savage satire" in Swift; in Cyrano it is merely "madness".

[65] Even the Yahoos beat this only in nastiness, not in scorn.

[66] "Pain du Roy", *i.e.* prisoner's rations.

[67] "Guillots"; I went to five dictionaries, before finding this (dubious) meaning.

[68] To the best of my knowledge this admirable indictment is Cyrano's own.

[69] The famous oracle of Zeus was here.

[70] Nobody "observed Nature" in the 17th century, of course!

[71] Cyrano seems to have confused Orestes and Pylades with Virgil's Nisus and Euryalus; *Æneid*, Bk. IX.

[72] A body of 300 picked Theban infantry, used notably by Pelopidas and Epaminondas in the battles of Tegyra and Leuctra, B.C. 375 and 371.

[73] These tales are from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.

[74] Any reader of our Caroline poets will know how fond they were of the Remora.

[75] Another hiatus here, perhaps.

[76] Some have thought this combat of the Salamander and the Remora was the lost *Story of the Spark*. In any case it is typical of the age. See Montfaucon de Villars's *Comte de Gabalis*. 1670.

[77] Probably not!

[78] Or "Scoters"; the text has "Maquereuses".

[79] Descartes died 1650, which dates this part of *The Sun*.

[80] This idea is a favourite with Cyrano. It is, of course, a commonplace now.

[81] This is rather in the spirit of Mlle de Scudéry's *Carte de Tendre*, but *Clélie* was not published until 1654.

[82] We never get this dream.

[83] "Black hellebore, that most renowned plant, and famous purger of melancholy, which all antiquity so much used and admired...." Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*.

[84] This episode allows Cyrano to jest a little at some of the absurd sexual ideas of More and Campanella.

[85] This is especially aimed at Sir Thomas More: "For a sad and an honest matrone sheweth the woman, be she mayde or widdowe, naked to the wower. And lykewise a sage and discreet man exhibyteth the wower naked to the woman". *The Seconde Booke of Utopia*.

[86] "Nel tempo innanzi é ad alcuno lecito il coito con le donne sterile et pregne...." (Campanella, *Città del Sole*.)

[87] Cyrano coined this verb, "to pulley".

[88] In spite of M. Lachèvre, I cannot help thinking that Cyrano is making fun of the *précieux* style in all this.

[89] This abrupt end indicates that the book is unfinished; I cannot agree with those who think it intentional.

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