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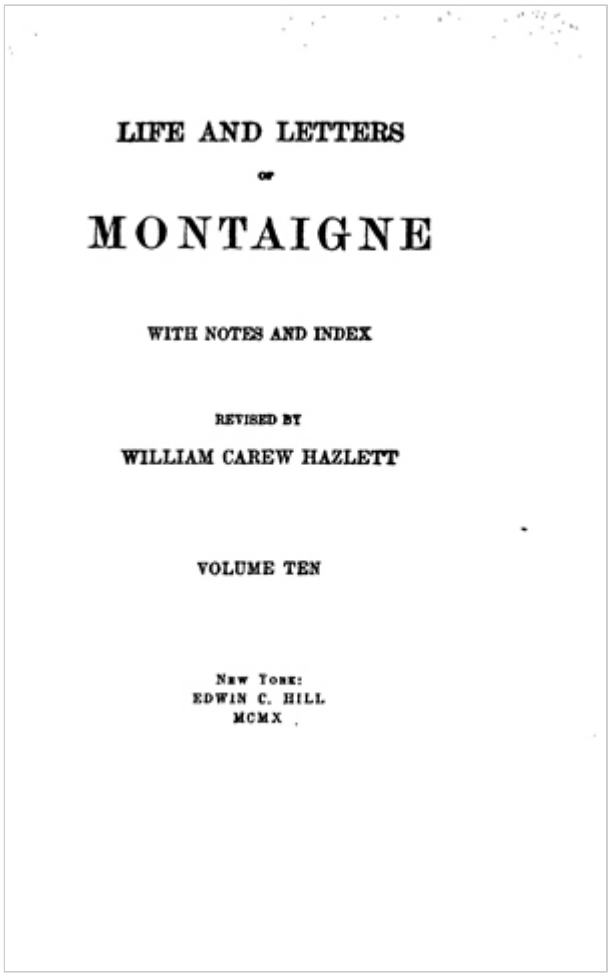
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THE WORKS OF MICHEL de MONTAIGNE

an essay by RALPH WALDO EMERSON

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Portrait of Montaigne.

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ESSAYS OF MONTAIGNE

OF EXPERIENCE

THERE IS no desire more natural than that of knowledge. We try all ways that can lead us to it; where reason is wanting, we therein employ experience:—

"By various trials experience created art, example showing the way,"

which is a means much more weak and cheap; but truth is so great a thing that we ought not to disdain any mediation that will guide us to it. Reason has so many forms that we know not to which to take; experience has no fewer; the consequence we would draw from the comparison of events is unsure, by reason they are always unlike. There is no quality so universal in this image of things as diversity and variety. Both the Greeks and the Latins and we, for the most express example of similitude, employ that of eggs; and yet there have been men, particularly one at Delphos, who could distinguish marks of difference amongst eggs so well that he never mistook one for another, and having many hens, could tell which had laid it. Dissimilitude intrudes itself of itself in our works; no art can arrive at perfect similitude: neither Perrozet nor any other can so carefully polish and blanch the backs of his cards that some gamesters will not distinguish them by seeing them only shuffled by another. Resemblance does not so much make one as difference makes another. Nature has obliged herself to make nothing other that was not unlike.

And yet I am not much pleased with his opinion, who thought by the multitude of laws to curb the authority of judges in cutting out for them their several parcels; he was not aware that there is as much liberty and latitude in the interpretation of laws as in their form; and they but fool themselves, who think to lessen and stop our disputes by recalling us to the express words of the Bible: forasmuch as our mind does not find the field less spacious wherein to controvert the sense of another than to deliver his own; and as if there were less animosity and tartness in commentary than in invention. We see how much he was mistaken, for we have more laws in France than all the rest of the world put together, and more than would be necessary for the government of all the worlds of Epicurus:—

"As we were formerly by crimes, so we are now overburdened by laws:"

and yet we have left so much to the opinions and decisions of our judges that there never was so full a liberty or so full a license. What have our legislators gained by culling out a hundred thousand particular cases, and by applying to these a hundred thousand laws? This number holds no manner of proportion with the infinite diversity of human actions; the multiplication of our inventions will never arrive at the variety of examples; add to these a hundred times as many more, it will still not happen that, of events to come, there shall one be found that, in this vast number of millions of events so chosen and recorded, shall so tally with any other one, and be so exactly coupled and matched with it that there will not remain some circumstance and

diversity which will require a diverse judgment. There is little relation betwixt our actions, which are in perpetual mutation, and fixed and immutable laws; the most to be desired are those that are the most rare, the most simple and general; and I am even of opinion that we had better have none at all than to have them in so prodigious a number as we have.

Nature always gives them better and happier than those we make ourselves; witness the picture of the Golden Age of the Poets and the state wherein we see nations live who have no other. Some there are, who for their only judge take the first passer-by that travels along their mountains, to determine their cause; and others who, on their market day, choose out some one amongst them upon the spot to decide their controversies. What danger would there be that the wisest amongst us should so determine ours, according to occurrences and at sight, without obligation of example and consequence? For every foot its own shoe. King Ferdinand, sending colonies to the Indies, wisely provided that they should not carry along with them any students of jurisprudence, for fear lest suits should get footing in that new world, as being a science in its own nature, breeder of altercation and division; judging with Plato, "that lawyers and physicians are bad institutions of a country."

Whence does it come to pass that our common language, so easy for all other uses, becomes obscure and unintelligible in wills and contracts? and that he who so clearly expresses himself in whatever else he speaks or writes, cannot find in these any way of declaring himself that does not fall into doubt and contradiction? if it be not that the princes of that art, applying themselves with a peculiar attention to cull out portentous words and to contrive artificial sentences, have so weighed every syllable, and so thoroughly sifted every sort of quirking connection that they are now confounded and entangled in the infinity of figures and minute divisions, and can no more fall within any rule or prescription, nor any certain intelligence:—

"Whatever is beaten into powder is indistinguishable."

As you see children trying to bring a mass of quicksilver to a certain number of parts, the more they press and work it and endeavor to reduce it to their own will, the more they irritate the liberty of this generous metal; it evades their endeavor and sprinkles itself into so many separate bodies as frustrate all reckoning; so is it here, for in subdividing these subtleties we teach men to increase their doubts; they put us into a way of extending and diversifying difficulties, and lengthen and disperse them. In sowing and retailing questions they make the world fructify and increase in uncertainties and disputes, as the earth is made fertile by being crumbled and dug deep:—

"Learning begets difficulty."

We doubted of Ulpian, and are still now more perplexed with Bartolus and Baldus. We should efface the trace of this innumerable diversity of opinions; not adorn ourselves with it, and fill posterity with crotchets. I know not what to say to it; but experience makes it manifest, that so many interpretations dissipate truth and break it. Aristotle wrote to be understood; if he could not do this, much less will another that is

not so good at it; and a third than he, who expressed his own thoughts. We open the matter, and spill it in pouring out: of one subject we make a thousand, and in multiplying and subdividing them, fall again into the infinity of atoms of Epicurus. Never did two men make the same judgment of the same thing; and 'tis impossible to find two opinions exactly alike, not only in several men, but in the same man, at diverse hours. I often find matter of doubt in things of which the commentary has disdained to take notice; I am most apt to stumble in an even country, like some horses that I have known, that make most trips in the smoothest way.

Who will not say that glosses augment doubts and ignorance, since there's no one book to be found, either human or divine, which the world busies itself about, whereof the difficulties are cleared by interpretation. The hundredth commentator passes it on to the next, still more knotty and perplexed than he found it. When were we ever agreed amongst ourselves: "This book has enough; there is now no more to be said about it?" This is most apparent in the law; we give the authority of law to infinite doctors, infinite decrees, and as many interpretations; yet do we find any end of the need of interpreting? is there, for all that, any progress or advancement towards peace, or do we stand in need of any fewer advocates and judges than when this great mass of law was yet in its first infancy? On the contrary, we darken and bury intelligence; we can no longer discover it, but at the mercy of so many fences and barriers. Men do not know the natural disease of the mind; it does nothing but ferret and inquire, and is eternally wheeling, juggling, and perplexing itself like silkworms, and then suffocates itself in its work; "Mus in pice." It thinks it discovers at a great distance, I know not what glimpses of light and imaginary truth: but whilst running to it, so many difficulties, hindrances, and new inquisitions cross it, that it loses its way, and is made drunk with the motion: not much unlike Aesop's dogs, that seeing something like a dead body floating in the sea, and not being able to approach it, set to work to drink the water and lay the passage dry, and so choked themselves. To which what one Crates said of the writings of Heraclitus falls pat enough, "that they required a reader who could swim well," so that the depth and weight of his learning might not overwhelm and stifle him. 'Tis nothing but particular weakness that makes us content with what others or ourselves have found out in this chase after knowledge: one of better understanding will not rest so content; there is always room for one to follow, nay, even for ourselves; and another road; there is no end of our inquisitions; our end is in the other world. 'Tis a sign either that the mind has grown short-sighted when it is satisfied, or that it has got weary. No generous mind can stop in itself; it will still tend further and beyond its power; it has sallies beyond its effects; if it do not advance and press forward, and retire, and rush and wheel about, 'tis but half alive; its pursuits are without bound or method; its aliment is admiration, the chase, ambiguity, which Apollo sufficiently declared in always speaking to us in a double, obscure, and oblique sense: not feeding, but amusing and puzzling us. 'Tis an irregular and perpetual motion, without model and without aim; its inventions heat, pursue, and interproduce one another:—

> "So in a running stream one wave we see
> After another roll incessantly,
> And as they glide, each does successively
> Pursue the other, each the other fly:

By this that's ever more pushed on, and this
By that continually preceded is:
The water still does into water swill,
Still the same brook, but different water still."

There is more ado to interpret interpretations than to interpret things, and more books upon books than upon any other subject; we do nothing but comment upon one another. Every place swarms with commentaries; of authors there is great scarcity. Is it not the principal and most reputed knowledge of our later ages to understand the learned? Is it not the common and final end of all studies? Our opinions are grafted upon one another; the first serves as a stock to the second, the second to the third, and so forth; thus step by step we climb the ladder; whence it comes to pass that he who is mounted highest has often more honor than merit, for he is got up but an inch upon the shoulders of the last but one.

How often, and, peradventure, how foolishly, have I extended my book to make it speak of itself; foolishly, if for no other reason but this, that it should remind me of what I say of others who do the same: that the frequent amorous glances they cast upon their work witness that their hearts pant with self-love, and that even the disdainful severity wherewith they scourge them are but the dandlings and caressings of maternal love; as Aristotle, whose valuing and undervaluing himself often spring from the same air of arrogance. My own excuse is, that I ought in this to have more liberty than others, forasmuch as I write specifically of myself and of my writings, as I do of my other actions; that my theme turns upon itself; but I know not whether others will accept this excuse.

I observed in Germany that Luther has left as many divisions and disputes about the doubt of his opinions, and more, than he himself raised upon the Holy Scriptures. Our contest is verbal: I ask what nature is, what pleasure, circle, and substitution are? the question is about words, and is answered accordingly. A stone is a body; but if a man should further urge: "And what is a body?"—"Substance;" "And what is substance?" and so on, he would drive the respondent to the end of his Calepin. We exchange one word for another, and often for one less understood. I better know what man is than I know what Animal is, or Mortal, or Rational. To satisfy one doubt, they give me three; 'tis the Hydra's head. Socrates asked Menon, "What virtue was." "There is," says Menon, "the virtue of a man and of a woman, of a magistrate and of a private person, of an old man and of a child." "Very fine," cried Socrates, "we were in quest of one virtue, and thou hast brought us a whole swarm." We put one question, and they return us a whole hive. As no event, no face, entirely resembles another, so do they not entirely differ: an ingenious mixture of nature. If our faces were not alike, we could not distinguish man from beast; if they were not unlike, we could not distinguish one man from another; all things hold by some similitude; every example halts, and the relation which is drawn from experience is always faulty and imperfect. Comparisons are ever coupled at one end or other: so do the laws serve, and are fitted to every one of our affairs, by some wrested, biased, and forced interpretation.

Since the ethic laws, that concern the particular duty of every one in himself, are so hard to be framed, as we see they are, 'tis no wonder if those which govern so many

particulars are much more so. Do but consider the form of this justice that governs us; 'tis a true testimony of human weakness, so full is it of error and contradiction. What we find to be favor and severity in justice—and we find so much of them both, that I know not whether the medium is as often met with—are sickly and unjust members of the very body and essence of justice. Some country people have just brought me news in great haste, that they presently left in a forest of mine a man with a hundred wounds upon him, who was yet breathing, and begged of them water for pity's sake, and help to carry him to some place of relief; they tell me they durst not go near him, but have run away, lest the officers of justice should catch them there; and as happens to those who are found near a murdered person, they should be called in question about this accident, to their utter ruin, having neither money nor friends to defend their innocence. What could I have said to these people? 'Tis certain that this office of humanity would have brought them into trouble.

How many innocent people have we known that have been punished, and this without the judge's fault; and how many that have not arrived at our knowledge? This happened in my time: certain men were condemned to die for a murder committed; their sentence, if not pronounced, at least determined and concluded on. The judges, just in the nick, are informed by the officers of an inferior court hard by, that they have some men in custody, who have directly confessed the murder, and made an indubitable discovery of all the particulars of the fact. Yet it was gravely deliberated whether or not they ought to suspend the execution of the sentence already passed upon the first accused: they considered the novelty of the example judicially, and the consequence of reversing judgments; that the sentence was passed, and the judges deprived of repentance; and in the result, these poor devils were sacrificed by the forms of justice. Philip, or some other, provided against a like inconvenience after this manner. He had condemned a man in a great fine towards another by an absolute judgment. The truth some time after being discovered, he found that he had passed an unjust sentence. On one side was the reason of the cause; on the other side, the reason of the judicial forms: he in some sort satisfied both, leaving the sentence in the state it was, and out of his own purse recompensing the condemned party. But he had to do with a reparable affair; my men were irreparably hanged. How many condemnations have I seen more criminal than the crimes themselves?

All which makes me remember the ancient opinions, "That 'tis of necessity a man must do wrong by retail who will do right in gross; and injustice in little things, who would come to do justice in great: that human justice is formed after the model of physic, according to which, all that is useful is also just and honest: and of what is held by the Stoics, that Nature herself proceeds contrary to justice in most of her works: and of what is received by the Cyrenaics, that there is nothing just of itself, but that customs and laws make justice: and what the Theodorians held that theft, sacrilege, and all sorts of uncleanness, are just in a sage, if he knows them to be profitable to him." There is no remedy: I am in the same case that Alcibiades was, that I will never, if I can help it, put myself into the hands of a man who may determine as to my head, where my life and honor shall more depend upon the skill and diligence of my attorney than on my own innocence. I would venture myself with such justice as would take notice of my good deeds, as well as my ill; where I had as much to hope as to fear: indemnity is not sufficient pay to a man who does better than not to do

amiss. Our justice presents to us but one hand, and that the left hand, too; let him be who he may, he shall be sure to come off with loss.

In China, of which kingdom the government and arts, without commerce with or knowledge of ours, surpass our examples in several excellent features, and of which the history teaches me how much greater and more various the world is than either the ancients or we have been able to penetrate, the officers deputed by the prince to visit the state of his provinces, as they punish those who behave themselves ill in their charge, so do they liberally reward those who have conducted themselves better than the common sort, and beyond the necessity of their duty; these there present themselves, not only to be approved but to get; not simply to be paid, but to have a present made to them.

No judge, thank God, has ever yet spoken to me in the quality of a judge, upon any account whatever, whether my own or that of a third party, whether criminal or civil; nor no prison has ever received me, not even to walk there. Imagination renders the very outside of a jail displeasing to me; I am so enamored of liberty, that should I be interdicted the access to some corner of the Indies, I should live a little less at my ease; and whilst I can find earth or air open elsewhere, I shall never lurk in any place where I must hide myself. My God! how ill should I endure the condition wherein I see so many people, nailed to a corner of the kingdom, deprived of the right to enter the principal cities and courts, and the liberty of the public roads, for having quarrelled with our laws. If those under which I live should shake a finger at me by way of menace, I would immediately go seek out others, let them be where they would. All my little prudence in the civil wars wherein we are now engaged is employed that they may not hinder my liberty of going and coming.

Now, the laws keep up their credit, not for being just, but because they are laws; 'tis the mystic foundation of their authority; they have no other, and it well answers their purpose. They are often made by fools, still oftener by men who, out of hatred to equality, fail in equity; but always by men, vain and irresolute authors. There is nothing so much, nor so grossly, nor so ordinarily faulty, as the laws. Whoever obeys them because they are just, does not justly obey them as he ought. Our French laws, by their irregularity and deformity, lend, in some sort, a helping hand to the disorder and corruption that all manifest in their dispensation and execution: the command is so perplexed and inconstant, that it in some sort excuses alike disobedience and defect in the interpretation, the administration and the observation of it. What fruit then soever we may extract from experience, that will little advantage our institution, which we draw from foreign examples, if we make so little profit of that we have of our own, which is more familiar to us, and, doubtless, sufficient to instruct us in that whereof we have need. I study myself more than any other subject; 'tis my metaphysic, my physic:—

"What god may govern with skill this dwelling of the world? whence rises the monthly moon, whither wanes she? how is it that her horns are contracted and reopen? whence do winds prevail on the main? what does the east wind court with its blasts? and whence are the clouds perpetually supplied with water? is a day to come which may undermine the world?"

"Ask whom the cares of the world trouble."

In this universality, I suffer myself to be ignorantly and negligently led by the general law of the world: I shall know it well enough when I feel it; my learning cannot make it alter its course; it will not change itself for me; 'tis folly to hope it, and a greater folly to concern one's self about it, seeing it is necessarily alike public and common. The goodness and capacity of the governor ought absolutely to discharge us of all care of the government: philosophical inquisitions and contemplations serve for no other use but to increase our curiosity. The philosophers, with great reason, send us back to the rules of nature; but they have nothing to do with so sublime a knowledge; they falsify them, and present us her face painted with too high and too adulterate a complexion, whence spring so many different pictures of so uniform a subject. As she has given us feet to walk with, so has she given us prudence to guide us in life: not so ingenious, robust, and pompous a prudence as that of their invention; but yet one that is easy, quiet, and salutary, and that very well performs what the other promises, in him who has the good luck to know how to employ it sincerely and regularly, that is to say, according to nature. The most simply to commit one's self to nature is to do it most wisely. Oh, what a soft, easy, and wholesome pillow is ignorance and incuriosity, whereon to repose a well-ordered head!

I had rather understand myself well in myself, than in Cicero. Of the experience I have of myself, I find enough to make me wise, if I were but a good scholar: whoever will call to mind the excess of his past anger, and to what a degree that fever transported him, will see the deformity of this passion better than in Aristotle, and conceive a more just hatred against it; whoever will remember the ills he has undergone, those that have threatened him, and the light occasions that have removed him from one state to another, will by that prepare himself for future changes, and the knowledge of his condition. The life of Caesar has no greater example for us than our own: though popular and of command, 'tis still a life subject to all human accidents. Let us but listen to it; we apply to ourselves all whereof we have principal need; whoever shall call to memory how many and many times he has been mistaken in his own judgment, is he not a great fool if he does not ever after suspect it? When I find myself convinced, by the reason of another, of a false opinion, I do not so much learn what he has said to me that is new and the particular ignorance—that would be no great acquisition—as, in general, I learn my own debility and the treachery of my understanding, whence I extract the reformation of the whole mass. In all my other errors I do the same, and find from this rule great utility to life; I regard not the species and individual as a stone that I have stumbled at; I learn to suspect my steps throughout, and am careful to place them right. To learn that a man has said or done a foolish thing is nothing: a man must learn that he is nothing but a fool, a much more ample and important instruction. The false steps that my memory has so often made, even then when it was most secure and confident of itself, are not idly thrown away; it vainly swears and assures me I shake my ears; the first opposition that is made to its testimony puts me into suspense, and I durst not rely upon it in anything of moment, nor warrant it in another person's concerns: and were it not that what I do for want of memory, others do more often for want of good faith, I should always, in matter of fact, rather choose to take the truth from another's mouth than from my own. If every one would pry into the effects and circumstances of the passions that sway him, as I

have done into those which I am most subject to, he would see them coming, and would a little break their impetuosity and career; they do not always seize us on a sudden; there is threatening and degrees:—

"As with the first wind the sea begins to foam, and swells, thence higher swells, and higher raises the waves, till the ocean rises from its depths to the sky."

Judgment holds in me a magisterial seat; at least it carefully endeavors to make it so: it leaves my appetites to take their own course, hatred and friendship, nay, even that I bear to myself, without change or corruption; if it cannot reform the other parts according to its own model, at least it suffers not itself to be corrupted by them, but plays its game apart.

The advice to every one, "to know themselves," should be of important effect, since that god of wisdom and light caused it to be written on the front of his temple, as comprehending all he had to advise us. Plato says also, that prudence is no other thing than the execution of this ordinance; and Socrates minutely verifies it in Xenophon. The difficulties and obscurity are not discerned in any science but by those who are got into it; for a certain degree of intelligence is required to be able to know that a man knows not, and we must push against a door to know whether it be bolted against us or no: whence this Platonic subtlety springs, that "neither they who know are to inquire, forasmuch as they know; nor they who do not know, forasmuch as to inquire they must know what they inquire of." So in this, "of knowing a man's self," that every man is seen so resolved and satisfied with himself, that every man thinks himself sufficiently intelligent, signifies that every one knows nothing about the matter; as Socrates gives Euthydemus to understand. I, who profess nothing else, therein find so infinite a depth and variety, that all the fruit I have reaped from my learning serves only to make me sensible how much I have to learn. To my weakness, so often confessed, I owe the propension I have to modesty, to the obedience of belief prescribed me, to a constant coldness and moderation of opinions, and a hatred of that troublesome and wrangling arrogance, wholly believing and trusting in itself, the capital enemy of discipline and truth. Do but hear them domineer; the first fopperies they utter, 'tis in the style wherewith men establish religions and laws:—

"Nothing is worse than that assertion and decision should precede knowledge and perception."

Aristarchus said that anciently there were scarce seven sages to be found in the world, and in his time scarce so many fools: have not we more reason than he to say so in this age of ours? Affirmation and obstinacy are express signs of want of wit. This fellow may have knocked his nose against the ground a hundred times in a day, yet he will be at his Ergos as resolute and sturdy as before. You would say he had had some new soul and vigor of understanding infused into him since, and that it happened to him, as to that ancient son of the earth, who took fresh courage and vigor by his fall:—

"Whose broken limbs, when they touched his mother earth, immediately new force acquire:"

does not this incorrigible coxcomb think that he assumes a new understanding by undertaking a new dispute? 'Tis by my own experience that I accuse human ignorance, which is, in my opinion, the surest part of the world's school. Such as will not conclude it in themselves, by so vain an example as mine, or their own, let them believe it from Socrates, the master of masters; for the philosopher Antisthenes said to his disciples, "Let us go and hear Socrates; there I will be a pupil with you;" and, maintaining this doctrine of the Stoic sect, "that virtue was sufficient to make a life completely happy, having no need of any other thing whatever;" except of the force of Socrates, added he.

That long attention that I employ in considering myself, also fits me to judge tolerably enough of others; and there are few things whereof I speak better and with better excuse. I happen very often more exactly to see and distinguish the qualities of my friends than they do themselves: I have astonished some with the pertinence of my description, and have given them warning of themselves. By having from my infancy been accustomed to contemplate my own life in those of others, I have acquired a complexion studious in that particular; and when I am once intent upon it, I let few things about me, whether countenances, humors, or discourses, that serve to that purpose, escape me. I study all, both what I am to avoid and what I am to follow. Also in my friends, I discover by their productions their inward inclinations; not by arranging this infinite variety of so diverse and unconnected actions into certain species and chapters, and distinctly distributing my parcels and divisions under known heads and classes:—

"But neither can we enumerate how many kinds there are, nor what are their names."

The wise speak and deliver their fancies more specifically, and piece by piece; I, who see no further into things than as use informs me, present mine generally without rule and experimentally: I pronounce my opinion by disjointed articles, as a thing that cannot be spoken at once and in gross; relation and conformity are not to be found in such low and common souls as ours. Wisdom is a solid and entire building, of which every piece keeps its place and bears its mark:—

"Wisdom only is wholly within itself."

I leave it to artists, and I know not whether or no they will be able to bring it about, in so perplexed, minute, and fortuitous a thing, to marshal into distinct bodies this infinite diversity of faces, to settle our inconstancy, and set it in order. I do not only find it hard to piece our actions to one another, but I moreover find it hard properly to design each by itself by any principal quality, so ambiguous and variform they are with diverse lights. That which is remarked for rare in Perseus, king of Macedon, "that his mind fixing itself to no one condition, wandered in all sorts of living, and represented manners so wild and erratic, that it was neither known to himself or any other what kind of man he was," seems almost to fit all the world; and, especially, I have seen another of his make, to whom I think this conclusion might more properly be applied; no moderate settledness, still running headlong from one extreme to another, upon occasions not to be guessed at; no line of path without traverse and wonderful contrariety: no one quality simple and unmixed; so that the best guess men

can one day make will be, that he affected and studied to make himself known by being not to be known. A man had need have sound ears to hear himself frankly criticised; and as there are few who can endure to hear it without being nettled, those who hazard the undertaking it to us manifest a singular effect of friendship; for 'tis to love sincerely indeed, to venture to wound and offend us, for our own good. I think it harsh to judge a man whose ill qualities are more than his good ones: Plato requires three things in him who will examine the soul of another: knowledge, benevolence, boldness.

I was sometimes asked, what I should have thought myself fit for, had any one designed to make use of me, while I was of suitable years:—

"Whilst better blood gave me vigor, and before envious old age whitened and thinned my temples:"

"for nothing," said I; and I willingly excuse myself from knowing anything which enslaves me to others. But I had told the truths to my master, and had regulated his manners, if he had so pleased, not in gross, by scholastic lessons, which I understand not, and from which I see no true reformation spring in those that do; but by observing them by leisure, at all opportunities, and simply and naturally judging them as an eye-witness, distinctly one by one; giving him to understand upon what terms he was in the common opinion, in opposition to his flatterers. There is none of us who would not be worse than kings, if so continually corrupted as they are with that sort of canaille. How, if Alexander, that great king and philosopher, cannot defend himself from them! I should have had fidelity, judgment, and freedom enough for that purpose. It would be a nameless office, otherwise it would lose its grace and its effect; and 'tis a part that is not indifferently fit for all men; for truth itself has not the privilege to be spoken at all times and indiscriminately; its use, noble as it is, has its circumspections and limits. It often falls out, as the world goes, that a man lets it slip into the ear of a prince, not only to no purpose, but moreover injuriously and unjustly; and no man shall make me believe that a virtuous remonstrance may not be viciously applied, and that the interest of the substance is not often to give way to that of the form.

For such a purpose, I would have a man who is content with his own fortune:—

"Who is pleased with what he is and desires nothing further,"

and of moderate station; forasmuch as, on the one hand, he would not be afraid to touch his master's heart to the quick, for fear by that means of losing his preferment: and, on the other hand, being of no high quality, he would have more easy communication with all sorts of people. I would have this office limited to only one person; for to allow the privilege of his liberty and privacy to many, would beget an inconvenient irreverence; and of that one, I would above all things require the fidelity of silence.

A king is not to be believed when he brags of his constancy in standing the shock of the enemy for his glory, if for his profit and amendment he cannot stand the liberty of

a friend's advice, which has no other power but to pinch his ear, the remainder of its effect being still in his own hands. Now, there is no condition of men whatever who stand in so great need of true and free advice and warning, as they do: they sustain a public life, and have to satisfy the opinion of so many spectators, that, as those about them conceal from them whatever should divert them from their own way, they insensibly find themselves involved in the hatred and detestation of their people, often upon occasions which they might have avoided without any prejudice even of their pleasures themselves, had they been advised and set right in time. Their favorites commonly have more regard to themselves than to their master; and indeed it answers with them, forasmuch as, in truth, most offices of them, forasmuch as, in truth, most offices of ereign, are under a rude and dangerous hazard, so that therein there is great need, not only of very great affection and freedom, but of courage too.

In fine, all this fricasee which I daub here, is nothing but a register of the essays of my own life, which, for the internal soundness, is a sufficient example to take instruction against the hair; but as to bodily health, no man can furnish out more profitable experience than I, who present it pure, and no way corrupted and changed by art or opinion. Experience is properly upon its own dunghill in the subject of physic, where reason wholly gives it place. Tiberius said that whoever had lived twenty years ought to be responsible to himself for all things that were hurtful or wholesome to him, and know how to order himself without physic; and he might have learned it of Socrates, who, advising his disciples to be solicitous of their health as a chief study, added that it was hard if a man of sense, having a care to his exercise and diet, did not better know than any physician what was good or ill for him. And physic itself professes always to have experience for the test of its operations: so Plato had reason to say that, to be a right physician, it would be necessary that he who would become such, should first himself have passed through all the diseases he pretends to cure, and through all the accidents and circumstances whereof he is to judge. 'Tis but reason they should get the pox, if they will know how to cure it; for my part, I should put myself into such hands; the others but guide us, like him who paints seas and rocks and ports sitting at table, and there makes the model of a ship sailing in all security; but put him to the work itself, he knows not at which end to begin. They make such a description of our maladies as a towncrier does of a lost horse or dog—such a color, such a height, such an ear—but bring it to him, and he knows it not, for all that. If physic should one day give me some good and visible relief, then truly I will cry out in good earnest:—

"Now indeed I give my hand to practical knowledge."

The arts that promise to keep our bodies and souls in health promise a great deal; but, withal, there are none that less keep their promise. And, in our time, those who make profession of these arts amongst us, less manifest the effects than any other sort of men; one may say of them, at the most, that they sell medicinal drugs; but that they are physicians, a man cannot say. I have lived long enough to be able to give an account of the custom that has carried me so far; for him who has a mind to try it, as his taster, I have made the experiment. Here are some of the articles, as my memory shall supply me with them; I have no custom that has not varied according to

circumstances; but I only record those that I have been best acquainted with, and that hitherto have had the greatest possession of me.

My form of life is the same in sickness as in health; the same bed, the same hours, the same meat, and even the same drink, serve me in both conditions alike; I add nothing to them but the moderation of more or less, according to my strength and appetite. My health is to maintain my wonted state without disturbance. I see that sickness puts me off it on one side, and if I will be ruled by the physicians, they will put me off on the other; so that by fortune and by art I am out of my way. I believe nothing more certainly than this, that I cannot be hurt by the use of things to which I have been so long accustomed. 'Tis for custom to give a form to a man's life, such as it pleases him; she is all in all in that: 'tis the potion of Circe, that varies our nature as she best pleases. How many nations, and but three steps from us, think the fear of the night-dew, that so manifestly is hurtful to us, a ridiculous fancy; and our own watermen and peasants laugh at it. You make a German sick if you lay him upon a mattress, as you do an Italian if you lay him on a feather-bed, and a Frenchman, if without curtains or fire. A Spanish stomach cannot hold out to eat as we can, nor ours to drink like the Swiss. A German made me very merry at Augsburg, by finding fault with our hearths, by the same arguments which we commonly make use of in decrying their stoves: for, to say the truth, the smothered heat, and then the smell of that heated matter of which the fire is composed, very much offend such as are not used to them; not me; and, indeed, the heat being always equal, constant, and universal, without flame, without smoke, and without the wind that comes down our chimneys, they may many ways sustain comparison with ours. Why do we not imitate the Roman architecture? for they say that anciently fires were not made in the houses, but on the outside, and at the foot of them, whence the heat was conveyed to the whole fabric by pipes contrived in the wall, which were drawn twining about the rooms that were to be warmed: which I have seen plainly described somewhere in Seneca. This German hearing me commend the conveniences and beauties of his city, which truly deserves it, began to compassionate me that I had to leave it; and the first inconvenience he alleged to me was, the heaviness of head that the chimneys elsewhere would bring upon me. He had heard some one make this complaint, and fixed it upon us, being by custom deprived of the means of perceiving it at home. All heat that comes from the fire weakens and dulls me. Evenus said that fire was the best condiment of life: I rather choose any other way of making myself warm.

We are afraid to drink our wines, when toward the bottom of the cask; in Portugal those fumes are reputed delicious, and it is the beverages of princes. In short, every nation has many customs and usages that are not only unknown to other nations, but savage and miraculous in their sight. What should we do with those people who admit of no evidence that is not in print, who believe not men if they are not in a book, nor truth if it be not of competent age? we dignify our fopperies when we commit them to the press: 'tis of a great deal more weight to say, "I have read such a thing," than if you only say, "I have heard such a thing." But I, who no more disbelieve a man's mouth than his pen, and who know that men write as indiscreetly as they speak, and who look upon this age as one that is past, as soon quote a friend as Aulus Gellius or Macrobius; and what I have seen, as what they have written. And, as 'tis held of virtue, that it is not greater for having continued longer, so do I hold of truth, that for

being older it is none the wiser. I often say, that it is mere folly that makes us run after foreign and scholastic examples; their fertility is the same now that it was in the time of Homer and Plato. But is it not that we seek more honor from the quotation, than from the truth of the matter in hand? As if it were more to the purpose to borrow our proofs from the shops of Vascosan or Plantin, than from what is to be seen in our own village; or else, indeed, that we have not the wit to cull out and make useful what we see before us, and to judge of it clearly enough to draw it into example: for if we say that we want authority to give faith to our testimony, we speak from the purpose; forasmuch as, in my opinion, of the most ordinary, common, and known things, could we but find out their light, the greatest miracles of nature might be formed, and the most wonderful examples, especially upon the subject of human actions.

Now, upon this subject, setting aside the examples I have gathered from books, and what Aristotle says of Andron the Argian, that he travelled over the arid sands of Lybia without drinking: a gentleman, who has very well behaved himself in several employments, said, in a place where I was, that he had ridden from Madrid to Lisbon, in the heat of summer, without any drink at all. He is very healthful and vigorous for his age, and has nothing extraordinary in the use of his life, but this, to live sometimes two or three months, nay, a whole year, as he has told me, without drinking. He is sometimes thirsty, but he lets it pass over, and he holds that it is an appetite which easily goes off of itself; and he drinks more out of caprice than either for need or pleasure.

Here is another example: 'tis not long ago that I found one of the learnedest men in France, among those of not inconsiderable fortune, studying in a corner of a hall that they had separated for him with tapestry, and about him a rabble of his servants full of license. He told me, and Seneca almost says the same of himself, he made an advantage of this hubbub; that, beaten with this noise, he so much the more collected and retired himself into himself for contemplation, and that this tempest of voices drove back his thoughts within himself. Being a student at Padua, he had his study so long situated amid the rattle of coaches and the tumult of the square, that he not only formed himself to the contempt, but even to the use of noise, for the service of his studies. Socrates answered Alcibiades, who was astonished how he could endure the perpetual scolding of his wife, "Why," said he, "as those do who are accustomed to the ordinary noise of wheels drawing water." I am quite otherwise; I have a tender head and easily discomposed; when 'tis bent upon anything, the least buzzing of a fly murders it.

Seneca in his youth having warmly espoused the example of Sextius, of eating nothing that had died, for a whole year dispensed with such food, and, as he said, with pleasure, and discontinued it that he might not be suspected of taking up this rule from some new religion by which it was prescribed: he adopted, in like manner, from the precepts of Attalus a custom not to lie upon any sort of bedding that gave way under his weight, and, even to his old age, made use of such as would not yield to any pressure. What the usage of his time made him account roughness, that of ours makes us look upon as effeminacy.

Do but observe the difference betwixt the way of living of my laborers and my own; the Scythians and Indians have nothing more remote both from my capacity and my form. I have picked up charity boys to serve me: who soon after have quitted both my kitchen and livery, only that they might return to their former course of life; and I found one afterwards, picking mussels out of the sewer for his dinner, whom I could neither by entreaties nor threats reclaim from the sweetness he found in indigence. Beggars have their magnificences and delights, as well as the rich, and, 'tis said, their dignities and polities. These are effects of custom; she can mould us, not only into what form she pleases (the sages say we ought to apply ourselves to the best, which she will soon make easy to us), but also to change and variation, which is the most noble and most useful instruction of all she teaches us. The best of my bodily conditions is that I am flexible and not very obstinate: I have inclinations more my own and ordinary, and more agreeable than others; but I am diverted from them with very little ado, and easily slip into a contrary course. A young man ought to cross his own rules, to awaken his vigor and to keep it from growing faint and rusty; and there is no course of life so weak and sottish as that which is carried on by rule and discipline:—

"When he is pleased to have himself carried to the first milestone, the hour is chosen from the almanac; if he but rub the corner of his eye, his horoscope having been examined, he seeks the aid of salves;"

he shall often throw himself even into excesses, if he will take my advice; otherwise the least debauch will destroy him, and render him troublesome and disagreeable in company. The worst quality in a well-bred man is over-fastidiousness, and an obligation to a certain particular way, and it is particular, if not pliable and supple. It is a kind of reproach, not to be able, or not to dare, to do what we see those about us do; let such as these stop at home. It is in every man unbecoming, but in a soldier vicious and intolerable: who, as Philopoemen said, ought to accustom himself to every variety and inequality of life.

Though I have been brought up, as much as was possible, to liberty and independence, yet so it is that, growing old, and having by indifference more settled upon certain forms (my age is now past instruction, and has henceforward nothing to do but to keep itself up as well as it can), custom has already, ere I was aware, so imprinted its character in me in certain things, that I look upon it as a kind of excess to leave them off; and, without a force upon myself, cannot sleep in the daytime, nor eat between meals, nor breakfast, nor go to bed, without a great interval betwixt eating and sleeping, as of three hours after supper; nor get children but before I sleep, nor get them standing; nor endure my own sweat; nor quench my thirst either with pure water or pure wine; nor keep my head long bare, nor cut my hair after dinner; and I should be as uneasy without my gloves as without my shirt, or without washing when I rise from table or out of my bed; and I could not lie without a canopy and curtains, as if they were essential things. I could dine without a tablecloth, but without a clean napkin, after the German fashion, very incommodiously; I foul them more than the Germans or Italians do, and make but little use either of spoon or fork. I complain that they did not keep up the fashion, begun after the example of kings, to change our napkin at every service, as they do our plate. We are told of that laborious

soldier Marius that, growing old, he became nice in his drink, and never drank but out of a particular cup of his own: I, in like manner, have suffered myself to fancy a certain form of glasses, and not willingly to drink in common glasses, no more than from a strange common hand: all metal offends me in comparison of a clear and transparent matter: let my eyes taste, too, according to their capacity. I owe several other such niceties to custom. Nature has also, on the other side, helped me to some of hers: as not to be able to endure more than two full meals in one day, without overcharging my stomach, nor a total abstinence from one of those meals without filling myself with wind, drying up my mouth, and dulling my appetite; the finding great inconvenience from overmuch evening air; for of late years, in night marches, which often happen to be all night long, after five or six hours my stomach begins to be queasy, with a violent pain in my head, so that I always vomit before the day can break. When the others go to breakfast, I go to sleep; and when I rise, I am as brisk and gay as before. I had always been told that the night dew never rises but in the beginning of the night; but for some years past, long and familiar intercourse with a lord, possessed with the opinion that the night dew is more sharp and dangerous about the declining of the sun, an hour or two before it sets, which he carefully avoids, and despises that of the night, he almost impressed upon me, not so much his reasoning as his experiences. What, shall mere doubt and inquiry strike our imagination, so as to change us? Such as absolutely and on a sudden give way to these propensions, draw total destruction upon themselves. I am sorry for several gentlemen who, through the folly of their physicians, have in their youth and health wholly shut themselves up: it were better to endure a cough, than, by disuse, for ever to lose the commerce of common life in things of so great utility. Malignant science, to interdict us the most pleasant hours of the day! Let us keep our possession to the last; for the most part, a man hardens himself by being obstinate, and corrects his constitution, as Caesar did the falling sickness, by dint of contempt. A man should addict himself to the best rules, but not enslave himself to them, except to such, if there be any such, where obligation and servitude are of profit.

Both kings and philosophers evacuate, and ladies too; public lives are bound to ceremony; mine, that is obscure and private, enjoys all natural dispensation; soldier and Gascon are also qualities a little subject to indiscretion; wherefore I shall say of this act of relieving nature, that it is desirable to refer it to certain prescribed and nocturnal hours, and compel one's self to this by custom, as I have done; in my declining years, to a particular convenience of place and seat for that purpose, and make it troublesome by long sitting; and yet, in the fouler offices, is it not in some measure excusable to require more care and cleanliness?

"Man is by nature a clean and delicate creature."

Of all the actions of nature, I am the most impatient of being interrupted in that. I have seen many soldiers troubled with the unruliness of their bellies; whereas mine and I never fail of our punctual assignation, which is at leaping out of bed, if some indispensable business or sickness does not molest us.

I think then, as I said before, that sick men cannot better place themselves anywhere in more safety, than in sitting still in that course of life wherein they have been bred

and trained up; change, be it what it will, distempers and puts one out. Do you believe that chestnuts can hurt a Perigordin or a Lucchese, or milk and cheese the mountain people? We enjoin them not only a new, but a contrary, method of life; a change that the healthful cannot endure. Prescribe water to a Breton of threescore and ten; shut a seaman up in a stove; forbid a Basque footman to walk: you will deprive them of motion, and in the end of air and light:—

"Is life worth so much? We are compelled to withhold the mind from things to which we are accustomed; and, that we may live, we cease to live. . . . Do I conceive that they still live, to whom the respirable air, and the light itself, by which we are governed, is rendered oppressive?"

If they do no other good, they do this at least, that they prepare patients betimes for death, by little and little undermining and cutting off the use of life.

Both well and sick, I have ever willingly suffered myself to obey the appetites that pressed upon me. I give great rein to my desires and propensities; I do not love to cure one disease by another; I hate remedies that are more troublesome than the disease itself. To be subject to the colic and subject to abstain from eating oysters, are two evils instead of one; the disease torments us on the one side, and the remedy on the other. Since we are ever in danger of mistaking, let us rather run the hazard of a mistake, after we have had the pleasure. The world proceeds quite the other way, and thinks nothing profitable that is not painful; it has great suspicion of facility. My appetite, in various things, has of its own accord happily enough accommodated itself to the health of my stomach. Relish and pungency in sauces were pleasant to me when young; my stomach disliking them since, my taste incontinently followed. Wine is hurtful to sick people, and 'tis the first thing that my mouth then finds distasteful, and with an invincible dislike. Whatever I take against my liking does me harm; and nothing hurts me that I eat with appetite and delight. I never received harm by any action that was very pleasant to me; and accordingly have made all medicinal conclusions largely give way to my pleasure; and I have, when I was young:—

"When Cupid, fluttering round me here and there, shone in his rich purple mantle:"

given myself the rein as licentiously and inconsiderately to the desire that was predominant in me, as any other whomsoever:—

"And I have played the soldier not ingloriously,"

yet more in continuation and holding out, than in sally:—

"I can scarcely remember six bouts in one night."

'Tis certainly a misfortune and a miracle at once to confess at what a tender age I first came under the subjection of love: it was, indeed, by chance; for it was long before the years of choice or knowledge; I do not remember myself so far back; and my fortune may well be coupled with that of Quartilla, who could not remember when she was a maid:—

“Thence the odor of the arm-pits, the precocious hair, and the beard which astonished my mother.”

Physicians modify their rules according to the violent longings that happen to sick persons, ordinarily with good success; this great desire cannot be imagined so strange and vicious, but that nature must have a hand in it. And then how easy a thing is it to satisfy the fancy? In my opinion, this part wholly carries it, at least, above all the rest. The most grievous and ordinary evils are those that fancy loads us with; this Spanish saying pleases me in several aspects:

“God defend me from myself.”

I am sorry when I am sick, that I have not some longing that might give me the pleasure of satisfying it; all the rules of physic would hardly be able to divert me from it. I do the same when I am well; I can see very little more to be hoped or wished for. ’Twere pity a man should be so weak and languishing, as not to have even wishing left to him.

The art of physic is not so fixed, that we need be without authority for whatever we do; it changes according to climates and moons, according to Fernel and to Scaliger. If your physician does not think it good for you to sleep, to drink wine, or to eat such and such meats, never trouble yourself; I will find you another that shall not be of his opinion; the diversity of medical arguments and opinions embraces all sorts of forms. I saw a miserable sick person panting and burning for thirst, that he might be cured, who was afterwards laughed at for his pains by another physician, who condemned that advice as prejudicial to him: had he not tormented himself to good purpose? There lately died of the stone a man of that profession, who had made use of extreme abstinence to contend with his disease: his fellowphysicians say that, on the contrary, this abstinence had dried him up and baked the gravel in his kidneys.

I have observed, that both in wounds and sicknesses, speaking discomposes and hurts me, as much as any irregularity I can commit. My voice pains and tires me, for ’tis loud and forced; so that when I have gone to whisper some great persons about affairs of consequence, they have often desired me to moderate my voice.

This story is worth a diversion. Some one in a certain Greek school speaking loud as I do, the master of the ceremonies sent to him to speak softly: “Tell him, then, he must send me,” replied the other, “the tone he would have me speak in.” To which the other replied, “That he should take the tone from the ears of him to whom he spake.” It was well said, if it is to be understood: “Speak according to the affair you are speaking about to your auditor,” for if it mean, “ ’tis sufficient that he hear you, or govern yourself by him,” I do not find it to be reason. The tone and motion of my voice carries with it a great deal of the expression and signification of my meaning, and ’tis I who am to govern it, to make myself understood: there is a voice to instruct, a voice to flatter, and a voice to reprehend. I will not only that my voice reach him, but, peradventure, that it strike and pierce him. When I rate my valet with sharp and bitter language, it would be very pretty for him to say, “Pray, master, speak lower; I hear you very well:”—

“There is a certain voice accommodated to the hearing, not by its loudness, but by its propriety.”

Speaking is half his who speaks, and half his who hears; the latter ought to prepare himself to receive it, according to its bias; as with tennis-players, he who receives the ball, shifts and prepares, according as he sees him move who strikes the stroke, and according to the stroke itself.

Experience has, moreover, taught me this, that we ruin ourselves by impatience. Evils have their life and limits, their diseases and their recovery.

The constitution of maladies is formed by the pattern of the constitution of animals; they have their fortune and their days limited from their birth; he who attempts imperiously to cut them short by force in the middle of their course, lengthens and multiplies them, and incenses instead of appeasing them. I am of Crantor’s opinion, that we are neither obstinately and deafly to oppose evils, nor succumb to them from want of courage; but that we are naturally to give way to them, according to their condition and our own. We ought to grant free passage to diseases; I find they stay less with me, who let them alone; and I have lost some, reputed the most tenacious and obstinate, by their own decay, without help and without art, and contrary to its rules. Let us a little permit Nature to take her own way; she better understands her own affairs than we. But such a one died of it; and so shall you: if not of that disease, of another. And how many have not escaped dying, who have had three physicians at their tails? Example is a vague and universal mirror, and of various reflections. If it be a delicious medicine, take it: ’tis always so much present good. I will never stick at the name nor the color, if it be pleasant and grateful to the palate: pleasure is one of the chiefest kinds of profit. I have suffered colds, gouty defluxions, relaxations, palpitations of the heart, megrims, and other accidents, to grow old and die in time a natural death; I have so lost them when I was half fit to keep them: they are sooner prevailed upon by courtesy than huffing. We must patiently suffer the laws of our condition; we are born to grow old, to grow weak, and to be sick, in despite of all medicine. ’Tis the first lesson the Mexicans teach their children; so soon as ever they are born they thus salute them: “Thou art come into the world, child, to endure: endure, suffer, and say nothing.” ’Tis injustice to lament that which has befallen any one which may befall every one:—

Sacrifice to Aesculapius. From painting by Gustave Popelin.

“Then be angry, when there is anything unjustly decreed against thee alone.”

See an old man who begs of God that he will maintain his health vigorous and entire; that is to say, that he restore him to youth:—

“Fool! why do you vainly form these puerile wishes?”

is it not folly? his condition is not capable of it. The gout, the stone, and indigestion are symptoms of long years; as heat, rains, and winds are of long journeys. Plato does not believe that Aesculapius troubled himself to provide by regimen to prolong life in a weak and wasted body, useless to his country and to his profession, or to beget healthful and robust children; and does not think this care suitable to the Divine justice and prudence, which is to direct all things to utility. My good friend, your business is done; nobody can restore you; they can, at the most, but patch you up, and prop you a little, and by that means prolong your misery an hour or two:—

“Like one who, desiring to stay an impending ruin, places various props against it, till, in a short time, the house, the props, and all, giving way, fall together.”

We must learn to suffer what we cannot evade; our life, like the harmony of the world, is composed of contrary things—of diverse tones, sweet and harsh, sharp and flat, sprightly and solemn: the musician who should only affect some of these, what would he be able to do? he must know how to make use of them all, and to mix them; and so we should mingle the goods and evils which are consubstantial with our life; our being cannot subsist without this mixture, and the one part is no less necessary to it than the other. To attempt to combat natural necessity, is to represent the folly of Ctesiphon, who undertook to kick with his mule.

I consult little about the alterations I feel: for these doctors take advantage; when they have you at their mercy, they surfeit your ears with their prognostics; and formerly surprising me, weakened with sickness, injuriously handled me with their dogmas and magisterial fopperies—one while menacing me with great pains, and another with approaching death. Hereby I was indeed moved and shaken, but not subdued nor jostled from my place; and though my judgment was neither altered nor distracted, yet it was at least disturbed: ’tis always agitation and combat.

Now, I use my imagination as gently as I can, and would discharge it, if I could, of all trouble and contest; a man must assist, flatter, and deceive it, if he can; my mind is fit for that office; it needs no appearances throughout: could it persuade as it preaches, it would successfully relieve me. Will you have an example? It tells me: “that ’tis for my good to have the stone: that the structure of my age must naturally suffer some decay, and it is now time it should begin to disjoin and to confess a breach; ’tis a common necessity, and there is nothing in it either miraculous or new; I therein pay what is due to old age, and I cannot expect a better bargain; that society ought to comfort me, being fallen into the most common infirmity of my age; I see everywhere men tormented with the same disease, and am honored by the fellowship, forasmuch

as men of the best quality are most frequently afflicted with it: 'tis a noble and dignified disease: that of such as are struck with it, few have it to a less degree of pain; that these are put to the trouble of a strict diet and the daily taking of nauseous potions, whereas I owe my better state purely to my good fortune; for some ordinary broths of eringo or burst-wort that I have twice or thrice taken to oblige the ladies, who, with greater kindness than my pain was sharp, would needs present me half of theirs, seemed to me equally easy to take and fruitless in operation, the others have to pay a thousand vows to Aesculapius, and as many crowns to their physicians, for the voiding a little gravel, which I often do by the aid of nature: even the decorum of my countenance is not disturbed in company; and I can hold my water ten hours, and as long as any man in health. The fear of this disease," says my mind, "formerly affrighted thee, when it was unknown to thee; the cries and despairing groans of those who make it worse by their impatience, begot a horror in thee. 'Tis an infirmity that punishes the members by which thou hast most offended. Thou art a conscientious fellow:"—

"We are entitled to complain of a punishment that we have not deserved:"

"consider this chastisement: 'tis very easy in comparison of others, and inflicted with a paternal tenderness: do but observe how late it comes; it only seizes on and incommodes that part of thy life which is, one way and another, sterile and lost; having, as it were by composition, given time for the license and pleasures of thy youth. The fear and the compassion that the people have of this disease serve thee for matter of glory; a quality whereof it thou hast thy judgment purified, and that thy reason has somewhat cured it, thy friends notwithstanding, discern some tincture in thy complexion. 'Tis a pleasure to hear it said of one's self: what strength of mind, what patience! Thou art seen to sweat with pain, to turn pale and red, to tremble, to vomit blood, to suffer strange contractions and convulsions, at times to let great tears drop from thine eyes, to urine thick, black, and dreadful water, or to have it suppressed by some sharp and craggy stone, that cruelly pricks and tears the neck of the bladder, whilst all the while thou entertainest the company with an ordinary countenance; drolling by fits with thy people; making one in a continuous discourse, now and then making excuse for thy pain, and representing thy suffering less than it is. Dost thou call to mind the men of past times, who so greedily sought diseases to keep their virtue in breath and exercise. Put the case that nature sets thee on and impels thee to this glorious school, into which thou wouldst never have entered of thy own free will. If thou tellest me that it is a dangerous and mortal disease, what others are not so? for 'tis a physical cheat to except any that they say do not go direct to death: what matters if they go thither by accident, or if they easily slide and slip into the path that leads us to it? But thou dost not die because thou art sick; thou diest because thou art living: death kills thee without the help of sickness; and sickness has deferred death in some, who have lived longer by reason that they thought themselves always dying; to which may be added, that as in wounds, so in diseases, some are medicinal and wholesome. The stone is often no less long-lived than you; we see men with whom it has continued from their infancy even to their extreme old age; and if they had not broken company, it would have been with them longer still; you more often kill it than it kills you. And though it should present to you the image of approaching death, were it not a good office to a man of such an age, to put him in

mind of his end? And, which is worse, thou hast no longer anything that should make thee desire to be cured. Whether or no, common necessity will soon call thee away. Do but consider how skillfully and gently she puts thee out of concern with life, and weans thee from the world; not forcing thee with a tyrannical subjection, like so many other infirmities which thou seest old men afflicted withal, that hold them in continual torment, and keep them in perpetual and unintermitted weakness and pains, but by warnings and instructions at intervals, intermixing long pauses of repose, as it were to give thee opportunity to meditate and ruminate upon thy lesson, at thy own ease and leisure. To give thee means to judge aright, and to assume the resolution of a man of courage, it presents to thee the state of thy entire condition, both in good and evil; and one while a very cheerful and another an insupportable life, in one and the same day. If thou embracest not death, at least thou shakest hands with it once a month; whence thou hast more cause to hope that it will one day surprise thee without menace; and that being so often conducted to the water-side, but still thinking thyself to be upon the accustomed terms, thou and thy confidence will at one time or another be unexpectedly wafted over. A man cannot reasonably complain of diseases that fairly divide the time with health."

I am obliged to Fortune for having so often assaulted me with the same sort of weapons: she forms and fashions me by use, hardens and habituates me, so that I can know within a little for how much I shall be quit. For want of natural memory, I make one of paper; and as any new symptom happens in my disease, I set it down, whence it falls out that, having now almost passed through all sorts of examples, if anything striking threatens me, turning over these little loose notes, as the Sybilline leaves, I never fail of finding matter of consolation from some favorable prognostic in my past experience. Custom also makes me hope better for the time to come; for, the conduct of this clearing out having so long continued, 'tis to be believed that nature will not alter her course, and that no other worse accident will happen than what I already feel. And besides, the condition of this disease is not unsuitable to my prompt and sudden complexion: when it assaults me gently, I am afraid, for 'tis then for a great while; but it has, naturally, brisk and vigorous excesses; it claws me to purpose for a day or two. My kidneys held out an age without alteration; and I have almost now lived another, since they changed their state; evils have their periods, as well as benefits: peradventure, the infirmity draws towards an end. Age weakens the heat of my stomach, and, its digestion being less perfect, sends this crude matter to my kidneys; why, at a certain revolution, may not the heat of my kidneys be also abated, so that they can no more petrify my phlegm, and nature find out some other way of purgation. Years have evidently helped me to drain certain rheums; and why not these excrements which furnish matter for gravel? But is there anything delightful in comparison of this sudden change, when from an excessive pain, I come, by the voiding of a stone, to recover, as by a flash of lightning, the beautiful light of health, so free and full, as it happens in our sudden and sharpest colics? Is there anything in the pain suffered, that one can counterpoise to the pleasure of so sudden an amendment? Oh, how much does health seem the more pleasant to me, after a sickness so near and so contiguous, that I can distinguish them in the presence of one another, in their greatest show; when they appear in emulation, as if to make head against and dispute it with one another! As the Stoics say that vices are profitably introduced to give value to and to set off virtue, we can, with better reason and less

temerity of conjecture, say that nature has given us pain for the honor and service of pleasure and indolence. When Socrates, after his fetters were knocked off, felt the pleasure of that itching which the weight of them had caused in his legs, he rejoiced to consider the strict alliance betwixt pain and pleasure; how they are linked together by a necessary connection, so that by turns they follow and mutually beget one another; and cried out to good Aesop, that he ought of this consideration to have taken matter for a fine fable.

The worst that I see in other diseases is, that they are not so grievous in their effect as they are in their issue: a man is a whole year in recovering, and all the while full of weakness and fear. There is so much hazard, and so many steps to arrive at safety, that there is no end on't: before they have unmuffled you of a kerchief, and then of a cap; before they allow you to walk abroad and take the air, to drink wine, to lie with your wife, or eat melons, 'tis odds you relapse into some new distemper. The stone has this privilege, that it carries itself clean off: whereas the other maladies always leave behind them some impression and alteration that render the body subject to a new disease, and lend a hand to one another. Those are excusable that content themselves with possessing us, without extending farther and introducing their followers; but courteous and kind are those whose passage brings us any profitable issue. Since I have been troubled with the stone, I find myself freed from all other accidents, much more, methinks, than I was before, and have never had any fever since; I argue that the extreme and frequent vomitings that I am subject to purge me: and, on the other hand, my distastes for this and that, and the strange fasts I am forced to keep, digest my peccant humors, and nature, with those stones, voids whatever there is in me superfluous and hurtful. Let them never tell me that it is a medicine too dear bought: for what avail so many stinking draughts, so many caustics, incisions, sweats, setons, diets, and so many other methods of cure, which often, by reason we are not able to undergo their violence and importunity, bring us to our graces? So that when I have the stone, I look upon it as physic; when free from it, as an absolute deliverance.

And here is another particular benefit of my disease; which is, that it almost plays its game by itself, and lets me play mine, if I have only courage to do it; for, in its greatest fury, I have endured it ten hours together on horseback. Do but endure only; you need no other regimen: play, run, dine, do this and t'other, if you can; your debauch will do you more good than harm; say as much to one that has the pox, the gout, or hernia! The other diseases have more universal obligations; rack our actions after another kind of manner, disturb our whole order, and to their consideration engage the whole state of life: this only pinches the skin; it leaves the understanding and the will wholly at our own disposal, and the tongue, the hands, and the feet; it rather awakens than stupefies you. The soul is struck with the ardor of a fever, overwhelmed with an epilepsy, and displaced by a sharp megrim, and, in short, astounded by all the diseases that hurt the whole mass and the most noble parts; this never meddles with the soul; if anything goes amiss with her, 'tis her own fault; she betrays, dismounts, and abandons herself. There are none but fools who suffer themselves to be persuaded, that this hard and massive body which is baked in our kidneys is to be dissolved by drinks; wherefore, when it is once stirred, there is nothing to be done but to give it passage; and, for that matter, it will itself make one.

I moreover observe this particular convenience in it, that it is a disease wherein we have little to guess at: we are dispensed from the trouble into which other diseases throw us by the uncertainty of their causes, conditions, and progress; a trouble that is infinitely painful: we have no need of consultations and doctoral interpretations; the senses well enough inform us both what it is and where it is.

By suchlike arguments, weak and strong, as Cicero with the disease of his old age, I try to rock asleep and amuse my imagination, and to dress its wounds. If I find them worse to-morrow, I will provide new stratagems. That this is true: I am come to that pass of late, that the least motion forces pure blood out of my kidneys: what of that? I move about, nevertheless, as before, and ride after my hounds with a juvenile and insolent ardor; and hold that I have very good satisfaction for an accident of that importance, when it costs me no more but a dull heaviness and uneasiness in that part; 'tis some great stone that wastes and consumes the substance of my kidneys and my life, which I by little and little evacuate, not without some natural pleasure, as an excrement henceforward superfluous and troublesome. Now if I feel anything stirring, do not fancy that I trouble myself to consult my pulse or my urine, thereby to put myself upon some annoying prevention; I shall soon enough feel the pain, without making it more and longer by the disease of fear. He who fears he shall suffer, already suffers what he fears. To which may be added that the doubts and ignorance of those who take upon them to expound the designs of nature and her internal progressions, and the many false prognostics of their art, ought to give us to understand that her ways are inscrutable and utterly unknown; there is great uncertainty, variety, and obscurity in what she either promises or threatens. Old age excepted, which is an indubitable sign of the approach of death, in all other accidents I see few signs of the future, whereon we may ground our divination. I only judge of myself by actual sensation, not by reasoning: to what end, since I am resolved to bring nothing to it but expectation and patience? Will you know how much I get by this? observe those who do otherwise, and who rely upon so many diverse persuasions and counsels; how often the imagination presses upon them without any bodily pain. I have many times amused myself, being well and in safety, and quite free from these dangerous attacks in communicating them to the physicians as then beginning to discover themselves in me; I underwent the decree of their dreadful conclusions, being all the while quite at my ease, and so much the more obliged to the favor of God and better satisfied of the vanity of this art.

There is nothing that ought so much to be recommended to youth as activity and vigilance: our life is nothing but movement. I bestir myself with great difficulty, and am slow in everything, whether in rising, going to bed, or eating: seven of the clock in the morning is early for me, and where I rule, I never dine before eleven, nor sup till after six. I formerly attributed the cause of the fevers and other diseases I fell into to the heaviness that long sleeping had brought upon me, and have ever repented going to sleep again in the morning. Plato is more angry at excess of sleeping than at excess of drinking. I love to lie hard and alone, even without my wife, as kings do; pretty well covered with clothes. They never warm my bed, but since I have grown old they give me at need cloths to lay to my feet and stomach. They found fault with the great Scipio that he was a great sleeper; not, in my opinion, for any other reason than that men were displeased that he alone should have nothing in him to be found fault with.

If I am anything fastidious in my way of living ’tis rather in my lying than anything else; but generally I give way and accommodate myself as well as any one to necessity. Sleeping has taken up a great part of my life, and I yet continue, at the age I now am, to sleep eight or nine hours at one breath. I wean myself with utility from this proneness to sloth, and am evidently the better for so doing. I find the change a little hard indeed, but in three days ’tis over; and I see but few who live with less sleep, when need requires, and who more constantly exercise themselves, or to whom long journeys are less troublesome. My body is capable of a firm, but not of a violent or sudden agitation. I escape of late from violent exercises, and such as make me sweat: my limbs grow weary before they are warm. I can stand a whole day together, and am never weary of walking; but from my youth I have ever preferred to ride upon paved roads; on foot, I get up to the haunches in dirt, and little folks are subject in the streets to be elbowed and jostled for want of presence; I have ever loved to repose myself, whether sitting or lying, with my heels as high or higher than my seat.

There is no profession as pleasant as the military, a profession both noble in its execution (for valor is the stoutest, proudest, and most generous of all virtues), and noble in its cause: there is no utility either more universal or more just than the protection of the peace and greatness of one’s country. The company of so many noble, young, and active men delights you; the ordinary sight of so many tragic spectacles; the freedom of the conversation, without art; a masculine and unceremonious way of living, please you; the variety of a thousand several actions; the encouraging harmony of martial music that ravishes and inflames both your ears and souls; the honor of this occupation, nay, even its hardships and difficulties, which Plato holds so light that in his Republic he makes women and children share in them, are delightful to you. You put yourselves voluntarily upon particular exploits and hazards, according as you judge of their lustre and importance; and, a volunteer, find even life itself excusably employed:—

“And he remembers that it is honorable to die in arms.”

To fear common dangers that concern so great a multitude of men; not to dare to do what so many sorts of souls, what a whole people dare, is for a heart that is poor and mean beyond all measure: company encourages even children. If others excel you in knowledge, in gracefulness, in strength, or fortune, you have alternative resources at your disposal; but to give place to them in stability of mind, you can blame no one for that but yourself. Death is more abject, more languishing and troublesome in bed than in a fight: fevers and catarrhs as painful and mortal as a musket-shot. Whoever has fortified himself valiantly to bear the accidents of common life need not raise his courage to be a soldier:—

“To live, my Lucilius, is to be a soldier.”

I do not remember that I ever had the itch, and yet scratching is one of nature’s sweetest gratifications, and so much at hand; but repentance follows too near. I use it most in my ears, which are at intervals apt to itch.

I came into the world with all my senses entire, even to perfection. My stomach is commodiously good, as also is my head and my breath; and, for the most part, uphold themselves so in the height of fevers. I have passed the age to which some nations, not without reason, have prescribed so just a term of life that they would not suffer men to exceed it; and yet I have some intermissions, though short and inconstant, so clean and sound as to be little inferior to the health and pleasantness of my mouth. I do not speak of vigor and sprightliness; 'tis not reason they should follow me beyond their limits:—

"I am no longer able to stand waiting at a door in the rain."

My face and eyes presently discover my condition; all my alterations begin there, and appear somewhat worse than they really are; my friends often pity me before I feel the cause in myself. My looking-glass does not frighten me; for even in my youth it has befallen me more than once to have a scurvy complexion and of ill augury, without any great consequence, so that the physicians, not finding any cause within answerable to that outward alteration, attributed it to the mind and to some secret passion that tormented me within; but they were deceived. If my body would govern itself as well, according to my rule, as my mind does, we should move a little more at our ease. My mind was then not only free from trouble, but, moreover, full of joy and satisfaction, as it commonly is, half by its complexion, half by its design:—

"Nor do the troubles of the body ever affect my mind."

I am of the opinion that this temperature of my soul has often raised my body from its lapses; this is often depressed; if the other be not brisk and gay, 'tis at least tranquil and at rest. I had a quartan ague four or five months, that made me look miserably ill; my mind was always, if not calm, yet pleasant. If the pain be without me, the weakness and languor do not much afflict me; I see various corporal faintings, that beget a horror in me but to name, which yet I should less fear than a thousand passions and agitations of the mind that I see about me. I make up my mind no more to run; 'tis enough that I can crawl along; nor do I more complain of the natural decadence that I feel in myself:—

"Who is surprised to see a swollen goitre in the Alps?"

than I regret that my duration shall not be as long and entire as that of an oak.

I have no reason to complain of my imagination; I have had few thoughts in my life that have so much as broken my sleep, except those of desire, which have awakened without afflicting me. I dream but seldom, and then of chimeras and fantastic things, commonly produced from pleasant thoughts, and rather ridiculous than sad; and I believe it to be true that dreams are faithful interpreters of our inclinations; but there is art required to sort and understand them:—

"'Tis less wonder, what men practice, think, care for, see, and do when waking, and which affect their feelings, if they happen to any in sleep."

Plato, moreover, says, that ’tis the office of prudence to draw instructions of divination of future things from dreams: I don’t know about this, but there are wonderful instances of it that Socrates, Xenophon, and Aristotle, men of irreproachable authority, relate. Historians say that the Atlantes never dream; who also never eat any animal food, which I add, forasmuch as it is, peradventure, the reason why they never dream, for Pythagoras ordered a certain preparation of diet to beget appropriate dreams. Mine are very gentle, without any agitation of body or expression of voice. I have seen several of my time wonderfully disturbed by them. Theon the philosopher walked in his sleep, and so did Pericles’ servant, and that upon the tiles and top of the house.

I hardly ever choose my dish at table, but take the next at hand, and unwillingly change it for another. A confusion of meats and a clatter of dishes displease me as much as any other confusion: I am easily satisfied with few dishes: and am an enemy to the opinion of Favorinus, that in a feast they should snatch from you the meat you like, and set a plate of another sort before you; and that ’tis a pitiful supper, if you do not sate your guests with the rumps of various fowls, the beccafico only deserving to be all eaten. I usually eat salt meats, yet I prefer bread that has no salt in it; and my baker never sends up other to my table, contrary to the custom of the country. In my infancy, what they had most to correct in me was the refusal of things that children commonly best love, as sugar, sweetmeats, and march-panes. My tutor contended with this aversion to delicate things, as a kind of over-nicety; and indeed ’tis nothing else but a difficulty of taste, in anything it applies itself to. Whoever cures a child of an obstinate liking for brown bread, bacon, or garlic, cures him also of pampering his palate. There are some who affect temperance and plainness by wishing for beef and ham amongst the partridges; ’tis all very fine; this is the delicacy of the delicate; ’tis the taste of an effeminate fortune that disrelishes ordinary and accustomed things:—

“By which the luxury of wealth causes tedium.”

Not to make good cheer with what another is enjoying, and to be curious in what a man eats, is the essence of this vice:—

“If you can’t be content with herbs in a small dish for supper.”

There is indeed this difference, that ’tis better to oblige one’s appetite to things that are most easy to be had; but ’tis always vice to oblige one’s self. I formerly said a kinsman of mine was over-nice, who, by being in our galleys, had unlearned the use of beds and to undress when he went to sleep.

If I had any sons, I should willingly wish them fortune. The good father that God gave me (who has nothing of me but the acknowledgment of his goodness, but truly ’tis a very hearty one) sent me from my cradle to be brought up in a poor village of his, and there continued me all the while I was at nurse, and still longer, bringing me up to the meanest and most common way of living:—

“A well-governed stomach is a great part of liberty.”

Never take upon yourselves, and much less give up to your wives, the care of their nurture; leave the formation to fortune, under popular and natural laws; leave it to custom to train them up to frugality and hardship, that they may rather descend from rigor than mount up to it. This humor of his yet aimed at another end, to make me familiar with the people and the condition of men who most need our assistance; considering that I should rather regard them who extend their arms to me, than those who turn their backs upon me; and for this reason it was that he provided to hold me at the font persons of the meanest fortune, to oblige and attach me to them.

Nor has his design succeeded altogether ill; for, whether upon the account of the more honor in such a condescension, or out of a natural compassion that has a very great power over me, I have an inclination towards the meaner sort of people. The faction which I should condemn in our wars, I should more sharply condemn, flourishing and successful; it will somewhat reconcile me to it, when I shall see it miserable and overwhelmed. How willingly do I admire the fine humor of Cheilonis, daughter and wife to kings of Sparta! Whilst her husband Cleombrotus, in the commotion of her city, had the advantage over Leonidas her father, she, like a good daughter, stuck close to her father in all his misery and exile, in opposition to the conqueror. But so soon as the chance of war turned, she changed her will with the change of fortune, and bravely turned to her husband's side, whom she accompanied throughout, where his ruin carried him: admitting, as it appears to me, no other choice than to cleave to the side that stood most in need of her, and where she could best manifest her compassion. I am naturally more apt to follow the example of Flaminius, who rather gave his assistance to those who had most need of him than to those who had power to do him good, than I do to that of Pyrrhus, who was of an humor to truckle under the great and to domineer over the poor.

Long sittings at table both trouble me and do me harm; for, be it that I was so accustomed when a child, I eat all the while I sit. Therefore it is that at my own house, though the meals there are of the shortest, I usually sit down a little while after the rest, after the manner of Augustus: but I do not imitate him in rising also before the rest; on the contrary, I love to sit still a long time after, and to hear them talk, provided I am none of the talkers: for I tire and hurt myself with speaking upon a full stomach, as much as I find it very wholesome and pleasant to argue and to strain my voice before dinner.

The ancient Greeks and Romans had more reason than we in setting apart for eating, which is a principal action of life, if they were not prevented by other extraordinary business, many hours and the greatest part of the night; eating and drinking more deliberately than we do, who perform all our actions post-haste; and in extending this natural pleasure to more leisure and better use, intermixing with their meals pleasant and profitable conversation.

They whose concern it is to have a care of me, may very easily hinder me from eating anything they think will do me harm; for in such matters I never covet nor miss anything I do not see; but withal, if it once comes in my sight, 'tis in vain to persuade me to forbear; so that when I design to fast I must be kept apart from the suppers, and must have only so much given me as is required for a prescribed collation; for if I sit

down to table, I forget my resolution. When I order a change in the manner of dressing any dish, my people know that it means, that my stomach is out of order, and that I shall not touch it.

I love to have all meats, that will endure it, very little boiled or roasted, and prefer them very high, and even, as to several, quite gone. Nothing but hardness generally offends me (of any other quality I am as patient and indifferent as any man I have known); so that, contrary to the common humor, even in fish it often happens that I find them both too fresh and too firm; not for want of teeth, which I ever had good, even to excellence, and which age does not now begin to threaten; I have always been used every morning to rub them with a napkin, and before and after dinner. God is favorable to those whom He makes to die by degrees; 'tis the only benefit of old age; the last death will be so much the less painful; it will kill but a half or a quarter of a man. There is one tooth lately fallen out without drawing and without pain; it was the natural term of its duration; in that part of my being several others are already dead, others half dead, of those that were most active and in the first rank during my vigorous years; 'tis so I melt and steal away from myself. What a folly it would be in my understanding to apprehend the height of this fall, already so much advanced, as if it were from the very top! I hope I shall not. I, in truth, receive a principal consolation in meditating my death, that it will be just and natural, and that henceforward I cannot herein either require or hope from Destiny any other but unlawful favor. Men make themselves believe that we formerly had longer lives as well as greater stature. But they deceive themselves; and Solon, who was of those elder times, limits the duration of life to threescore and ten years. I, who have so much and so universally adored that apioton perpon the best mean of the passed time, and who have concluded the most moderate measures to be the most perfect, shall I pretend to an immeasurable and prodigious old age? Whatever happens contrary to the course of nature may be troublesome; but what comes according to her should always be pleasant:—

"All things that are done according to nature are to be accounted good."

And so, says Plato, the death which is occasioned by wounds and diseases is violent; but that which comes upon us, old age conducting us to it, is of all others the most easy, and in some sort delicious:—

"Young men are taken away by violence, old men by maturity."

Death mixes and confounds itself throughout with life; decay anticipates its hour, and shoulders itself even into the course of our advance. I have portraits of myself taken at five-and-twenty and five-and-thirty years of age. I compare them with that lately drawn: how many times is it no longer me; how much more is my present image unlike the former, than unlike my dying one? It is too much to abuse nature, to make her trot so far that she must be forced to leave us, and abandon our conduct, our eyes, teeth, legs, and all the rest to the mercy of a foreign and haggard countenance, and to resign us into the hands of art, being weary of following us herself.

I am not excessively fond either of salads or fruits, except melons. My father hated all sorts of sauces; I love them all. Eating too much hurts me; but, as to the quality of

what I eat, I do not yet certainly know that any sort of meat disagrees with me; neither have I observed that either full moon or decrease, autumn or spring, have any influence upon me. We have in us motions that are inconstant and unknown; for example, I found radishes first grateful to my stomach, since that nauseous, and now again grateful. In several other things, I find my stomach and appetite vary after the same manner; I have changed again and again from white wine to claret, from claret to white wine.

I am a great lover of fish, and consequently make my fasts feasts and feasts fasts; and I believe what some people say, that it is more easy of digestion than flesh. As I make a conscience of eating flesh upon fish-days, so does my taste make a conscience of mixing fish and flesh; the difference betwixt them seems to me too remote.

From my youth, I have sometimes kept out of the way at meals; either to sharpen my appetite against the next morning (for, as Epicurus fasted and made lean meals to accustom his pleasure to make shift without abundance, I, on the contrary, do it to prepare my pleasure to make better and more cheerful use of abundance); or else I fasted to preserve my vigor for the service of some action of body or mind: for both the one and the other of these is cruelly dulled in me by repletion; and, above all things, I hate that foolish coupling of so healthful and sprightly a goddess with that little belching god, bloated with the fumes of his liquor:—or to cure my sick stomach, or for want of fit company; for I say, as the same Epicurus did, that one is not so much to regard what he eats, as with whom; and I commend Chilo that he would not engage himself to be at Periander's feast till he first was informed who were to be the other guests; no dish is so acceptable to me, nor no sauce so appetizing, as that which is extracted from society. I think more wholesome to eat more leisurely and less, and to eat oftener; but I would have appetite and hunger attended to: I should take no pleasure to be fed with three or four pitiful and stinted repasts a day, after a medicinal manner: who will assure me that, if I have a good appetite in the morning, I shall have the same at supper? But we old fellows especially, let us take the first opportune time of eating, and leave to almanac-makers hopes and prognostics. The utmost fruit of my health is pleasure; let us take hold of the present and known. I avoid the invariable in these laws of fasting; he who would have one form serve him, let him avoid the continuing it; we harden ourselves in it; our strength is there stupefied and laid asleep; six months after, you shall find your stomach so inured to it, that all you have got is the loss of your liberty of doing otherwise but to your prejudice.

I never keep my legs and thighs warmer in winter than in summer; one simple pair of silk stockings is all. I have suffered myself, for the relief of my colds, to keep my head warmer, and my belly upon the account of my colic; my diseases in a few days habituate themselves thereto, and disdained my ordinary provisions: we soon get from a coif to a kerchief over it, from a simple cap to a quilted hat; the trimmings of the doublet must not merely serve for ornament: there must be added a hare's skin or a vulture's skin, and a cap under the hat: follow this gradation, and you will go a very fine way to work. I will do nothing of the sort, and would willingly leave off what I have begun. If you fall into any new inconvenience, all this is labor lost; you are accustomed to it; seek out some other. Thus do they destroy themselves who submit

to be pestered with these enforced and superstitious rules; they must add something more, and something more after that; there is no end on't.

For what concerns our affairs and pleasures, it is much more commodious, as the ancients did, to lose one's dinner, and defer making good cheer till the hour of retirement and repose, without breaking up a day; and so was I formerly used to do. As to health, I since by experience find, on the contrary, that it is better to dine, and that the digestion is better while awake. I am not very used to be thirsty, either well or sick; my mouth is, indeed, apt to be dry, but without thirst; and commonly I never drink but with thirst that is created by eating, and far on in the meal; I drink pretty well for a man of my pitch: in summer, and at a relishing meal, I do not only exceed the limits of Augustus, who drank but thrice precisely; but not to offend Democritus' rule, who forbade that men should stop at four times as an unlucky number, I proceed at need to the fifth glass, about three half-pints; for the little glasses are my favorites, and I like to drink them off, which other people avoid as an unbecoming thing. I mix my wine sometimes with half, sometimes with the third part water; and when I am at home, by an ancient custom that my father's physician prescribed both to him and himself, they mix that which is designed for me in the buttery, two or three hours before 'tis brought in. 'Tis said that Cranaos, king of Attica, was the inventor of this custom of diluting wine; whether useful or no, I have heard disputed. I think it more decent and wholesome for children to drink no wine till after sixteen or eighteen years of age. The most usual and common method of living is the most becoming; all particularity, in my opinion, is to be avoided; and I should as much hate a German who mixed water with his wine, as I should a Frenchman who drank it pure. Public usage gives the law in these things.

I fear a mist, and fly from smoke as from the plague: the first repairs I fell upon in my own house were the chimneys and houses of office, the common and insupportable defects of all old buildings; and amongst the difficulties of war I reckon the choking dust they make us ride in a whole day together. I have a free and easy respiration, and my colds for the most part go off without offence to the lungs and without a cough.

The heat of summer is more an enemy to me than the cold of winter; for, besides the incommodity of heat, less remediable than cold, and besides the force of the sunbeams that strike upon the head, all glittering light offends my eyes, so that I could not now sit at dinner over against a flaming fire.

To dull the whiteness of paper, in those times when I was more wont to read, I laid a piece of glass upon my book, and found my eyes much relieved by it. I am to this hour—to the age of fifty-four—ignorant of the use of spectacles; and I can see as far as ever I did, or any other. 'Tis true that in the evening I begin to find a little disturbance and weakness in my sight if I read, an exercise I have always found troublesome, especially by night. Here is one step back, and a very manifest one; I shall retire another: from the second to the third, and so to the fourth, so gently, that I shall be stark blind before I shall be sensible of the age and decay of my sight: so artificially do the Fatal Sisters untwist our lives. And so I doubt whether my hearing begins to grow thick; and you will see I shall have half lost it, when I shall still lay the

fault on the voices of those who speak to me. A man must screw up his soul to a high pitch to make it sensible how it ebbs away.

My walking is quick and firm; and I know not which of the two, my mind or my body, I have most to do to keep in the same state. That preacher is very much my friend who can fix my attention a whole sermon through: in places of ceremony, where every one's countenance is so starched, where I have seen the ladies keep even their eyes so fixed, I could never order it so, that some part or other of me did not lash out; so that though I was seated, I was never settled; and as to gesticulation, I am never without a switch in my hand, walking or riding. As the philosopher Chrysippus' maid said of her master, that he was only drunk in his legs, for it was his custom to be always kicking them about in what place soever he sat; and she said it when, the wine having made all his companions drunk, he found no alteration in himself at all; it may have been said of me from my infancy, that I had either folly or quick-silver in my feet, so much stirring and unsettledness there is in them, wherever they are placed.

'Tis indecent, besides the hurt it does to one's health, and even to the pleasure of eating, to eat greedily as I do; I often bite my tongue, and sometimes my fingers, in my haste. Diogenes, meeting a boy eating after that manner, gave his tutor a box on the ear. There were men at Rome that taught people to chew, as well as to walk, with a good grace. I lose thereby the leisure of speaking, which gives great relish to the table, provided the discourse be suitable, that is, pleasant and short.

There is jealousy and envy amongst our pleasures; they cross and hinder one another. Alcibiades, a man who well understood how to make good cheer, banished even music from the table, that it might not disturb the entertainment of discourse, for the reason, as Plato tells us, "that it is the custom of ordinary people to call fiddlers and singing men to feasts, for want of good discourse and pleasant talk, with which men of understanding know how to entertain one another." Varro requires all this in entertainments: "Persons of graceful presence and agreeable conversation, who are neither silent nor garrulous; neatness and delicacy, both of meat and place; and fair weather." The art of dining well is no slight art, the pleasure not a slight pleasure; neither the greatest captains nor the greatest philosophers have disdained the use or science of eating well. My imagination has delivered three repasts to the custody of my memory, which fortune rendered sovereignly sweet to me, upon several occasions in my more flourishing age; my present state excludes me; for every one, according to the good temper of body and mind wherein he then finds himself, furnishes for his own share a particular grace and savor. I, who but crawl upon the earth, hate this inhuman wisdom, that will have us despise and hate all culture of the body; I look upon it as an equal injustice to loath natural pleasures as to be too much in love with them. Xerxes was a blockhead, who, environed with all human delights, proposed a reward to him who could find out others; but he is not much less so who cuts off any of those pleasures that nature has provided for him. A man should neither pursue nor avoid them, but receive them. I receive them, I confess, a little too warmly and kindly, and easily suffer myself to follow my natural propensions. We have no need to exaggerate their inanity; they themselves will make us sufficiently sensible of it, thanks to our sick wetblanket mind, that puts us out of taste with them as with itself; it

treats both itself and all it receives, one while better, and another worse, according to its insatiable, vagabond, and versatile essence:—

"Unless the vessel be clean, it will sour whatever you put into it."

I, who boast that I so curiously and particularly embrace the conveniences of life, find them, when I most nearly consider them, very little more than wind. But what? We are all wind throughout; and, moreover, the wind itself, more discreet than we, loves to bluster and shift from corner to corner, and contents itself with its proper offices without desiring stability and solidity—qualities not its own.

The pure pleasures, as well as the pure displeasures, of the imagination, say some, are the greatest, as was expressed by the balance of Critolaus. 'Tis no wonder; it makes them to its own liking, and cuts them out of the whole cloth; of this I every day see notable examples, and, peradventure, to be desired. But I, who am of a mixed and heavy condition, cannot snap so soon at this one simple object, but that I negligently suffer myself to be carried away with the present pleasures of the general human law, intellectually sensible, and sensibly intellectual. The Cyrenaic philosophers will have it that as corporal pains, so corporal pleasures are more powerful, both as double and as more just. There are some, as Aristotle says, who out of a savage kind of stupidity dislike them; and I know others who out of ambition do the same. Why do they not, moreover, forswear breathing? why do they not live of their own? why not refuse light, because it is gratuitous, and costs them neither invention nor exertion? Let Mars, Pallas, or Mercury afford them their light by which to see, instead of Venus, Ceres, and Bacchus. These boastful humors may counterfeit some content, for what will not fancy do? But as to wisdom, there is no touch of it. Will they not seek the quadrature of the circle, even when on their wives? I hate that we should be enjoined to have our minds in the clouds, when our bodies are at table; I would not have the mind nailed there, nor wallow there; I would have it take place there and sit, but not lie down. Aristippus maintained nothing but the body, as if we had no soul; Zeno comprehended only the soul, as if we had no body: both of them faultily. Pythagoras, they say, followed a philosophy that was all contemplation, Socrates one that was all conduct and action; Plato found a mean betwixt the two; but they only say this for the sake of talking. The true temperament is found in Socrates; and Plato is much more Socratic than Pythagoric, and it becomes him better. When I dance, I dance; when I sleep, I sleep. Nay, when I walk alone in a beautiful orchard, if my thoughts are some part of the time taken up with external occurrences, I some part of the time call them back again to my walk, to the orchard, to the sweetness of that solitude, and to myself.

Nature has mother-like observed this, that the actions she has enjoined us for our necessity should be also pleasurable to us; and she invites us to them, not only by reason, but also by appetite, and 'tis injustice to infringe her laws. When I see alike Caesar and Alexander, in the midst of his greatest business, so fully enjoy human and corporal pleasures, I do not say that he relaxed his mind: I say that he strengthened it, by vigor of courage subjecting those violent employments and laborious thoughts to the ordinary usage of life: wise, had he believed the last was his ordinary, the first his extraordinary, vocation. We are great fools. "He has passed his life in idleness," say we: "I have done nothing to-day." What? have you not lived? that is not only the

fundamental, but the most illustrious, of your occupations. “Had I been put to the management of great affairs, I should have made it seen what I could do.” “Have you known how to meditate and manage your life? you have performed the greatest work of all.” In order to show and develop herself, nature needs only fortune; she equally manifests herself in all stages, and behind a curtain as well as without one. Have you known how to regulate your conduct, you have done a great deal more than he who has composed books. Have you known how to take repose, you have done more than he who has taken empires and cities.

The glorious masterpiece of man is to live to purpose; all other things: to reign, to lay up treasure, to build, are but little appendices and props. I take pleasure in seeing a general of an army, at the foot of a breach he is presently to assault, give himself up entire and free at dinner, to talk and be merry with his friends. And Brutus, when heaven and earth were conspired against him and the Roman liberty, stealing some hour of the night from his rounds to read and scan Polybius in all security. ’Tis for little souls, buried under the weight of affairs, not from them to know how clearly to disengage themselves, not to know how to lay them aside and take them up again:—

“O brave spirits, who have often suffered sorrow with me, drink cares away; to-morrow we will embark once more on the vast sea.”

Whether it be in jest or earnest, that the theological and Sorbonnical wine, and their feasts, are turned into a proverb, I find it reasonable they should dine so much more commodiously and pleasantly, as they have profitably and seriously employed the morning in the exercise of their schools. The conscience of having well spent the other hours, is the just and savory sauce of the dinner-table. The sages lived after that manner; and that inimitable emulation to virtue, which astonishes us both in the one and the other Cato, that humor of theirs, so severe as even to be importunate, gently submits itself and yields to the laws of the human condition, of Venus and Bacchus; according to the precepts of their sect, that require the perfect sage to be as expert and intelligent in the use of natural pleasures as in all other duties of life:—

“He that has a wise heart, has a wise palate too.”

Relaxation and facility, methinks, wonderfully honor and best become a strong and generous soul. Epaminondas did not think that to take part, and that heartily, in songs and sports and dances with the young men of his city, were things that in any way derogated from the honor of his glorious victories and the perfect purity of manners that was in him. And amongst so many admirable actions of Scipio the grandfather, a person worthy to be reputed of a heavenly extraction, there is nothing that gives him a greater grace than to see him carelessly and childishly trifling at gathering and selecting cockle shells, and playing at Cornichon va devant along the seashore with Laelius. And, if it was foul weather, amusing and tickling himself in representing by writing in comedies the meanest and most popular actions of men. And his head full of that wonderful enterprise of Hannibal and Africa, visiting the schools in Sicily, and attending philosophical lectures, to the extent of arming the blind envy of his enemies at Rome. Nor is there anything more remarkable in Socrates than that, old as he was, he found time to make himself taught dancing and playing upon instruments, and

thought it time well spent. This same man was seen in an ecstasy, standing upon his feet a whole day and a night together, in the presence of all the Grecian army, surprised and absorbed by some profound thought. He was the first, amongst so many valiant men of the army, to run to the relief of Alcibiades, oppressed with the enemy, to shield him with his own body, and disengage him from the crowd by absolute force of arms. It was he who in the Delian battle, raised and saved Xenophon when fallen from his horse; and who, amongst all the people of Athens, enraged as he was at so unworthy a spectacle, first presented himself to rescue Theramenes, whom the thirty tyrants were leading to execution by their satellites, and desisted not from his bold enterprise but at the remonstrance of Theramenes himself, though he was only followed by two more in all. He was seen, when courted by a beauty with whom he was in love, to maintain at need a severe abstinence. He was seen ever to go to the wars, and walk upon ice, with bare feet; to wear the same robe, winter and summer; to surpass all his companions in patience of bearing hardships, and to eat no more at a feast than at his own private dinner. He was seen, for seven-and-twenty years together, to endure hunger, poverty, the indocility of his children, and the nails of his wife, with the same countenance. And, in the end, calumny, tyranny, imprisonment, fetters, and poison. But was this man obliged to drink full bumpers by any rule of civility? he was also the man of the whole army, with whom the advantage in drinking remained. And he never refused to play at noisettes, nor to ride the hobby-horse with children, and it became him well; for all actions, says philosophy, equally become and equally honor a wise man. We have enough wherewithal to do it, and we ought never to be weary of presenting the image of this great man in all the patterns and forms of perfection. There are very few examples of life, full and pure; and we wrong our teaching every day, to propose to ourselves those that are weak and imperfect, scarce good for any one service, and rather pull us back; corrupters rather than correctors of manners. The people deceive themselves; a man goes much more easily indeed by the ends, where the extremity serves for a bound, a stop, and guide, than by the middle way, large and open; and according to art, more than according to nature: but withal much less nobly and commendably.

Greatness of soul consists not so much in mounting and in pressing forward, as in knowing how to govern and circumscribe itself; it takes everything for great, that is enough, and demonstrates itself in preferring moderate to eminent things. There is nothing so fine and legitimate as well and duly to play the man; nor science so arduous as well and naturally to know how to live this life; and of all the infirmities we have, ’tis the most barbarous to despise our being.

Whoever has a mind to isolate his spirit, when the body is ill at ease, to preserve it from the contagion, let him by all means do it if he can: but otherwise let him on the contrary favor and assist it, and not refuse to participate of its natural pleasures with a conjugal complacency, bringing to it, if it be the wiser, moderation, lest by indiscretion they should get confounded with displeasure. Intemperance is the pest of pleasure; and temperance is not its scourge, but rather its seasoning. Euxodus, who therein established the sovereign good, and his companions, who set so high a value upon it, tasted it in its most charming sweetness, by the means of temperance, which in them was singular and exemplary.

I enjoin my soul to look upon pain and pleasure with an eye equally regulated:—

"For from the same imperfection arises the expansion of the mind in pleasure and its contraction in sorrow,"

and equally firm; but the one gaily and the other severely, and so far as it is able, to be careful to extinguish the one as to extend the other. The judging rightly of good brings along with it the judging soundly of evil: pain has something of the inevitable in its tender beginnings, and pleasure something of the evitable in its excessive end. Plato couples them together, and wills that it should be equally the office of fortitude to fight against pain, and against the immoderate and charming blandishments of pleasure: they are two fountains, from which whoever draws, when and as much as he needs, whether city, man, or beast, is very fortunate. The first is to be taken medicinally and upon necessity, and more scantily; the other for thirst, but not to drunkenness. Pain, pleasure, love and hatred are the first things that a child is sensible of: if, when reason comes, they apply it to themselves, that is virtue.

I have a special vocabulary of my own; I "pass away time," when it is ill and uneasy, but when 'tis good I do not pass it away: "I taste it over again and adhere to it;" one must run over the ill and settle upon the good. This ordinary phrase of pastime, and passing away the time, represents the usage of that wise sort of people who think they cannot do better with their lives than to let them run out and slide away, pass them over, and balk them, and, as much as they can, ignore them and shun them as a thing of troublesome and contemptible quality: but I know it to be another kind of thing, and find it both valuable and commodious, even in its latest decay, wherein I now enjoy it; and nature has delivered it into our hands in such and so favorable circumstances that we have only ourselves to blame if it be troublesome to us, or escapes us unprofitably:—

"The life of a fool is thankless, timorous, and wholly bent upon the future."

Nevertheless I compose myself to lose mine without regret; but withal as a thing that is perishable by its condition, not that it molests or annoys me. Nor does it properly well become any not to be displeased when they die, excepting such as are pleased to live. There is good husbandry in enjoying it: I enjoy it double to what others do; for the measure of its fruition depends upon our more or less application to it. Chiefly that I perceive mine to be so short in time, I desire to extend it in weight; I will stop the promptitude of its flight by the promptitude of my grasp; and by the vigor of using it compensate the speed of its running away. In proportion as the possession of life is more short, I must make it so much deeper and fuller.

Others feel the pleasure of content and prosperity; I feel it too, as well as they, but not as it passes and slips by; one should study, taste, and ruminate upon it to render condign thanks to Him who grants it to us. They enjoy the other pleasures as they do that of sleep, without knowing it. To the end that even sleep itself should not so stupidly escape from me, I have formerly caused myself to be disturbed in my sleep, so that I might the better and more sensibly relish and taste it. I ponder with myself of content; I do not skim over, but sound it; and I bend my reason, now grown perverse

and peevish, to entertain it. Do I find myself in any calm composedness? is there any pleasure that tickles me? I do not suffer it to dally with my senses only; I associate my soul to it too: not there to engage itself, but therein to take delight; not there to lose itself, but to be present there; and I employ it, on its part, to view itself in this prosperous state, to weigh and appreciate its happiness and to amplify it. It reckons how much it stands indebted to God that its conscience and the intestine passions are in repose; that it has the body in its natural disposition, orderly and competently enjoying the soft and soothing functions by which He of His grace is pleased to compensate the sufferings wherewith His justice at His good pleasure chastises us. It reflects how great a benefit it is to be so protected, that which way soever it turns its eye the heavens are calm around it. No desire, no fear, no doubt, troubles the air; no difficulty, past, present, or to come, that its imagination may not pass over without offence. This consideration takes great lustre from the comparison of different conditions. So it is that I present to my thought, in a thousand aspects, those whom fortune or their own error carries away and torments. And, again, those who, more like to me, so negligently and incuriously receive their good fortune. Those are folks who spend their time indeed; they pass over the present and that which they possess, to wait on hope, and for shadows and vain images which fancy puts before them:—

"Such forms as those, which after death are reputed to hove about, or dreams which delude the senses in sleep:"

which hasten and prolong their flight, according as they are pursued. The fruit and end of their pursuit is to pursue; as Alexander said, that the end of his labor was to labor:—

"Thinking nothing done, if anything remained to be done."

For my part then, I love life and cultivate it, such as it has pleased God to bestow it upon us. I do not desire it should be without the necessity of eating and drinking; and I should think it a not less excusable failing to wish it had been twice as long:—

"A wise man is the keenest seeker for natural riches:"

nor that we should support ourselves by putting only a little of that drug into our mouths, by which Epimenides took away his appetite and kept himself alive; nor that we should stupidly beget children with our fingers or heels, but rather, with reverence be it spoken, that we might voluptuously beget them with our fingers and heels; nor that the body should be without desire and without titillation. These are ungrateful and wicked complaints. I accept kindly, and with gratitude, what nature has done for me; am well pleased with it, and proud of it. A man does wrong to that great and omnipotent giver to refuse, annul, or disfigure his gift: all goodness himself, he has made everything good:—

"All things that are according to nature are worthy of esteem."

Of philosophical opinions, I preferably embrace those that are most solid, that is to say, the most human and most our own: my discourse is, suitable to my manners, low

and humble: philosophy plays the child, to my thinking, when it puts itself upon its Ergos to preach to us that 'tis a barbarous alliance to marry the divine with the earthly, the reasonable with the unreasonable, the severe with the indulgent, the honest with the dishonest. That pleasure is a brutish quality, unworthy to be tasted by a wise man; that the sole pleasure he extracts from the enjoyment of a fair young wife is a pleasure of his conscience to perform an action according to order, as to put on his boots for a profitable journey. Oh, that its followers had no more right, nor nerves, nor vigor in getting their wives' maidenheads than in its lesson.

This is not what Socrates says, who is its master and ours: he values, as he ought, bodily pleasure; but he prefers that of the mind as having more force, constancy, facility, variety, and dignity. This, according to him, goes by no means alone—he is not so fantastic—but only it goes first; temperance with him is the moderatrix, not the adversary of pleasure. Nature is a gentle guide, but not more sweet and gentle than prudent and just:—

"A man must search into the nature of things, and fully examine what she requires."

I hunt after her foot throughout: we have confounded it with artificial traces; and that academic and peripatetic good, which is "to live according to it," becomes on this account hard to limit and explain; and that of the Stoics, neighbor to it, which is "to consent to nature." Is it not an error to esteem any actions less worthy, because they are necessary? And yet they will not take it out of my head, that it is not a very convenient marriage of pleasure with necessity, with which, says an ancient, the gods always conspire. To what end do we dismember by divorce a building united by so close and brotherly a correspondence? Let us, on the contrary, confirm it by mutual offices; let the mind rouse and quicken the heaviness of the body, and the body stay and fix the levity of the soul:—

"He who commends the nature of the soul as the supreme good, and condemns the nature of the flesh as evil, at once both carnally desires the soul, and carnally flies the flesh, because he feels thus from human vanity, not from divine truth."

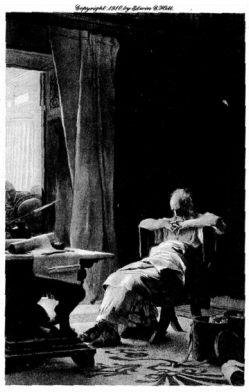
In this present that God has made us, there is nothing unworthy our care; we stand accountable for it even to a hair; and is it not a commission to man, to conduct man according to his condition; 'tis express, plain, and the very principal one, and the Creator has seriously and strictly prescribed it to us. Authority has power only to work in regard to matters of common judgment, and is of more weight in a foreign language; therefore let us again charge at it in this place:—

"Who will not say, that it is the property of folly, slothfully and contumaciously to perform what is to be done, and to bend the body one way and the mind another, and to be distracted betwixt wholly different motions?"

To make this apparent, ask any one, some day, to tell you what whimsies and imaginations he put into his pate, upon the account of which he diverted his thoughts from a good meal, and regrets the time he spends in eating; you will find there is nothing so insipid in all the dishes at your table as this wise meditation of his (for the

most part we had better sleep than wake to the purpose we wake); and that his discourses and notions are not worth your hotchpotch. Though they were the ecstasies of Archimedes himself, what then? I do not here speak of, nor mix with the rabble of us ordinary men, and the vanity of the thoughts and desires that divert us, those venerable souls, elevated by the ardor of devotion and religion, to a constant and conscientious meditation of divine things, who, by the energy of vivid and vehement hope, prepossessing the use of the eternal nourishment, the final aim and last step of Christian desires, the sole, constant, and incorruptible pleasure, disdain to apply themselves to our necessitous, fluid, and ambiguous conveniences, and easily resign to the body the care and use of sensual and temporal pasture; 'tis a privileged study. Between ourselves, I have ever observed supercelestial opinions and subterranean manners to be of singular accord.

Aesop, that great man, saw his master piss as he walked: "What then," said he, "must we drop as we run?" Let us manage our time; there yet remains a great deal idle and ill employed. The mind has not willingly other hours enough wherein to do its business, without disassociating itself from the body, in that little space it must have for its necessity. They would put themselves out of themselves, and escape from being men. It is folly; instead of transforming themselves into angels, they transform themselves into beasts; instead of elevating, they lay themselves lower. These transcendental humors affright me, like high and inaccessible places; and nothing is hard for me to digest in the life of Socrates but his ecstasies and communication with demons; nothing so human in Plato as that for which they say he was called divine; and of our sciences, those seem to be the most terrestrial and low that are highest mounted; and I find nothing so humble and mortal in the life of Alexander as his fancies about his immortalization. Philotas pleasantly quipped him in his answer; he congratulated him by letter concerning the oracle of Jupiter Ammon, which had placed him amongst the gods: "Upon thy account I am glad of it, but the men are to be pitied who are to live with a man, and to obey him, who exceeds and is not contented with the measure of a man:"—



Archimides. From painting by Nicolo Barabino.

"Because thou carriest thyself lower than the gods, thou rulest."

The pretty inscription wherewith the Athenians honored the entry of Pompey into their city is conformable to my sense: "By so much thou art a god, as thou confessest

thee a man." 'Tis an absolute, and, as it were, a divine perfection, for a man to know how loyally to enjoy his being. We seek other conditions, by reason we do not understand the use of our own; and go out of ourselves, because we know not how there to reside. 'Tis to much purpose to go upon stilts, for, when upon stilts, we must yet walk with our legs; and when seated upon the most elevated throne in the world, we are but seated upon our breech. The fairest lives, in my opinion, are those which regularly accommodate themselves to the common and human model without miracle, without extravagance. Old age stands a little in need of a more gentle treatment. Let us recommend that to God, the protector of health and wisdom, but let it be gay and sociable:—

"Grant it to me, Apollo, that I may enjoy my possessions in good health; let me be sound in mind; let me not lead a dishonorable old age, nor want the cittern."

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SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF MONTAIGNE

THE AUTHOR of the Essays was born, as he informs us himself, between eleven and twelve o'clock in the day, the last of February 1533, at the chateau of St. Michel de Montaigne. He was possibly descended from a family which had been located in those parts many generations. An Everard de Montaigne went to the Fifth Crusade in 1202. He mentions that the name was not uncommon, however, and predicts the possibility that some other Montaigne might hereafter be credited or otherwise with what he had done. His father, Pierre Eyquem, esquire, born at Montaigne, 29th September 1495, and a person engaged in a lucrative business at Bordeaux, was successively first Jurat of the town of Bordeaux (1530), Under-Mayor (1536), Jurat for the second time in 1540, Procureur in 1546, and at length Mayor from 1553 to 1556. He was a man of austere probity, who had "a particular regard for honor and for propriety in his person and attire . . . a mighty good faith in his speech, and a conscience and a religious feeling inclining to superstition, rather than to the other extreme;" but he was also, as we have to learn in perusing the Essays of his more distinguished son, that son's veritable father in more than a single respect, yet in some ways different, inasmuch as he was, for instance, a man extremely particular in ordering his household affairs. He did not profess to be a man of letters; but he was very far from being illiterate; he was a master of the Latin, Italian, and Spanish languages; and in early life, as a youth of seventeen, he published some Latin verses, thus testifying at all events to his possession of a fair scholastic culture. Pierre Eyquem bestowed great care on the education of his children, especially on the practical side of it. To associate closely his son Michel with the people, and attach him to those who stand in need of assistance, he caused him to be held at the font by persons of the meanest position; subsequently he put him out to nurse with poor persons in the adjoining village of Papessus, and then, at a later period, made him accustom himself to the most common sort of living, taking care, nevertheless, to cultivate his mind, and superintend its development without the exercise of undue rigor or constraint. From many passages in the Essays we gather with satisfaction that he retained through life a steadfast, sincere, and charming affection for his father, alone sufficient to atone for a thousand foibles. We all remember the ancestral cloak, in which he felt as if "wrapped up" in him. We shall encounter in the course of the Essays some grateful and engaging reminiscences of the elder Montaigne. His son followed him, he tells us, even in the style of his dress. Of his mother, on the contrary, he has nothing to say, which in the case of great men is most unusual. He gives us the minutest account of his earliest years, narrates how they used to awake him by the sound of some agreeable music, and how he learned Latin, without suffering the rod or shedding a tear, before beginning French, thanks to the German teacher whom his father had placed near him, and who never addressed him except in the language of Virgil and Cicero. The study of Greek took precedence. At six years of age young Montaigne went to the College of Guienne at Bordeaux, where he had as preceptors the most eminent scholars of the sixteenth century, Nicole Grouchy, Guerente, Muret, and Buchanan. At thirteen he had passed through all the classes; and, as he was destined for the law, he left school to study that science. He was then about fourteen, but these early years of his life are involved in obscurity. The next information that we have is that in 1554 he received the appointment of

councillor in the Parliament of Bordeaux; in 1559 he was at Bar-le-Duc with the court of Francis II., and in the year following he was present at Rouen to witness the declaration of the majority of Charles IX. We do not know in what manner he was engaged on these occasions; but from casual notices of incidents, which occurred to him, in the course of his book and from passages in the correspondence, he evidently paid numerous visits to different localities in his own country both before and after his marriage, and even proceeded as far as Navarre.

Between 1556 and 1563 an important incident occurred in the life of Montaigne, in the commencement of his romantic friendship with Etienne de la Boetie, whom he had met, as he tells us, by pure chance at some festive celebration in the town. From their very first interview the two found themselves drawn irresistibly close to one another; and during six years this alliance was foremost in the heart of Montaigne, as it was afterward in his memory, when death had severed it.

Although he blames severely in his own book those who, contrary to the opinion of Aristotle, marry before five-and-thirty, Montaigne did not wait for the period fixed by the philosopher of Stageira; for in 1566, in his thirty-third year, he espoused Francoise de Chassaigne, daughter of a councillor in the Parliament of Bordeaux, and two years later he lost his beloved father. The history of his early married life vies in obscurity with that of his youth. His biographers are not agreed among themselves; and in the same degree that he lays open to our view all that concerns his secret thoughts, the innermost mechanism of his mind, he observes too much reticence in respect to his public functions and conduct and his social relations. The title of Gentleman in Ordinary to the King, which he assumes in a preface, and which Henry III. gives him in a letter which we print a little farther on; what he says as to the commotions of courts, where he passed a portion of his life; the Instructions which he wrote under the dictation of Catherine de Medici for King Charles IX., and his noble correspondence with Henry IV., leave no doubt, however, as to the part which he played in the transactions of those times, and we find an unanswerable proof of the esteem in which he was held by the most exalted personages in a letter which was addressed to him by Charles at the time he was admitted to the Order of St. Michel, which was, as he informs us himself, the highest honor of the French noblesse.

It is hardly worth while to discuss the statements which have been made in respect to the civil and military transactions of Montaigne. The earlier authorities, from the still greater dearth of material for a biography than exists to-day, formed very erroneous theories as to the public life of the Essayist, which, whatever might have been his personal wishes and tastes, was destined to be a very busy and eventful one. After the successive deaths of his father and eldest brother, however, he resigned, it is said, the post of Councillor, and having arrived at his thirty-eighth year, resolved to dedicate to study and contemplation the remaining term of his life. On his birthday, the last of February 1571, he caused a Latin inscription to be placed on one of the walls of his chateau to the effect, that in the year 1571, on the last of February, his birthday, weary of court life and charges, he, Michel de Montaigne, while in perfect health of body, withdrew into the society of the learned virgins for what remained to him of a career already more than half-spent. The vow was perchance sincere enough. How vain and unreal we shall presently and abundantly see; and yet when it was registered, it was

not necessarily so, as the civil troubles had then not yet broken out, and Montaigne might think himself in a position to treat soldiering as an agreeable retrospect, and to quote his favorites, Horace and Seneca, for "militavi non sine gloria," and "vivere militare est."

At the time to which we have come, Montaigne was unknown to the world of letters, except as a translator and an editor. In 1569 he had published a translation of the "Natural Theology" of Raymond de Sebonde, which he had solely undertaken to please his father. In 1571 he had caused to be printed at Paris certain opuscula of Etienne de la Boetie; and these two efforts, inspired in one case by filial duty and in the other by friendship, prove that affectionate motives overruled with him mere personal ambition as a literary man. We may suppose that he began to compose the Essays at the very outset of his retirement from public engagements; for as, according to his own account, observes the President Bouhier, he cared neither for the chase, nor building, nor gardening, nor agricultural pursuits, and was (in the leisure snatched from public affairs) exclusively occupied with reading and reflection, he devoted himself with satisfaction to the task of setting down his thoughts just as they occurred to him. Those thoughts became a book, and the first edition of that book, which was to confer immortality on the writer, appeared at Bordeaux in 1580. The author presented a copy to his sovereign, who expressed himself extremely pleased by the gift. Montaigne intimated his gratification at such a feeling, and described the volume as merely giving an account of his own life and actions.

Montaigne was about fifty-seven; he had suffered for some years past from renal colic and stone, to the latter of which maladies his father had been subject; and it was with the necessity of distraction from his pain, and the hope of deriving relief from the waters, that he undertook at this time a great journey. As the account which he has left of his travels in Germany and Italy comprises some highly interesting particulars of his life and personal history, it seems worth while to furnish a sketch or analysis of it. The Essayist was accompanied not only by a secretary, but by his young brother, Bertrand-Charles de Montaigne, Sieur de Mattecoulon, a gentleman of the King of Navarre's privy chamber, and Michel's junior by many years, and by three other connections or intimate friends. From what we are able to glean of the composition of the household at Montaigne, it is a reasonable deduction that the Essayist employed foreign body-servants, from whom he collected much general information about Italy and other adjacent countries calculated to inspire him with a desire to become personally acquainted with foreign scenery and manners.

"The Journey, of which we proceed to describe the course simply," says the editor of the Itinerary, "had, from Beaumont-sur-Oise to Plombieres, in Lorraine, nothing sufficiently interesting to detain us . . . we must go as far as Basle, of which we have a description, acquainting us with its physical and political condition at that period, as well as with the character of its baths. The passage of Montaigne through Switzerland is not without interest, as we see there how our philosophical traveller accommodated himself everywhere to the ways of the country. The hotels, the provisions, the Swiss cookery, everything was agreeable to him; it appears indeed, as if he preferred to the French manners and tastes those of the places he was visiting, and of which the simplicity and freedom (or frankness) accorded more with his own mode of life and

thinking. In the towns where he stayed, Montaigne took care to see the Protestant divines, to make himself conversant with all their dogmas. He even held disputations with them occasionally.

"Having left Switzerland, he went to Isny, an imperial town, then on to Augsburg and Munich. He afterward proceeded to the Tyrol, where he was agreeably surprised, after the warning which he had received, at the very slight inconveniences which he suffered, which gave him occasion to remark that he had all his life distrusted the statements of others respecting foreign countries, each person's taste being according to the notions of his native place; and that he had consequently set very little on what he was told beforehand.

"Upon his arrival at Botzen, Montaigne wrote to Francois Hotman to say that he had been so pleased with his visit to Germany that he quitted it with great regret, although it was to go into Italy. He then passed through Branzoll, where he put up at the Rose inn, and so on to Trent or Trienta; thence going to Rovera; and here he first lamented the scarcity of crawfish, but made up for the loss by partaking of truffles cooked in oil and vinegar, oranges, citrons, and olives, in all of which he delighted."

After passing a restless night, when he bethought himself in the morning that there was some new town or district to be seen, he rose, we are told, with alacrity and pleasure. His secretary, to whom he dictated his Journal, assures us that he never saw him take so much interest in surrounding scenes and persons, and believes that the complete change helped to mitigate his sufferings in concentrating his attention on other points. When there was a complaint made that he had led his party out of the beaten route, and then returned very near the spot from which they started, his answer was that he had no settled course, and that he merely proposed to himself to pay visits to places which he had not seen, and so long as they could not convict him of traversing the same path twice, or revisiting a point already seen, he could perceive no harm in his plan. As to Rome, he cared less to go there, inasmuch as everybody went there; and he said that he never had a lacquey, who could not tell him all about Florence or Ferrara. He also would say that he seemed to himself like those who are reading some pleasant story or some fine book, of which they fear to come to an end: he felt so much pleasure in travelling that he dreaded the moment of arrival at the place where they were to stop for the night.

We see that Montaigne travelled, just as he wrote, completely at his ease, and without the least constraint, turning, just as he fancied, from the common or ordinary roads taken by tourists. The good inns, the soft beds, the fine views, attracted his notice at every point; and in his observations on men and things he confines himself chiefly to the practical side. The consideration of his health was constantly before him, and it was in consequence of this that, while at Venice, which disappointed him, he took occasion to note, for the benefit of readers, that he had an attack of colic, and that he evacuated two large stones after supper.

Nevertheless, his sojourn in the city was by no means unobservant or uninteresting. He remarked the absence of the use of side-arms there, which had been officially interdicted in consequence of the danger which the practice involved, of promoting

fatal affrays in the streets; but he did not perhaps observe that many carried weapons under their cloaks. His secretary makes him dwell a little on the splendor and excellent status of the hetaira at that time (1580), and there is in the Italian Diary a particular notice of the luxuriously appointed residence of the famous Imperia (Veronica Franco), who was openly visited by persons of the highest rank, and who possessed not only musical tastes, but a library of Latin and Italian books. We are told that she presented Montaigne with a copy of her Familiar Letters, just newly published, as she had previously to Henry III., when he paid her a visit, given her Sonnets, and that the bearer of the gift received a douceur of two gold scudi—probably to his intense astonishment. It was during his stay in the east of Europe, that the Essayist enjoyed the opportunity of seeing the Turkish soldier, whose appearance and bearing struck him so forcibly that he recommended him as a model to his own countrymen. We observe that, after his return home, he arrived at the conclusion that Venice would be a good place for a residence in a man's declining years.

On quitting Venice he went in succession to Ferrara, where one of his party, M. d'Estissac, had letters of introduction to the Duke from the French King and Catherine de Medici, and where Montaigne saw the unhappy Tasso, Rovigo, Padua, Bologna (where he had a stomach-ache), Florence, &c.; and everywhere, before alighting, he made it a rule to send some of his servants to ascertain where the best accommodation was to be had. He pronounced the Florentine women the finest in the world, but had not an equally good opinion of the food, which was less plentiful than in Germany, and not so well served. He lets us understand that in Italy they sent up dishes without dressing, but in Germany they were much better seasoned, and served with a variety of sauces and gravies. He remarked farther, that the glasses were singularly small and the wines insipid.

After dining with the Grand-Duke of Tuscany and his Duchess, the famous Bianca Cappello, who took, he noted, less water with her wine than the Duke, and paying a visit to Pisa in order to see an Aristotelian, Montaigne passed rapidly over the intermediate country, which had no fascination for him, and arrived at Rome on the last day of November, entering by the Porta del Popolo, and putting up at the Orso. But he afterward hired, at twenty crowns a month, three fine furnished rooms in the house of a Spaniard, who included in these terms the use of the kitchen fire. What most annoyed him in the Eternal City was the number of Frenchmen he met, who all saluted him in his native tongue; but otherwise he was very comfortable, and his stay extended to five months. A mind like his, full of grand classical recollections, could not fail to be profoundly impressed in the presence of the ruins at Rome, and he has enshrined in a magnificent passage of the Journal the feelings of the moment: "He said," writes his secretary, "that at Rome one saw nothing but the sky under which she had been built, and the outline of her site: that the knowledge we had of her was abstract, contemplative, not palpable to the actual senses: that those who said they beheld at least the ruins of Rome, went too far, for the ruins of so gigantic a structure must have commanded greater reverence—it was nothing but her sepulchre. The world, jealous of her prolonged empire, had in the first place broken to pieces that admirable body, and then, when they perceived that the remains attracted worship and awe, had buried the very wreck itself. As to those small fragments which were still to

be seen on the surface, notwithstanding the assaults of time and all other attacks, again and again repeated, they had been saved by fortune to be some slight evidence of that infinite grandeur which nothing could entirely distinguish. But it was likely that these disfigured remains were the least entitled to attention, and that the enemies of that immortal renown, in their fury, had addressed themselves in the first instance to the destruction of what was most beautiful and worthiest of preservation; and that the buildings of this bastard Rome, raised upon the ancient productions, although they might excite the admiration of the present age, reminded him of the crows' and sparrows' nests built in the walls and arches of the old churches, destroyed by the Huguenots. Again, he was apprehensive, seeing the space which this grave occupied, that the whole might not have been recovered, and that the burial itself had been buried. And, moreover, to see a wretched heap of rubbish, as pieces of tile and pottery, grow (as it had ages since) to a height equal to that of Mont Gurson, and thrice the width of it, appeared to show a conspiracy of destiny against the glory and pre-eminence of that city, affording at the same time a novel and extraordinary proof of its departed greatness. He (Montaigne) observed that it was difficult to believe, considering the limited area taken up by any of her seven hills, and particularly the two most favored ones, the Capitoline and the Palatine, that so many buildings stood on the site. Judging only from what is left of the Temple of Concord, along the Forum Romanum, of which the fall seems quite recent, like that of some huge mountain split into horrible crags, it does not look as if more than two such edifices could have found room on the Capitoline, on which there were at one period from five-and-twenty to thirty temples, besides private dwellings. But, in point of fact, there is scarcely any probability of the views which we take of the city being correct, its plan and form having changed infinitely; for instance, the Velabrum, which, on account of its depressed level, received the sewage of the city and had a lake, has been raised by artificial accumulation to a height with the other hills, and Monte Savello has, in truth, grown simply out of the ruins of the theatre of Marcellus. He believed that an ancient Roman would not recognize the place again. It often happened that in digging down into the earth the workmen came upon the crown of some lofty column, which, though thus buried, was still standing upright. The people there have no recourse to other foundations than the vaults and arches of the old houses, upon which, as on slabs of rock, they raise their modern palaces. It is easy to see that several of the ancient streets are thirty feet below those at present in use."

Sceptical as Montaigne shows himself in his book, yet during his sojourn at Rome he manifested a great regard for religion. He solicited the honor of being admitted to kiss the feet of the Holy Father, Gregory XIII.; and the Pontiff exhorted him always to continue in the devotion which he had hitherto exhibited to the Church and the service of the Most Christian King.

"After this, one sees," says the editor of the Journal, that construable piece of filial homage, "Montaigne employing all his time in making excursions about the neighborhood on horseback or on foot, in visits, in observations of every kind. The churches, the stations, the processions, even the sermons; then the palaces, the vineyards, the gardens, the public amusements, as the Carnival, &c.—nothing was overlooked. He saw a Jewish child circumcised, and wrote down a most minute account of the operation. He met at San Sisto a Muscovite ambassador, the second

who had come to Rome since the pontificate of Paul III. This minister had despatches from his court for Venice, addressed to the Grand Governor of the Signory. The court of Muscovy had at that time such limited relations with the other powers of Europe, and it was so imperfect in its information, that it thought Venice to be a dependency of the Holy See."

Of all the particulars with which he has furnished us during his stay at Rome, the following passage in reference to the Essays is not the least singular: "The Master of the Sacred Palace returned him his Essays, castigated in accordance with the views of the learned monks. 'He had only been able to form a judgment of them,' said he, 'through a certain French monk, not understanding French himself' "—we leave Montaigne himself to tell the story—"and he received so complacently my excuses and explanations on each of the passages which had been animadverted upon by the French monk, that he concluded by leaving me at liberty to revise the text agreeably to the dictates of my own conscience. I begged him, on the contrary, to abide by the opinion of the person who had criticised me, confessing, among other matters, as, for example, in my use of the word fortune, in quoting historical poets, in my apology for Julian, in my animadversion on the theory that he who prayed ought to be exempt from vicious inclinations for the time being; item, in my estimate of cruelty, as something beyond simple death; item, in my view that a child ought to be brought up to do everything, and so on; that these were my opinions, which I did not think wrong; as to other things, I said that the corrector understood not my meaning. The Master, who is a clever man, made many excuses for me, and gave me to suppose that he did not concur in the suggested improvements; and pleaded very ingeniously for me in my presence against another (also an Italian), who opposed my sentiments."

Such is what passed between Montaigne and these two personages at that time; but when the Essayist was leaving, and went to bid them farewell, they used very different language to him. "They prayed me," says he, "to pay no attention to the censure passed on my book, in which other French persons had apprised them that there were many foolish things; adding, that they honored my affectionate intention toward the Church and my capacity; and had so high an opinion of my candor and conscientiousness that they should leave it to me to make such alterations as were proper in the book, when I reprinted it; among other things, the word fortune. To excuse themselves for what they had said against my book, they instanced works of our time by cardinals and other divines of excellent repute which had been blamed for similar faults, which in no way affected the reputation of the author, or of the publication as a whole; they requested me to lend the church the support of my eloquence (this was their fair speech), and to make a longer stay in the place, where I should be free from all further intrusion on their part. It seemed to me that we parted very good friends."

Before quitting Rome, Montaigne received his diploma of citizenship, by which he was greatly flattered; and after a visit to Tivoli he set out for Loretto, stopping at Ancona, Fano, and Urbino. He arrived at the beginning of May 1581 at Bagno-a-Corsena, near Lucca, where he established himself, in order to try the famous waters. There, we find in the Journal, of his own accord the Essayist lived in the strictest conformity with the regime, and henceforth we only hear of his diet, the effect which

the waters had by degrees upon his system, of the manner in which he took them: in a word, he does not omit an item of the circumstances connected with his daily routine, his habit of body, his baths, and the rest. It was no longer the journal of a traveller which he kept, but the diary of an invalid, attentive to the minutest details of the cure which he was endeavoring to accomplish: a sort of memorandum book, in which he was noting down everything that he felt and did, for the benefit of his medical man at home, who would have the care of his health on his return, and the attendance on his subsequent infirmities. Montaigne gives it as his reason and justification for enlarging to this extent here, that he had omitted, to his regret, to do so in his visits to other baths, which might have saved him the trouble of writing at such great length now; but it is perhaps a better reason in our eyes, that what he wrote he wrote for his own use.

We find in these accounts, however, many touches which are valuable as illustrating the manners of the place. The greater part of the entries in the Journal, giving the account of these waters, and of the travels, down to Montaigne's arrival at the first French town on his homeward route, are in Italian, because he wished to exercise himself in that language.

The minute and constant watchfulness of Montaigne over his health and over himself might lead one to suspect that excessive fear of death which degenerates into cowardice. But was it not rather the fear of the operation for the stone, at that time really formidable? Or perhaps he was of the same way of thinking with the Greek poet, of whom Cicero reports this saying: "I do not desire to die; but the thought of being dead is indifferent to me." Let us hear, however, what he says himself on this point very frankly: "It would be too weak and unmanly on my part if, certain as I am of always finding myself in the position of having to succumb in that way, and death coming nearer and nearer to me, I did not make some effort, before the time came, to bear the trial with fortitude. For reason prescribes that we should joyfully accept what it may please God to send us. Therefore the only remedy, the only rule, and the sole doctrine for avoiding the evils by which mankind is surrounded, whatever they are, is to resolve to bear them so far as our nature permits, or to put an end to them courageously and promptly."

He was still at Bagno when, on the 7th September 1581, he learned by letter that he had been elected Mayor of Bordeaux on the 1st August preceding. This intelligence made him hasten his departure; and from Lucca he proceeded to Rome. He again made some stay in that city, and he there received the letter of the jurats of Bordeaux, notifying to him officially his election to the mayoralty, and inviting him to return as speedily as possible. He left for France, accompanied by young D'Estissac and several other gentlemen, who escorted him a considerable distance; but none went back to France with him, not even his travelling companion. He passed by Padua, Milan, Mont Cenis, and Chambery; thence he went on to Lyons, and lost no time in repairing to his chateau, after an absence of seventeen months and eight days.

"The gentlemen of Bordeaux," says he, "elected me Mayor of their town while I was at a distance from France, and far from the thought of such a thing. I excused myself; but they gave to understand that I was wrong in so doing, it being also the command

of the King that I should stand." This is the letter which Henry III. wrote to him on the occasion:

"Monsieur de Montaigne,—Inasmuch as I hold in great esteem your fidelity and zealous devotion to my service, it has been a pleasure to me to learn that you have been chosen mayor of my town of Bordeaux, having had the agreeable duty of confirming the selection, which I did so much the more willingly, seeing that it was made without intrigue and in your distant absence. Wherefore my intention is, and I command and enjoin you expressly, that you return without delay or excuse, as soon as the present letter is delivered to you, to do the duties and service of the charge to which you have received so legitimate a call. And you will do a thing which will be very agreeable to me, and the contrary would displease me greatly. Praying God, M. de Montaigne, to have you in His holy keeping.

"Written at Paris, the 25th day of November 1581.

"HENRI.

"A Monsieur de Montaigne, Knight of my Order, Gentleman in Ordinary of my Chamber, being at present in Rome."

Montaigne, in his new employment, the most important in the province, obeyed the axiom that a man may not refuse a duty, though it absorb his time and attention, and even involve the sacrifice of his blood. Placed between two extreme parties, ever on the point of getting to blows, he showed himself in practice what he is in his book, the friend of a middle and temperate policy. Tolerant by character and on principle, he belonged, like all the great minds of the sixteenth century, to that political sect which sought to improve, without destroying, institutions; and we may say of him, what he himself said of La Boetie, "that he had that maxim indelibly impressed on his mind, to obey and submit himself religiously to the laws under which he was born. Affectionately attached to the repose of his country, an enemy to changes and innovations, he would have preferred to employ what means he had toward their discouragement and suppression, than in promoting their success." Such was the platform of his administration.

He applied himself in an especial manner to the maintenance of peace between the two religious factions which at that time divided the town of Bordeaux. In July 1583, on his personal intercession, Henry III. repealed the customs duties (traite foraine) hitherto payable by ships loading and unloading at that port; and in the same year his grateful fellow-citizens renewed the mayoralty in his person for a further term of two years, a distinction which had been enjoyed, he tells us, only in two prior cases. On the expiration of his official career, after four years' duration, he could say fairly enough of himself, that he left behind him neither hatred nor cause of offence. But we do not know whether he obtained the preferment mentioned in the letter of 1583, from which he augured the receipt by the King of (no doubt complimentary) presents of game and poultry.

Numerous letters to the Marechal de Matignon, the Jurats of Bordeaux, and others, as well as communications from correspondents which have been successively brought to light, attest the activity and appreciation of Montaigne as a public man during the troublous and difficult years 1584 and 1585, and seem to suggest the eminent probability that he wrote others not hitherto recovered. This correspondence presents him in an aspect forcibly contrasting with his quiet and secluded life at his chateau amid his books and literary avocations, and exhibits a complete reversal of the dedication of his future years in 1571 to learned repose among the Muses; but, if the attribution be a correct one, he farther distinguished his term of office by penning a Representation of the Authorities at Bordeaux on the occasion of the opening of the Court of Justice there in January 1582-83. The peculiar structure of the piece seems to betray its origin, and it could scarcely have been issued without the concurrence at least of the Mayor.

In the midst of the cares of government, however, Montaigne found leisure to revise and enlarge his Essays, which, since their appearance in 1580, were continually receiving augmentations in the form of additional chapters or papers. Two more editions were printed in 1582 and 1587; and during this time the author, while making alterations in the original text, had composed part of the Third Book. He went to Paris to make arrangements for the publication of his enlarged labors; and a fourth impression in 1588 was the result. He remained in the capital some time on this occasion, and it was now that he met for the first time Mademoiselle Le Jars de Gournay. Gifted with an active and inquiring spirit, and, above all, possessing a sound and healthy tone of mind, Mademoiselle de Gournay had been carried from her childhood with that tide which set in with the sixteenth century toward controversy, learning, and knowledge. She learned Latin without a master; and when, at the age of eighteen, she accidentally became possessor of a copy of the Essays, she was transported with delight and admiration. She was now about twenty.

She quitted the chateau of Gournay-sur-Aronde in Picardy to come and see him. We cannot do better, in connection with this journey of sympathy, than to repeat the words of Pasquier: “That young lady, allied to several great and noble families of Paris, proposed to herself no other marriage than with her honor, enriched with the knowledge gained from good books, and, beyond all others, from the essays of M. de Montaigne, who making in the year 1588 a lengthened stay in the town of Paris, she went there for the purpose of forming his personal acquaintance; and her mother, Madame de Gournay, and herself took him back with them to their chateau, where, at two or three different times, he spent three months altogether, most welcome of visitors.” It was from this moment that Mademoiselle de Gournay dated her adoption as Montaigne’s daughter, a circumstance which has tended to confer immortality upon her in a far greater measure than her own literary productions. Mr. St John has supplied a few other interesting particulars of the relations between the Essayist and this singular young woman, as well as of her subsequent fortunes. In the posthumous edition of the Essays, 1595, livre i. chap. 40, the author particularly commemorates this notable meeting. It was during the temporary sojourn of Montaigne at Paris, when the enlarged impression of his Essays was in the press, that he became for a short time, by a curious contretemps, an inmate of the Bastille. He was almost immediately released through the offices of the queenmother; but he did not recollect to modify the

passage in his book, where he disclaims having ever seen the interior of a prison. He tells us himself that he was arrested between three and four in the afternoon, and liberated at eight in the evening.

Montaigne, on leaving Paris, stayed a short time at Blois, to attend the meeting of the States-General. We do not know what part he took in that assembly; but it is known that he was commissioned, about this period, to negotiate between Henry of Navarre (afterward Henry IV.) and the Duc de Guise. De Thou assures us that Montaigne enjoyed the confidence of the principal persons of his time. He calls him a frank man without constraint, and tells us that, walking with him and Pasquier in the court at the Castle of Blois, he heard him pronounce some very remarkable opinions on contemporary events, and adds that Montaigne had foreseen that the troubles in France could not end without witnessing the death of either the King of Navarre or of the Duc de Guise. He had made himself so completely master of the views of these two princes, that he told De Thou that the King of Navarre would have been prepared to embrace Catholicism, if he had not been afraid of being abandoned by his party, and that the Duc de Guise, on his part, had no particular repugnance to the Confession of Augsburg, for which the Cardinal de Lorraine, his uncle, had inspired him with a liking, if it had not been for the peril involved in quitting the Romish communion. For the present, Montaigne returned to his chateau, where he could carry out his motto, Otio et libertati, and compose a chapter for his next edition on The Inconveniences of Greatness.

The author of the Essays was now fifty-five. The hereditary complaint which tormented him grew only worse and worse with years; and in 1588, while he was in Paris, he had had in addition an attack of gout in his left foot. During the wars of the League he had exposed himself to a vast amount of fatigue and exertion; in 1585 he is heard appealing for consideration on account of his old age; and his correspondence, at present readable in an ampler form, establishes him beyond doubt as one of the principal actors in the busy and critical period which preceded the accession of Henry IV. to the French throne. This is to be predicated of his public career: that he never flinched from his duty even when the discharge involved severe toil and considerable expense, and that he was regarded by all with whom he came into official contact with confidence and respect; and yet he occupied himself at all spare intervals with reading, meditating, and composition, which doubtless did not fail to exercise the usual effect of a too sedentary life. He employed the years 1589, 1590, and 1591 in making fresh additions to his book; and he might have fairly anticipated many happy hours, when he was unexpectedly attacked by a new and yet more lethal enemy—quinsy, depriving him of the power of utterance. Pasquier, who has left us some details of his last hours, obtained, it is presumable, from some witness of the scene, narrates that he remained three days in full possession of his faculties, but unable to speak, so that, in order to make known his desires, he was obliged to resort to writing; and as he felt his end drawing near, he begged his wife to summon certain of the gentlemen who resided in the neighborhood to bid them a last farewell. When they had arrived, he caused mass to be celebrated in his apartment; and just as the priest was elevating the host, Montaigne fell forward, with his arms extended in front of him, on the bed, and so expired. He was in his sixtieth year. It was the 13th September 1592.

Montaigne was buried near his own house; but a few months after his decease, his remains were removed to the Church of the Feuillants at Bordeaux, where they still continued till 1871, when they were finally removed to the vestibule of the Hall of Faculties. But the vessel containing the heart of the Essayist, originally deposited in the Church of Saint Michel de Montaigne, has not been recovered.

The Essayist lived in easy circumstances, his income, which represented only, we must recollect, a portion of the whole paternal fortune, being about 6000 francs a year, and he left a large sum in land and money—90,000 francs. The property, which shared the general fortune of all French estates prior to modern improvements, and was, no doubt, relatively unprofitable, has repeatedly changed hands, and would be probably worth at the present time at least half a million of francs.

The family of Eyquem, in truth, had had a lengthened commercial experience and record; and so far down as the time of Pierre the father the house still continued to devote close attention to practical affairs, and chiefly resided at Bordeaux, where Pierre, following the precedent of his ancestors, engaged in the shipping and export trade, as well as in any other undertakings calculated to prove profitable. The elder Montaigne, who enjoyed the entire revenue, must have had a very affluent independence. But his eldest son seems, agreeably to the view and principle laid down in one of the Essays, to have had an income allowed to him vita patris.

He tells us in one passage of his book, that his father apprehended diminution of the estate from his want of aptitude for business; “but,” says Montaigne, “it did not so happen,” and he even improved matters.

Montaigne was in one sense the first gentleman of his race, unless the crusader was of the same blood. But it was a puerile trait on the part of Joseph Scaliger to stigmatize him as the son of a herring-salesman; nor was it inopportune, granting such a thing, to congratulate all such dealers, past, present, and to come, on such an egregious accession of honor.

In 1595 Mademoiselle de Gournay published a new edition of Montaigne’s Essays, and the first with the latest emendations of the author, from a copy examined and set in order by the poet Pierre de Brach, and forwarded to the lady at Paris by Mme. de Montaigne in the March of 1594. But in the same year the Lyons press brought out a reprint of the text of 1588 in duodecimo form, probably an independent contrefacon; and its main curiosity is the presence on the title of a striking appreciation of the author, which reads as if it were the product of the pen of some anonymous admirer. We are here apprised that the Essays contain “vn riche et rare thresor de plusieurs beaux et notables discours couchez en vn stile le plus pur et orne qu’il se trouve en nostre siecle.”

Whatever may have been the general reception of Montaigne’s literary productions by the generation immediately succeeding his own age, his genius grew into just esteem in the seventeenth century, when such great spirits arose as La Bruyere, Moliere, La Fontaine, Madame de Sevigne. “O,” exclaimed the Chatelaine des Rochers, “what capital company he is, the dear man! he is my old friend; and just for the reason that

he is so, he always seems new. My God! how full is that book of sense!" Balzac said that he had carried human reason as far and as high as it could go, both in politics and in morals. On the other hand, Malebranche and the writers of Port Royal were against him; some reprehended the licentiousness of his writings; others their impiety, materialism, epicureanism. Even Pascal, who had carefully read the Essays, and gained no small profit by them, did not spare his reproaches. But Montaigne has outlived detraction. As time has gone on, his admirers and borrowers have increased in number, and his Jansenism, which recommended him to the eighteenth century, may not be his least recommendation in the twentieth. Here we have certainly, on the whole, a first-class man, and one proof of his masterly genius seems to be, that his merits and his beauties are sufficient to induce us to leave out of consideration blemishes and faults which would have been fatal to an inferior writer.

The books which constituted the library of Montaigne occasionally occur, and bear his autograph; he probably possessed a fairly large collection, as he informs us in his Essay 30 of the First Book, that he had a hundred volumes of the Italian Letter-writers alone; and he speaks elsewhere of being surrounded by thousands of works. But since he resided and composed his Essays at a distance from any other collection, a catalogue might be experimentally drawn up from the references to authors consulted by him, and probably all in his hands. No two writers could have been more different in their style and method, though occasionally so parallel in their thoughts, than Montaigne and Shakspeare. The former lived at a distance from books, and was obliged to retain them at his elbow for reference and quotation, of which he was inordinately prodigal. Shakspeare lived in the midst of them, kept nothing or next to nothing, and instead of transcribing sentences, not to say entire paragraphs, from others, reproduced the matter chemically transformed—sometimes so much so as to be barely recognizable.

In his Essays, 1600, Sir William Cornwallis the Younger was the first person in England to call attention to the merits of Montaigne, and the subject evidently interested him, since he left behind him in manuscript, an epigram first inserted by the editor in a privately printed volume of poetical miscellanies. This production runs as follows:—

Upon Montaigne's Essays.

"Come, Montaigne, come, I'll love thee with my heart;

We may not part.

I'll harken: thou shalt sing of Nature's King,

Music's chief part.

Union's division to discover to the lover,

Rarest of art."

It is sufficiently curious that Cornwallis speaks of having seen some of the Essays in English before Florio succeeded in printing his version, for he observes: “For profitable recreation, that noble knight, the Lord de Montaigne, is most excellent, whom, though I have not been so much beholding to the French as to see in his original, yet divers of his pieces I have seen translated, they that understand both languages say very well done; and I am able to say (if you will take the word of ignorance) translated into a style admitting as few idle words as our language will endure. It is well fitted in this new garment, and Montaigne now speaks good English. It is done by a fellow less beholding to nature for his fortune than wit, yet lesser for his face than his fortune. The truth is, he looks more like a good fellow than a wise man, and yet he is wise beyond either his fortune or education.”

Thus Cornwallis, prior to 1600, had seen not only parts of the book, but the translator; and as Florio was at one time in the service of Lord Southampton as a tutor, there is the special probability that Shakspeare may have had the opportunity of glancing at the manuscript. But this aspect of the question is treated more at large in my New Essay on Shakspeare, where I show some warrant for a new view of the matter.

The translation by Florio, completed some years before it found a publisher, appeared in 1603 and was reprinted in 1613 and 1632; and readers had to wait more than half a century more for the idiomatic but loose and treacherous version by Cotton, which passed through several impressions.

I notice merely for the sake of the slight indication which it affords of an increasing call for the book, that in 1701 we meet with a small duodecimo volume entitled: “An Abstract of the most curious and excellent Thoughts in Seigneur de Montaigne’s Essays. Very useful for improving the Mind and forming the manners of Men.” This effort was well meant, but the essential point about the Essays seems to be their possession and perusal in all their full and even garrulous detail. Doubtless the Cotton version, periodically republished down to 1743, at once helped to diffuse a knowledge of the Essays in a far greater measure than the Florio one; and allusions in such books as Spence’s Anecdotes show that Montaigne was known to the literary circle in which Pope and Addison moved.

Letter of Introduction. From painting by Arture Ricci.

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LETTERS OF MONTAIGNE

The five-and-thirty letters here given (inclusively of the Memorial of 1583) represent all that are known to exist. In 1842 only ten appear to have been recovered. The earlier letters are generally signed Michel de Montaigne, although in 1568 the Essayist had already succeeded to the family estates. The later letters bear the signature Montaigne. The object in printing this correspondence was in principal measure to illustrate the active and practical side of the character of the writer. It is to be predicated of the composition, orthography, and punctuation that they betray a tendency to haste and a negligent and incompact arrangement of sentences, as well as an indifference to the choice of expressions. We perceive that the letter to du Prat had been preceded by at least one other. But the family has not preserved it or them. It should be added that the latest French Variorum gives only thirty letters, and that search has been unsuccessfully made in many probable directions, here and abroad, for others evidently once in existence. In the 39th chapter of the First Book of the Essays, Montaigne has entered at considerable length into the art of letter-writing and into his views on some of the aspects of the question, and we need not wonder or complain that the practical statesman and the philosophical theorist are not always unanimous or consistent.

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I

To Messire Antoine Du Prat, Provost Of Paris.

I put you in possession, Monsieur, by my last letter of the troubles which desolated the Agenois and Perigord, where our common friend Mesney, taken prisoner, was brought to Bordeaux, and had his head cut off. I wish to tell you now that those of Nerac, having by the indiscretion of the young captain of this town, lost from a hundred to a hundred and twenty men in a skirmish against a troop of Monluc, withdrew into Bearn with their ministers, not without great danger of their lives, about the fifteenth day of July, at which time those of Castel Jalous surrendered, of which place the minister was executed. Those of Marmande, Saint Macaire, and Bazas fled likewise, but not without a cruel loss, for immediately the chateau of Duras was pillaged, and that of Monseigneur Villette was forced, where there were two citizens and a large number of churchmen. There every cruelty and violence were exercised, the first day of August, without regard to quality, sex, or age. Monluc violated the daughter of the minister, who was slain with the others. I am extremely sorry to tell you that in this massacre were involved our kinswoman, the wife of Gaspard du Prat, and two of her children; it was a noble woman, whom I have had opportunities of often seeing when I went into those parts, and at whose house I was always assured of enjoying good hospitality. In short, I say no more to you at present, for the recital causes me severe pain, and therefore I pray God to have you in His holy keeping.—Your servant and good friend,

MONTAIGNE.

This 24 August 1562.

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II

To Monseigneur, Monseigneur De Montaigne (His Father).

(1563.)

. . . As to his last words, doubtless, if any man can give a good account of them, it is I, both because, during the whole of his sickness he conversed as fully with me as with any one, and also because, in consequence of the singular and brotherly friendship which we had entertained for each other, I was perfectly acquainted with the intentions, opinions, and wishes which he had formed in the course of his life, as much so, certainly, as one man can possibly be with those of another man; and because I knew them to be elevated, virtuous, full of steady resolution, and (after all said) admirable. I well foresaw that, if his illness permitted him to express himself, he would allow nothing to fall from him, in such an extremity, that was not replete with good example. I consequently took every care in my power to treasure what was said. True it is, Monseigneur, as my memory is not only in itself very short, but in this case affected by the trouble which I have undergone, through so heavy and important a loss, that I have forgotten a number of things which I should wish to have had known; but those which I recollect shall be related to you as exactly as lies in my power. For to represent in full measure his noble career suddenly arrested, to paint to you his indomitable courage, in a body worn out and prostrated by pain and the assaults of death, I confess, would demand a far better ability than mine: because, although, when in former years he discoursed on serious and important matters, he handled them in such a manner that it was difficult to reproduce exactly what he said, yet his ideas and his words at the last seemed to rival each other in serving him. For I am sure that I never knew him give birth to such fine conceptions, or display so much eloquence, as in the time of his sickness. If, Monseigneur, you blame me for introducing his more ordinary observations, please to know that I do so advisedly; for since they proceeded from him at a season of such great trouble, they indicate the perfect tranquillity of his mind and thoughts to the last.

On Monday, the 9th day of August 1563, on my return from the Court, I sent an invitation to him to come and dine with me. He returned word that he was obliged, but, being indisposed, he would thank me to do him the pleasure of spending an hour with him before he started for Medoc. Shortly after my dinner I went to him. He had laid himself down on the bed with his clothes on, and he was already, I perceived, much changed. He complained of diarrhoea, accompanied by the gripes, and said that he had it about him ever since he played with M. d'Escars with nothing but his doublet on, and that with him a cold often brought on such attacks. I advised him to go as he had proposed, but to stay for the night at Germignac, which is only about two leagues from the town. I gave him this advice, because some houses, near to that where he was living, were visited by the plague, about which he was nervous since his return from Perigord and the Agenois, where it had been raging; and, besides, horse

exercise was, from my own experience, beneficial under similar circumstances. He set out accordingly, with his wife and M. Bouillhonnas, his uncle.

Early on the following morning, however, I had intelligence from Madame de la Boetie, that in the night he had a fresh and violent attack of dysentery. She had called in a physician and apothecary, and prayed me to lose no time in coming, which (after dinner) I did. He was delighted to see me; and when I was going away, under promise to return the following day, he begged me more importunately and affectionately than he was wont to do, to give him as much of my company as possible. I was a little affected; yet I was about to leave, when Madame de la Boetie, as if she foresaw something about to happen, implored me with tears to stay the night. When I consented, he seemed to grow more cheerful. I returned home the next day, and on the Thursday I paid him another visit. He had become worse; and his loss of blood from the dysentery, which reduced his strength very much, was largely on the increase. I quitted his side on Friday, but on Saturday I went to him, and found him very weak. He then gave me to understand that his complaint was infectious, and, moreover, disagreeable and depressing; and that he, knowing thoroughly my constitution, desired that I should content myself with coming to see him now and then. On the contrary, after that I never left his side.

It was only on the Sunday that he began to converse with me on any subject beyond the immediate one of his illness, and what the ancient doctors thought of it: we had not touched on public affairs, for I found at the very outset that he had a dislike to them.

But, on the Sunday, he had a fainting fit; and when he came to himself, he told me that everything seemed to him confused, as if in a mist and in disorder, and that, nevertheless, this visitation was not unpleasing to him. “Death,” I replied, “has no worse sensation, my brother.” “None so bad,” was his answer. He had had no regular sleep since the beginning of his illness; and as he became worse and worse, he began to turn his attention to questions which men commonly occupy themselves with in the last extremity, despairing now of getting better, and intimating as much to me. On that day, as he appeared in tolerably good spirits, I took occasion to say to him that, in consideration of the singular love I bore him, it would become me to take care that his affairs, which he had conducted with such rare prudence in his life, should not be neglected at present; and that I should regret it if, from want of proper counsel, he should leave anything unsettled, not only on account of the loss to his family, but also to his good name.

He thanked me for my kindness; and after a little reflection, as if he was resolving certain doubts in his own mind, he desired me to summon his uncle and his wife by themselves, in order that he might acquaint them with his testamentary dispositions. I told him that this would shock them. “No, no,” he answered, “I will cheer them by making out my case to be better than it is.” And then, he inquired whether we were not all much taken by surprise at his having fainted? I replied, that it was of no importance, being incidental to the complaint from which he suffered. “True, my brother,” said he; “it would be unimportant, even though it should lead to what you most dread.” “For you,” I rejoined, “it might be a happy thing; but I should be the

loser, who would thereby be deprived of so great, so wise, and so steadfast a friend, a friend whose place I should never see supplied." "It is very likely you may not," was his answer; "and be sure that one thing which makes me somewhat anxious to recover, and to delay my journey to that place, whither I am already halfway gone, is the thought of the loss both you and that poor man and woman there (referring to his uncle and wife) must sustain; for I love them with my whole heart, and I feel certain that they will find it very hard to lose me. I should also regret it on account of such as have, in my lifetime, valued me, and whose conversation I should like to have enjoyed a little longer; and I beseech you, my brother, if I leave the world, to carry to them for me an assurance of the esteem I entertained for them to the last moment of my existence. My birth was, moreover, scarcely to so little purpose but that, had I lived, I might have done some service to the public; but, however this may be, I am prepared to submit to the will of God, when it shall please Him to call me, being confident of enjoying the tranquillity which you have foretold for me. As for you, my friend, I feel sure that you are so wise, that you will control your emotions, and submit to His divine ordinance regarding me; and I beg of you to see that that good man and woman do not mourn for my departure unnecessarily."

He proceeded to inquire how they behaved at present. "Very well," said I, "considering the circumstances." "Ah!" he replied, "that is, so long as they do not abandon all hope of me; but when that shall be the case, you will have a hard task to support them." It was owing to his strong regard for his wife and uncle that he studiously disguised from them his own conviction as to the certainty of his end, and he prayed me to do the same. When they were near him he assumed an appearance of gaiety, and flattered them with hopes. I then went to call them. They came, wearing as composed an air as possible; and when we four were together, he addressed us, with an untroubled countenance, as follows: "Uncle and wife, rest assured that no new attack of my disease, or fresh doubt that I have as to my recovery, has led me to take this step of communicating to you my intentions, for, thank God, I feel very well and hopeful; but taught by observation and experience the instability of all human things, and even of the life to which we are so much attached, and which is, nevertheless, a mere bubble; and knowing, moreover, that my state of health brings me more within the danger of death, I have thought proper to settle my worldly affairs, having the benefit of your advice." Then addressing himself more particularly to his uncle, "Good uncle," said he, "if I were to rehearse all the obligations under which I lie to you. I am sure that I never should make an end. Let me only say that, wherever I have been, and with whomsoever I have conversed, I have represented you as doing for me all that a father could do for a son: both in the care with which you tended my education, and in the zeal with which you pushed me forward into public life, so that my whole existence is a testimony of your good offices towards me. In short, I am indebted for all that I have to you, who have been to me as a parent; and therefore I have no right to part with anything, unless it be with your approval."

There was a general silence hereupon, and his uncle was prevented from replying by tears and sobs. At last he said that whatever he thought for the best would be agreeable to him; and as he intended to make him his heir, he was at liberty to dispose of what would be his.

Then he turned to his wife. “My image,” said he (for so he often called her, there being some sort of relationship between them), “since I have been united to you by marriage, which is one of the most weighty and sacred ties imposed on us by God, for the purpose of maintaining human society, I have continued to love, cherish, and value you; and I know that you have returned my affection, for which I have no sufficient acknowledgment. I beg you to accept such portion of my estate as I bequeath to you, and be satisfied with it, though it is very inadequate to your desert.”

Afterwards he turned to me. “My brother,” he began, “for whom I have so entire a love, and whom I selected out of so large a number, thinking to revive with you that virtuous and sincere friendship which, owing to the degeneracy of the age, has grown to be almost unknown to us, and now exists only in certain vestiges of antiquity, I beg of you, as a mark of my affection to you, to accept my library: a slender offering, but given with a cordial will, and suitable to you, seeing that you are fond of learning. It will be a memorial of your old companion.”

Then he addressed all three of us. He blessed God that in his extremity he had the happiness to be surrounded by all those whom he held dearest in the world, and he looked upon it as a fine spectacle, where four persons were together, so unanimous in their feelings, and loving each other for each other’s sake. He commended us one to the other; and proceeded thus: “My worldly matters being arranged, I must now think of the welfare of my soul. I am a Christian; I am a Catholic. I have lived one, and I shall die one. Send for a priest; for I wish to conform to this last Christian obligation.” He now concluded his discourse, which he had conducted with such a firm face and with so distinct an utterance, that whereas, when I first entered his room, he was feeble, inarticulate in his speech, his pulse low and feverish, and his features pallid, now, by a sort of miracle, he appeared to have rallied, and his pulse was so strong that for the sake of comparison, I asked him to feel mine.

I felt my heart so oppressed at this moment, that I had not the power to make him any answer; but in the course of two or three hours, solicitous to keep up his courage, and, likewise, out of the tenderness which I had had all my life for his honor and fame, wishing a larger number of witnesses to his admirable fortitude, I said to him, how much I was ashamed to think that I lacked courage to listen to what he, so great a sufferer, had the courage to deliver; that down to the present time I had scarcely conceived that God granted us such command over human infirmities, and had found a difficulty in crediting the examples I had read in histories; but that with such evidence of the thing before my eyes, I gave praise to God that it had shown itself in one so excessively dear to me, and who loved me so entirely, and that his example would help me to act in a similar manner when my turn came. Interrupting me, he begged that it might happen so, and that the conversation which had passed between us might not be mere words, but might be impressed deeply on our minds, to be put in exercise at the first occasion; and that this was the real object and aim of all philosophy.

He then took my hand, and continued: “Brother, friend, there are many acts of my life, I think, which have cost me as much difficulty as this one is likely to do; and, after all, I have been long prepared for it, and have my lesson by heart. Have I not

lived long enough? I am just upon thirty-three. By the grace of God, my days so far have known nothing but health and happiness; but in the ordinary course of our unstable human affairs, this could not have lasted much longer; it would have become time for me to enter on graver avocations, and I should thus have involved myself in numberless vexations, and, among them, the troubles of old age, from which I shall now be exempt. Moreover, it is probable that hitherto my life has been spent more simply, and with less of evil, than if God had spared me, and I had survived to feel the thirst for riches and worldly prosperity. I am sure, for my part, that I now go to God and the place of the blessed." He seemed to detect in my expression some inquietude at his words; and he exclaimed, "What, my brother, would you make me entertain apprehensions? Had I any, whom would it become so much as yourself to remove them?"

The notary, who had been summoned to draw up his will, came in the evening, and when he had the documents prepared, I inquired of La Boetie if he would sign them. "Sign them," cried he; "I will do so with my own hand; but I could desire more time, for I feel exceedingly timid and weak, and in a manner exhausted." But when I was going to change the conversation, he suddenly rallied, said he had but a short time to live, and asked if the notary wrote rapidly, for he should dictate without making any pause. The notary was called, and he dictated his will there and then with such speed that the man could scarcely keep up with him; and when he had done, he asked me to read it out, saying to me, "What a good thing it is to look after what are called our riches." Sunt haec quae hominibus vocantur bona. As soon as the will was signed, the chamber being full, he asked me if it would hurt him to talk. I answered, that it would not, if he did not speak too loud. He then summoned Mademoiselle de Saint Quentin, his niece, to him, and addressed her thus: "Dear niece, since my earliest acquaintance with thee, I have observed the marks of great natural goodness in thee; but the services which thou rendered to me, with so much affectionate diligence, in my present and last necessity, inspire me with high hopes of thee; and I am under great obligations to thee, and give thee most affectionate thanks. Let me relieve my conscience by counselling thee to be, in the first place, devout to God: for this doubtless is our first duty, failing which all others can be of little advantage or grace, but which, duly observed, carries with it necessarily all other virtues. After God, thou shouldest love thy father and mother—thy mother, my sister, whom I regard as one of the best and most intelligent of women, and by whom I beg of thee to let thy own life be regulated. Allow not thyself to be led away by pleasures; shun, like the plague, the foolish familiarities thou seest between some men and women; harmless enough at first, but which by insidious degrees corrupt the heart, and thence lead it to negligence, and then into the vile slough of vice. Credit me, the greatest safeguard to female chastity is sobriety of demeanor. I beseech and direct that thou often call to mind the friendship which was betwixt us; but I do not wish thee to mourn for me too much—an injunction which, so far as it is in my power, I lay on all my friends, since it might seem that by doing so they felt a jealousy of that blessed condition in which I am about to be placed by death. I assure thee, my dear, that if I had the option now of continuing in life or of completing the voyage on which I have set out, I should find it very hard to choose. Adieu, dear niece."

Mademoiselle d'Arsat, his step-daughter, was next called. He said to her: "Daughter, you stand in no great need of advice from me, insomuch as you have a mother, whom I have ever found most sagacious, and entirely in conformity with my own opinions and wishes, and whom I have never found faulty; with such a preceptress, you cannot fail to be properly instructed. Do not account it singular that I, with no tie of blood to you, am interested in you; for, being the child of one who is so closely allied to me, I am necessarily concerned in what concerns you; and consequently the affairs of your brother, M. d'Arsat, have ever been watched by me with as much care as my own; nor perhaps will it be to your disadvantage that you were my step-daughter. You enjoy sufficient store of wealth and beauty; you are a lady of good family; it only remains for you to add to these possessions the cultivation of your mind, in which I exhort you not to fail. I do not think it necessary to warn you against vice, a thing so odious in women, for I would not even suppose that you could harbor any inclination for it—nay, I believe that you hold the very name in abhorrence. Dear daughter, farewell."

All in the room were weeping and lamenting; but he held without interruption the thread of his discourse, which was pretty long. But when he had done, he directed us all to leave the room, except the women attendants, whom he styled his garrison. But first, calling to him my brother, M. de Beauregard, he said to him: "M. de Beauregard, you have my best thanks for all the care you have taken of me. I have now a thing which I am very anxious indeed to mention to you, and with your permission I will do so." As my brother gave him encouragement to proceed, he added: "I assure you that I never knew any man who engaged in the reformation of our Church with greater sincerity, earnestness, and single-heartedness than yourself. I consider that you were led to it by observing the vicious character of our prelates, which no doubt much requires setting in order, and by imperfections which time has brought into our Church. It is not my desire at present to discourage you from this course, for I would have no man act in opposition to his conscience; but I wish, having regard to the good repute acquired by your family from its enduring concord—a family, than which none can be dearer to me; a family, thank God, no member of which has ever been guilty of dishonor—in regard, further, to the will of your good father to whom you owe so much, and of your uncle, I wish you to avoid extreme means; avoid harshness and violence: be reconciled with your relatives; do not act apart, but unite. You perceive what disasters our quarrels have brought upon this kingdom, and I anticipate still worse mischiefs; and in your goodness and wisdom, beware of involving your family in such broils; let it continue to enjoy its former reputation and happiness. M. de Beauregard, take what I say in good part, and as a proof of the friendship I feel for you. I postponed till now any communication with you on the subject, and perhaps the condition in which you see me address you may cause my advice and opinion to carry greater authority." My brother expressed his thanks to him cordially.

On the Monday morning he had become so ill that he quite despaired of himself; and he said to me very pitifully: "Brother, do not you feel pain for all the pain I am suffering? Do you not perceive now that the help you give me has no other effect than that of lengthening my suffering?"

Shortly afterwards he fainted, and we all thought him gone; but by the application of vinegar and wine he rallied. But he soon sank, and when he heard us in lamentation, he murmured, “O God! who is it that teases me so? Why did you break the agreeable repose I was enjoying? I beg of you to leave me.” And then, when he caught the sound of my voice, he continued: “And art thou, my brother, likewise unwilling to see me at peace? O how thou robbest me of my repose!” After a while, he seemed to gain more strength, and called for wine, which he relished, and declared it to be the finest drink possible. I, in order to change the current of his thoughts, put in, “Surely not; water is the best.” “Ah, yes,” he returned “doubtless so; ‘but gold is a blazing fire.’ ” He had now become icy-cold at his extremities, even to his face; a deathly perspiration was upon him, and his pulse was scarcely perceptible.

This morning he confessed, but the priest had omitted to bring with him the necessary apparatus for celebrating Mass. On the Tuesday, however, M. de la Boetie summoned him to aid him, as he said, in discharging the last office of a Christian. After the conclusion of Mass, he took the sacrament; and when the priest was about to depart, he said to him: “Spiritual father, I implore you humbly, as well as those over whom you are set, to pray to the Almighty on my behalf; that, if it be decreed in heaven that I am now to end my life, He will take compassion on my soul, and pardon me my sins, which are manifold, it not being possible for so weak and poor a creature as I to obey completely the will of such a Master; or, if He think fit to keep me longer here, that it may please Him to release me from my present extreme anguish, and to direct my footsteps in the right path, that I may become a better man than I have been.” He paused to recover breath a little, but noticing that the priest was about to go away, he called him back, and proceeded: “I desire to say, besides, in your hearing this: I declare that I was christened and I have lived, and that so I wished to die, in the faith which Moses preached in Egypt; which afterwards the Patriarchs accepted and professed in Judaea; and which, in the course of time, has been transmitted to France and to us.” He seemed desirous of adding something more, but he ended with a request to his uncle and me to send up prayers for him; “for these are,” he said, “the best duties that Christians can fulfil one for another.” In the course of talking, his shoulder was uncovered, and although a man-servant stood near him, he asked his uncle to readjust the clothes. Then, turning his eyes towards me, he said, “Ingenui est, cui multum debeas, ei plurimum velle debere.”

M. de Belot called in the afternoon to see him, and M. de la Boetie, taking his hand, said to him: “I was on the point of discharging my debt, but my kind creditor has given me a little further time.” A little while after, appearing to wake out of a sort of reverie, he uttered words which he had employed once or twice before in the course of his sickness: “Ah well, ah well, whenever the hour comes, I await it with pleasure and fortitude.” And then, as they were holding his mouth open by force to give him a draught, he observed to M. de Belot: “An vivere tanti est?”

As the evening approached, he began perceptibly to sink; and while I supped, he sent for me to come, being no more than the shadow of a man, or, as he put it himself, non homo, sed species hominis; and he said to me with the utmost difficulty: “My brother, my friend, please God I may realize the imaginations I have just enjoyed.” Afterwards, having waited for some time while he remained silent, and by painful

efforts was drawing long sighs (for his tongue at this point began to refuse its functions), I said, “What are they?” “Grand, grand!” he replied. “I have never yet failed,” returned I, “to have the honor of hearing your conceptions and imaginations communicated to me; will you not now still let me enjoy them?” “I would indeed,” he answered; “but, my brother, I am not able to do so; they are admirable, infinite, and unspeakable.” We stopped short there, for he could not go on. A little before, indeed, he had shown a desire to speak to his wife, and had told her, with as gay a countenance as he could contrive to assume, that he had a story to tell her. And it seemed as if he was making an attempt to gain utterance; but, his strength failing him, he begged a little wine to resuscitate it. It was of no avail, for he fainted away suddenly, and was for some time insensible.

Having become so near a neighbor to death, and hearing the sobs of Mademoiselle de la Boetie, he called her, and said to her thus: “My own image, you grieve yourself beforehand; will you not have pity on me? take courage. Assuredly, it costs me more than half the pain I endure to see you suffer; and reasonably so, because the evils which we ourselves feel we do not actually ourselves suffer, but it is certain sentient faculties which God plants in us that feel them: whereas what we feel on account of others, we feel by consequence of a certain reasoning process which goes on within our minds. But I am going away—” That he said because his strength was failing him; and fearing that he had frightened his wife, he resumed, observing: “I am going to sleep. Good night, my wife; go thy way.” This was the last farewell he took of her.

After she had left, “My brother,” said he to me, “keep near me, if you please;” and then feeling the advance of death more pressing and more acute, or else the effect of some warm draught which they had made him swallow, his voice grew stronger and clearer, and he turned quite with violence in his bed, so that all began again to entertain the hope which we had lost only upon witnessing his extreme prostration.

At this stage he proceeded, among other things, to pray me again and again, in a most affectionate manner, to give him a place; so that I was apprehensive that his reason might be impaired, particularly when, on my pointing out to him that he was doing himself harm, and that these were not the words of a rational man, he did not give way at first, but redoubled his outcry, saying, “My brother, my brother! dost thou then refuse me a place?” insomuch that he constrained me to demonstrate to him that, as he breathed and spoke, and had his physical being, therefore he had his place. “Yes, yes,” he responded, “I have; but it is not that which I need; and, besides, when all is said, I have no longer any existence.” “God,” I replied, “will grant you a better one soon.” “Would it were now, my brother,” was his answer. “It is now three days since I have been eager to take my departure.”

Being in this extremity, he frequently called me, merely to satisfy him that I was at his side. At length, he composed himself a little to rest, which strengthened our hopes; so much so, indeed, that I left the room, and went to rejoice thereupon with Mademoiselle de la Boetie. But, an hour or so afterwards, he called me by name once or twice, and then with a long sigh expired at three o’clock on Wednesday morning, the 18th August 1563, having lived thirty-two years, nine months, and seventeen days.

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III

To The Same.

In pursuance of the instructions which you gave me last year in your house at Montaigne, Monseigneur, I have put into a French dress, with my own hand, Raymonde de Sebonde, that great Spanish theologian and philosopher; and I have divested him, so far as I could, of that rough bearing and barbaric appearance which you saw him wear at first; so that, in my opinion, he is now qualified to present himself in the best company. It is perfectly possible that some fastidious persons will detect in the book some trace of Gascon parentage; but it will be so much the more to their discredit that they allowed the task to devolve on one who is quite a novice in these things. It is only right, Monseigneur, that the work should come before the world under your auspices, since whatever emendations and polish it may have received are owing to you. Still I see well that, if you think proper to balance accounts with the author, you will find yourself much his debtor; for against his excellent and religious discourses, his lofty and, so to speak, divine conceptions, you will find that you will have to set nothing but words and phraseology; a sort of merchandise so ordinary and commonplace, that whoever has the most of it, peradventure is the worst off.

Monseigneur, I pray God to grant you a very long and happy life. From Paris, this 18th of June 1568. Your most humble and most obedient son,

MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE.

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IV

To Monsieur, Monsieur De Lansac, Knight Of The King'S Order, Privy Councillor, Subcontroller Of His Finance, And Captain Of The Cent Gardes Of His Household.

Monsieur,—I send you the "Economics" of Xenophon, put into French by the late M. de la Boetie, a present which appears to me to be appropriate to you, as well for having originally proceeded, as you know, from a gentleman of mark, a very great man in war and peace, as for having taken its second shape from a personage whom I know to have been loved and esteemed by you during his life. This will serve you as a spur to continue to cherish towards his name and memory your good opinion and will. And to be bold with you, Monsieur, do not fear to increase these sentiments somewhat; for, having knowledge only from public testimony of what he had done, it is for me to assure you that he had so many degrees of proficiency beyond, that you were very far from knowing him completely. He did me that honor in his life, which I count the most fortunate circumstance in my own career, to knit with me a friendship so close and so intimate, that there was no movement, impulse, thought of his mind which I had not the means of considering and judging, unless my vision sometimes fell short of the truth. Without lying, then, he was, on the whole, so nearly a miracle, that in order that I may not be discredited, casting aside probability, it is needful for me to keep myself well within the limits of my knowledge. And for this time, Monsieur, I shall content myself with praying you, for the honor and respect you owe to truth, to testify and believe that our Guienne has never beheld his peer among the men of his vocation. Under the hope, therefore, that you will render him what is justly due to him, and in order to refresh him in your memory, I give you this book, which will at the same time answer for me that were it not for the special excuse which my incapacity makes for me, I would present you as willingly something of my own, as an acknowledgment of the obligations I owe to you, and of the ancient favor and friendship which you have borne toward the members of our house. But, Monsieur, in default of better coin, I offer you in payment a most assured desire to do you humble service.

Monsieur, I pray God to have you in His keeping. Your obedient servant,

MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE.

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V

To Monsieur, Monsieur De Mesmes, Seigneur De Roissy And Malassize, Privy Councillor To The King.

Monsieur,—It is one of the most notable follies which men commit, to employ the strength of their understanding in overturning and destroying common received opinions, and which afford us satisfaction and content. For where everything beneath heaven employs the means and utensils, which Nature has placed in our hands (as indeed it is customary) for the advancement and commodity of its being, these, in order to appear of a more sprightly and enlightened wit, which accepts not anything that has not been tried and balanced a thousand times with the most subtle reasoning, sacrifice their peace of mind to doubt, uneasiness, and feverish excitement. It is not without reason that childhood and simplicity have been recommended by holy writ itself. For my part, I prefer to be more at my ease and less clever: more content and less wide in my range. This is the reason, Monsieur, why, although persons of an ingenious turn laugh at our care as to what will happen after our own time, as, for instance, to our souls, which, lodged elsewhere, will lose all consciousness of what goes on here below, yet I consider it to be a great consolation for the frailty and brevity of this life, to reflect that there is the power of prolonging it by reputation and renown; and I embrace very readily such a pleasant and favorable notion innate in our being, without inquiring too curiously either the how or why. Insomuch that having loved beyond everything else M. de la Boetie, the greatest man, in my judgment, of our age, I should think myself very negligent of my duty if I failed, to the extent of my power, to prevent so rich a name as his, and a memory so deserving of remembrance, from disappearing and being lost; and if I did not essay by these means to resuscitate it and make it live again. I believe that he something feels this, and that my services affect and rejoice him. In truth, he lodges with me so vividly and so wholly that I am loth to believe him committed to the gross earth, or altogether severed from communication with us. Therefore, Monsieur, since every new knowledge which I afford of him and his name is so much added to his second being, and, moreover, since his name is ennobled and honored by the place which receives it, it falls to me not only to extend it as widely as I can, but to confide it to the keeping of persons of honor and virtue, among whom you hold such a rank, that, to afford you the opportunity of receiving this new guest, and giving him good entertainment, I decided on presenting to you this little work, not for any service you are likely to derive from it, being well aware that to deal with Plutarch and his companions you have nought to do save as an interpreter; but it is possible that Madame de Roissy, perceiving in it the order of her household and of your happy accord represented to the life, will be very pleased to find her own natural inclination to have not only reached but surpassed the imaginations of the wisest philosophers, regarding the duties and laws of wedlock. And, at all events, it will be always an honor to me, to be able to do anything which shall be for the pleasure of you and yours, on account of the obligation under which I lie to serve you.

Monsieur, I pray God to grant you a very long and happy life. From Montaigne, this 30th April 1570. Your humble servant,

MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE.

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VI

To Monsieur, Monsieur De L'Hospital, Chancellor Of France.

Monseigneur,—I hold the opinion that you others, to whose hands fortune and reason have committed the government of public affairs, are not more inquisitive in any point than in arriving at a knowledge of those in office under you; for no community is so poorly furnished, that it has not persons sufficient for the discharge of all official duties, provided that there is a just distribution of functions. And that point gained, there should be nothing wanting to make a State perfect in its constitution. Now, in proportion as this is more to be desired, so it is the more difficult, since your eyes can neither stretch so far as to select from a multitude so large and so widely spread, nor to penetrate hearts, to discover intentions and conscience, matter principally to be considered; so that there has never been any commonwealth so well established, in which we may not detect often enough a deficiency in this distributory selection. And in those, where ignorance and malice, favoritism, intrigue, and violence govern, if any choice is seen to be made on the ground of merit and regularity, we owe it without doubt to chance, which, in its inconstant movements, has for once found the path of reason.

Monsieur, this consideration has often consoled me, knowing M. Etienne de la Boetie, one of the fittest and most necessary men for high office in France, to have passed his whole life in obscurity, by his domestic hearth, to the great detriment of our common weal; for, so far as he was concerned, I tell you, Monseigneur, that he was so abundantly endowed with those treasures which defy fortune, that never was man more satisfied or content. I know well that he was raised to the local dignities, which are accounted considerable; and I know also, that no one ever brought to their discharge a better capacity; and that when he died at the age of thirty-two, he had acquired a reputation in that way beyond all who had preceded him.

But all that is no reason that a man should be left a common soldier who deserves to become a captain; nor that mean functions should be assigned to those who are perfectly equal to the highest. In truth, his powers were badly economized and too sparingly employed; insomuch that, over and above his work, there was abundant capacity lying idle, from which the public service might have drawn profit and himself glory.

Therefore, Monsieur, since he was so apathetic in pushing forward to the front (as virtue and ambition unfortunately seldom lodge together), and since he lived in an age so dull and so jealous, that he could be little succored by witnesses to his character, I have it marvellously at heart that his memory, at all events, to which I owe the good offices of a friend, should enjoy the recompense of his brave life, and that it should survive in the good report of persons of honor and virtue. On this account, I have been desirous to publish and present to you, Monsieur, such few Latin verses as he left behind. Different from the mason, who places the most attractive portion of his house

toward the street, and from the shopkeeper, who displays in his window the richest sample of his merchandise, that which was most recommendable in him, the juice and marrow of his genius, departed with him, and there have remained to us but the bark and the leaves.

Whoever could make visible the exactly regulated movements of his mind, his piety, his virtue, his justice, the vivacity of his spirit, the solidity and the sanity of his judgment, the loftiness of his conceptions, raised so far above the common level, his learning, the grace which accompanied his ordinary actions, the tender affection which he bore for his miserable country, and his capital and sworn detestation of all vice, but principally of that villainous traffic which disguises itself under the honorable title of Justice, would certainly impress all well-disposed persons with a singular affection toward him and a marvellous regret for his loss. But, Monsieur, I am the more unable to do justice to him, since of the fruit of his own studies he had never thought of leaving any proof to posterity; and there has remained to us only what he occasionally wrote by way of pastime.

However this may be, I beg you, Monsieur, to receive it with a good countenance, and as our judgment argues many times from lesser things to greater ones, and as even the recreations of illustrious men carry with them to the clear-sighted some honorable traits of their origin, I would have you ascend hence to some knowledge of himself, and love and cherish his name and his memory. In this, Monsieur, you will only reciprocate the high opinion which he had of your virtue, and realize what he infinitely desired in his lifetime; for there was no one in the world in whose acquaintance and friendship he would have so willingly seen himself established as in your own. But if any man is offended by the freedom which I use with the belongings of another, I apprise him that nothing was ever more precisely spoken in the schools of the philosophers respecting the law and duties of sacred friendship, than what this personage and myself have practiced together.

For the rest, Monsieur, this slender gift, to strike two blows with one stone, may likewise serve, if you please, to testify the honor and reverence which I entertain for your ability and singular qualities; for as to those gifts which are foreign and accidental, it is not to my taste to take them into account.

Monsieur, I pray God to grant you a very happy and long life. From Montaigne, this 30th of April 1570.—Your humble and obedient servant,

MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE.

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VII

To Monsieur, Monsieur De Foix, Privy Councillor, And Ambassador Of His Majesty To The Signory Of Venice.

Monsieur,—Being on the point of commending to you and to posterity the memory of the late Etienne de la Boetie, as well for his extreme virtue as for the singular affection which he bore to me, it struck my fancy as an indiscretion very serious in its results, and meriting some coercion from our laws, the practice which often prevails of robbing virtue of glory, its faithful associate, in order to confer it, in accordance with our private interests and without discrimination, on the first comer. Seeing that our two principal guiding reins are reward and punishment, which only touch us nearly, and as men, through the medium of honor and dishonor, forasmuch as these go straight to the soul, and come home to our innermost feelings and those most truly ours: just where mere animals are not at all susceptible to other kinds of recompense and corporal chastisement. Moreover, it is well to notice that the custom of praising virtue, even in those who are no longer with us, is impalpable to them, while it serves as a stimulant to the living to imitate them; just as capital sentences are carried out by the law, more for the sake of example to others, than in the interest of those who suffer. Now, commendation and its opposite being analogous as regards effects, it is hard to deny that our laws prohibit us from slandering the reputation of others, and nevertheless do prevent us from bestowing nobility without merit. This pernicious license in distributing praise broadcast was formerly checked in another direction; indeed, peradventure, it contributed to involve poesy in discredit among the wiser sort. However this may be, it cannot be concealed that the vice of falsehood is one very unbecoming in a man well-born, let them give it what guise they will.

As for that personage of whom I am speaking to you, Monsieur, he sends me far away indeed from this kind of language; for the danger is not, lest I should lend him anything, but that I might take something from him; and it is his ill-fortune that, while he has supplied me, so far as a man could, with most just and most obvious opportunities for commendation, I find myself unable and unqualified to render it to him—I say, do I, to whom alone he communicated to the life, and who alone can answer for a million of graces, perfections, and virtues, latent (thanks to the ingratitude of his fortune) in so noble a soul. For the nature of things having (I know not how) permitted that truth, fair and acceptable as it may be of itself, is only embraced where there are arts of persuasion to insinuate it into our minds, I see myself so wanting, both in authority to support my simple testimony, and in the eloquence requisite for lending it value and weight, that I was on the eve of relinquishing the task, having nothing of his which would enable me to exhibit to the world a proof of his genius and knowledge.

In truth, Monsieur, having been overtaken by his fate in the flower of his age, and in the full enjoyment of the most vigorous health, he had meditated nothing less than to publish works which would have demonstrated to posterity what sort of a man he was.

And peradventure he was indifferent enough to fame, having thought of the matter, to have no curiosity to proceed farther in it. But I have come to the conclusion, that it was far more excusable in him to bury with him all his rare endowments, than it would be on my part to bury also with me the knowledge of them which he had imparted to me. And, anyhow, having collected with care all that I found in a complete state here and there among his memorandum-books and papers, I have thought good to distribute them so as to recommend his memory to as many persons as possible, selecting the most suitable and worthy of my acquaintance, and those whose testimony might do him greatest honor. Such as you, Monsieur, who very possibly have yourself had some knowledge of him during his life, but assuredly too slight to discover the extent of his entire worth. Posterity will credit it, if it chooses; but I swear upon all that I own of conscience, that I knew and saw him to be such as, all things considered, I could neither desire nor imagine a genius surpassing his; and as he cannot have many associates, I beg you very humbly, Monsieur, not only to undertake the general protection of his name, but also these ten or twelve French verses, which cast themselves, as of necessity, under the shadow of your patronage. For I will not disguise from you that their publication was deferred, upon the appearance of his other writings, under the pretext that they were too crude to come to light. You will see, Monsieur, how much truth there is in this; and since it seems that this verdict touches the interest of all this part, whence it is thought that hereabout nothing can be produced in our own dialect but what is barbarous and unpolished. It falls to you, who, besides your rank as the first house in Guienne, handed down from your ancestors, possess every other sort of qualification, to establish, not merely by your example, but by your authoritative testimony, that such is not always the case: the more so that, though ’tis more natural with the Gascons to act than talk, yet sometimes they employ the tongue more than the arm, and wit in place of valor.

For my own part, Monsieur, it is not my game to judge of such matters; but I have heard persons who are supposed to understand them, say that these stanzas are not only worthy to be offered in the market, but, independently of that, as regards beauty and wealth of invention, they are as full of marrow and matter as any compositions of the kind which have appeared in our language. Naturally each workman feels himself more strong in some special part of his art, and those are to be regarded as most fortunate who lay hands on the noblest, for all the parts essential to the construction of any whole are not equally prizable. Delicacy of phrase, softness and harmony of language, are found perchance in others; but in imaginative grace, and in the store of pointed wit, I do not think he has been surpassed; and we should take into the account that he made these things neither his occupation nor his study, and that he scarcely took a pen in his hand more than once a year, witness the little that we have of his whole life. For you see here, Monsieur, green wood and dry, without any sort of selection, all that has come into my possession; insomuch that there are among the rest efforts even of his boyhood. In point of fact, he seems to have written them merely to show that he was capable of dealing with all subjects: for otherwise, thousands of times, in the course of ordinary conversation, we have seen things proceed from him infinitely more worthy of being known, infinitely more worthy of being admired.

Behold, Monsieur, what justice and affection, forming a rare conjunction, oblige me to say of this great and good man; and if I have offended by the familiarity in detaining you at such a length, you will recollect, if you please, that the principal result of greatness and eminence is to lay one open to importunate appeals on behalf of the rest of the world. Hereupon, after having presented to you my very humble devotion to your service, I beseech God to give you, Monsieur, a very happy and prolonged life. From Montaigne, this 1st of September 1570.—Your obedient servant,

MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE.

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VIII

To Mademoiselle, Mademoiselle De Montaigne, My Wife.

My wife,—You understand well that it is not the part of a man of the world, according to the rules of this time, still to court and caress you; for they say that a sensible man may well take a wife, but that to espouse her is to act like a fool. Let them talk; I adhere for my part to the custom of the elder age; I also wear my hair in that fashion. And, in truth, novelty costs this poor State to this moment so dear (and I do not know whether we are yet at the height), that everywhere and in everything I forsake the mode. Let us live, my wife, you and I, in the old French method. Now, you may recollect how the late M. de la Boetie, that dear brother and inseparable companion of mine, gave me, at his death, all his papers and books, which have remained ever since the most favorite part of my effects. I do not wish to keep them niggardly to myself alone, nor do I deserve to have the exclusive use of them. On this account I have formed a desire to communicate them to my friends; and because I have none, I believe, more intimate than you, I send you the Consolatory Letter of Plutarch to his Wife, translated by him into French; very sorry that fortune has made you so suitable a present, and that, having had no child save a daughter, long looked for, after four years of our married life, it was our lot to lose her in the second year of her age. But I leave to Plutarch the charge of comforting you, and acquainting you with your duty herein, praying you to trust him for my sake; for he will reveal to you my purposes, and will state them far better than I should myself. Hereupon, my wife, I commend myself very heartily to your good-will, and pray God that He will have you in His keeping. From Paris, this 10th September 1570.—Your good husband,

MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE.

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IX

To Madame De Grammont, Comtesse De Guissen.

(With twenty-nine sonnets of Monsieur De la Boetie.)

Madam,—I offer to your ladyship nothing of mine, either because it is already yours, or because I find nothing in my writings worthy of you: but I have a great desire that these verses, into what part of the world soever they may travel, may carry your name in the front, for the honor will accrue to them by having the great Corisande d' Andoins for their safe-conduct. I conceive this present, madam, so much the more proper for you, both by reason there are few ladies in France who are so good judges of poetry, and make so good use of it as you do; as also, that there is none who can give it the spirit and life that you can, by that rich and incomparable voice nature has added to your other perfections. You will find, madam, that these verses deserve your esteem, and will agree with me in this, that Gascony never yielded more invention, finer expression, or that more evidence themselves to flow from a masterhand. And be not jealous, that you have but the remainder of what I published some years since under the patronage of Monsieur de Foix, your worthy kinsman; for, certainly, these have something in them more sprightly and luxuriant, as being written in a greener youth, and inflamed with a noble ardor that one of these days I will tell you, madam, in your ear. The others were written later, when he was a suitor for marriage, and in honor of his wife, and, already relishing of I know not what matrimonial coldness. And for my part, I am of the same opinion with those who hold that poesy appears nowhere so gay as in a wanton and irregular subject.

(1580.)

(MONTAIGNE.)

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X

To The Jurats Of Bordeaux.

Messieurs,—I trust that the journey of Monsieur de Cursol will bring some advantage to the town, having in hand a case so just and so favorable; you did all in your power to put the business which was before you in good order. Matters being in so good a train, I beg you to excuse my absence for some time, inasmuch as I shall hasten to you so far as the pressure of my affairs will permit. I hope that this (the delay) will be slight; however, you will keep me, if you please, in your good grace, and will command me, if the occasion shall arise of employing me for the public service. And your Monsieur de Cursol has also written to me and apprised me of his journey. I humbly commend myself to you, and pray God, Messieurs, to grant you long and happy life. From Montaigne, this 25th of May 1582. Your humble brother and servant,

MONTAIGNE.

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XI

To Monseigneur, Monseigneur De Nantouillet, Councillor To The King.

Monseigneur,—You desire to know from me how the King should hold the three reins by which absolute power is regulated. This is my view. And in the first place, touching the three reins, of which I have already spoken to you in my preceding missive, whereby the absolute power of the prince and monarch, which is called tyrannical when it is used contrary to reason, is curbed and reduced to moderation, and so is reputed just, tolerable, and aristocratic. I say once again that the King can do nothing more agreeable, more pleasant, and more profitable to his subjects, nor more honorable and more praiseworthy to himself, than to observe the three things by virtue of which he acquires the name of good and most Christian King, father of the people, and well-beloved, and all other titles which a brave and glorious prince can obtain. This is my mind and advice. Therefore, I pray God, Monseigneur, to give you in good health good and long life, The 22nd of November 1582. Your servant,

MONTAIGNE.

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XII

To Henry III.

Sire,—By information which I have had in this place of Moncornet, it seems that fortune is suffering to release you from the promise which your goodness and liberality made me a few days since. For I found in the hands of M. Pinard a letter herewith enclosed, whereby it is notified that the Priory of Provins is vacant by the death of Monseigneur Maurice de Commerces, and may be worth from a thousand to twelve hundred livres, as the writer says. It is in the Loudonnois, and in the nomination of your Majesty, who will not make a Prior of me, if you give it me, so much as the place will be to me a dukedom or countship, which will be perpetually stocked with big and good capons, whenever you chose to have them, as well as quails. I do not offer here to interfere with the resolution which your Majesty has formed for the distribution of your bounty, for he who has waited five-and-twenty years on his superiors can wait two months more, or even a year, for folks of smaller account; and that my letter may not be longer than myself, and may not be importunate to you, I will conclude by praying your Majesty to disregard that hardihood and presumption of writing to you on the exigency which threatens as well those of low as of high estate. I supplicate God with all my heart that He will be pleased to advance your welfare much and more while you are King of France. From Moncornet, the 7th of July 1583. Your very humble servant and subject,

MONTAIGNE.

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XIII

Memorial Of Montaigne, Mayor Of Bordeaux, And Of His Jurats, Addressed To The King Of Navarre, On Different Subjects Interesting That Same Town.

10 December 1583

It is so that MM. de Montaigne, mayor, and De Lurbe, syndic precureur of the town of Bordeaux, are charged and commissioned to make a representation to the King of Navarre, Lieutenant-General of the King in the country and duchy of Guienne, for the service of his Majesty and relief of his subjects.

They will represent to the said Lord King of Navarre that the provinces and towns cannot be maintained and preserved in their present state without freedom of trade, which by the unimpeded intercourse of one with the other produces abundance of all things, and by that means the husband by the sale of his produce feeds and supports his family, the shopkeeper trafficks in goods, and the citizen finds a price for his labor—the whole in aid of the public expenditure; and inasmuch as the chief commerce of this town is carried on with the inhabitants of Toulouse and other places situated on the Garonne, as well for the matter of grain, wines, pastels, fish, as for woolen goods, and that the said Mayor and Jurats have been informed by a common report that those of Mas de Verdun are resolved, under pretext of failure of the payment of the garrison of the cautionary towns, named by the edict of pacification, to stop the boats laden with merchandise both ascending and descending the said river Garonne, which will tend to the total ruin of this country, the said Lord King of Navarre shall be supplicated not to permit the arrest of the said boats and goods either at said Mas de Verdum or other towns under his government, so as to keep and maintain freedom of commerce among all, according to the edicts of the King.

Done at Bordeaux in the Jurat Hall the 10th of December 1583.

MONTAIGNE.

DALESME.	GALOPIN.
PIERRE REYNIER.	FANEAU.
FETAYERS.	DELURBE.

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XIV

To The Marechal De Matignon.

Monseigneur,—Those in this quarter who went away to join the King of Navarre have returned two days since. I have not seen them; but they report nothing but the inclination to peace, pursuant to what I wrote to you, and have no other news save a general assembly of ministers which meets on Monday at Saint Foy. If a great and extraordinary company of different sorts of people and of both sexes come here to-morrow, as I expect, I will communicate to you what I hear, and very humbly kiss your hands, supplicating God, Monseigneur, to give you long and happy life. From Montaigne, this 21st of January 1584. Your humble servant,

MONTAIGNE.

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XV

To The Same.

Monseigneur,—I see nothing here meriting your attention; nevertheless, considering the favor which you do me, and the confidential access which you grant me, I venture to send this to apprise you of my health, which has been improved by change of air. I returned here after a transaction sufficiently prolonged. I found near here that some people of standing of the reformation of Saint Foy had killed a poor tailor with fifty or sixty strokes with scissors for no other reason than to take from him twenty sous and a cloak worth twice that sum.

I very humbly kiss your hands, and supplicate God to give you, Monseigneur, very happy and long life. From Montaigne, this 10th of April 1584. Your very humble servant,

MONTAIGNE.

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XVI

To Monsieur, Monsieur Dupuy, The King'S Councillor In His Court And Parliament Of Paris, At Xaintes.

Monsieur,—The action of the Sieur de Verres, a prisoner, who is very well known to me, deserves that you should bring to bear in his judgment your natural clemency, if, in the public interest, you are able to do so. He has done a thing not only excusable, according to the military laws of this age, but necessary and (as we are living) commendable. He committed the act, without doubt, unwillingly and under pressure; the rest of his course of life is irreproachable. I beseech you, Monsieur, to devote your attention to this; you will find the nature of this fact as I represent it to you. He is persecuted on this crime in a way which is far worse than the offence itself. If it is likely to be of use to you, I desire to inform you that he is a man brought up in my house, related to several respectable families, and above all, who has always led an honorable life, (and that he) is my particular friend. By saving him you lay me under an extreme obligation. I beg you very humbly to regard him as recommended by me, and, after kissing your hands, I pray God, Monsieur, to give you a long and happy life. From Castera, this 23rd of April (1584?). Your affectionate servant,

MONTAIGNE.

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XVII

To MM, The Jurats Of The Town Of Bordeaux.

Messieurs,—I received your letter, and will come to see you as soon as possible. All that court of Saint Foy is on my hands, and have arranged to come and see me. That done, I shall be (more) at liberty. I send you the letter of M. de Vallees, from which you will be able to judge that my presence would only involve embarrassment and uncertainty as to my choice and opinion in that matter.

Hereupon I recommend myself humbly to your good (grace), and supplicate God to give you, Messieurs, long and happy life. From Montaigne, this 10th of December 1584. Your humble brother and servant,

MONTAIGNE.

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XVIII

To The Marechal De Matignon.

Monseigneur,—By reason of several communications which M. de Bissonze (Vicoze) has made to me on the part of M. de la Turenne, of the opinion which he has of you, and of the confidence which that prince has in my views; moreover, since I place scarcely any confidence in Court gossip, I formed the plan after dinner of writing to M. De Turenne; that I bade him farewell by letter; that I had received the letter of the King of Navarre, who seemed to me to take good counsel in relying on your affectionate offer of service; that I had written to Mme. de Guissen to make use of the opportunity for employing her vessel, to what purpose I should engage myself toward you, and that I had advised her not to commit to her passions the interest and fortune of that prince, and since she had full power over him, to study his advantage rather than his private amours; that you spoke of going to Bayonne, whither perhaps I might offer to follow you, if I judged that my assistance would be of the slightest value; that if you went thither, the King of Navarre, knowing you to be so near, would do well to invite you to see his fine garden at Pau. This is the substance of my letter without further detail. I send you the answer to it, which has been brought to me this evening, and, if I am not mistaken, there will soon rise trouble, and it seems to me that this letter already breathes an air of discontent and apprehension. Whateve he says, I keep them where they go, for more than two months, and then we shall see a different sort of tone. I beg you to return me this with the other two; the bearer has only to study the despatch of your business.

From Montaigne, the 18th of January, 1585.

MONTAIGNE.

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XIX

To The Same.

Monseigneur,—I have heard nothing since, beyond that I have seen many folks of that retinue hereabout. I judge that all is evacuated, unless M. du Ferrier remains to receive the guarantees. If you like to see a letter which the Sieur du Plessis wrote me since, you will find in it that the reconciliation was perfectly complete and full of good understanding; and I believe that the master will have communicated to him more fully than to others, knowing that he is of that way of thinking, as is likewise M. de Clervan, who saw you since. If I am to accompany you to Bayonne, I desire you to adhere to your determination to stay in Lent, in order that I may take the waters at the same time. Meanwhile, I have learned that nothing is so distasteful to the husband than to see that one is on good terms with the wife. I have had news that the Jurats have come to their good behavior, and very humbly kiss your hands, supplicating God to give you, Monseigneur, long and happy life. From Montaigne, the 26th of January 1585. Your very humble servant,

MONTAIGNE.

(Postscriptum.)—Monseigneur, you do me a great favor in receiving amicably the affection which I show to your service, and you may be sure that you have not gained in Guyenne any one more purely and sincerely yours but it is little gain. When you quit a position, it ought not to be, when they can boast of having deprived you of it.

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XX

To The Same.

Monseigneur,—The man by whom I wrote last, and sent a letter of M. du Plessis, has not yet returned. Since, they report to me from Fleix, that MM. du Ferrier and la Marseliere are still at S. Foi, and that the King of Navarre has just sent to demand some residue of equipments and hunting gear that he had here, and (to say) that his stay in Bearn will be longer than he thought. According to some fresh instructions of M. de Roquelaure, and favorable ones, he will go toward Bayonne and Daqs (Dax) to show them that the King took in very good part the entry which was made there. That is what I am told. The rest of the country remains in quiet, and nothing is stirring. Whereupon I very humbly kiss your hands, and supplicate God to give you, Monseigneur, long and happy life. From Montaigne, this 2nd of February 1585. Your very humble servant.

MONTAIGNE.

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XXI

To The Jurats Of Bordeaux.

Messieurs,—I have largely shared the satisfaction which you assure me that you feel with the good progress which has been made by Messieurs your Deputies, and treat it as a good augury that you have made a fortunate commencement of this year, hoping to join you at the earliest convenience. I recommend myself very humbly to your good grace, and pray God to give you, Messieurs, happy and long life. From Montaigne, this 8th February 1585. Your humble brother and servant,

MONTAIGNE.

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XXII

To The Marechal De Matignon.

Monseigneur,—I hope that the stone which troubled you when last you wrote has passed, as has another which I evacuated at the same time.

If the Jurats arrived on the day on which they were expected at Bordeaux, and came to the place of attendance, they will have been able to bring you fresh news from the Court. They are circulating here a rumor that Ferrand has been taken, at three leagues from Nerac, on his way to the Court, and brought back to Pau; also, that the Huguenots nearly surprised Taillebourg and Tallemont at the same time, and some other plans for Dax and Bayonne. On Tuesday, a troop of bohemians, which has been prowling hereabout a long time, having purchased the favor and aid of a gentleman of the country named Le Borgue la Siguinie to assist them in getting redress from another troop beyond the water in the territory of Gensac, which belongs to the King of Navarre: the said La Siguinie having assembled twenty or thirty of his friends, under pretence of going duck-shooting with arquebuses, with two or three of the said bohemians on this side the river, charged those on the other side, and killed one of them. The authorities of Gensac, advised hereof, raised an armed force, and attacked the assailants, and took four, one gentleman and three others, killed one, and wounded three or four others. The rest retired to this side, and of those of Gensac there are two or three mortally wounded. The skirmish lasted a long time, and was very hot. The matter is open to settlement, as both sides are to blame. If the Sieur de la Rocque, who is very much one of my friends, must fight with Cabanac du Puch, I wish and advise him to do so at a distance from you. Whereupon I very humbly kiss your hands, and supplicate God to grant you, Monseigneur, long and happy life. From Montaigne, this 9th of February 1585. Your very humble servant,

MONTAIGNE.

(Postscriptum.)—Monseigneur, my letter was closed when I received yours of the 6th and that of M. Villeroy, which you have been pleased to send me (by a man whom the Corps of the town has sent), of the fortunate expedition of their deputies. Le Sieur de la Motte sends to me to say that he has things to tell me which he cannot write, and I send word to him that, if need be, he shall come in search of me here, to which I have no reply. But as to the command which you are so good as to give, that I shall come to you, I very humbly beg you to believe that there is nothing which I face more willingly, and that I will never throw myself back into solitude, or withdraw so much from public affairs, but that there remains a singular devotion to your service and an affection of being where you are. At this moment, I am booted to go to Fleix, where the good President Ferrier and Le Sieur de la Marseliere are to be to-morrow, with the intention of coming here the day after to-morrow or Tuesday. I hope to go and kiss your hands one day next week, or to let you know if there is a reasonable ground for preventing me. I have received no news from Bearne; but Poiferre, who has been at

Bordeaux, wrote to me, and according to what I am told, gave the letter to a man, from whom I have not yet received it. I am vexed about it.

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XXIII

To The Same.

Monseigneur,—I have just arrived from Fleix. La Marseliere was there, and others of that committee. They say that, since the accident to Ferrand, and for that reason, Frontinac has come to Nerac, to whom the Queen of Navarre says that, if she had thought the King her husband so curious, she would have passed through his hands all the despatches, and what was in the letter which she wrote to the Queen her mother, where she speaks of returning to France: that it is in the way of asking advice and considering, but not as a course on which she has resolved, and that she puts it in question on account of the slight store they so evidently set by her, that every one sees it and knows it well enough. And Frontinac says that what the King of Navarre has done was due to his fear imbibed from them, that Ferrand carried papers which affected his State and public affairs. They say that the chief effect is that several letters of the young ladies of that Court to their friends in France—I say the letters which were saved, for they say that, when Ferrand was taken, he found means to throw certain documents into the fire, which were consumed, before they could be rescued—these letters which survive afford matter for laughter. I saw, in repassing, M. Ferrier ill at Sainte-Foy, who made up his mind to come and see me one day this week. Others will be there this evening. I doubt whether he will come, and it seems to me, considering his age, that I left him in a bad state. Nevertheless I shall wait for him, unless you command me to the contrary, (and) shall on that account defer my journey to you till the commencement of next week.

Kissing your hands very humbly hereupon, and praying God, Monseigneur, to give you long and happy life. From Montaigne, this 12th of February 1585.—Your very humble servant,

MONTAIGNE.

(Postscriptum.)—The said Ferrand had a thousand ecus on him, they say; for all this information is hardly sure.

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XXIV

To The Same.

Monseigneur,—M. du Ferrier has just written to me, that the King of Navarre is to arrive at Montauban. They are hereabouts in fear of some troopers, who, they say, are quartered on the other side of the river near Bazadois. If I know the news before this is closed up, I will apprise you, and will go there to-night. It may be the forces of the King of Navarre which are mustering to make a demonstration, of which I have hereabout men at arms who are on their way to join the movement. You will see what rumors are afloat in these quarters from what the Marquis de Trans wrote to me. I saw the letter of Poiferre; there was nothing in it, except that he had to speak to me about the ladies, a thing which it was necessary that I should know, but which he could not write, nor delay his departure.

Whereupon, hoping soon to have the opportunity of kissing your hands, I supplicate God to give you, Monseigneur, long and happy life. From Montaigne, this 13th of February 1585.—Your very humble servant,

MONTAIGNE.

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XXV

To The Same.

Monseigneur,—I have just this Sunday morning received your two letters, whereupon I should forthwith mount horse, if it were not that the President Eimar, who left here yesterday, carries mine, which I keep till this evening, with the hope of setting out to-morrow in search of you, and being prevented at this moment by the floods, which have overflowed the roads between this and Bordeaux a day's journey. I shall sleep at Fraubenet near the port of Tourne to meet you if you leave, however, and shall arrive on Tuesday morning at Podensac, to hear what you shall be pleased to command me. If by the present bearer you do not change the appointment, I shall go in quest of you on Tuesday at Bordeaux, crossing the water only at Bastide. The news which I have received of the 11th from Pau, that the King of Navarre was going a few days after to Boucau de Bayonne, thence to Nerac, from Nerac to Bragerac, and afterward into Saintonge. Madame de Grammont was still very ill. Whereupon I very humbly kiss your hands, and supplicate God to give you, Monseigneur, very happy and long life.

(?Montaigne, second half of February 1585).—Your very humble servant,

MONTAIGNE.

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XXVI

To The Same.

Monseigneur,—I received this morning your letter, which I have communicated to M. de Gourgues, and we have dined together at the house of M. (the mayor) of Bordeaux. As to the inconvenience of transporting the money named in your memorandum, you see how difficult a thing it is to provide for; but you may be sure that we shall keep as close a watch over it as possible. I used every exertion to discover the man of whom you spoke. He has not been here; and M. de Bordeaux has shown me a letter in which he mentions that he could not come to see the said Sieur of Bordeaux, as he intended, having been informed that you mistrust him. The letter is of the day before yesterday. If I could have found him, I might perhaps have pursued the gentler course, being uncertain of your resolution; but I entreat you nevertheless feel no manner of fear that I refuse to carry out anything to which you have made up your mind, and that, where your commands are concerned, I know no distinction of business or person. I hope that you have in Guienne many as well affected to you as I am. They report that the Nantes galleys are advancing toward Brouage. M. le Marechal de Biron has not yet left. Those who were charged to convey the message to M. d'Usa say that they cannot find him; and I believe that he is no longer here, if he has been. We keep a vigilant eye on our posts and guard, and we look after them a little more attentively in your absence, which makes me apprehensive, not merely on account of the preservation of the town, but likewise for our own sakes, knowing that the enemies of the service of the king feel how necessary you are to it, and how ill all would go without you. I am afraid that, in the part where you are, you will be overtaken by so many affairs requiring your attention on every side, that it will take you a long time and involve great difficulty before you have disposed of everything. If there supervenes any new and important occasion, I will despatch an express at once, and you may estimate that nothing is stirring if you do not hear from me: begging you also to consider that such sort of movements are wont to be so sudden and unexpected that, if they occur, they will grasp me by the throat before they say a word. I will do what I can to collect news, and for this purpose I will make a point of visiting and seeing all sorts of men. Down to the present time nothing is stirring. M. du Londel saw me this morning, and we have been arranging for some advances for the place, where I shall go to-morrow morning. Since I began this letter, I have learned from Chartreux that two gentlemen, who describe themselves as in the service of M. de Guise, and who come from Agen, have passed near that town (Chartreux); but I was not able to ascertain which road they have taken. They are expecting you at Agen. The Sieur de Mauvezin came as far as Canteloup, and thence returned, having got some intelligence. I am in search of one Captain Roux, to whom Masparante wrote, trying to draw him into his cause by all sorts of promises. The news of the two Nantes galleys ready to descend on Brouage with two companies of foot is certain. M. de Mercure is in the town of Nantes. The Sieur de la Courbe said to M. le President Nesmond that M. d'Elbeuf is on this side of Angers, and lodges with his father, drawing toward Lower Poitou with 4000 foot and 400 or 500 horse, having been reinforced by the troops of M. de Brissac and others;

and M. de Mercure is to join him. The report runs also that M. du Maine is about to take command of all the forces they have collected in Auvergne, and that by the district of Forez he will advance on Rouergue and us, that is to say, on the King of Navarre, against whom all this is being directed. M. de Lansac is at Bourg, and has two warvessels which remain in attendance on him. His functions are naval. I tell you what I learn, and mix up together the hearsay of the town, which I do not find probable, with actual matter of fact, that you may be in possession of everything—begging you most humbly to return directly affairs may allow you to do so, and assuring you that meanwhile we shall not spare our labor, or, if that were necessary, our life, to maintain everything in the king's authority. Monseigneur, I kiss your hands very respectfully, and pray God to have you in His Keeping. From Bordeaux, this Wednesday night, 22nd May 1585. Your very humble servant,

MONTAIGNE.

I have seen no one from the King of Navarre; they say that M. de Biron has seen him.

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XXVII

To The Same.

Monseigneur,—I have written to you these passed days very fully. I send you two letters which I received for you by a servant of M. de Rouillac. The neighborhood of M. de Vaillac fills me with alarms, and there is not a day that I have not fifty very pressing grounds for such. We most humbly beg you to come here, as soon as your affairs will permit you. I have passed every night either in the tower under arms or outside on the port; and, previously to your advices, I had already been on the watch there upon the intelligence of a boat freighted with armed men, which was to pass. We have seen nothing of it; and the evening before yesterday we were there till after midnight, where M. de Gourgues was; but nothing came. I made use of Le Capitaine Saintes having need of our soldiers. Massip and he manned the three customs' boats. As for the town-guard, I hope you will find it in the state in which you left it. I send this morning two Jurats to apprise the Court of Parliament of the so many reports which are current, and of the evidently suspicious men, whom we know to be here. Whereupon, hoping that you may be here tomorrow at latest, I very humbly kiss your hands. From Bordeaux, the 27th May 1585.

MONTAIGNE.

(Postscriptum.)—There is not a day that I have not been at the Chateau Trompette. You will find the platform completed. I see the Archbishop daily.

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XXVIII

To The Jurats Of Bordeaux.

Messieurs,—I have found here news of you transmitted through M. le Marechal. I will not spare either my life or anything else for your service, and will leave it to you to judge whether what I may do for you at the forthcoming election is worth the risk of going into the town, seeing the bad state it is in, particularly for people coming away from so fine an air as I do. I will draw as near to you on Wednesday as I can, that is, to Feuillas, if the malady has not reached that place, where, as I wrote to M. de la Motte, I shall be very pleased to have the honor of seeing one of you to take your directions, and relieve myself of the credentials, which M. le Marechal will give me for you all: commending myself hereupon humbly to your good graces, and praying God to grant you, Messieurs, long and happy life. From Libourne, the 30th July 1585. Your humble servant and brother,

MONTAIGNE.

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XXIX

To The Same.

Messieurs,—I communicated to M. le Marechal the letter which you sent me, and what the bearer said that he was charged by you to let me know, and he has begged me to request you to send him the drum which was at Bourg on your behalf. He also said to me that he prays you to send forward to him at once Captains Saint-Aulaye and Mathelin, and to collect as large a number of mariners and seamen as can be found. As to the bad example and the injustice of taking women and children prisoners, I am by no means of opinion that we should imitate the conduct of others, which I have equally mentioned to the said Monsieur le Marechal, who has charged me to write to you hereupon to do nothing till you have fuller information. Whereupon I recommend myself right humbly to your good graces, and pray God to grant you, Messieurs, long and happy life. From Feuillas, the 31st July 1585. Your humble brother and servant,

MONTAIGNE.

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XXX

To The Marechal De Matignon.

Monseigneur,—You have heard of our baggage being taken from us under our eyes in the forest of Villebois: then, after a good deal of discussion and delay, of the capture being pronounced illegal by the Prince. We dared not, however, proceed on our way, from an uncertainty as to the safety of our persons, which should have been clearly expressed on our passports. The League has done this through M. de Barraut and M. de la Rochefocaut; the storm has burst on me, who had my money in my box. I have recovered none of it, and most of my papers and clothes remain in their possession. We have not seen the Prince. We have lost fifty ecus for the Comte de Thorigny, some silver plate and a few articles of clothing. He diverged from his route to pay a visit to the mourning ladies at Montresor, where are the remains of his two brothers and grandmother, and came to us again in this town, whence we start shortly. The journey to Normandy is relinquished. The King has despatched MM. de Bellieure and de la Guiche to M. de Guise to summon him to court; we shall be there on Thursday.

From Orleans, this 16th of February, in the morning (1588).—Your very humble servant,

MONTAIGNE.

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XXXI

To The Same.

Monseigneur,—Mademoiselle de Mauriac is arranging to conclude the marriage of the Sieur de Mauriac, her son, with one of the sisters of M. d'Aubeterre. The matter is so far advanced, they tell me, that nothing remains to be done but the presence of Mlle. de Brigneus, her eldest daughter, who is at Lectour with her husband. She begs you very humbly to grant her a passport for her said daughter and her little party to come to Mauriac, and as her kinsman, and having the honor to be known to you, she desired me to make you the request, and has sent me a letter, which she says is written by M. d'Aubeterre—I believe to the same purport. I do so very humbly and affectionately, if it is not a thing which is displeasing or troublesome in your eyes. Otherwise this will at least serve to bring me back to your remembrance, from which I may have been dislodged through my slight merit and the long space of time since I had the honor of seeing you. From Montaigne, this 12th of June (1587?). I am, Monseigneur, your very humble servant,

MONTAIGNE.

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XXXII

To Mademoiselle Paulmier.

Mademoiselle,—My friends know that, from the first moment of our acquaintance, I have destined a copy of my book for you; for I feel that you have done it much honor. But the courtesy of M. Paulmier deprives me of the pleasure of giving it to you, for he has obliged me since a great deal beyond the worth of my book. You will accept it then, if you please, as having been yours before I owed it to you, and will confer on me the favor of loving it, whether for its own sake or for mine; and I will keep my debt to M. Paulmier undischarged, that I may requite him, if I have at some other time the means of serving him.

(?1588.)

(No Signature.)

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XXXIII

To Henry IV.

Sire,—It is to be above the weight and crowd of your great and important affairs to know how to lend yourself and attend to small matters in their turn, according to the duty of your royal authority, which exposes you at all times to every description and degree of men and employments. Yet, that your Majesty deigned to consider my letter and direct, a reply, I prefer to owe to your benignity rather than your vigor of mind. I have always looked forward to that same fortune in you which you now enjoy, and you may recollect that even when I could only make avowal of it to my heart, I did not omit to view with goodwill your successes. Now, with the greater reason and freedom I embrace them with full affection. They serve you there in effect; but they serve you here no less by reputation: the echo carries as much weight as the blow. We should not be able to derive from the justice of your case such powerful arguments for the maintenance and reduction of your subjects, as we do from the reports of the success of your undertakings; and I can assure your Majesty, that the recent changes to your advantage, which you observe hereabouts, the prosperous issue at Dieppe, have opportunely seconded the honest zeal and marvellous prudence of M. le Marechal de Matignon, from whom I flatter myself that you do not daily receive accounts of such good and signal services without remembering my assurances and expectations. I look to this coming summer, not only for fruits to nourish us, but for those of our common tranquillity, and that it will pass over our heads with the same even tenor of happiness, dissipating, like its predecessors, all the fine promises with which your adversaries sustain the spirits of their followers. The popular inclinations resemble a tidal wave; if the current once commences in your favor, it will go on of its own force to the end. I could have desired much that the private gain of the soldiers of your army, and the necessity for satisfying them, had not deprived you, especially in this principal town, of the glorious credit of treating your mutinous subjects, in the midst of victory, with greater clemency than their own protectors, and that, as distinguished from a passing and usurped repute, you could have shown them to be really your own, by the exercise of a paternal and truly royal protection. In the conduct of such affairs as you have in hand, men are obliged to have recourse to uncommon expedients. If it is always seen that where conquests by their magnitude and difficulty are not to be carried out by arms and force, the end has been accomplished by clemency and generosity, excellent lures to draw men particularly toward the just and legitimate side. If there is to be severity and punishment, they must be foregone, when the mastery has been won. A great conqueror of the passed time boasts that he gave his enemies as great an inducement to love him as his friends. And here we feel already some effect of good augury in the impression upon your rebellious towns by the comparison of their rough treatment with that of those which are under your obedience. Desiring your Majesty a happiness more tangible and less hazardous, and that you may be beloved rather than feared by your people, and holding your welfare and theirs to be of necessity attached together, I rejoice to think

that the progress which you make toward victory is also one toward more practical conditions of peace.

Sire, your letter of the last of November came to my hand only just now, when the time which it pleased you to name for meeting you at Tours had already passed. I take it as a singular favor that you should have deigned to desire to see me, so useless a person, but yours more by affection than from duty. You have acted very commendably in adapting yourself, in the matter of external forms, to the height of your new fortune; but your debonnaireness and affability of your intimate relations you are equally praiseworthy in not changing. You have been pleased to take thought not only for my age, but for the desire which I have to see you, where you may be at rest from these laborious agitations. Will not that be soon at Paris, Sire? and may nothing prevent me from presenting myself there! From Montaigne, the 18th of January 1590. Your very humble and very obedient servant and subject,

MONTAIGNE.

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XXXIV

To — —

Monsieur,—I address you this writing, seeing that the time and necessity enjoin it, assuring you that I recognize the honesty of what you say, better than I (appear to) know how to do at this moment. Now, in the uncertain condition of our finances, I have taken the opportunity to show the care and attachment which I know to be due to you these long years for good and loyal services. Indeed, I so much wish to prove this to you that herewith is the title, of which M. Etienne will provide for the discharge, as soon as I shall present it to him. That is what I beg to be accorded to me as a testimony of your good friendship, and as a thing most acceptable to me. . . . Hereupon I pray God to give you long and happy life. X. of Ma(rch or May), 1590.

MONTAIGNE.

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XXXV

To Henry IV.

Sire,—That which it pleased your Majesty to write to me on the 20th of July was not delivered to me till this morning, and found me laid up with a very violent tertian ague, a complaint epidemic in this part of the country during the last month. Sire, I consider myself greatly honored by the receipt of your commands, and I have not omitted to communicate to M. le Marechal de Matignon three times most emphatically my intention and obligation to proceed in search of him, and even so far as to indicate the route by which I might safely join him, if he thought proper; whereto having received no answer, I consider that he has weighed the length and risk of the journey to me. Sire, your Majesty will do me the favor to believe, if you please, that I shall never complain of the expense on occasions where I should not hesitate to devote my life. I have never derived any substantial benefit whatever from the bounty of kings any more than I have solicited or deserved such; nor have I had any recompense for the services which I have performed for them: whereof your Majesty is in part aware. What I have done for your predecessors I shall do still more readily for you. I am as rich, Sire, as I desire to be. When I shall have exhausted my purse in attendance on your Majesty at Paris, I will take the liberty to tell you, and then, if you should regard me worthy of being retained any longer in your suite, you shall have me at a cheaper rate than the humblest of your officers.

Sire, I pray God for your prosperity and health. From Montaigne, this 2nd of September (1590). Your very humble and very obedient servant and subject,

MONTAIGNE.

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NOTES

VOLUME I

Page 69 Florio's version begins thus: "The most vsuall waie to appease those minds wee have offended when revenge lies in their hands, and that we stand at their mercie, is by submission to move them to commiseration and pity; Nevertheless, courage, constancie, and resolution (means altogether opposite) have sometimes wrought the same effect." I do not pretend to follow the text of Florio, which is grossly inaccurate and illiterate; I merely furnish a few comparative extracts.

Page 79 This turn of sentiment is noticed elsewhere; and compare Shakespeare, Merchant of Venice.

> "BASS. Antonio I am married to a wife,
> Which is as dear to me as life itself;
> But life itself, my wife, and all the world,
> Are not with me esteem'd above thy life;
> I would lose all—ay, sacrifice them all
> Here to this devil, to deliver you."

Page 83 A surprise of unexpected joy does likewise often produce the same effect:—

"When she beheld me advancing, and saw, with stupefaction, the Trojan arms around me, terrified with so great a prodigy, she fainted away at the very sight: vital warmth forsook her limbs: she sinks down, and, after a long interval, with difficulty speaks."

Aeneid.

Page 179 This essay may be advantageously compared with passages in Hamlet, and Measure for Measure.

Page 186 This was in virtue of an ordinance of Charles IX in 1563. Previously the year commenced at Easter, so that the 1st of January 1563 became the first day of the year 1564.

Page 187 Montaigne speaks of him as if he had been a contemporary neighbor, perhaps because he was Archbishop of Bordeaux. Bertrand le Goth was Pope under the title of Clement V., 1305-14.

Page 195 Montaigne, when he went to Italy, carried his Essays with him, probably for the sake of making additions or corrections, as they occurred to his mind; but in his shorter absences from home he seems to have used tablets for current memoranda, as his English contemporaries did. These tablets are mentioned by Shakespeare in Hamlet.

Page 206 Compare Shakespeare, Hamlet.

“Ham. Denmark’s a prison.

“Ros. Then is the world one.

“Ham. A goodly one: in which there are many confines, wards, and dungeons, Denmark being one of the worst.

“Ros. We think not so, my lord.

“Ham. Why, then, it’s none to you; for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so.”

“Your grandsires saw no other things, nor will your nephews.”

Page 229 The Emperor Claudius, who, however, according to Seutonius, only intended to authorise this singular privilege by an edict.

Page 240 Let us take Florio’s rendering of this curious passage: “My opinion is, that he conveied aright of the force of custome, that first invented this tale, how a countrey-woman, having enured herselfe to cherish and beare a young calfe in her armes, which continuing, shee got such a custome, that when he grew to be a great oxe, shee carried him still in her arms.”

Page 242 Compare Shakespeare, Merchant of Venice.

> “Lor. . . . . Look how the floor of heaven
> Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold,
> There’s not the smallest orb which thou beholdest,
> But in his motion like an angel sings,
> Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubims.”

QUOTATIONS

Cicero-97-113-138-139-141-143-184-242-247-272-274. Pliny-241.
Horace-120-141-162-183-184-187-189-191-195-202.
Aeneid-81-106-115-119-151-168-196. Manlius-205-207. Lucan-101-102-120-139.
Livy-271. Martial-120. Ovid-81-174-197-217-233-268. Propertius-161-191.
Seneca-83-85-99-180-194-205-276. Virgil-234.
Lucretius-90-176-177-185-193-196-197-205-206-208-210-240-261. Catullus-82-193.
Mithridates-190-206-208-209. Macrobius-176. Petrarch-82. Aristo-115.
Ennius-99-107-172. Florus-106. Curtius Quintus-170. La Brebis-133.

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VOLUME II

Page 91 Born at Sarlac in Perigord, 1st November, 1530, died 18th August, 1563. Of his works, all unpublished during his life, there is a complete edition, Paris, 1846. There is a sufficiently copious account of this gentleman in the Memoir and Letters supra. He to some extent forestalled in his economical views Thoreau in his Walden, 1854. Yet both follow the lines of the Natural Philosophers.

Page 179 "It is likely that Montaigne meant Henry III., king of France. The Cardinal d'Ossat, writing to Louise, the queen-dowager, told her, in his frank manner, that he had lived as much more like a monk than a monarch. And Pope Sextus V., speaking of that prince one day to the Cardinal de Joyeuse, protector of the affairs of France, said to him pleasantly, 'There is nothing that your king hath not done, and does not do so still, to be a monk, nor anything that I have not done, not to be a monk'."

Montaigne would here give us to understand upon the authority of Diodurus Siculus, that Pausanias' mother gave the first hint of the punishment that was to be inflicted on her son. 'Pausanias,' says this historian, 'perceiving that the ephori, and some other Lacedæmonians, aimed at apprehending him, got the start of them, and went and took sanctuary in Minerva's temple; and the Lacedæmonians, being doubtful whether they ought to take him from thence in violation of the franchise there, it is said that his own mother came herself to the temple, but spoke nothing, nor did anything more than lay a piece of brick, which she brought with her, on the threshold of the temple, which, when she had done, she returned home. The Lacedæmonians, taking the hint from the mother, caused the gate of the temple to be walled up, and by this means starved Pausanias, so that he died with hunger, etc.' The name of Pausanias' mother was Alcithea, as we are informed by Thucydides' scholiast, who only says that it was reported, that when they set about walling up the gates of the chapel in which Pausanias had taken refuge, his mother Alcithea laid the first stone.

"Opinions differ as to the truth of this fact. Livy thinks he has good authority for rejecting it, because it does not appear in history that Posthumius was branded with it, as Titus Manlius was, about 100 years after his time; for Manlius, having put his son to death for the like cause, obtained the odious name of Imperiosus, and since that time Manliana Imperia has been used as a term to signify orders that are too severe; Manliana Imperia, says Livy, were not only horrible for the time present, but of a bad example to posterity. And this historian makes no doubt but such commands would have been actually styled Posthumiana Imperia, if Posthumus had been the first who set so barbarous an example. But, however, Montaigne has Valer. Maximus on his side, who says expressly, that Posthumus caused his son to be put to death, and Diodorus Siculus.

Page 189 Montaigne probably found at least the basis of the material for this paper in three savages, whom Martin Frobisher brought back with him from America in 1577, and of whom there is an account in English, 1577, and in French, 1578. The portraiture of these strange people was appended to the latter, shewing their dress,

arms, tents, and boats, and was separately intended to be printed in English, though no longer known. The essayist seems to have seen the unusual visitors at Rouen, where he was in attendance on Charles IX., and he personally conversed with one of them at a somewhat later date. Antoine Jacquard executed a series of twelve engravings, which he entitled: "Les divers Pourtraicts et Figures faictes sur les moeurs des habitans du Nouveau Monde." These engravings are sometimes misdescribed as the earliest of the kind. But we perceive that they had been anticipated by the Frobisher volume. The elder Cabot, however, long before Frobisher's time, presented some natives whom he had induced to accompany him from the same continent in 1497 to Henry VII.

Page 199 This is the famous passage which Shakespeare, through Florio's version, 1603, or ed. 1613, p. 102, has employed in the "Tempest." It may be interesting in such a case to compare the essayist with the poet:—

MONTAIGNE.

(Book.)

"They (Lycurgus and Plato) could not imagine a genuitie so pure and simple, as we see it by experience, nor ever beleeve our societie might be maintained with so little arte and humane combination. It is a nation, would I answere, Plato, that hath no kinde of traffike, no knowledge of letters, no intelligence of numbers, no name of magistrate, nor of politike superioritie; no vse of service, of riches, or of poverty; no contracts, no successions, no dividences, no occupation but idle; no respect of kinred, but common; no apparrell but naturall, no manuring of lands, no vse of wine, corne, or mettle. The very words that import lying, falsehood, treason, dissimulation, covetousness, envie, detraction, and pardon, were never heard of amongst them. How dissonant would hee finde his imaginary commonwealth from this perfection?

Hos natura modos primum dedit.

Nature at first uprise,

These manners did devise.

Furthermore, they live in a country of so exceeding pleasant and temperate situation, that as my testimonies have tolde me it is very rare to see a sicke body amongst them; and they have further assured me, they never saw any man there, shaking with the palsie, toothlesse, with eyes drooping, or crooked and stooping through age."

SHAKESPEARE.

(Act. Ii. Sc. 1.)

GON. I' the commonwealth I would by contraries

Execute all things; for no kind of traffic

Would I admit; no name of magistrate;

Letters should not be known; riches, poverty,

And use of service, none; contract, succession,

Bourn, bound of land; tilth, vineyard, none;

No use of metal, corn, or wine, or oil;

No occupation; all men idle, all;

And women too, but innocent and pure,

No sovereignty—. . .

All things in common nature should produce

Without sweat or endeavour; treason, felony,

Sword, pike, knife, gun, or need of any engine,

Would I not have; but nature should bring forth,

Of its own kind, all foison, all abundance,

To feed my innocent people.

QUOTATIONS

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VOLUME III

Page 28 “This plodding occupation of bookes is as painful as any other, and as great an enemie vnto health, which ought principally to be considered. And a man should not suffer him selfe to be inveagled by the pleasure he takes in them.”

Page 136 Antonio Iscalin, called Paulin, from the place of his birth, a town in the Albigeois, and who is called in De Thou’s History Antonius Iscalinus Adhemarus (and oftener Adæmarus), Polinius Garda. He took the name of De la Garda from a corporal of that name, who passing one day through Paulin with a company of foot soldiers, took a fancy to him and carried him off with him to make him his boy. He distinguished himself by his wit, valour, and conduct in the several employments which he had, as general of the galleys ambassador to the Porte and to England.

Page 153 In the narrative which Philip de Commines has given of this battle, in which he himself was present, he tells us of wonderful performances by the horse on which the king was mounted. The name of the horse was Savoy, and it was the most beautiful horse he had ever seen. During the battle the king was personally attacked, when he had nobody near him but a valet de chambre, a little fellow, and not well armed. “The king,” says Commines, “had the best horse under him in the world, and therefore he stood his ground bravely, till a number of his men, not a great way from him, arrived at the critical minute.”

QUOTATIONS

Livy-74-93-152-155-157-159-160-162. Ovid-60-103-173. St. Augustine-60-66-91.
Juvenal-12-96-137-183-189-210-250.
Mithridates-86-102-111-137-159-165-172-203-235-242. Manlius-150.
Persius-15-27-31-32-102-178-222-223. Quintilian-22-117-126.
Horace-14-15-23-26-31-38-97-98-101-103-104-106-177-204-224-226-234-238-239-247-249-252.
Lucretius-16-59-99-100-101-105-114-174-194-195-230-235-248-261.
Cicero-34-56-63-68-69-74-85-89-137-236-243-262. Catullus-79.
Aeneid-38-135-137-156-159-162-172-262-264. Seneca-40-62-80-100-110-245.
Lucan-48-139-140-157-162-223. Virgil-249. Martial-163-172-175-177-203.
Terence-190-261.

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VOLUME IV

Page 83 The mother of one of the gentlemen who accompanied Montaigne to Italy in 1580.

Page 96 It used to be a frequent practice in Scotland to defer marriage to this age, the country being poor, and a man being unable, till he had reached that time of life, to support a household.

Page 109 Madame de Sevigne tells us that she never read this passage without tears in her eyes. “My God!” she exclaims, “how full is this book of good sense!”

Page 163 Rousseau, in his Emile, book v., adopts this passage almost in the same words. Montaigne was not so well known at that time. Yet, could he have been aware of the loan, he would have been the last man to resent it.

Page 193 Raymond de Sebonde, or Sebon, or Sabaude, or Sebeyde, as he was variously named, was a professor of medicine, philosophy, and theology at Toulouse, about 1430. The work was first printed at Daventer about 1484.

Page 247 Georgius Trapexuntius, or George of Trebizond, born 1396, died 1486; a learned translator of and commentator upon Aristotle and other authors.

Page 259 Remora, “delay, hindrance.” This story about Antony is, of course, a fable, arising from the ignorant superstition which prevailed among the ancients, and even, as Montaigne shows, down to a much later period, respecting the power of this adhesive fish.

QUOTATIONS

Aristo-226. Terence-93-104. Manlius-213-220-221. Propertius-136. Quintilian-202. St. Augustine-223. Tasso-60-95-227. Horace-17-71-98-142-169-175-181-214-270. Lucretius-18-48-54-62-65-195-207-220-226-232-234-237-238-270. Catullus-140. Aeneid-16-23-63-64-127-174-187-200-272-280. Mithridates-19-221-223-238. Seneca-13-17-23-164-186-223. Lucan-18-55. Juvenal-47-48-178-190-244-254-269. Virgil-48-144-229-269-272-273. Martial-17-18-78-142-257. Livy-80-94-127. Ovid-49-62-67-126-187-189-198-267.

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VOLUME V

Page 31 “This was Lucretius who, in the verses preceding this period, speaks so pompously of Epicurus and his doctrine: for a love potion that was given him by his wife or his mistress, so much disturbed his reason, that the violence of his disorder only afforded him a few lucid intervals, which he employed in composing his book, and at last made him kill himself.”

Page 46 This appears to be Thrasyllus, the celebrated Athenian military and naval commander, fifth century

Page 218 Ptolemy was then, and long after, accounted the highest geographical authority; but the inaccuracy of his astronomical knowledge, betrayed him into an erroneous theory of the relations of the members of the Cosmos.

Page 251 A present which the scholars gave their master at the Fair of Landy, held yearly at St. Dennis, by institution of King Dagobert in 629.

QUOTATIONS

Ennius-20-92. Manlius-161. Persius-94. Propertius-17. St.
Augustine-53-121-126-134-143-176. Tactius-53. Juvenal-27-229-230-242.
Virgil-151-162-178-212. Martial-246. Livy-39-131-143-270.
Ovid-19-21-132-133-136-192-193-230-238-267-268. Lucan-123-124.
Seneca-19-44-47-80-82-173-177.
Mithridates-16-41-44-120-129-151-153-168-170-171-255-256-262.
Aeneid-95-131-132-241-272. Horace-26-29-45-46-47-126-131-142-204-232.
Cicero-25-32-33-42-43-44-53-54-57-58-64-66-67-71-72-87-93-120-121-130-132-138-141-154-160-171-
Lucretius-15-21-31-44-47-48-53-58-61-73-93-151-152-153-162-163-164-165-167-169-171-172-180-199
Catullus-205. Dryden-37. Petrarch-187. Valerius Saranus-85.

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VOLUME VI

Page 63 The play, however, was called the “Ransom of Hector.” It was the games at which it was acted that were called Leneian; they were one of the four Dionysiac festivals.

Page 130 The character of the Emperor Julian was censured, when Montaigne was at Rome in 1581, by the Master of the Sacred Palace, who, however, as Montaigne tells us in his Journal, referred it to his conscience to alter what he should think in bad taste. This Montaigne did not do, and this chapter supplied Voltaire with the greater part of the praises he bestowed upon the Emperor.

Page 241 Ostracism at Athens was banishment for ten years; petalism at Syracuse was banishment for five years.

QUOTATIONS

Aristo-36. Persius-40-42-44-109-120. Propertius-17-83-84-201. Quintilian-39. St. Augustine-121. Tacitus-55. Tasso-182.
Cicero-32-33-34-37-38-49-52-86-88-95-103-110-141-214. Catullus-139-158.
Horace-14-16-30-37-42-54-61-67-75-76-78-79-84-104-115-120-170-194.
Lucretius-15-71-75-109-137. Aeneid-46-47-225-228-257. Mithridates-165.
Seneca-13-14-21-48-81-83-138-139-194-195-227. Lucan-51.
Juvenal-27-45-77-85-105-157-171-193-216-217. Virgil-17-71-181.
Martial-14-61-74-100-122-166-170. Livy-38-142-147-153.
Ovid-13-16-17-20-40-52-64-139-173-218. Terence-16-83-95-102.

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VOLUME VII

Page 26 Gaspard de Coligny, who fell in the St. Bartholomew massacre 24th August, 1572.

Page 80 A term used by the Languedoc waggoners to hasten their horses.

Page 98 A sound opinion and piece of advice, which are not even yet generally appreciated. Certain callings are more prone to this disease from the want of opportunities for relieving nature.

Page 114 Marguerite de Grammont, widow of Jean de Durfort, Seigneur de Duras, who was killed near Leghorn, leaving no posterity. Montaigne seems to have been on terms of considerable intimacy with her, and to have tendered her some very wholesome and frank advice in regard to her relations with Henry IV.

Page 138 Between the King of Navarre, afterwards Henry IV., and the Duc de Guise.

Page 142 An able negotiator, who, though protected by the Guises, and strongly supporting them, was yet very far from persecuting the Reformists. He died 1577.

Page 150 An Indian sage who lived in the time of Alexander the Great.

Page 154 A picked body of troops in the Macedonian army, carrying silver-plated shields.

Page 235 The corresponding passage in Florio's version is:—"If your affection in love be over-powerful, disperse or dissipate the same, say they; and they say true, for I have often with profit made trial of it; break it by virtue of several desires, of which one may be regent or chief Master, if you please; but for fear it should misuse and tyrannise you, weaken it with dividing, and protract it with diverting the same."

QUOTATIONS

Manlius-47. Persius-236. Propertius-46-167-245. Quintilian-192. Tacitus-30-214.
Cicero-65-66-129-140-149-163-166-175-200-212-229-234.
Horace-19-47-133-176-205. Lucretius-47-123-137-236-239-240.
Aeneid-17-53-54-67-83-123-233.
Mithridates-127-149-Seneca-61-123-150-174-199-222.
Lucan-14-18-51-124-126-166-181. Juvenal-81-207-224. Virgil-33-125.
Martial-36-63-103. Livy-141-165-213-229. Terence-135.

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VOLUME VIII

Page 84 Compare with this passage Henri Estienne's Precellence du Langage Francois and his Conformite du Langage Francois avec le Grec, of which two works M. Leon Feugere has published an edition, with notes.

Leo the Jew, Ficinus, Cardinal Bembo, and Mario Equicola all wrote Treatises on Love.

Page 197 So Hobbes said that if he had read as much as the academical pedants he should have known as little.

QUOTATIONS

Ennius-52. Propertius-64. Quintilian-81. St. Augustine-69. Tacitus-226.
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VOLUME IX

Page 12 It was not Diomedes, but Didymus the grammarian, who, as Seneca tells us, wrote four (not six) thousand books on questions of vain literature, which was the principal study of the ancient grammarian.

Page 33 Liard, a small coin of base silver, at this time worth a few pence of English money.

Page 82 This debauch evidently means the diversion of travel, which is the subject of so large a portion of this essay; not debauch in its ordinary sense.

Page 98 Montaigne refers to the society of Synapothanoumenes, “bands of those who would die together,” formed by Antony and Cleopatra after the battle of Actium.

Page 117 Saturninus, one of the thirty tyrants in the time of the Emperor Gallienus. Trebellius Pollio, two ephemeral rulers of this name are recorded, of whom this one, a general under Valerian and Probus, involuntarily usurped the empire under Gallienus.

Page 119 Capets, so called from their short capes, were the students of Montaigne College at Paris, and were held in great contempt.

Page 186 By the adoption of the Gregorian calendar.

Page 190 Voltaire says of this passage, “He who would learn to doubt should read this whole chapter of Montaigne, the least methodical of all philosophers, but the wisest and the most amiable.”

Page 198 That is of Admiration. “She (Iris, the rainbow) is beautiful, and for that reason, because she has a face to be admired, she is said to have been the daughter of Thaumus.”

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VOLUME X

Page 22 Calepin (Ambrogio da Calepio), a famous lexicographer of the fifteenth century. His Polyglot Dictionary became so famous, that Calepin became a common appellation for a lexicon.

Page 44 Suetonius says in this Life of Tiberius that this emperor, after he was thirty years old, governed his health without the aid of physicians; and what Plutarch tells is, in his essay on the Rules and Precepts of Health, is that Tiberius said that the man who, having attained sixty years, held out his pulse to a physician was a fool. This might be the origin of the adage: A man is a fool or a physician at fifty; but the term of life varies in different authorities.

Page 131 This is translated freely from that prefixed to the variorum Paris edition 1854. This biography is the more desirable that it contains all the really interesting and important matter in the Journal of the Tour in Germany and Italy, which, as it was merely written under Montaigne's dictation, and is in the third person, is scarcely worth publication, as a whole, in an English dress.

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