VOLTAIRE

A PHILOSOPHICAL DICTIONARY, VOLUME 10

Voltaire
A Philosophical Dictionary, Volume 10

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Содержание

François-Marie Arouet (AKA Voltaire) A Philosophical Dictionary, Volume 10

STYLE

It is very strange that since the French people became literary they have had no book written in a good style, until the year 1654, when the "Provincial Letters" appeared; and why had no one written history in a suitable tone, previous to that of the "Conspiracy of Venice" of the Abbé St. Réal? How is it that Pellisson was the first who adopted the true Ciceronian style, in his memoir for the superintendent Fouquet?

Nothing is more difficult and more rare than a style altogether suitable to the subject in hand.

The style of the letters of Balzac would not be amiss for funeral orations; and we have some physical treatises in the style of the epic poem or the ode. It is proper that all things occupy their own places.

Affect not strange terms of expression, or new words, in a treatise on religion, like the Abbé Houteville; neither declaim

in a physical treatise. Avoid pleasantry in the mathematics, and flourish and extravagant figures in a pleading. If a poor intoxicated woman dies of an apoplexy, you say that she is in the regions of death; they bury her, and you exclaim that her mortal remains are confided to the earth. If the bell tolls at her burial, it is her funeral knell ascending to the skies. In all this you think you imitate Cicero, and you only copy Master Littlejohn…

Without style, it is impossible that there can be a good work in any kind of eloquence or poetry. A profusion of words is the great vice of all our modern philosophers and anti-philosophers. The "*Système de la Nature*" is a great proof of this truth. It is very difficult to give just ideas of God and nature, and perhaps equally so to form a good style.

As the kind of execution to be employed by every artist depends upon the subject of which he treats – as the line of Poussin is not that of Teniers, nor the architecture of a temple that of a common house, nor music of a serious opera that of a comic one – so has each kind of writing its proper style, both in prose and verse. It is obvious that the style of history is not that of a funeral oration, and that the despatch of an ambassador ought not to be written like a sermon; that comedy is not to borrow the boldness of the ode, the pathetic expression of the tragedy, nor the metaphors and similes of the epic.

Every species has its different shades, which may, however, be reduced to two, the simple and the elevated. These two kinds, which embrace so many others, possess essential beauties

in common, which beauties are accuracy of idea, adaptation, elegance, propriety of expression, and purity of language. Every piece of writing, whatever its nature, calls for these qualities; the difference consists in the employment of the corresponding tropes. Thus, a character in comedy will not utter sublime or philosophical ideas, a shepherd spout the notions of a conqueror, not a didactic epistle breathe forth passion; and none of these forms of composition ought to exhibit bold metaphor, pathetic exclamation, or vehement expression.

Between the simple and the sublime there are many shades, and it is the art of adjusting them which contributes to the perfection of eloquence and poetry. It is by this art that Virgil frequently exalts the eclogue. This verse: *Ut vidi ut perii, ut me malus abstulit error!* (Eclogue viii, v. 41) – I saw, I perished, yet indulged my pain! (Dryden) – would be as fine in the mouth of Dido as in that of a shepherd, because it is nature, true and elegant, and the sentiment belongs to any condition. But this:

> Castaneasque nuces me quas Amaryllis amabat.
>
> – *Eclogue, ii, v. 52..*
>
> And pluck the chestnuts from the neighboring grove,
> Such as my Amaryllis used to love.
>
> – *DRYDEN.*

belongs not to an heroic personage, because the allusion is not

such as would be made by a hero.

These two instances are examples of the cases in which the mingling of styles may be defended. Tragedy may occasionally stoop; it even ought to do so. Simplicity, according to the precept of Horace, often relieves grandeur. *Et tragicus plerumque dolet sermone pedestri* (*Ars Poet.*, v. 95) – And oft the tragic language humbly flows (Francis).

These two verses in Titus, so natural and so tender:

> *Depuis cinq ans entiers chaque jour je la vois.*
> *Et crois toujours la voir pour la première fois.*
>
> *– BÉRÉNICE, acte ii, scene 1.*
>
> Each day, for five years, have I seen her face,
> And each succeeding time appears the first.

would not be at all out of place in serious comedy; but the following verse of Antiochus: *Dans l'orient desert quel devint mon ennui!* (Id., acte i, scene 4) – The lonely east, how wearisome to me! – would not suit a lover in comedy; the figure of the "lonely east" is too elevated for the simplicity of the buskin. We have already remarked, that an author who writes on physics, in allusion to a writer on physics, called Hercules, adds that he is not able to resist a philosopher so powerful. Another who has written a small book, which he imagines to be physical and moral, against the utility of inoculation, says that if the smallpox be diffused

artificially, death will be defrauded.

The above defect springs from a ridiculous affectation. There is another which is the result of negligence, which is that of mingling with the simple and noble style required by history, popular phrases and low expressions, which are inimical to good taste. We often read in Mézeray, and even in Daniel, who, having written so long after him, ought to be more correct, that "a general pursued at the heels of the enemy, followed his track, and utterly basted him" —*à plate couture*. We read nothing of this kind in Livy, Tacitus, Guicciardini, or Clarendon.

Let us observe, that an author accustomed to this kind of style can seldom change it with his subject. In his operas, La Fontaine composed in the style of his fables; and Benserade, in his translation of Ovid's "Metamorphoses," exhibited the same kind of pleasantry which rendered his madrigals successful. Perfection consists in knowing how to adapt our style to the various subjects of which we treat; but who is altogether the master of his habits, and able to direct his genius at pleasure?

VARIOUS STYLES DISTINGUISHED

The Feeble.

Weakness of the heart is not that of the mind, nor weakness of the soul that of the heart. A feeble soul is without resource in action, and abandons itself to those who govern it. The *heart* which is weak or feeble is easily softened, changes its inclinations

with facility, resists not the seduction or the ascendency required, and may subsist with a strong *mind*; for we may think strongly and act weakly. The weak mind receives impressions without resistance, embraces opinions without examination, is alarmed without cause, and tends naturally to superstition.

A work may be feeble either in its matter or its style; by the thoughts, when too common, or when, being correct, they are not sufficiently profound; and by the style, when it is destitute of images, or turns of expression, and of figures which rouse attention. Compared with those of Bossuet, the funeral orations of Mascaron are weak, and his style is lifeless.

Every speech is feeble when it is not relieved by ingenious turns, and by energetic expressions; but a pleader is weak, when, with all the aid of eloquence, and all the earnestness of action, he fails in ratiocination. No philosophical work is feeble, notwithstanding the deficiency of its style, if the reasoning be correct and profound. A tragedy is weak, although the style be otherwise, when the interest is not sustained. The best-written comedy is feeble if it fails in that which the Latins call the "*vis comica*," which is the defect pointed out by Cæsar in Terence: "*Lenibus atque utinam scriptis adjuncta foret vis comica!*"

This is above all the sin of the weeping or sentimental comedy (*larmoyante*). Feeble verses are not those which sin against rules, but against genius; which in their mechanism are without variety, without choice expression, or felicitous inversions; and which retain in poetry the simplicity and homeliness of prose. The

distinction cannot be better comprehended than by a reference to the similar passages of Racine and Campistron, his imitator.

Flowery Style.

"Flowery," that which is in blossom; a tree in blossom, a rose-bush in blossom: people do not say, flowers which blossom. Of flowery bloom, the carnation seems a mixture of white and rose-color. We sometimes say a flowery mind, to signify a person possessing a lighter species of literature, and whose imagination is lively.

A flowery discourse is more replete with agreeable than with strong thoughts, with images more sparkling than sublime, and terms more curious than forcible. This metaphor is correctly taken from flowers, which are showy without strength or stability.

The flowery style is not unsuitable to public speeches or addresses which amount only to compliment. The lighter beauties are in their place when there is nothing more solid to say; but the flowery style should be banished from a pleading, a sermon, or a didactic work.

While banishing the flowery style, we are not to reject the soft and lively images which enter naturally into the subject; a few flowers are even admissible; but the flowery style cannot be made suitable to a serious subject.

This style belongs to productions of mere amusement; to idyls, eclogues, and descriptions of the seasons, or of gardens. It may gracefully occupy a portion of the most sublime ode, provided it

be duly relieved by stanzas of more masculine beauty. It has little to do with comedy, which, as it ought to possess a resemblance to common life, requires more of the style of ordinary conversation. It is still less admissible in tragedy, which is the province of strong passions and momentous interests; and when occasionally employed in tragedy or comedy, it is in certain descriptions in which the heart takes no part, and which amuse the imagination without moving or occupying the soul.

The flowery style detracts from the interest of tragedy, and weakens ridicule in comedy. It is in its place in the French opera, which rather flourishes on the passions than exhibits them. The flowery is not to be confounded with the easy style, which rejects this class of embellishment.

Coldness of Style.

It is said that a piece of poetry, of eloquence, of music, and even of painting, is cold, when we look for an animated expression in it, which we find not. Other arts are not so susceptible of this defect; for instance, architecture, geometry, logic, metaphysics, all the principal merit of which is correctness, cannot properly be called warm or cold. The picture of the family of Darius, by Mignard, is very cold in comparison with that of Lebrun, because we do not discover in the personages of Mignard the same affliction which Lebrun has so animatedly expressed in the attitudes and countenances of the Persian princesses. Even a statue may be cold; we ought to perceive fear and horror in the features of an Andromeda, the effect of a writhing of the

muscles; and anger mingled with courageous boldness in the attitude and on the brow of Hercules, who suspends and strangles Antæus.

In poetry and eloquence the great movements of the soul become cold, when they are expressed in common terms, and are unaided by imagination. It is this latter which makes love so animated in Racine, and so languid in his imitator, Campistron.

The sentiments which escape from a soul which seeks concealment, on the contrary, require the most simple expression. Nothing is more animated than those verses in "The Cid": "Go; I hate thee not – thou knowest it; I cannot." This feeling would become cold, if conveyed in studied phrases.

For this reason, nothing is so cold as the timid style. A hero in a poem says, that he has encountered a tempest, and that he has beheld his friend perish in the storm. He touches and affects, if he speaks with profound grief of his loss – that is, if he is more occupied with his friend than with all the rest; but he becomes cold, and ceases to affect us, if he amuses us with a description of the tempest; if he speaks of the source of "the fire which was boiling up the waters, and of the thunder which roars and which redoubles the furrows of the earth and of the waves." Coldness of style, therefore, often arises from a sterility of ideas; often from a deficiency in the power of governing them; frequently from a too common diction, and sometimes from one that is too far-fetched.

The author who is cold only in consequence of being animated out of time and place, may correct this defect of a too fruitful

imagination; but he who is cold from a deficiency of soul is incapable of self-correction. We may allay a fire which is too intense, but cannot acquire heat if we have none.

On Corruption of Style.

A general complaint is made, that eloquence is corrupted, although we have models of almost all kinds. One of the greatest defects of the day, which contributes most to this defect, is the mixture of style. It appears to me, that we authors do not sufficiently imitate the painters, who never introduce the attitudes of Calot with the figures of Raphael. I perceive in histories, otherwise tolerably well written, and in good doctrinal works, the familiar style of conversation. Some one has formerly said, that we must write as we speak; the sense of which law is, that we should write naturally. We tolerate irregularity in a letter, freedom as to style, incorrectness, and bold pleasantries, because letters, written spontaneously, without particular object or act, are negligent conversations; but when we speak or treat of a subject formally, some attention is due to decorum; and to whom ought we to pay more respect than to the public?

Is it allowable to write in a mathematical work, that "a geometrician who would pay his devotions, ought to ascend to heaven in a right line; that evanescent quantities turn up their noses at the earth for having too much elevated them; that a seed sown in the ground takes an opportunity to release and amuse itself; that if Saturn should perish, it would be his fifth and not his first satellite that would take his place, because kings always

keep their heirs at a distance; that there is no void except in the purse of a ruined man; that when Hercules treats of physics, no one is able to resist a philosopher of his degree of power?" etc.

Some very valuable works are infected with this fault. The source of a defect so common seems to me to be the accusation of pedantry, so long and so justly made against authors. "*In vitium ducit culpæ fuga.*" It is frequently said, that we ought to write in the style of good company; that the most serious authors are becoming agreeable: that is to say, in order to exhibit the manners of good company to their readers, they deliver themselves in the style of very bad company.

Authors have sought to speak of science as Voiture spoke to Mademoiselle Paulet of gallantry, without dreaming that Voiture by no means exhibits a correct taste in the species of composition in which he was esteemed excellent; for he often takes the false for the refined, and the affected for the natural. Pleasantry is never good on serious points, because it always regards subjects in that point of view in which it is not the purpose to consider them. It almost always turns upon false relations and equivoque, whence jokers by profession usually possess minds as incorrect as they are superficial.

It appears to me, that it is as improper to mingle styles in poetry as in prose. The macaroni style has for some time past injured poetry by this medley of mean and of elevated, of ancient and of modern expression. In certain moral pieces it is not musical to hear the whistle of Rabelais in the midst of sounds

from the flute of Horace – a practice which we should leave to inferior minds, and attend to the lessons of good sense and of Boileau. The following is a singular instance of style, in a speech delivered at Versailles in 1745:

Speech Addressed to the King (Louis XV.) by M. le Camus, First President of the Court of Aids.

"Sire – The conquests of your majesty are so rapid, that it will be necessary to consult the power of belief on the part of posterity, and to soften their surprise at so many miracles, for fear that heroes should hold themselves dispensed from imitation, and people in general from believing them.

"But no, sire, it will be impossible for them to doubt it, when they shall read in history that your majesty has been at the head of your troops, recording them yourself in the field of Mars upon a drum. This is to engrave them eternally in the temple of Memory.

"Ages the most distant will learn, that the English, that bold and audacious foe, that enemy so jealous of your glory, have been obliged to turn away from your victory; that their allies have been witnesses of their shame, and that all of them have hastened to the combat only to immortalize the glory of the conqueror.

"We venture to say to your majesty, relying on the love that you bear to your people, that there is but one way of augmenting our happiness, which is to diminish your courage; as heaven would lavish its prodigies at too costly a rate, if they increased your dangers, or those of the young heroes who constitute our dearest hopes."

SUPERSTITION

SECTION I

I have sometimes heard you say – We are no longer superstitious; the reformation of the sixteenth century has made us more prudent; the Protestants have taught us better manners.

But what then is the blood of a St. Januarius, which you liquefy every year by bringing it near his head? Would it not be better to make ten thousand beggars earn their bread, by employing them in useful tasks, than to boil the blood of a saint for their amusement? Think rather how to make their pots boil.

Why do you still, in Rome, bless the horses and mules at St. Mary's the Greater? What mean those bands of flagellators in Italy and Spain, who go about singing and giving themselves the lash in the presence of ladies? Do they think there is no road to heaven but by flogging?

Are those pieces of the true cross, which would suffice to build a hundred-gun ship – are the many relics acknowledged to be false – are the many false miracles – so many monuments of an enlightened piety?

France boasts of being less superstitious than the neighbors of St. James of Compostello, or those of Our Lady of Loretto. Yet

how many sacristies are there where you still find pieces of the Virgin's gown, vials of her milk, and locks of her hair! And have you not still, in the church of Puy-en-Velay, her Son's foreskin preciously preserved?

You all know the abominable farce that has been played, ever since the early part of the fourteenth century, in the chapel of St. Louis, in the Palais at Paris, every Maundy Thursday night. All the possessed in the kingdom then meet in this church. The convulsions of St. Médard fall far short of the horrible grimaces, the dreadful howlings, the violent contortions, made by these wretched people. A piece of the true cross is given them to kiss, encased in three feet of gold, and adorned with precious stones. Then the cries and contortions are redoubled. The devil is then appeased by giving the demoniacs a few sous; but the better to restrain them, fifty archers of the watch are placed in the church with fixed bayonets.

The same execrable farce is played at St. Maur. I could cite twenty such instances. Blush, and correct yourselves.

There are wise men who assert, that we should leave the people their superstitions, as we leave them their raree-shows, etc.; that the people have at all times been fond of prodigies, fortune-tellers, pilgrimages, and quack-doctors; that in the most remote antiquity they celebrated Bacchus delivered from the waves, wearing horns, making a fountain of wine issue from a rock by a stroke of his wand, passing the Red Sea on dry ground with all his people, stopping the sun and moon, etc.; that

at Lacedæmon they kept the two eggs brought forth by Leda, hanging from the dome of a temple; that in some towns of Greece the priests showed the knife with which Iphigenia had been immolated, etc.

There are other wise men who say – Not one of these superstitions has produced any good; many of them have done great harm: let them then be abolished.

SECTION II

I beg of you, my dear reader, to cast your eye for a moment on the miracle which was lately worked in Lower Brittany, in the year of our Lord 1771. Nothing can be more authentic: this publication is clothed in all the legal forms. Read: —

"***Surprising Account of the Visible and Miraculous Appearance of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Holy Sacrament of the Altar; which was worked by the Almighty Power of God in the Parish Church of Paimpole, near Tréguier, in Lower Brittany, on Twelfth-day.***

"On January 6, 1771, being Twelfth-day, during the chanting of the *Salve*, rays of light were seen to issue from the consecrated host, and instantly the Lord Jesus was beheld in natural figure, seeming more brilliant than the sun, and was seen for a whole half-hour, during which there appeared a rainbow over the top of the church. The footprints of Jesus remained on the tabernacle, where they are still to be seen; and many miracles

are worked there every day. At four in the afternoon, Jesus having disappeared from over the tabernacle, the curate of the said parish approached the altar, and found there a letter which Jesus had left; he would have taken it up, but he found that he could not lift it. This curate, together with the vicar, went to give information of it to the bishop of Tréguier, who ordered the forty-hour prayers to be said in all the churches of the town for eight days, during which time the people went in crowds to see this holy letter. At the expiration of the eight days, the bishop went thither in procession, attended by all the regular and secular clergy of the town, after three days' fasting on bread and water. The procession having entered the church, the bishop knelt down on the steps of the altar; and after asking of God the grace to be able to lift this letter, he ascended to the altar and took it up without difficulty; then, turning to the people, he read it over with a loud voice, and recommended to all who could read to peruse this letter on the first Friday of every month; and to those who could not read, to say five paternosters, and five ave-marias, in honor of the five wounds of Jesus Christ, in order to obtain the graces promised to such as shall read it devoutly, and the preservation of the fruits of the earth! Pregnant women are to say, for their happy delivery, nine paters and nine aves for the benefit of the souls in purgatory, in order that their children may have the happiness of receiving the holy sacrament of baptism.

"All that is contained in this account has been approved by the bishop, by the lieutenant-general of the said town of Tréguier,

and by many persons of distinction who were present at this miracle."

"Copy of the Letter Found Upon the Altar, at the Time of the Miraculous Appearance of Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, on Twelfth-day, 1771.

"Everlasting life, everlasting punishments, or everlasting delights, none can forego; one part must be chosen – either to go to glory, or to depart into torment. The number of years that men pass on earth in all sorts of sensual pleasures and excessive debaucheries, of usurpation, luxury, murder, theft, slander, and impurity, no longer permitting it to be suffered that creatures created in My image and likeness, redeemed by the price of My blood on the tree of the cross, on which I suffered passion and death, should offend Me continually, by transgressing My commands and abandoning My divine law – I warn you all, that if you continue to live in sin, and I behold in you neither remorse, nor contrition, nor a true and sincere confession and satisfaction, I shall make you feel the weight of My divine arm. But for the prayers of My dear mother, I should already have destroyed the earth, for the sins which you commit one against another. I have given you six days to labor, and the seventh to rest, to sanctify My Holy Name, to hear the holy mass, and employ the remainder of the day in the service of God My Father. But, on the contrary, nothing is to be seen but blasphemy and drunkenness; and so disordered is the world that all in it is vanity and lies. Christians, instead of taking compassion on the

poor whom they behold every day at their doors, prefer fondling dogs and other animals, and letting the poor die of hunger and thirst – abandoning themselves entirely to Satan by their avarice, gluttony, and other vices; instead of relieving the needy, they prefer sacrificing all to their pleasures and debauchery. Thus do they declare war against Me. And you, iniquitous fathers and mothers, suffer your children to swear and blaspheme against My holy name; instead of giving them a good education, you avariciously lay up for them wealth, which is dedicated to Satan. I tell you, by the mouth of God My Father and My dear mother, of all the cherubim and seraphim, and by St. Peter, the head of My church, that if you do not amend your ways, I will send you extraordinary diseases, by which all shall perish. You shall feel the just anger of God My Father; you shall be reduced to such a state that you shall not know one another. Open your eyes, and contemplate My cross, which I have left to be your weapon against the enemy of mankind, and your guide to eternal glory; look upon My head crowned with thorns, My feet and hands pierced with nails; I shed the last drop of My blood to redeem you, from pure fatherly love for ungrateful children. Do such works as may secure to you My mercy; do not swear by My Holy Name; pray to Me devoutly; fast often; and in particular give alms to the poor, who are members of My body – for of all good works this is the most pleasing to Me; neither despise the widow nor the orphan; make restitution of that which does not belong to you; fly all occasions of sin; carefully keep My commandments; and

honor Mary My very dear mother.

"Such of you who shall not profit by the warnings I give them, such as shall not believe My words, will, by their obstinacy, bring down My avenging arm upon their heads; they shall be overwhelmed by misfortunes, which shall be the forerunners of their final and unhappy end; after which they shall be cast into everlasting flames, where they shall suffer endless pains – the just punishment reserved for their crimes.

"On the other hand, such of you as shall make a holy use of the warnings of God, given them in this letter, shall appease His wrath, and shall obtain from Him, after a sincere confession of their faults, the remission of their sins, how great soever they may be.

"With permission, Bourges, July 30, 1771.
"DE BEAUVOIR, Lieut. – Gen. of Police.

"This letter must be carefully kept, in honor of our Lord Jesus Christ."

N.B. – It must be observed that this piece of absurdity was printed at Bourges, without there having been, either at Tréguier or at Paimpole, the smallest pretence that could afford occasion for such an imposture. However, we will suppose that in a future age some miracle-finder shall think fit to prove a point in divinity by the appearance of Jesus Christ on the altar at Paimpole, will he not think himself entitled to quote Christ's own letter, printed at Bourges "with permission"? Will he not prove, by facts, that in our time Jesus worked miracles everywhere? Here is a fine field

opened for the Houtevilles and the Abadies.

SECTION III

A Fresh Instance of the Most Horrible Superstition.

The thirty conspirators who fell upon the king of Poland, in the night of November 3, of the present year, 1771, had communicated at the altar of the Holy Virgin, and had sworn by the Holy Virgin to butcher their king.

It seems that some one of the conspirators was not entirely in a state of grace, when he received into his stomach the body of the Holy Virgin's own Son, together with His blood, under the appearance of bread; and that while he was taking the oath to kill his king, he had his god in his mouth for only two of the king's domestics. The guns and pistols fired at his majesty missed him; he received only a slight shot-wound in the face, and several sabre-wounds, which were not mortal. His life would have been at an end, but that humanity at length combated superstition in the breast of one of the assassins named Kosinski. What a moment was that when this wretched man said to the bleeding prince: "You are, however, my king!" "Yes," answered Stanislaus Augustus, "and your good king, who has never done you any harm." "True," said the other; "but I have taken an oath to kill you."

They had sworn before the miraculous image of the virgin at Czentoshova. The following is the formula of this fine oath:

"We – who, excited by a holy and religious zeal, have resolved to avenge the Deity, religion, and our country, outraged by Stanislaus Augustus, a despiser of laws both divine and human, a favorer of atheists and heretics, do promise and swear, before the sacred and miraculous image of the mother of God, to extirpate from the face of the earth him who dishonors her by trampling on religion… So help us God!"

Thus did the assassins of Sforza, of Medici, and so many other holy assassins, have masses said, or say them themselves, for the happy success of their undertaking.

The letter from Warsaw which gives the particulars of this attempt, adds: "The religious who employ their pious ardor in causing blood to flow and ravaging their country, have succeeded in Poland, as elsewhere, in inculcating on the minds of their affiliated, that it is allowable to kill kings."

Indeed, the assassins had been hidden in Warsaw for three days in the house of the reverend Dominican fathers; and when these accessory monks were asked why they had harbored thirty armed men without informing the government of it, they answered, that these men had come to perform their devotions, and to fulfil a vow.

O ye times of Châtel, of Guinard, of Ricodovis, of Poltrot, of Ravaillac, of Damiens, of Malagrida, are you then returning? Holy Virgin, and Thou her holy Son, let not Your sacred names be abused for the commission of the crime which disgraced them!

M. Jean Georges le Franc, bishop of Puy-en-Velay, says, in his immense pastoral letter to the inhabitants of Puy, pages 258-9, that it is the philosophers who are seditious. And whom does he accuse of sedition? Readers, you will be astonished; it is Locke, the wise Locke himself! He makes him an accomplice in the pernicious designs of the earl of Shaftesbury, one of the heroes of the philosophical party.

Alas! M. Jean Georges, how many mistakes in a few words! First, you take the grandson for the grandfather. The earl of Shaftesbury, author of the "Characteristics" and the "Inquiry Into Virtue," that "hero of the philosophical party," who died in 1713, cultivated letters all his life in the most profound retirement. Secondly, his grandfather, Lord-Chancellor Shaftesbury, to whom you attribute misdeeds, is considered by many in England to have been a true patriot. Thirdly, Locke is revered as a wise man throughout Europe.

I defy you to show me a single philosopher, from Zoroaster down to Locke, that has ever stirred up a sedition; that has ever been concerned in an attempt against the life of a king; that has ever disturbed society; and, unfortunately, I will find you a thousand votaries of superstition, from Ehud down to Kosinski, stained with the blood of kings and with that of nations. Superstition sets the whole world in flames; philosophy extinguishes them. Perhaps these poor philosophers are not devoted enough to the Holy Virgin; but they are so to God, to reason, and to humanity.

Poles! if you are not philosophers, at least do not cut one another's throats. Frenchmen! be gay, and cease to quarrel. Spaniards! let the words "inquisition" and "holy brotherhood" be no longer uttered among you. Turks, who have enslaved Greece – monks, who have brutalized her – disappear ye from the face of the earth.

SECTION IV

Drawn from Cicero, Seneca, and Plutarch.

Nearly all that goes farther than the adoration of a supreme being, and the submission of the heart to his eternal orders, is superstition. The forgiveness of crimes, which is attached to certain ceremonies, is a very dangerous one.

Et nigras mactant pecudes, et manibu', divis,
Inferias mittunt.

– LUCRETIUS, b. iii, 52-53.

O faciles nimium, qui tristia crimina cœdis,
Fluminea tolli posse putatis aqua!

– OVID, Fasti ii, 45-46.

You think that God will forget your homicide, if you bathe in a river, if you immolate a black sheep, and a few words are pronounced over you. A second homicide then will be forgiven

you at the same price, and so of a third; and a hundred murders will cost you only a hundred black sheep and a hundred ablutions. Ye miserable mortals, do better; but let there be no murders, and no offerings of black sheep.

What an infamous idea, to imagine that a priest of Isis and Cybele, by playing cymbals and castanets, will reconcile you to the Divinity. And what then is this priest of Cybele, this vagrant eunuch, who lives on your weakness, and sets himself up as a mediator between heaven and you? What patent has he received from God? He receives money from you for muttering words; and you think that the Being of Beings ratifies the utterance of this charlatan!

There are innocent superstitions; you dance on festival days, in honor of Diana or Pomona, or some one of the secular divinities of which your calendar is full; be it so. Dancing is very agreeable; it is useful to the body; it exhilarates the mind; it does no harm to any one; but do not imagine that Pomona and Vertumnus are much pleased at your having jumped in honor of them, and that they may punish you for having failed to jump. There are no Pomona and Vertumnus but the gardener's spade and hoe. Do not be so imbecile as to believe that your garden will be hailed upon, if you have missed dancing the *pyrrhic* or the *cordax*.

There is one superstition which is perhaps pardonable, and even encouraging to virtue – that of placing among the gods great men who have been benefactors to mankind. It were doubtless better to confine ourselves to regarding them simply

as venerable men, and above all, to imitating them. Venerate, without worshipping, a Solon, a Thales, a Pythagoras; but do not adore a Hercules for having cleansed the stables of Augeas, and for having lain with fifty women in one night.

Above all, beware of establishing a worship for vagabonds who have no merit but ignorance, enthusiasm, and filth; who have made idleness and beggary their duty and their glory. Do they who have been at best useless during their lives, merit an apotheosis after their deaths? Be it observed, that the most superstitious times have always been those of the most horrible crimes.

SECTION V

The superstitious man is to the knave, what the slave is to the tyrant; nay more – the superstitious man is governed by the fanatic, and becomes a fanatic himself. Superstition, born in Paganism, adopted by Judaism, infected the Church in the earliest ages. All the fathers of the Church, without exception, believed in the power of magic. The Church always condemned magic, but she always believed in it; she excommunicated sorcerers, not as madmen who were in delusion, but as men who really had intercourse with the devils.

At this day, one half of Europe believes that the other half has long been and still is superstitious. The Protestants regard relics, indulgences, macerations, prayers for the dead, holy water, and

almost all the rites of the Roman church, as mad superstitions. According to them, superstition consists in mistaking useless practices for necessary ones. Among the Roman Catholics there are some, more enlightened than their forefathers, who have renounced many of these usages formerly sacred; and they defend their adherence to those which they have retained, by saying they are indifferent, and what is indifferent cannot be an evil.

It is difficult to mark the limits of superstition. A Frenchman travelling in Italy thinks almost everything superstitious; nor is he much mistaken. The archbishop of Canterbury asserts that the archbishop of Paris is superstitious; the Presbyterians cast the same reproach upon his grace of Canterbury, and are in their turn called superstitious by the Quakers, who in the eyes of the rest of Christians are the most superstitious of all.

It is then nowhere agreed among Christian societies what superstition is. The sect which appears to be the least violently attacked by this mental disease, is that which has the fewest rites. But if, with but few ceremonies, it is strongly attached to an absurd belief, that absurd belief is of itself equivalent to all the superstitious practices observed from the time of Simon the Magician, down to that of the curate Gaufredi. It is therefore evident that what is the foundation of the religion of one sect, is by another sect regarded as superstitious.

The Mussulmans accuse all Christian societies of it, and are accused of it by them. Who shall decide this great cause? Shall

not reason? But each sect declares that reason is on its side. Force then will decide, until reason shall have penetrated into a sufficient number of heads to disarm force.

For instance: there was a time in Christian Europe when a newly married pair were not permitted to enjoy the nuptial rights, until they had bought that privilege of the bishop and the curate. Whosoever, in his will, did not leave a part of his property to the Church, was excommunicated, and deprived of burial. This was called dying unconfessed – i.e., not confessing the Christian religion. And when a Christian died intestate, the Church relieved the deceased from this excommunication, by making a will for him, stipulating for and enforcing the payment of the pious legacy which the defunct should have made.

Therefore it was, that Pope Gregory IX. and St. Louis ordained, after the Council of Nice, held in 1235, that every will to the making of which a priest had not been called, should be null; and the pope decreed that the testator and the notary should be excommunicated.

The tax on sins was, if possible, still more scandalous. It was force which supported all these laws, to which the superstition of nations submitted; and it was only in the course of time that reason caused these shameful vexations to be abolished, while it left so many others in existence.

How far does policy permit superstition to be undermined? This is a very knotty question; it is like asking how far a dropsical man may be punctured without his dying under the operation;

this depends on the prudence of the physician.

Can there exist a people free from all superstitious prejudices? This is asking, Can there exist a people of philosophers? It is said that there is no superstition in the magistracy of China. It is likely that the magistracy of some towns in Europe will also be free from it. These magistrates will then prevent the superstition of the people from being dangerous. Their example will not enlighten the mob; but the principal citizens will restrain it. Formerly, there was not perhaps a single religious tumult, not a single violence, in which the townspeople did not take part, because these townspeople were then part of the mob; but reason and time have changed them. Their ameliorated manners will improve those of the lowest and most ferocious of the populace; of which, in more countries than one, we have striking examples. In short, the fewer superstitions, the less fanaticism; and the less fanaticism, the fewer calamities.

SYMBOL, OR CREDO

We resemble not the celebrated comedian, Mademoiselle Duclos, to whom somebody said: "I would lay a wager, mademoiselle, that you know not your credo!" "What!" said she, "not know my credo? I will repeat it to you. '*Pater noster qui.*' … Help me, I remember no more." For myself, I repeat my pater and credo every morning. I am not like Broussin, of whom Reminiac said, that although he could distinguish a sauce almost in his infancy, he could never be taught his creed or pater-noster:

> Broussin, dès l'âge le plus tendre,
> Posséda la sauce Robert,
> Sans que son précepteur lui pût jamais apprende
> Ni son credo, ni son pater.

The term "symbol" comes from the word "*symbolein*," and the Latin church adopts this word because it has taken everything from the Greek church. Even slightly learned theologians know that the symbol, which we call apostolical, is not that of all the apostles.

Symbol, among the Greeks, signified the words and signs by which those initiated into the mysteries of Ceres, Cybele, and Mythra, recognized one another; and Christians in time had their symbol. If it had existed in the time of the apostles, we think that

St. Luke would have spoken of it.

A history of the symbol is attributed to St. Augustine in his one hundred and fifteenth sermon; he is made to say, that Peter commenced the symbol by saying: "I believe in God, the Father Almighty." John added: "Maker of heaven and earth;" James proceeded: "I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord," and so on with the rest. This fable has been expunged from the last edition of Augustine; and I relate it to the reverend Benedictine fathers, in order to know whether this little curious article ought to be left out or not.

The fact is, that no person heard anything of this "creed" for more than four hundred years. People also say that Paris was not made in a day, and people are often right in their proverbs. The apostles had our symbol in their hearts, but they put it not into writing. One was formed in the time of St. Irenæus, which does not at all resemble that which we repeat. Our symbol, such as it is at present, is of the fifth century, which is posterior to that of Nice. The passage which says that Jesus descended into hell, and that which speaks of the communion of saints, are not found in any of the symbols which preceded ours; and, indeed, neither the gospels, nor the Acts of the Apostles, say that Jesus descended into hell; but it was an established opinion, from the third century, that Jesus descended into Hades, or Tartarus, words which we translate by that of hell. Hell, in this sense, is not the Hebrew word "*sheol*," which signifies "under ground," "the pit"; for which reason St. Athanasius has since taught us how

our Saviour descended into hell. His humanity, says he, was not entirely in the tomb, nor entirely in hell. It was in the sepulchre, according to the body, and in hell, according to the soul.

St. Thomas affirms that the saints who arose at the death of Jesus Christ, died again to rise afterwards with him, which is the most general sentiment. All these opinions are absolutely foreign to morality. We must be good men, whether the saints were raised once or twice. Our symbol has been formed, I confess, recently, but virtue is from all eternity.

If it is permitted to quote moderns on so grave a matter, I will here repeat the creed of the Abbé de St. Pierre, as it was written with his own hand, in his book on the purity of religion, which has not been printed, but which I have copied faithfully:

"I believe in one God alone, and I love Him. I believe that He enlightens all souls coming into the world; thus says St. John. By that, I understand all souls which seek Him in good faith. I believe in one God alone, because there can be but one soul of the Great All, a single vivifying being, a sole Creator.

"I believe in God, the Father Almighty; because He is the common Father of nature, and of all men, who are equally His children. I believe that He who has caused all to be born equally, who arranges the springs of their life in the same manner, who has given them the same moral principles, as soon as they reflect, has made no difference between His children but that of crime and virtue.

"I believe that the just and righteous Chinese is more precious

to Him than the cavilling and arrogant European scholar. I believe that God, being our common Father, we are bound to regard all men as our brothers. I believe that the persecutor is abominable, and that he follows immediately after the poisoner and parricide. I believe that theological disputes are at once the most ridiculous farce, and the most dreadful scourge of the earth, immediately after war, pestilence, famine, and leprosy.

"I believe that ecclesiastics should be paid and well paid, as servants of the public, moral teachers, keepers of registers of births and deaths; but there should be given to them neither the riches of farmers-general, nor the rank of princes, because both corrupt the soul; and nothing is more revolting than to see men so rich and so proud preach humility through their clerks, who have only a hundred crowns' wages.

"I believe that all priests who serve a parish should be married, as in the Greek church; not only to have an honest woman to take care of their household, but to be better citizens, to give good subjects to the state, and to have plenty of well-bred children.

"I believe that many monks should give up the monastic form of life, for the sake of the country and themselves. It is said that there are men whom Circe has changed into hogs, whom the wise Ulysses must restore to the human form."

"Paradise to the beneficent!" We repeat this symbol of the Abbé St. Pierre historically, without approving of it. We regard it merely as a curious singularity, and we hold with the most respectful faith to the true symbol of the Church.

SYSTEM

We understand by system a supposition; for if a system can be proved, it is no longer a system, but a truth. In the meantime, led by habit, we say the celestial system, although we understand by it the real position of the stars.

I once thought that Pythagoras had learned the true celestial system from the Chaldæans; but I think so no longer. In proportion as I grow older, I doubt of all things. Notwithstanding that Newton, Gregory, and Keil honor Pythagoras and the Chaldæans with a knowledge of the system of Copernicus, and that latterly M. Monier is of their opinion, I have the impudence to think otherwise.

One of my reasons is, that if the Chaldæans had been so well informed, so fine and important a discovery would not have been lost, but would have been handed down from age to age, like the admirable discoveries of Archimedes.

Another reason is that it was necessary to be more widely informed than the Chaldæans, in order to be able to contradict the apparent testimony of the senses in regard to the celestial appearances; that it required not only the most refined experimental observation, but the most profound mathematical science; as also the indispensable aid of telescopes, without which it is impossible to discover the phases of Venus, which prove her course around the sun, or to discover the spots in

the sun, which demonstrate his motion round his own almost immovable axis. Another reason, not less strong, is that of all those who have attributed this discovery to Pythagoras, no one can positively say how he treated it.

Diogenes Laertius, who lived about nine hundred years after Pythagoras, teaches us, that according to this grand philosopher, the number one was the first principle, and that from two sprang all numbers; that body has four elements – fire, water, air, and earth; that light and darkness, cold and heat, wet and dry, are equally distributed; that we must not eat beans; that the soul is divided into three parts; that Pythagoras had formerly been Atalides, then Euphorbus, afterwards Hermotimus; and, finally, that this great man studied magic very profoundly. Diogenes says not a word concerning the true system of the world, attributed to this Pythagoras; and it must be confessed that it is by no means to an aversion to beans that we owe the calculations which at present demonstrate the motion of the earth and planets generally.

The famous Arian Eusebius, bishop of Cæsarea, in his "Evangelical Preparation," expresses himself thus: "All the philosophers declare that the earth is in a state of repose; but Philolaus, the peripatetic, thinks that it moves round fire in an oblique circle, like the sun and the moon." This gibberish has nothing in common with the sublime truths taught by Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler, and above all by Newton.

As to the pretended Aristarchus of Samos, who, it is asserted, developed the discoveries of the Chaldæans in regard to the

motion of the earth and other planets, he is so obscure, that Wallace has been obliged to play the commentator from one end of him to the other, in order to render him intelligible.

Finally, it is very much to be doubted whether the book, attributed to this Aristarchus of Samos, really belongs to him. It has been strongly suspected that the enemies of the new philosophy have constructed this forgery in favor of their bad cause. It is not only in respect to old charters that similar forgeries are resorted to. This Aristarchus of Samos is also the more to be suspected, as Plutarch accuses him of bigotry and malevolent hypocrisy, in consequence of being imbued with a direct contrary opinion. The following are the words of Plutarch, in his piece of absurdity entitled "The Round Aspect of the Moon." Aristarchus the Samian said, "that the Greeks ought to punish Cleanthes of Samos, who suggested that the heavens were immovable, and that it is the earth which travels through the zodiac by turning on its axis."

They will tell me that even this passage proves that the system of Copernicus was already in the head of Cleanthes and others – of what import is it whether Aristarchus the Samian was of the opinion of Cleanthes, or his accuser, as the Jesuit Skeiner was subsequently Galileo's? – it equally follows that the true system of the present day was known to the ancients.

I reply, no; but that a very slight part of this system was vaguely surmised by heads better organized than the rest. I further answer that it was never received or taught in the schools, and that it

never formed a body of doctrine. Attentively peruse this "Face of the Moon" of Plutarch, and you will find, if you look for it, the doctrine of gravitation; but the true author of a system is he who demonstrates it.

We will not take away from Copernicus the honor of this discovery. Three or four words brought to light in an old author, which exhibit some distant glimpse of his system, ought not to deprive him of the glory of the discovery.

Let us admire the great rule of Kepler, that the revolutions of the planets round the sun are in proportion to the cubes of their distances. Let us still more admire the profundity, the justness, and the invention of the great Newton, who alone discovered the fundamental reasons of these laws unknown to all antiquity, which have opened the eyes of mankind to a new heaven.

Petty compilers are always to be found who dare to become the enemies of their age. They string together passages from Plutarch and Athenæus, to prove that we have no obligations to Newton, to Halley, and to Bradley. They trumpet forth the glory of the ancients, whom they pretend have said everything; and they are so imbecile as to think that they divide the glory by publishing it. They twist an expression of Hippocrates, in order to persuade us that the Greeks were acquainted with the circulation of the blood better than Harvey. Why not also assert that the Greeks were possessed of better muskets and field-pieces; that they threw bomb-shells farther, had better printed books, and much finer engravings? That they excelled in oil-paintings,

possessed looking-glasses of crystal, telescopes, microscopes, and thermometers? All this may be found out by men, who assure us that Solomon, who possessed not a single seaport, sent fleets to America, and so forth.

One of the greatest detractors of modern times is a person named Dutens, who finished by compiling a libel, as infamous as insipid, against the philosophers of the present day. This libel is entitled the "Tocsin"; but he had better have called it his clock, as no one came to his aid; and he has only tended to increase the number of the Zoilusses, who, being unable to produce anything themselves, spit their venom upon all who by their productions do honor to their country and benefit mankind.

TABOR, OR THABOR

A famous mountain in Judæa, often alluded to in general conversation. It is not true that this mountain is a league and a half high, as mentioned in certain dictionaries. There is no mountain in Judæa so elevated; Tabor is not more than six hundred feet high, but it appears loftier, in consequence of its situation on a vast plain.

The Tabor of Bohemia is still more celebrated by the resistance which the imperial armies encountered from Ziska. It is from thence that they have given the name of Tabor to intrenchments formed with carriages. The Taborites, a sect very similar to the Hussites, also take their name from the latter mountain.

TALISMAN

Talisman, an Arabian word, signifies properly "consecration." The same thing as "telesma," or "philactery," a preservative charm, figure, or character; a superstition which has prevailed at all times and among all people. It is usually a sort of medal, cast and stamped under the ascendency of certain constellations. The famous talisman of Catherine de Medici still exists.

TARTUFFE – TARTUFERIE

Tartuffe, a name invented by Molière, and now adopted in all the languages of Europe to signify hypocrites, who make use of the cloak of religion. "He is a Tartuffe; he is a true Tartuffe." *Tartuferie*, a new word formed from Tartuffe – the action of a hypocrite, the behavior of a hypocrite, the knavery of a false devotee; it is often used in the disputes concerning the Bull Unigenitus.

TASTE

SECTION I

The taste, the sense by which we distinguish the flavor of our food, has produced, in all known languages, the metaphor expressed by the word "taste" – a feeling of beauty and defects in all the arts. It is a quick perception, like that of the tongue and the palate, and in the same manner anticipates consideration. Like the mere sense, it is sensitive and luxuriant in respect to the good, and rejects the bad spontaneously; in a similar way it is often uncertain, divided, and even ignorant whether it ought to be pleased; lastly, and to conclude the resemblance, it sometimes requires to be formed and corrected by habit and experience.

To constitute taste, it is not sufficient to see and to know the beauty of a work. We must feel and be affected by it. Neither will it suffice to feel and be affected in a confused or ignorant manner; it is necessary to distinguish the different shades; nothing ought to escape the promptitude of its discernment; and this is another instance of the resemblance of taste, the sense, to intellectual taste; for an epicure will quickly feel and detect a mixture of two liquors, as the man of taste and connoisseur will, with a single glance, distinguish the mixture of two styles, or a defect by the

side of a beauty. He will be enthusiastically moved with this verse in the Horatii:

> *Que voulez-vous qu'il fît contre trois? – Qu'il mourût!*
> What have him do 'gainst three? – Die!

He feels involuntary disgust at the following:

> *Ou qu'un beau désespoir alors le secourût.*
>
> *– ACT iii, sc. 6.*
>
> Or, whether aided by a fine despair.

As a physical bad taste consists in being pleased only with high seasoning and curious dishes, so a bad taste in the arts is pleased only with studied ornament, and feels not the pure beauty of nature.

A depraved taste in food is gratified with that which disgusts other people: it is a species of disease. A depraved taste in the arts is to be pleased with subjects which disgust accomplished minds, and to prefer the burlesque to the noble, and the finical and the affected to the simple and natural: it is a mental disease. A taste for the arts is, however, much more a thing of formation than physical taste; for although in the latter we sometimes finish by liking those things to which we had in the first instance a repugnance, nature seldom renders it necessary for men in

general to learn what is necessary to them in the way of food, whereas intellectual taste requires time to duly form it. A sensible young man may not, without science, distinguish at once the different parts of a grand choir of music; in a fine picture, his eyes at first sight may not perceive the gradation, the chiaroscuro perspective, agreement of colors, and correctness of design; but by little and little his ears will learn to hear and his eyes to see. He will be affected at the first representation of a fine tragedy, but he will not perceive the merit of the unities, nor the delicate management that allows no one to enter or depart without a sufficient reason, nor that still greater art which concentrates all the interest in a single one; nor, lastly, will he be aware of the difficulties overcome. It is only by habit and reflection, that he arrives spontaneously at that which he was not able to distinguish in the first instance. In a similar way, a national taste is gradually formed where it existed not before, because by degrees the spirit of the best artists is duly imbibed. We accustom ourselves to look at pictures with the eyes of Lebrun, Poussin, and Le Sueur. We listen to musical declamation from the scenes of Quinault with the ears of Lulli, and to the airs and accompaniments with those of Rameau. Finally, books are read in the spirit of the best authors.

If an entire nation is led, during its early culture of the arts, to admire authors abounding in the defects and errors of the age, it is because these authors possess beauties which are admired by everybody, while at the same time readers are not sufficiently

instructed to detect the imperfections. Thus, Lucilius was prized by the Romans, until Horace made them forget him; and Regnier was admired by the French, until the appearance of Boileau; and if old authors who stumble at every step have, notwithstanding, attained great reputation, it is because purer writers have not arisen to open the eyes of their national admirers, as Horace did those of the Romans, and Boileau those of the French.

It is said that there is no disputation on taste, and the observation is correct in respect to physical taste, in which the repugnance felt to certain aliments, and the preference given to others, are not to be disputed, because there is no correction of a defect of the organs. It is not the same with the arts which possess actual beauties, which are discernible by a good taste, and unperceivable by a bad one; which last, however, may frequently be improved. There are also persons with a coldness of soul, as there are defective minds; and in respect to them, it is of little use to dispute concerning predilections, as they possess none.

Taste is arbitrary in many things, as in raiment, decoration, and equipage, which, however, scarcely belong to the department of the fine arts, but are rather affairs of fancy. It is fancy rather than taste which produces so many new fashions.

Taste may become vitiated in a nation, a misfortune which usually follows a period of perfection. Fearing to be called imitators, artists seek new and devious routes, and fly from the pure and beautiful nature of which their predecessors have made

so much advantage. If there is merit in these labors, this merit veils their defects, and the public in love with novelty runs after them, and becomes disgusted, which makes way for still minor efforts to please, in which nature is still more abandoned. Taste loses itself amidst this succession of novelties, the last one of which rapidly effaces the other; the public loses its "whereabout," and regrets in vain the flight of the age of good taste, which will return no more, although a remnant of it is still preserved by certain correct spirits, at a distance from the crowd.

There are vast countries in which taste has never existed: such are they in which society is still rude, where the sexes have little general intercourse, and where certain arts, like sculpture and the painting of animated beings, are forbidden by religion. Where there is little general intercourse, the mind is straitened, its edge is blunted, and nothing is possessed on which a taste can be formed. Where several of the fine arts are wanting, the remainder can seldom find sufficient support, as they go hand in hand, and rest one on the other. On this account, the Asiatics have never produced fine arts in any department, and taste is confined to certain nations of Europe.

SECTION II

Is there not a good and a bad taste? Without doubt; although men differ in opinions, manners, and customs. The best taste in every species of cultivation is to imitate nature with the highest

fidelity, energy, and grace. But is not grace arbitrary? No, since it consists in giving animation and sweetness to the objects represented. Between two men, the one of whom is gross and the other refined, it will readily be allowed that one possesses more grace than the other.

Before a polished period arose, Voiture, who in his rage for embroidering nothings, was occasionally refined and agreeable, wrote some verses to the great Condé upon his illness, which are still regarded as very tasteful, and among the best of this author.

At the same time, L'Étoile, who passed for a genius – L'Étoile, one of the five authors who constructed tragedies for Cardinal Richelieu – made some verses, which are printed at the end of Malherbe and Racan. When compared with those of Voiture referred to, every reader will allow that the verses of Voiture are the production of a courtier of good taste, and those of L'Étoile the labor of a coarse and unintellectual pretender.

It is a pity that we can gift Voiture with occasional taste only: his famous letter from the carp to the pike, which enjoyed so much reputation, is a too extended pleasantry, and in passages exhibiting very little nature. Is it not a mixture of refinement and coarseness, of the true and the false? Was it right to say to the great Condé, who was called "the pike" by a party among the courtiers, that at his name the whales of the North perspired profusely, and that the subjects of the emperor had expected to fry and to eat him with a grain of salt? Was it proper to write so many letters, only to show a little of the wit which consists in

puns and conceits?

Are we not disgusted when Voiture says to the great Condé, on the taking of Dunkirk: "I expect you to seize the moon with your teeth." Voiture apparently acquired this false taste from Marini, who came into France with Mary of Medici. Voiture and Costar frequently cite him as a model in their letters. They admire his description of the rose, daughter of April, virgin and queen, seated on a thorny throne, extending majestically a flowery sceptre, having for courtiers and ministers the amorous family of the zephyrs, and wearing a crown of gold and a robe of scarlet:

> Bella figlia d'Aprile,
> Verginella e reina,
> Sic lo spinoso trono
> Del verde cespo assisa,
> De' fior' lo scettro in maestà sostiene;
> E corteggiata intorno
> Da lascivia famiglia
> Di Zefiri ministri,
> Porta d'or' la corona et dostro il manto.

Voiture, in his thirty-fifth letter to Costar, compliments the musical atom of Marini, the feathered voice, the living breath clothed in plumage, the winged song, the small spirit of harmony, hidden amidst diminutive lungs; all of which terms are employed to convey the word nightingale:

Una voce pennuta, un suon' volante,
E vestito di penne, un vivo fiato,
Una piuma canora, un canto alato,
Un spiritel' che d'armonia composto
Vive in auguste vise ere nascosto.

The bad taste of Balzac was of a different description; he composed familiar letters in a fustian style. He wrote to the Cardinal de la Valette, that neither in the deserts of Libya, nor in the abyss of the sea, there was so furious a monster as the sciatica; and that if tyrants, whose memory is odious to us, had instruments of cruelty in their possession equal to the sciatica, the martyrs would have endured them for their religion.

These emphatic exaggerations – these long and stately periods, so opposed to the epistolary style – these fastidious declamations, garnished with Greek and Latin, concerning two middling sonnets, the merits of which divided the court and the town, and upon the miserable tragedy of "Herod the Infanticide," – all indicate a time and a taste which were yet to be formed and corrected. Even "Cinna," and the "Provincial Letters," which astonished the nations, had not yet cleared away the rust.

As an artist forms his taste by degrees, so does a nation. It stagnates for a long time in barbarism; then it elevates itself feebly, until at length a noon appears, after which we witness nothing but a long and melancholy twilight. It has long been agreed, that in spite of the solicitude of Francis I., to produce a

taste in France for the fine arts, this taste was not formed until towards the age of Louis XIV., and we already begin to complain of its degeneracy. The Greeks of the lower empire confess, that the taste which reigned in the days of Pericles was lost among them, and the modern Greeks admit the same thing. Quintilian allows that the taste of the Romans began to decline in his days.

Lope de Vega made great complaints of the bad taste of the Spaniards. The Italians perceived, among the first, that everything had declined among them since their immortal sixteenth century, and that they have witnessed the decline of the arts, which they caused to spring up.

Addison often attacks the bad taste of the English in more than one department – as well when he ridicules the carved wig of Sir Cloudesley Shovel, as when he testifies his contempt for a serious employment of conceit and pun, or the introduction of mountebanks in tragedy.

If, therefore, the most gifted minds allow that taste has been wanting at certain periods in their country, their neighbors may certainly feel it, as lookers-on; and as it is evident among ourselves that one man has a good and another a bad taste, it is equally evident that of two contemporary nations, the one may be rude and gross, and the other refined and natural.

The misfortune is, that when we speak this truth, we disgust the whole nation to which we allude, as we provoke an individual of bad taste when we seek to improve him. It is better to wait until time and example instruct a nation which sins against taste.

It is in this way that the Spaniards are beginning to reform their drama, and the Germans to create one.

Of National Taste.

There is beauty of all times and of all places, and there is likewise local beauty. Eloquence ought to be everywhere persuasive, grief affecting, anger impetuous, wisdom tranquil; but the details which may gratify a citizen of London, would have little effect on an inhabitant of Paris. The English drew some of their most happy metaphors and comparisons from the marine, while Parisians seldom see anything of ships. All which affects an Englishman in relation to liberty, his rights and his privileges, would make little impression on a Frenchman.

The state of the climate will introduce into a cold and humid country a taste for architecture, furniture, and clothing, which may be very good, but not admissible at Rome or in Sicily. Theocritus and Virgil, in their eclogues, boast of the shades and of the cooling freshness of the fountains. Thomson, in his "Seasons," dwells upon contrary attractions.

An enlightened nation with little sociability will not have the same points of ridicule as a nation equally intellectual, which gives in to the spirit of society even to indiscretion; and, in consequence, these two nations will differ materially in their comedy. Poetry will be very different in a country where women are secluded, and in another in which they enjoy liberty without bounds.

But it will always be true that the pastoral painting of Virgil

exceeds that of Thomson, and that there has been more taste on the banks of the Tiber than on those of the Thames; that the natural scenes of the Pastor Fido are incomparably superior to the shepherdizing of Racan; and that Racine and Molière are inspired persons in comparison with the dramatists of other theatres.

On the Taste of Connoisseurs.

In general, a refined and certain taste consists in a quick feeling of beauty amidst defects, and defects amidst beauties. The epicure is he who can discern the adulteration of wines, and feel the predominating flavor in his viands, of which his associates entertain only a confused and general perception.

Are not those deceived who say, that it is a misfortune to possess too refined a taste, and to be too much of a connoisseur; that in consequence we become too much occupied by defects, and insensible to beauties, which are lost by this fastidiousness? Is it not, on the contrary, certain that men of taste alone enjoy true pleasure, who see, hear, and feel, that which escapes persons less sensitively organized, and less mentally disciplined?

The connoisseur in music, in painting, in architecture, in poetry, in medals, etc., experiences sensations of which the vulgar have no comprehension; the discovery even of a fault pleases him, and makes him feel the beauties with more animation. It is the advantage of a good sight over a bad one. The man of taste has other eyes, other ears, and another tact from the uncultivated man; he is displeased with the poor draperies of

Raphael, but he admires the noble purity of his conception. He takes a pleasure in discovering that the children of Laocoon bear no proportion to the height of their father, but the whole group makes him tremble, while other spectators are unmoved.

The celebrated sculptor, man of letters and of genius, who placed the colossal statue of Peter the Great at St. Petersburg, criticises with reason the attitude of the Moses of Michelangelo, and his small, tight vest, which is not even an Oriental costume; but, at the same time, he contemplates the air and expression of the head with ecstasy.

Rarity of Men of Taste.

It is afflicting to reflect on the prodigious number of men – above all, in cold and damp climates – who possess not the least spark of taste, who care not for the fine arts, who never read, and of whom a large portion read only a journal once a month, in order to be put in possession of current matter, and to furnish themselves with the ability of saying things at random, on subjects in regard to which they have only confused ideas.

Enter into a small provincial town: how rarely will you find more than one or two good libraries, and those private. Even in the capital of the provinces which possess academies, taste is very rare.

It is necessary to select the capital of a great kingdom to form the abode of taste, and yet even there it is very partially divided among a small number, the populace being wholly excluded. It is unknown to the families of traders, and those who are occupied

in making fortunes, who are either engrossed with domestic details, or divided between unintellectual idleness and a game at cards. Every place which contains the courts of law, the offices of revenue, government, and commerce, is closed against the fine arts. It is the reproach of the human mind that a taste for the common and ordinary introduces only opulent idleness. I knew a commissioner in one of the offices at Versailles, who exclaimed: "I am very unhappy; I have not time to acquire a taste."

In a town like Paris, peopled with more than six hundred thousand persons, I do not think there are three thousand who cultivate a taste for the fine arts. When a dramatic masterpiece is represented, a circumstance so very rare, people exclaim: "All Paris is enchanted," but only three thousand copies, more or less, are printed.

Taste, then, like philosophy, belongs only to a small number of privileged souls. It was, therefore, great happiness for France to possess, in Louis XIV., a king born with taste.

Pauci, quos æquus amavit
Jupiter, aut ardens, evexit ad æthera virtus
Dis geniti, potuere.

– ÆNEID, b. vi, v. 129 and s.

To few great Jupiter imparts his grace,
And those of shining worth and heavenly race.

– DRYDEN.

Ovid has said in vain, that God has created us to look up to heaven: "*Erectos ad sidera tollere vultus*." Men are always crouching on the ground. Why has a misshapen statue, or a bad picture, where the figures are disproportionate, never passed for a masterpiece? Why has an ill-built house never been regarded as a fine monument of architecture? Why in music will not sharp and discordant sounds please the ears of any one? And yet, very bad and barbarous tragedies, written in a style perfectly Allobrogian, have succeeded, even after the sublime scenes of Corneille, the affecting ones of Racine, and the fine pieces written since the latter poet. It is only at the theatre that we sometimes see detestable compositions succeed both in tragedy and comedy.

What is the reason of it? It is, that a species of delusion prevails at the theatre; it is, that the success depends upon two or three actors, and sometimes even upon a single one; and, above all, that a cabal is formed in favor of such pieces, whilst men of taste never form any. This cabal often lasts for an entire generation, and it is so much the more active, as its object is less to elevate the bad author than to depress the good one. A century possibly is necessary to adjust the real value of things in the drama.

There are three kinds of taste, which in the long run prevail in the empire of the arts. Poussin was obliged to quit France and

leave the field to an inferior painter; Le Moine killed himself in despair; and Vanloo was near quitting the kingdom, to exercise his talents elsewhere. Connoisseurs alone have put all of them in possession of the rank belonging to them. We often witness all kinds of bad works meet with prodigious success. The solecisms, barbarisms, false statement, and extravagant bombast, are not felt for awhile, because the cabal and the senseless enthusiasm of the vulgar produce an intoxication which discriminates in nothing. The connoisseurs alone bring back the public in due time; and it is the only difference which exists between the most enlightened and the most cultivated of nations for the vulgar of Paris are in no respect beyond; the vulgar of other countries; but in Paris there is a sufficient number of correct opinions to lead the crowd. This crowd is rapidly excited in popular movements, but many years are necessary to establish in it a general good taste in the arts.

TAUROBOLIUM

Taurobolium, a sacrifice of expiation, very common in the third and fourth centuries. The throat of a bull was cut on a great stone slightly hollowed and perforated in various places. Underneath this stone was a trench, in which the person whose offence called for expiation received upon his body and his face the blood of the immolated animal. Julian the Philosopher condescended to submit to this expiation, to reconcile himself to the priests of the Gentiles.

TAX – FEE

Pope Pius II., in an epistle to John Peregal, acknowledges that the Roman court gives nothing without money; it sells even the imposition of hands and the gifts of the Holy Ghost; nor does it grant the remission of sins to any but the rich.

Before him, St. Antonine, archbishop of Florence, had observed that in the time of Boniface IX., who died in 1404, the Roman court was so infamously stained with simony, that benefices were conferred, not so much on merit, as on those who brought a deal of money. He adds, that this pope filled the world with plenary indulgences; so that the small churches, on their festival days, obtained them at a low price.

That pontiff's secretary, Theodoric de Nieur, does indeed inform us, that Boniface sent questors into different kingdoms, to sell indulgences to such as should offer them as much money as it would have cost them to make a journey to Rome to fetch them; so that they remitted all sins, even without penance, to such as confessed, and granted them, for money, dispensations for irregularities of every sort; saying, that they had in that respect all the power which Christ had granted to Peter, of binding and unbinding on earth.

And, what is still more singular, the price of every crime is fixed in a Latin work, printed at Rome by order of Leo X., and published on November 18, 1514, under the title of "Taxes of

the Holy and Apostolic Chancery and Penitentiary."

Among many other editions of this book, published in different countries, the Paris edition – quarto 1520, Toussaint Denis, Rue St. Jacques, at the wooden cross, near St. Yves, with the king's privilege, for three years – bears in the frontispiece the arms of France, and those of the house of Medici, to which Leo N. belonged. This must have deceived the author of the "Picture of the Popes" (*Tableau de Papes*), who attributes the establishment of these taxes to Leo X., although Polydore Virgil, and Cardinal d'Ossat agree in fixing the period of the invention of the chancery tax about the year 1320, and the commencement of the penitentiary tax about sixteen years later, in the time of Benedict XII.

To give some idea of these taxes, we will here copy a few articles from the chapter of absolutions: Absolution for one who has carnally known his mother, his sister, etc., costs five drachmas. Absolution for one who has deflowered a virgin, six drachmas. Absolution for one who has revealed another's confession, seven drachmas. Absolution for one who has killed his father, his mother, etc., five drachmas. And so of other sins, as we shall shortly see; but, at the end of the book, the prices are estimated in ducats.

A sort of letters too are here spoken of, called confessional, by which, at the approach of death, the pope permits a confessor to be chosen, who gives full pardon for every sin; these letters are granted only to princes, and not to them without great difficulty.

These particulars will be found in page 32 of the Paris edition.

The court of Rome was at length ashamed of this book, and suppressed it as far as it was able. It was even inserted in the expurgatory index of the Council of Trent, on the false supposition that heretics had corrupted it.

It is true that Antoine Du Pinet, a French gentleman of Franche-Comté, had an abstract of it printed at Lyons in 1564, under this title: "Casual Perquisites of the Pope's Shop" (*Taxes des Parties Casuelles de la Boutique du Pape*), "taken from the Decrees, Councils, and Canons, ancient and modern, in order to verify the discipline formerly observed in the Church; by A.D.P." But, although, he does not inform us that his work is but an abridgment of the other, yet, far from corrupting his original, he on the contrary strikes out of it some odious passages, such as the following, beginning page 23, line 9 from the bottom, in the Paris edition: "And carefully observe, that these kinds of graces and dispensations are not granted to the poor, because, not having wherewith, they cannot be consoled."

It is also true, that Du Pinet estimates these taxes in tournois, ducats, and carlins; but, as he observes (page 42) that the carlins and the drachmas are of the same value, the substituting for the tax of five, six, or seven drachmas in the original, the like number of carlins, is not falsifying it. We have a proof of this in the four articles already quoted from the original.

Absolution – says Du Pinet – for one who has a carnal knowledge of his mother, his sister, or any of his kindred by birth

or affinity, or his godmother, is taxed at five carlins. Absolution for one who deflowers a young woman, is taxed at six carlins. Absolution for one who reveals the confession of a penitent, is taxed at seven carlins. Absolution for one who has killed his father, his mother, his brother, his sister, his wife, or any of his kindred – they being of the laity – is taxed at five carlins; for if the deceased was an ecclesiastic, the homicide would be obliged to visit the sanctuary. We will here repeat a few others.

Absolution – continues Du Pinet – for any act of fornication whatsoever, committed by a clerk, whether with a nun in the cloister or out of the cloister, or with any of his kinswomen, or with his spiritual daughter, or with any other woman whatsoever, costs thirty-six tournois, three ducats. Absolution for a priest who keeps a concubine, twenty-one tournois, live ducats, six carlins. The absolution of a layman for all sorts of sins of the flesh, is given at the tribunal of conscience for six tournois, two ducats.

The absolution of a layman for the crime of adultery, given at the tribunal of conscience, costs four tournois; and if the adultery is accompanied by incest, six tournois must be paid per head. If, besides these crimes, is required the absolution of the sin against nature, or of bestiality, there must be paid ninety tournois, twelve ducats, six carlins; but if only the absolution of the crime against nature, or of bestiality, is required, it will cost only thirty-six tournois, nine ducats.

A woman who has taken a beverage to procure an abortion, or the father who has caused her to take it, shall pay four tournois,

one ducat, eight carlins; and if a stranger has given her the said beverage, he shall pay four tournois, one ducat, five carlins.

A father, a mother, or any other relative, who has smothered a child, shall pay four tournois, one ducat, eight carlins; and if it has been killed by the husband and wife together, they shall pay six tournois, two ducats.

The tax granted by the datary for the contracting of marriage out of the permitted seasons, is twenty carlins; and in the permitted periods, if the contracting parties are the second or third degree of kindred, it is commonly twenty-five ducats, and four for expediting the bulls; and in the fourth degree, seven tournois, one ducat, six carlins.

The dispensation of a layman from fasting on the days appointed by the Church, and the permission to eat cheese, are taxed at twenty carlins. The permission to eat meat and eggs on forbidden days is taxed at twelve carlins; and that to eat butter, cheese, etc., at six tournois for one person only; and at twelve tournois, three ducats, six carlins for a whole family, or for several relatives.

The absolution of an apostate and a vagabond, who wishes to return into the pale of the Church, costs twelve tournois, three ducats, six carlins. The absolution and reinstatement of one who is guilty of sacrilege, robbery, burning, rapine, perjury, and the like, is taxed at thirty-six tournois, nine ducats.

Absolution for a servant who detains his deceased master's property, for the payment of his wages, and after receiving

notice does not restore it, provided the property so detained does not exceed the amount of his wages, is taxed in the tribunal of conscience at only six tournois, two ducats. For changing the clauses of a will, the ordinary tax is twelve tournois, three ducats, six carlins. The permission to change one's proper name costs nine tournois, two ducats, nine carlins; and to change the surname and mode of signing, six tournois, two ducats. The permission to have a portable altar for one person only, is taxed at ten carlins: and to have a domestic chapel on account of the distance of the parish church, and furnish it with baptismal fonts and chaplains, thirty carlins.

Lastly, the permission to convey merchandise, one or more times, to the countries of the infidels, and in general to traffic and sell merchandise without being obliged to obtain permission from the temporal lords of the respected places, even though they be kings or emperors, with all the very ample derogatory clauses, is taxed at only twenty-four tournois, six ducats.

This permission, which supersedes that of the temporal lords, is a fresh evidence of the papal pretensions, which we have already spoken of in the article on "Bull." Besides, it is known that all rescripts, or expeditions for benefices, are still paid for at Rome according to the tax; and this charge always falls at last on the laity, by the impositions which the subordinate clergy exact from them. We shall here notice only the fees for marriages and burials.

A decree of the Parliament of Paris, of May 19, 1409,

provides that every one shall be at liberty to sleep with his wife as soon as he pleases after the celebration of the marriage, without waiting for leave from the bishop of Amiens, and without paying the fee required by that prelate for taking off his prohibitions to consummate the marriage during the first three nights of the nuptials. The monks of St. Stephen of Nevers were deprived of the same fee by another decree of September 27, 1591. Some theologians have asserted, that it took its origin from the fourth Council of Carthage, which had ordained it for the reverence of the matrimonial benediction. But as that council did not order its prohibition to be evaded by paying, it is more likely that this tax was a consequence of the infamous custom which gave to certain lords the first nuptial night of the brides of their vassals. Buchanan thinks that this usage began in Scotland under King Evan.

Be this as it may, the lords of Prellay and Persanny, in Piedmont, called this privilege "*carrajio*"; but having refused to commute it for a reasonable payment, the vassals revolted, and put themselves under Amadeus VI., fourteenth count of Savoy.

There is still preserved a *procès-verbal*, drawn up by M. Jean Fraguier, auditor in the *Chambre des Comptes*, at Paris, by virtue of a decree of the said chamber of April 7, 1507, for valuing the county of Eu, fallen into the king's keeping by the minority of the children of the count of Nevers, and his wife Charlotte de Bourbon. In the chapter of the revenue of the barony of St. Martin-le-Gaillard, dependent on the county of Eu, it is said:

"Item, the said lord, at the said place of St. Martin, has the right of 'cuissage' in case of marriage."

The lords of Souloire had the like privilege, and having omitted it in the acknowledgment made by them to their sovereign, the lord of Montlevrier, the acknowledgment was disapproved; but by deed of Dec. 15, 1607, the sieur de Montlevrier formally renounced it; and these shameful privileges have everywhere been converted into small payments, called "marchetta."

Now, when our prelates had fiefs, they thought – as the judicious Fleury remarks – that they had as bishops what they possessed only as lords; and the curates, as their under-vassals, bethought themselves of blessing their nuptial bed, which brought them a small fee under the name of wedding-dishes – i.e., their dinner, in money or in kind. On one of these occasions the following quatrain was put by a country curate under the pillow of a very aged president, who married a young woman named La Montagne. He alludes to Moses' horns, which are spoken of in Exodus.

> Le Président à barbe grise
> Sur La Montagne va monter;
> Mais certes il peut bien compter
> D'en descendre comme Moïse.

A word or two on the fees exacted by the clergy for the burial of the laity. Formerly, at the decease of each individual,

the bishops had the contents of his will made known to them; and forbade those to receive the rights of sepulchre who had died "unconfessed," i.e., left no legacy to the Church, unless the relatives went to the official, who commissioned a priest, or some other ecclesiastic, to repair the fault of the deceased, and make a legacy in his name. The curates also opposed the profession of such as wished to turn monks, until they had paid their burial-fees; saying that since they died to the world, it was but right that they should discharge what would have been due from them had they been interred.

But the frequent disputes occasioned by these vexations obliged the magistrates to fix the rate of these singular fees. The following is extracted from a regulation on this subject, brought in by Francis de Harlai de Chamvallon, archbishop of Paris, on May 30, 1693, and passed in the court of parliament on the tenth of June following:

Marriages

Liv. Sous.

For the publication of the bans..... 1 10 For the betrothing..... 2 0 For celebrating the marriage..... 6 0 For the certificate of the publication ofthe bans, and the permission given tothe future husband to go and be marriedin the parish of his future wife… 5 0 For the wedding mass..... 1 10 For the vicar..... 1 10For the

clerk of the sacrament..... 1 10 For blessing the bed..... 1 10

Funeral Processions

Of children under seven years old, whenthe clergy do not go in a body: For the curate..... 1 10 For each priest..... 1 10When the clergy go in a body: For the curial fee..... 4 0For the presence of the curate..... 2 0 For each priest..... 0 10 For the vicar..... 1 10 For each singing-boy, when they carry the body..... 8 0 And when they do not carry it..... 5 0And so of young persons from seven totwelve years old. Of persons above twelve years old: For the curial fee..... 6 0 For the curate's attendance..... 4 0 For each vicar..... 2 0 For the priest..... 1 0 For each singing-boy..... 0 10 Each of the priests that watch the bodyin the night, for drink, etc..... 3 0 And in the day, each..... 2 0 For the celebration of the mass..... 1 0For the service extraordinary; called thecomplete service; viz., the vigils andthe two masses of the Holy Ghost andthe Holy Virgin..... 4 10 For each of the priests that carry thebody..... 1 0 For carrying the great cross..... 0 10For the holy water-pot carrier..... 0 5 For carrying the little cross..... 0 5 For the clerk of the processions… 0 1 For conveying bodies from one church toanother there shall be paid, for eachof the above fees, one-half more. For the reception of bodies thus conveyed: To the curate..... 6 10 To the vicar..... 1 10 To each

priest..... 0 15

TEARS

Tears are the silent language of grief. But why? What relation is there between a melancholy idea and this limpid and briny liquid filtered through a little gland into the external corner of the eye which moistens the conjunctiva and little lachrymal points, whence it descends into the nose and mouth by the reservoir called the lachrymal duct, and by its conduits? Why in women and children, whose organs are of a delicate texture, are tears more easily excited by grief than in men, whose formation is firmer?

Has nature intended to excite compassion in us at the sight of these tears, which soften us and lead us to help those who shed them? The female savage is as strongly determined to assist her child who cries, as a lady of the court would be, and perhaps more so, because she has fewer distractions and passions.

Everything in the animal body has, no doubt, its object. The eyes, particularly, have mathematical relations so evident, so demonstrable, so admirable with the rays of light; this mechanism is so divine, that I should be tempted to take for the delirium of a high fever, the audacity of denying the final causes of the structure of our eyes. The use of tears appears not to have so determined and striking an object; but it is probable that nature caused them to flow in order to excite us to pity.

There are women who are accused of weeping when they

choose. I am not at all surprised at their talent. A lively, sensible, and tender imagination can fix upon some object, on some melancholy recollection, and represent it in such lively colors as to draw tears; which happens to several performers, and particularly to actresses on the stage.

Women who imitate them in the interior of their houses, join to this talent the little fraud of appearing to weep for their husbands, while they really weep for their lovers. Their tears are true, but the object of them is false.

It is impossible to affect tears without a subject, in the same manner as we can affect to laugh. We must be sensibly touched to force the lachrymal gland to compress itself, and to spread its liquor on the orbit of the eye; but the will alone is required to laugh.

We demand why the same man, who has seen with a dry eye the most atrocious events, and even committed crimes with sang-froid, will weep at the theatre at the representation of similar events and crimes? It is, that he sees them not with the same eyes; he sees them with those of the author and the actor. He is no longer the same man; he was barbarous, he was agitated with furious passions, when he saw an innocent woman killed, when he stained himself with the blood of his friend; he became a man again at the representation of it. His soul was filled with a stormy tumult; it is now tranquil and void, and nature re-entering it, he sheds virtuous tears. Such is the true merit, the great good of theatrical representation, which can never be effected by the cold

declamation of an orator paid to tire an audience for an hour.

The capitoul David, who; without emotion, saw and caused the innocent Calas to die on the wheel, would have shed tears at seeing his own crime in a well-written and well-acted tragedy. Pope has elegantly said this in the prologue to Addison's Cato:

> Tyrants no more their savage nature kept,
> And foes to virtue wondered how they wept.

TERELAS

Terelas, Pterelas, or Pterlaus, just which you please, was the son of Taphus, or Taphius. Which signifies what you say? Gently, I will tell you. This Terelas had a golden lock, to which was attached the destiny of the town of Taphia, and what is more, this lock rendered Terelas immortal, as he would not die while this lock remained upon his head; for this reason he never combed it, lest he should comb it off. An immortality, however, which depends upon a lock of hair, is not the most certain of all things.

Amphitryon, general of the republic of Thebes, besieged Taphia, and the daughter of King Terelas became desperately in love with him on seeing him pass the ramparts. Thus excited, she stole to her father in the dead of night, cut off his golden lock, and sent it to the general, in consequence of which the town was taken, and Terelas killed. Some learned men assure us, that it was the wife of Terelas who played him this ill turn; and as they ground their opinions upon great authorities, it might be rendered the subject of a useful dissertation. I confess that I am somewhat inclined to be of the opinion of those learned persons, as it appears to me that a wife is usually less timorous than a daughter.

The same thing happened to Nisus, king of Megara, which town was besieged by Minos. Scylla, the daughter of Nisus, became madly in love with him; and although in point of fact,

her father did not possess a lock of gold, he had one of purple, and it is known that on this lock depended equally his life and the fate of the Megarian Empire. To oblige Minos, the dutiful Scylla cut it off, and presented it to her lover.

"All the history of Minos is true," writes the profound Bannier; "and this is attested by all antiquity." I believe it precisely as I do that of Terelas, but I am embarrassed between the profound Calmet and the profound Huet. Calmet is of opinion, that the adventure of the lock of Nisus presented to Minos, and that of Terelas given to Amphitryon, are obviously taken from the genuine history of Samson. Huet the demonstrator, on the contrary shows, that Minos is evidently Moses, as cutting out the letters *n* and *e*, one of these names is the anagram of the other.

But, notwithstanding the demonstration of Huet, I am entirely on the side of the refined Dom Calmet, and for those who are of the opinion that all which relates to the locks of Terelas and of Nisus is connected with the hair of Samson. The most convincing of my triumphant reasons is, that without reference to the family of Terelas, with the metamorphoses of which I am unacquainted, it is certain that Scylla was changed into a lark, and her father Nisus into a sparrow-hawk. Now, Bochart being of opinion that a sparrow-hawk is called "neis" in Hebrew, I thence conclude, that the history of Terelas, Amphitryon, Nisus, and Minos is copied from the history of Samson.

I am aware that a dreadful sect has arisen in our days, equally

detested by God and man, who pretend that the Greek fables are more ancient than the Jewish history; that the Greeks never heard a word of Samson any more than of Adam, Eve, Cain, Abel, etc., which names are not cited by any Greek author. They assert, as we have modestly intimated – in the articles on "Bacchus" and "Jew" – that the Greeks could not possibly take anything from the Jews, but that the Jews might derive something from the Greeks.

I answer with the doctor Hayet, the doctor Gauchat, the ex-Jesuit Patouillet, and the ex-Jesuit Paulian, that this is the most damnable heresy which ever issued from hell; that it was formerly anathematized in full parliament, on petition, and condemned in the report of the Sieur P.; and finally, that if indulgence be extended to those who support such frightful systems, there will be no more certainty in the world; but that Antichrist will quickly arrive, if he has not come already.

TESTES

SECTION I

This word is scientific, and a little obscure, signifying small witnesses. Sixtus V., a Cordelier become pope, declared, by his letter of the 25th of June, 1587, to his nuncio in Spain, that he must unmarry all those who were not possessed of testicles. It seems by this order, which was executed by Philip II., that there were many husbands in Spain deprived of these two organs. But how could a man, who had been a Cordelier, be ignorant that the testicles of men are often hidden in the abdomen, and that they are equally if not more effective in that situation? We have beheld in France three brothers of the highest rank, one of whom possessed three, the other only one, while the third possessed no appearance of any, and yet was the most vigorous of the three.

The angelic doctor, who was simply a Jacobin, decides that two testicles are "*de essentia matrimonii*" (of the essence of marriage); in which opinion he is followed by Ricardus, Scotus, Durandus, and Sylvius. If you are not able to obtain a sight of the pleadings of the advocate Sebastian Rouillard, in 1600, in favor of the testicles of his client, concealed in his abdomen, at least consult the dictionary of Bayle, at the article "Quellenec." You

will there discover, that the wicked wife of the client of Sebastian Rouillard wished to render her marriage void, on the plea that her husband could not exhibit testicles. The defendant replied, that he had perfectly fulfilled his matrimonial duties, and offered the usual proof of a re-performance of them in full assembly. The jilt replied, that this trial was too offensive to her modesty, and was, moreover, superfluous, since the defendant was visibly deprived of testicles, and that messieurs of the assembly were fully aware that testicles are necessary to perfect consummation.

I am unacquainted with the result of this process, but I suspect that her husband lost his cause. What induces me to think so is, that the same Parliament of Paris, on the 8th of January, 1665, issued a decree, asserting the necessity of two visible testicles, without which marriage was not to be contracted. Had there been any member in the assembly in the situation described, and reduced to the necessity of being a witness, he might have convinced the assembly that it decided without a due knowledge of circumstances. Pontas may be profitably consulted on testicles, as well as upon any other subject. He was a sub-penitentiary, who decided every sort of case, and who sometimes comes near to Sanchez.

SECTION II

A word or two on hermaphrodites. A prejudice has for a long time crept into the Russian Church, that it is not lawful to

say mass without testicles; or, at least, they must be hid in the officiator's pocket. This ancient idea was founded in the Council of Nice, who forbade the admission into orders of those who mutilated themselves. The example of Origen, and of certain enthusiasts, was the cause of this order, which was confirmed a second time in the Council of Aries.

The Greek Church did not exclude from the altar those who had endured the operation of Origen against their own consent. The patriarchs of Constantinople, Nicetas, Ignatius, Photius, and Methodius, were eunuchs. At present this point of discipline seems undecided in the Catholic Church. The most general opinion, however, is, that in order to be ordained a priest, a eunuch will require a dispensation.

The banishment of eunuchs from the service of the altar appears contrary to the purity and chastity which the service exacts; and certainly such of the priests as confess handsome women and girls would be exposed to less temptation. Opposing reasons of convenience and decorum have determined those who make these laws.

In Leviticus, all corporeal defects are excluded from the service of the altar – the blind, the crooked, the maimed, the lame, the one-eyed, the leper, the scabby, long noses, and short noses. Eunuchs are not spoken of, as there were none among the Jews. Those who acted as eunuchs in the service of their kings, were foreigners.

It has been demanded whether an animal, a man for example,

can possess at once testicles and ovaries, or the glands which are taken for ovaries; in a word, the distinctive organs of both sexes? Can nature form veritable hermaphrodites, and can a hermaphrodite be rendered pregnant? I answer, that I know nothing about it, nor the ten-thousandth part of what is within the operation of nature. I believe, however, that Europe has never witnessed a genuine hermaphrodite, nor has it indeed produced elephants, zebras, giraffes, ostriches, and many more of the animals which inhabit Asia, Africa, and America. It is hazardous to assert, that because we never beheld a thing, it does not exist.

Examine "Cheselden," page 34, and you will behold there a very good delineation of an animal man and woman – a negro and negress of Angola, which was brought to London in its infancy, and carefully examined by this celebrated surgeon, as much distinguished for his probity as his information. The plate is entitled "Members of an Hermaphrodite Negro, of the Age of Twenty-six Years, of both Sexes." They are not absolutely perfect, but they exhibit a strange mixture of the one and the other.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.