

ESSAYS OF MONTAIGNE

(VOLUME-II)

{COMPLETE & ILLUSTRATED}

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BY

MICHEL MONTAIGNE

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About Author



THE LIFE OF MONTAIGNE

The author of the *Essays* was born, as he informs us himself, between eleven and twelve o'clock in the day, the last of February 1533, at the chateau of St. Michel de Montaigne. His father, Pierre Eyquem, esquire, was successively first Jurat of the town of Bordeaux (1530), Under-Mayor 1536, Jurat for the second time in 1540, Procureur in 1546, and at length Mayor from 1553 to 1556. He was a man of austere probity, who had "a particular regard for honour and for propriety in his person and attire . . . a mighty good faith in his speech, and a conscience and a religious feeling inclining to superstition, rather than to the other extreme. Between 1556 and 1563 an important incident occurred in the life of Montaigne, in the commencement of his romantic friendship with Etienne de la Boetie, whom he had met, as he tells us, by pure chance at some festive celebration in the town. From their very first interview the two found themselves drawn irresistibly close to one another, and during six years this alliance was foremost in the heart of Montaigne, as it was afterwards in his memory, when death had severed it.

* * * * *

Preface (About the Book)

PREFACE

The present publication is intended to supply a recognised deficiency in our literature—a library edition of the *Essays of Montaigne*. This great French writer deserves to be regarded as a classic, not only in the land of his birth, but in all countries and in all literatures. His *Essays*, which are at once the most celebrated and the most permanent of his productions, form a magazine out of which such minds as those of Bacon and Shakespeare did not disdain to help themselves; and, indeed, as Hallam observes, the Frenchman's literary importance largely results from the share which his mind had in influencing other minds, coeval and subsequent. But, at the same time, estimating the value and rank of the essayist, we are not to leave out of the account the drawbacks and the circumstances of the period: the imperfect state of education, the comparative scarcity of books, and the limited opportunities of intellectual intercourse. Montaigne freely borrowed of others, and he has found men willing to borrow of him as freely. We need not wonder at the reputation which he with seeming facility achieved. He was, without being aware of it, the leader of a new school in letters and morals. His book was different from all others which were at that date in the world. It diverted the ancient currents of thought into new channels. It told its readers, with unexampled frankness, what its writer's opinion was about men and things, and threw what must have been a strange kind of new light on many matters but darkly understood. Above all, the essayist uncased himself, and made his intellectual and physical organism public property. He took the world into his confidence on all subjects. His essays were a sort of literary anatomy, where we get a diagnosis of the writer's mind, made by himself at different levels and under a large variety of operating influences.

Of all egotists, Montaigne, if not the greatest, was the most fascinating, because, perhaps, he was the least affected and most truthful. What he did, and what he had professed to do, was to dissect his mind, and show us, as best he could, how it was made, and what relation it bore to external objects. He investigated his mental structure as a schoolboy pulls his watch to pieces, to examine the mechanism of the works; and the result, accompanied by illustrations abounding with originality and force, he delivered to his fellow-men in a book.

W. C. H.

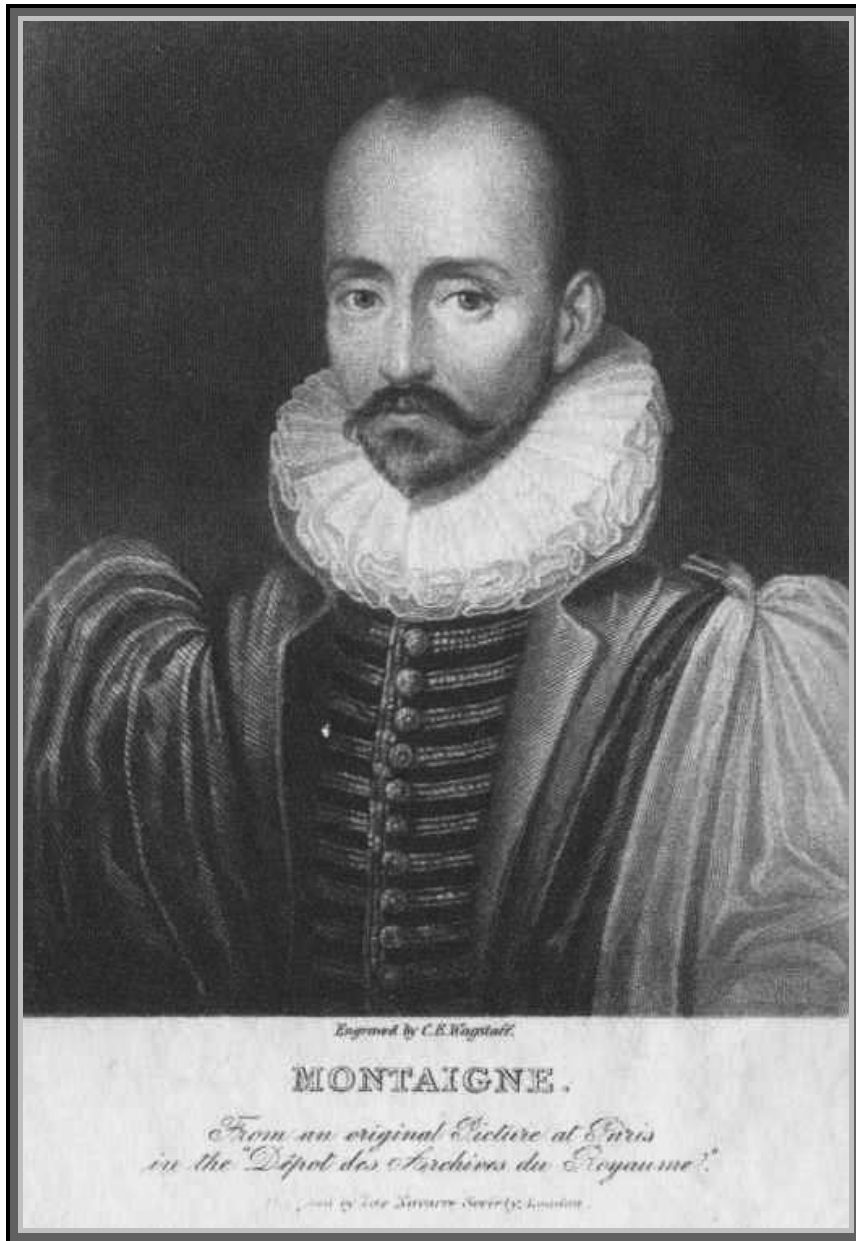
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ESSAYS OF MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE

Chapter XIV

—THAT OUR MIND HINDERS ITSELF

'Tis a pleasant imagination to fancy a mind exactly balanced betwixt two equal desires: for, doubtless, it can never pitch upon either, forasmuch as the choice and application would manifest an inequality of esteem; and were we set betwixt the bottle and the ham, with an equal appetite to drink and eat, there would doubtless be no remedy, but we must die of thirst and hunger. To provide against this inconvenience, the Stoics, when they are asked whence the election in the soul of two indifferent things proceeds, and that makes us, out of a great number of crowns, rather take one than another, they being all alike, and there being no reason to incline us to such a preference, make answer, that this movement of the soul is extraordinary and irregular, entering into us by a foreign, accidental, and fortuitous impulse. It might rather, methinks, he said, that nothing presents itself to us wherein there is not some difference, how little soever; and that, either by the sight or touch, there is always some choice that, though it be imperceptibly, tempts and attracts us; so, whoever shall presuppose a packthread equally strong throughout, it is utterly impossible it should break; for, where will you have the breaking to begin? and that it should break altogether is not in nature. Whoever, also, should hereunto join the geometrical propositions that, by the certainty of their demonstrations, conclude the contained to be greater than the containing, the centre to be as great as its circumference, and that find out two lines incessantly approaching each other, which yet can never meet, and the philosopher's stone, and the quadrature of the circle, where the reason and the effect are so opposite, might, peradventure, find some argument to second this bold saying of Pliny:

"Solum certum nihil esse certi, et homine nihil miserius ant superbius."

["It is only certain that there is nothing certain, and that nothing is more miserable or more proud than man."—Nat. Hist., ii. 7.]

Chapter XV

—THAT OUR DESIRES ARE AUGMENTED BY DIFFICULTY

There is no reason that has not its contrary, say the wisest of the philosophers. I was just now ruminating on the excellent saying one of the ancients alleges for the contempt of life: "No good can bring pleasure, unless it be that for the loss of which we are beforehand prepared."

"In aequo est dolor amissae rei, et timor amittendae,"

["The grief of losing a thing, and the fear of losing it, are equal."—Seneca, Ep., 98.]

meaning by this that the fruition of life cannot be truly pleasant to us if we are in fear of losing it. It might, however, be said, on the contrary, that we hug and embrace this good so much the more earnestly, and with so much greater affection, by how much we see it the less assured and fear to have it taken from us: for it is evident, as fire burns with greater fury when cold comes to mix with it, that our will is more obstinate by being opposed:

"Si nunquam Danaen habuisset ahenea turris,

Non esses, Danae, de Jove facta parens;"

["If a brazen tower had not held Danae, you would not, Danae, have been made a mother by Jove."—Ovid, Amoy., ii. 19, 27.]

and that there is nothing naturally so contrary to our taste as satiety which proceeds from facility; nor anything that so much whets it as rarity and difficulty:

"Omnium rerum voluptas ipso, quo debet fugare, periculo crescit."

["The pleasure of all things increases by the same danger that should deter it."—Seneca, De Benef., vii. 9.]

"Galla, nega; satiatur amor, nisi gaudia torquent."

["Galla, refuse me; love is glutted with joys that are not attended with trouble."—Martial, iv. 37.]

To keep love in breath, Lycurgus made a decree that the married people of Lacedaemon should never enjoy one another but by stealth; and that it should be as great a shame to take them in bed together as committing with others. The difficulty of assignations, the danger of surprise, the shame of the morning,

"Et languor, et silentium, Et latere petitus imo Spiritus:"

["And languor, and silence, and sighs, coming from the innermost heart."—Hor., Epod., xi. 9.]

these are what give the piquancy to the sauce. How many very wantonly pleasant sports spring from the most decent and modest language of the works on love? Pleasure itself seeks to be heightened with pain; it is much sweeter when it smarts and has the skin rippled. The courtesan Flora said she never lay with Pompey but that she made him wear the prints of her teeth.—[Plutarch, Life of Pompey, c. i.]

"Quod petiere, premunt arcte, faciuntque dolorem

Corporis, et dentes inlidunt saepe labellis . . .

Et stimuli subsunt, qui instigant laedere ad ipsum,

Quodcunque est, rabies unde illae germina surgunt."

["What they have sought they dress closely, and cause pain; on the lips fix the teeth, and every kiss indents: urged by latent stimulus the part to wound"—Lucretius, i. 4.]

And so it is in everything: difficulty gives all things their estimation; the people of the march of Ancona more readily make their vows to St. James, and those of Galicia to Our Lady of Loreto; they make wonderful to-do at Liege about the baths of Lucca, and in Tuscany about those of Aspa: there are few Romans seen in the fencing school of Rome, which is full of French. That great Cato also, as much as us, nauseated his wife whilst she was his, and longed for her when in the possession of another.

I was fain to turn out into the paddock an old horse, as he was not to be governed when he smelt a mare: the facility presently sated him as towards his own, but towards strange mares, and the first that passed by the pale of his pasture, he would again fall to his importunate neighings and his furious heats as before. Our appetite contemns and passes by what it has in possession, to run after that it has not:

"Transvolat in medio posita, et fugientia captat."

["He slights her who is close at hand, and runs after her who flees from him."—Horace, Sat., i. 2, 108.]

To forbid us anything is to make us have a mind to't:

"Nisi to servare puellam

Incipis, incipiet desinere esse mea:"

["Unless you begin to guard your mistress, she will soon begin to be no longer mine."—Ovid, Amoy., ii. 19, 47.]

to give it wholly up to us is to beget in us contempt. Want and abundance fall into the same inconvenience:

"Tibi quod superest, mihi quod desit, dolet."

["Your superfluities trouble you, and what I want troubles me."—Terence, Phoym., i. 3, 9.]

Desire and fruition equally afflict us. The rigors of mistresses are troublesome, but facility, to say truth, still more so; forasmuch as discontent and anger spring from the esteem we have of the thing desired, heat and actuate love, but satiety begets disgust; 'tis a blunt, dull, stupid, tired, and slothful passion:

"Si qua volet regnare diu, contemnat amantem."

["She who would long retain her power must use her lover ill." —Ovid, *Amor.*, ii. 19, 33]

"Contemnite, amantes:

Sic hodie veniet, si qua negavit heri."

["Slight your mistress; she will to-day come who denied you yesterday.—"Propertius, ii. 14, 19.]

Why did Poppea invent the use of a mask to hide the beauties of her face, but to enhance it to her lovers? Why have they veiled, even below the heels, those beauties that every one desires to show, and that every one desires to see? Why do they cover with so many hindrances, one over another, the parts where our desires and their own have their principal seat? And to what serve those great bastion farthingales, with which our ladies fortify their haunches, but to allure our appetite and to draw us on by removing them farther from us?

"Et fugit ad salices, et se cupit ante videri."

["She flies to the osiers, and desires beforehand to be seen going." —Virgil, *Eclog.*, iii. 65.]

"Interdum tunica duxit operta moram."

["The hidden robe has sometimes checked love." —Propertius, ii. 15, 6.]

To what use serves the artifice of this virgin modesty, this grave coldness, this severe countenance, this professing to be ignorant of things that they know better than we who instruct them in them, but to increase in us the desire to overcome, control, and trample underfoot at pleasure all this ceremony and all these obstacles?

For there is not only pleasure, but, moreover, glory, in conquering and debauching that soft sweetness and that childish modesty, and to reduce a cold and matronlike gravity to the mercy of our ardent desires: 'tis a glory, say they, to triumph over modesty, chastity, and temperance; and whoever dissuades ladies from those qualities, betrays both them and himself. We are to believe that their hearts tremble with affright, that the very sound of our words offends the purity of their ears, that they hate us for talking so, and only yield to our importunity by a compulsive force. Beauty, all powerful as it is, has not wherewithal to make itself relished without the mediation of these little arts. Look into Italy, where there is the most and the finest beauty to be sold, how it is necessitated to have recourse to extrinsic means and other artifices to render itself charming, and yet, in truth, whatever it may do, being venal and public, it remains feeble and languishing. Even so in virtue itself, of two like effects, we notwithstanding look upon that as the fairest and most worthy, wherein the most trouble and hazard are set before us.

'Tis an effect of the divine Providence to suffer the holy Church to be afflicted, as we see it, with so many storms and troubles, by this opposition to rouse pious souls, and to awaken them from that drowsy lethargy wherein, by so long tranquillity, they had been immersed. If we should lay the loss we have sustained in the number of those who have gone astray, in the balance against the benefit we have had by being again put in breath, and by having our zeal and strength revived by reason of this opposition, I know not whether the utility would not surmount the damage.

We have thought to tie the nuptial knot of our marriages more fast and firm by having taken away all means of dissolving it, but the knot of the will and affection is so much the more slackened and made loose, by how much that of constraint is drawn closer; and, on the contrary, that which kept the marriages at Rome so long in honour and inviolate, was the liberty every one who so desired had to break them; they kept their wives the better, because they might part with them, if they would; and, in the full liberty of divorce, five hundred years and more passed away before any one made use on't.

"Quod licet, ingratum est; quod non licet, acrius urit."

["What you may, is displeasing; what is forbidden, whets the appetite.—"Ovid, *Amor.*, ii. 19.]

We might here introduce the opinion of an ancient upon this occasion, "that executions rather whet than dull the edge of vices: that they do not beget the care of doing well, that being the work of reason and discipline, but only a care not to be taken in doing ill:"

"Latius excisae pestis contagia serpunt."

["The plague-sore being lanced, the infection spreads all the more." —Rutilius, Itinerar. 1, 397.]

I do not know that this is true; but I experimentally know, that never civil government was by that means reformed; the order and regimen of manners depend upon some other expedient.

The Greek histories make mention of the Argippians, neighbours to Scythia, who live without either rod or stick for offence; where not only no one attempts to attack them, but whoever can fly thither is safe, by reason of their virtue and sanctity of life, and no one is so bold as to lay hands upon them; and they have applications made to them to determine the controversies that arise betwixt men of other countries. There is a certain nation, where the enclosures of gardens and fields they would preserve, are made only of a string of cotton; and, so fenced, is more firm and secure than by our hedges and ditches.

"Furem signata sollicitant . . .

aperta effractarius praeterit."

["Things sealed, up invite a thief: the housebreaker passes by open doors."—Seneca, Epist., 68.]

Peradventure, the facility of entering my house, amongst other things, has been a means to preserve it from the violence of our civil wars: defence allures attempt, and defiance provokes an enemy. I enervated the soldiers' design by depriving the exploit of danger and all manner of military glory, which is wont to serve them for pretence and excuse: whatever is bravely, is ever honourably, done, at a time when justice is dead. I render them the conquest of my house cowardly and base; it is never shut to any one that knocks; my gate has no other guard than a porter, and he of ancient custom and ceremony; who does not so much serve to defend it as to offer it with more decorum and grace; I have no other guard nor sentinel than the stars. A gentleman would play the fool to make a show of defence, if he be not really in a condition to defend himself. He who lies open on one side, is everywhere so; our ancestors did not think of building frontier garrisons.

The means of assaulting, I mean without battery or army, and of surprising our houses, increases every day more and more beyond the means to guard them; men's wits are generally bent that way; in invasion every one is concerned: none but the rich in defence. Mine was strong for the time when it was built; I have added nothing to it of that kind, and should fear that its strength might turn against myself; to which we are to consider that a peaceable time would require it should be dismantled. There is danger never to be able to regain it, and it would be very hard to keep; for in intestine dissensions, your man may be of the party you fear; and where religion is the pretext, even a man's nearest relations become unreliable, with some colour of justice. The public exchequer will not maintain our domestic garrisons; they would exhaust it: we ourselves have not the means to do it without ruin, or, which is more inconvenient and injurious, without ruining the people. The condition of my loss would be scarcely worse. As to the rest, you there lose all; and even your friends will be more ready to accuse your want of vigilance and your improvidence, and your ignorance of and indifference to your own business, than to pity you. That so many garrisoned houses have been undone whereas this of mine remains, makes me apt to believe that they were only lost by being guarded; this gives an enemy both an invitation and colour of reason; all defence shows a face of war. Let who will come to me in God's name; but I shall not invite them; 'tis the retirement I have chosen for my repose from war. I endeavour to withdraw this corner from the public tempest, as I also do another corner in my soul. Our war may put on what forms it will, multiply and diversify itself into new parties; for my part, I stir not. Amongst so many garrisoned houses, myself alone amongst those of my rank, so far as I know, in France, have trusted purely to Heaven for the protection of mine, and have never removed plate, deeds, or hangings. I will neither fear nor save myself by halves. If a full acknowledgment acquires the Divine favour, it will stay with me to the end: if not, I have still continued long enough to render my continuance remarkable and fit to be recorded. How? Why, there are thirty years that I have thus lived.

Chapter XVI

—OF GLORY

There is the name and the thing: the name is a voice which denotes and signifies the thing; the name is no part of the thing, nor of the substance; 'tis a foreign piece joined to the thing, and outside it. God, who is all fulness in Himself and the height of all perfection, cannot augment or add anything to Himself within; but His name may be augmented and increased by the blessing and praise we attribute to His exterior works: which praise, seeing we cannot incorporate it in Him, forasmuch as He can have no accession of good, we attribute to His name, which is the part out of Him that is nearest to us. Thus is it that to God alone glory and honour appertain; and there is nothing so remote from reason as that we should go in quest of it for ourselves; for, being indigent and necessitous within, our essence being imperfect, and having continual need of amelioration, 'tis to that we ought to employ all our endeavour. We are all hollow and empty; 'tis not with wind and voice that we are to fill ourselves; we want a more solid substance to repair us: a man starving with hunger would be very simple to seek rather to provide himself with a gay garment than with a good meal: we are to look after that whereof we have most need. As we have it in our ordinary prayers:

"Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terra pax hominibus."

We are in want of beauty, health, wisdom, virtue, and such like essential qualities: exterior ornaments should, be looked after when we have made provision for necessary things. Divinity treats amply and more pertinently of this subject, but I am not much versed in it.

Chrysippus and Diogenes were the earliest and firmest advocates of the contempt of glory; and maintained that, amongst all pleasures, there was none more dangerous nor more to be avoided than that which proceeds from the approbation of others. And, in truth, experience makes us sensible of many very hurtful treasons in it. There is nothing that so poisons princes as flattery, nor anything whereby wicked men more easily obtain credit and favour with them; nor panderism so apt and so usually made use of to corrupt the chastity of women as to wheedle and entertain them with their own praises. The first charm the Syrens made use of to allure Ulysses is of this nature:

"Deca vers nous, deca, o tres-louable Ulysse,

Et le plus grand honneur don't la Grece fleurisse."

["Come hither to us, O admirable Ulysses, come hither, thou greatest ornament and pride of Greece."—Homer, *Odysseus*, xii. 184.]

These philosophers said, that all the glory of the world was not worth an understanding man's holding out his finger to obtain it:

"Gloria quantalibet quid erit, si gloria tantum est?"

["What is glory, be it as glorious as it may be, if it be no more than glory?"—Juvenal, *Sat.*, vii. 81.]

I say for it alone; for it often brings several commodities along with it, for which it may justly be desired: it acquires us good-will, and renders us less subject and exposed to insult and offence from others, and the like. It was also one of the principal doctrines of Epicurus; for this precept of his sect, Conceal thy life, that forbids men to encumber themselves with public negotiations and offices, also necessarily presupposes a contempt of glory, which is the world's approbation of those actions we produce in public.—[Plutarch, *Whether the saying, Conceal thy life, is well said.*]—He that bids us conceal ourselves, and to have no other concern but for ourselves, and who will not have us known to others, would much less have us honoured and glorified; and so advises Idomeneus not in any sort to regulate his actions by the common reputation or opinion, except so as to avoid the other accidental inconveniences that the contempt of men might bring upon him.

These discourses are, in my opinion, very true and rational; but we are, I know not how, double in ourselves, which is the cause that what we believe we do not believe, and cannot disengage ourselves from what we condemn. Let us see the last and dying words of Epicurus; they are grand, and worthy of such a philosopher, and yet they carry some touches of the recommendation of his name and of that humour he had decried by his precepts. Here is a letter that he dictated a little before his last gasp:

"EPICUYUS TO HEYMACHUS, health.

"Whilst I was passing over the happy and last day of my life, I

write this, but, at the same time, afflicted with such pain in my

bladder and bowels that nothing can be greater, but it was recompensed with the pleasure the remembrance of my inventions and doctrines brought to my soul. Now, as the affection thou hast ever from thy infancy borne towards me and philosophy requires, take upon thee the protection of Metrodorus' children."

This is the letter. And that which makes me interpret that the pleasure he says he had in his soul concerning his inventions, has some reference to the reputation he hoped for thence after his death, is the manner of his will, in which he gives order that Amynomachus and Timocrates, his heirs, should, every January, defray the expense of the celebration of his birthday as Hermachus should appoint; and also the expense that should be made the twentieth of every moon in entertaining the philosophers, his friends, who should assemble in honour of the memory of him and of Metrodorus.—[Cicero, *De Finibus*, ii. 30.]

Carneades was head of the contrary opinion, and maintained that glory was to be desired for itself, even as we embrace our posthumous issue for themselves, having no knowledge nor enjoyment of them. This opinion has not failed to be the more universally followed, as those commonly are that are most suitable to our inclinations. Aristotle gives it the first place amongst external goods; and avoids, as too extreme vices, the immoderate either seeking or evading it. I believe that, if we had the books Cicero wrote upon this subject, we should there find pretty stories; for he was so possessed with this passion, that, if he had dared, I think he could willingly have fallen into the excess that others did, that virtue itself was not to be coveted, but upon the account of the honour that always attends it:

"Paulum sepultae distat inertiae Celata virtus:"

["Virtue concealed little differs from dead sloth." —Horace, *Od.*, iv. 9, 29.]

which is an opinion so false, that I am vexed it could ever enter into the understanding of a man that was honoured with the name of philosopher.

If this were true, men need not be virtuous but in public; and we should be no further concerned to keep the operations of the soul, which is the true seat of virtue, regular and in order, than as they are to arrive at the knowledge of others. Is there no more in it, then, but only silyly and with circumspection to do ill?

"If thou knowest," says Carneades, "of a serpent lurking in a place where, without suspicion, a person is going to sit down, by whose death thou expectest an advantage, thou dost ill if thou dost not give him caution of his danger; and so much the more because the action is to be known by none but thyself." If we do not take up of ourselves the rule of well-doing, if impunity pass with us for justice, to how many sorts of wickedness shall we every day abandon ourselves? I do not find what Sextus Peduceus did, in faithfully restoring the treasure that C. Plotius had committed to his sole secrecy and trust, a thing that I have often done myself, so commendable, as I should think it an execrable baseness, had we done otherwise; and I think it of good use in our days to recall the example of P. Sextilius Rufus, whom Cicero accuses to have entered upon an inheritance contrary to his conscience, not only not against law, but even by the determination of the laws themselves; and M. Crassus and Hortensius, who, by reason of their authority and power, having been called in by a stranger to share in the succession of a forged will, that so he might secure his own part, satisfied themselves with having no hand in the forgery, and refused not to make their advantage and to come in for a share: secure enough, if they could shroud themselves from accusations, witnesses, and the cognisance of the laws:

"Meminerint Deum se habere testem, id est (ut ego arbitror) mentem suam."

["Let them consider they have God to witness, that is (as I interpret it), their own consciences."—Cicero, *De Offic.*, iii. 10.]

Virtue is a very vain and frivolous thing if it derive its recommendation from glory; and 'tis to no purpose that we endeavour to give it a station by itself, and separate it from fortune; for what is more accidental than reputation?

"Profecto fortuna in omni re dominatur: ea res cunctas ex

libidine magis, quam ex vero, celebrat, obscuratque."

["Fortune rules in all things; it advances and depresses things more out of its own will than of right and justice." —Sallust, *Catilina*, c. 8.]

So to order it that actions may be known and seen is purely the work of fortune; 'tis chance that helps us to glory, according to its own temerity. I have often seen her go before merit, and often very much outstrip it.

He who first likened glory to a shadow did better than he was aware of; they are both of them things pre-eminently vain glory also, like a shadow, goes sometimes before the body, and sometimes in length infinitely exceeds it. They who instruct gentlemen only to employ their valour for the obtaining of honour:

"Quasi non sit honestum, quod nobilitatum non sit;"

["As though it were not a virtue, unless celebrated" —Cicero De Offic. iii. 10.]

what do they intend by that but to instruct them never to hazard themselves if they are not seen, and to observe well if there be witnesses present who may carry news of their valour, whereas a thousand occasions of well-doing present themselves which cannot be taken notice of? How many brave individual actions are buried in the crowd of a battle? Whoever shall take upon him to watch another's behaviour in such a confusion is not very busy himself, and the testimony he shall give of his companions' deportment will be evidence against himself:

"Vera et sapiens animi magnitudo, honestum illud, quod maxime naturam sequitur, in factis positum, non in gloria, judicat."

["The true and wise magnanimity judges that the bravery which most follows nature more consists in act than glory."—Cicero, De Offic. i. 19.]

All the glory that I pretend to derive from my life is that I have lived it in quiet; in quiet, not according to Metrodorus, or Arcesilaus, or Aristippus, but according to myself. For seeing philosophy has not been able to find out any way to tranquillity that is good in common, let every one seek it in particular.

To what do Caesar and Alexander owe the infinite grandeur of their renown but to fortune? How many men has she extinguished in the beginning of their progress, of whom we have no knowledge, who brought as much courage to the work as they, if their adverse hap had not cut them off in the first sally of their arms? Amongst so many and so great dangers I do not remember I have anywhere read that Caesar was ever wounded; a thousand have fallen in less dangers than the least of those he went through.

An infinite number of brave actions must be performed without witness and lost, before one turns to account. A man is not always on the top of a breach, or at the head of an army, in the sight of his general, as upon a scaffold; a man is often surprised betwixt the hedge and the ditch; he must run the hazard of his life against a henroost; he must dislodge four rascally musketeers out of a barn; he must prick out single from his party, and alone make some attempts, according as necessity will have it. And whoever will observe will, I believe, find it experimentally true, that occasions of the least lustre are ever the most dangerous; and that in the wars of our own times there have more brave men been lost in occasions of little moment, and in the dispute about some little paltry fort, than in places of greatest importance, and where their valour might have been more honourably employed.

Who thinks his death achieved to ill purpose if he do not fall on some signal occasion, instead of illustrating his death, wilfully obscures his life, suffering in the meantime many very just occasions of hazarding himself to slip out of his hands; and every just one is illustrious enough, every man's conscience being a sufficient trumpet to him.

"Gloria nostra est testimonium conscientiae nostrae."

["For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience."—Corinthians, i. 1.]

He who is only a good man that men may know it, and that he may be the better esteemed when 'tis known; who will not do well but upon condition that his virtue may be known to men: is one from whom much service is not to be expected:

"Credo ch 'el reste di quel verno, cose
Facesse degne di tener ne conto;
Ma fur fin' a quel tempo si nascose,
Che non a colpa mia s' hor 'non le conto
Perche Orlando a far l'opre virtuose
Piu ch'a narrar le poi sempre era pronto;
Ne mai fu alcun' de'suoi fatti espresso,
Se non quando ebbe i testimonii appresso."

["The rest of the winter, I believe, was spent in actions worthy of narration, but they were done so secretly that if I do not tell them I am not to blame, for Orlando was more bent to do great acts than to boast of them, so that no deeds of his were ever known but those that had witnesses."—Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso*, xi. 81.]

A man must go to the war upon the account of duty, and expect the recompense that never fails brave and worthy actions, how private soever, or even virtuous thoughts—the satisfaction that a well-disposed conscience receives in itself in doing well. A man must be valiant for himself, and upon account of the advantage it is to him to have his courage seated in a firm and secure place against the assaults of fortune:

"Virtus, repulsaa nescia sordidix

Intaminatis fulget honoribus

Nec sumit, aut ponit secures

Arbitrio popularis aura."

["Virtue, repudiating all base repulse, shines in taintless honours, nor takes nor leaves dignity at the mere will of the vulgar."—Horace, *Od.*, iii. 2, 17.]

It is not for outward show that the soul is to play its part, but for ourselves within, where no eyes can pierce but our own; there she defends us from the fear of death, of pain, of shame itself: there she arms us against the loss of our children, friends, and fortunes: and when opportunity presents itself, she leads us on to the hazards of war:

"Non emolumento aliquo, sed ipsius honestatis decore."

["Not for any profit, but for the honour of honesty itself." —Cicero, *De Finib.*, i. 10.]

This profit is of much greater advantage, and more worthy to be coveted and hoped for, than, honour and glory, which are no other than a favourable judgment given of us.

A dozen men must be called out of a whole nation to judge about an acre of land; and the judgment of our inclinations and actions, the most difficult and most important matter that is, we refer to the voice and determination of the rabble, the mother of ignorance, injustice, and inconstancy. Is it reasonable that the life of a wise man should depend upon the judgment of fools?

"An quidquam stultius, quam, quos singulos contemnas,
eos aliquid putare esse universes?"

["Can anything be more foolish than to think that those you despise singly, can be anything else in general." —Cicero, Tusc. Quaes., v. 36.]

He that makes it his business to please them, will have enough to do and never have done; 'tis a mark that can never be aimed at or hit:

"Nil tam inaestimabile est, quam animi multitudinis."

["Nothing is to be so little understood as the minds of the multitude."—Livy, xxxi. 34.]

Demetrius pleasantly said of the voice of the people, that he made no more account of that which came from above than of that which came from below. He [Cicero] says more:

"Ego hoc judico, si quando turpe non sit, tamen non esse non turpe, quum id a multitudine laudatur."

["I am of opinion, that though a thing be not foul in itself, yet it cannot but become so when commended by the multitude." —Cicero, De Finib., ii. 15.]

No art, no activity of wit, could conduct our steps so as to follow so wandering and so irregular a guide; in this windy confusion of the noise of vulgar reports and opinions that drive us on, no way worth anything can be chosen. Let us not propose to ourselves so floating and wavering an end; let us follow constantly after reason; let the public approbation follow us there, if it will; and as it wholly depends upon fortune, we have no reason sooner to expect it by any other way than that.

Even though I would not follow the right way because it is right, I should, however, follow it as having experimentally found that, at the end of the reckoning, 'tis commonly the most happy and of greatest utility.

"Dedit hoc providentia hominibus munus, ut honesta magis juvarent."

["This gift Providence has given to men, that honest things should be the most agreeable."—Quintilian, *Inst. Orat.*, i. 12.]

The mariner of old said thus to Neptune, in a great tempest: "O God, thou wilt save me if thou wilt, and if thou chooseth, thou wilt destroy me; but, however, I will hold my rudder straight."—[Seneca, *Ep.*, 85.]— I have seen in my time a thousand men supple, halfbred, ambiguous, whom no one doubted to be more worldly-wise than I, lose themselves, where I have saved myself:

"Risi successus posse carere dolos."

["I have laughed to see cunning fail of success." —Ovid, *Heroid*, i. 18.]

Paulus AEmilius, going on the glorious expedition of Macedonia, above all things charged the people of Rome not to speak of his actions during his absence. Oh, the license of judgments is a great disturbance to great affairs! forasmuch as every one has not the firmness of Fabius against common, adverse, and injurious tongues, who rather suffered his authority to be dissected by the vain fancies of men, than to do less well in his charge with a favourable reputation and the popular applause.

There is I know not what natural sweetness in hearing one's self commended; but we are a great deal too fond of it:

"Laudari metuam, neque enim mihi cornea fibra est Sed recti finemque extremumque esse recuso Euge tuum, et belle."

["I should fear to be praised, for my heart is not made of horn; but I deny that 'excellent— admirably done,' are the terms and final aim of virtue."—Persius, i. 47.]

I care not so much what I am in the opinions of others, as what I am in my own; I would be rich of myself, and not by borrowing. Strangers see nothing but events and outward appearances; everybody can set a good face on the matter, when they have trembling and terror within: they do not see my heart, they see but my countenance. One is right in decrying the hypocrisy that is in war; for what is more easy to an old soldier than to shift in a time of danger, and to counterfeit the brave when he has no more heart than a chicken? There are so many ways to avoid hazarding a man's own person, that we have deceived the world a thousand times before we come to be engaged in a real danger: and even then, finding ourselves in an inevitable necessity of doing something, we can make shift for that time to conceal our apprehensions by setting a good face on the business, though the heart beats within; and whoever had the use of the Platonic ring, which renders those invisible that wear it, if turned inward towards the palm of the hand, a great many would very often hide themselves when they ought most to appear, and would repent being placed in so honourable a post, where necessity must make them bold.

"Falsus honor juvat, et mendax infamia terret

Quem nisi mendosum et mendacem?"

["False honour pleases, and calumny affrights, the guilty and the sick."—Horace, Ep., i. 16, 89.]

Thus we see how all the judgments that are founded upon external appearances, are marvellously uncertain and doubtful; and that there is no so certain testimony as every one is to himself. In these, how many soldiers' boys are companions of our glory? he who stands firm in an open trench, what does he in that more than fifty poor pioneers who open to him the way and cover it with their own bodies for fivepence a day pay, do before him?

"Non quicquid turbida Roma

Elevet, accedas; examenque improbum in illa

Castiges trutina: nec to quaesiveris extra."

["Do not, if turbulent Rome disparage anything, accede; nor correct a false balance by that scale; nor seek anything beyond thyself." —Persius, Sat., i. 5.]

The dispersing and scattering our names into many mouths, we call making them more great; we will have them there well received, and that this increase turn to their advantage, which is all that can be excusable in this design. But the excess of this disease proceeds so far that many covet to have a name, be it what it will. Trogius Pompeius says of Herostratus, and Titus Livius of Manlius Capitolinus, that they were more ambitious of a great reputation than of a good one. This is very common; we are more solicitous that men speak of us, than how they speak; and it is enough for us that our names are often mentioned, be it after what manner it will. It should seem that to be known, is in some sort to have a man's life and its duration in others' keeping. I, for my part, hold that I am not, but in myself; and of that other life of mine which lies in the knowledge of my friends, to consider it naked and simply in itself, I know very well that I am sensible of no fruit nor enjoyment from it but by the vanity of a fantastic opinion; and when I shall be dead, I shall be still and much less sensible of it; and shall, withal, absolutely lose the use of those real advantages that sometimes accidentally follow it.

I shall have no more handle whereby to take hold of reputation, neither shall it have any whereby to take hold of or to cleave to me; for to expect that my name should be advanced by it, in the first place, I have no name that is enough my own; of two that I have, one is common to all my race, and indeed to others also; there are two families at Paris and Montpellier, whose surname is Montaigne, another in Brittany, and one in Xaintonge, De La Montaigne. The transposition of one syllable only would suffice so to ravel our affairs, that I shall share in their glory, and they peradventure will partake of my discredit; and, moreover, my ancestors have formerly been surnamed, Eyquem,—[Eyquem was the patronymic.]—a name wherein a family well known in England is at this day concerned. As to my other name, every one may take it that will, and so, perhaps, I may honour a porter in my own stead. And besides, though I had a particular distinction by myself, what can it distinguish, when I am no more? Can it point out and favour inanity?

"Non levior cippus nunc imprimit ossa?

Laudat posteritas! Nunc non e manibus illis,

Nunc non a tumulo fortunataque favilla,

Nascentur violae?"

["Does the tomb press with less weight upon my bones? Do comrades praise? Not from my manes, not from the tomb, not from the ashes will violets grow."—Persius, Sat., i. 37.]

but of this I have spoken elsewhere. As to what remains, in a great battle where ten thousand men are maimed or killed, there are not fifteen who are taken notice of; it must be some very eminent greatness, or some consequence of great importance that fortune has added to it, that signalises a private action, not of a harquebuser only, but of a great captain; for to kill a man, or two, or ten: to expose a man's self bravely to the utmost peril of death, is indeed something in every one of us, because we there hazard all; but for the world's concern, they are things so ordinary, and so many of them are every day seen, and there must of necessity be so many of the same kind to produce any notable effect, that we cannot expect any particular renown from it:

"Casus multis hic cognitus, ac jam

Tritus, et a medio fortunae ductus acervo."

["The accident is known to many, and now trite; and drawn from the midst of Fortune's heap."—Juvenal, Sat., xiii. 9.]

Of so many thousands of valiant men who have died within these fifteen hundred years in France with their swords in their hands, not a hundred have come to our knowledge. The memory, not of the commanders only, but of battles and victories, is buried and gone; the fortunes of above half of the world, for want of a record, stir not from their place, and vanish without duration. If I had unknown events in my possession, I should think with great ease to out-do those that are recorded, in all sorts of examples. Is it not strange that even of the Greeks and Romans, with so many writers and witnesses, and so many rare and noble exploits, so few are arrived at our knowledge:

"Ad nos vix tenuis famx perlabitur aura."

["An obscure rumour scarce is hither come."—Aeneid, vii. 646.]

It will be much if, a hundred years hence, it be remembered in general that in our times there were civil wars in France. The Lacedaemonians, entering into battle, sacrificed to the Muses, to the end that their actions might be well and worthily written, looking upon it as a divine and no common favour, that brave acts should find witnesses that could give them life and memory. Do we expect that at every musket-shot we receive, and at every hazard we run, there must be a register ready to record it? and, besides, a hundred registers may enrol them whose commentaries will not last above three days, and will never come to the sight of any one. We have not the thousandth part of ancient writings; 'tis fortune that gives them a shorter or longer life, according to her favour; and 'tis permissible to doubt whether those we have be not the worst, not having seen the rest. Men do not write histories of things of so little moment: a man must have been general in the conquest of an empire or a kingdom; he must have won two-and-fifty set battles, and always the weaker in number, as Caesar did: ten thousand brave fellows and many great captains lost their lives valiantly in his service, whose names lasted no longer than their wives and children lived:

"Quos fama obscura recondit."

["Whom an obscure reputation conceals."—Aeneid, v. 302.]

Even those whom we see behave themselves well, three months or three years after they have departed hence, are no more mentioned than if they had never been. Whoever will justly consider, and with due proportion, of what kind of men and of what sort of actions the glory sustains itself in the records of history, will find that there are very few actions and very few persons of our times who can there pretend any right. How many worthy men have we known to survive their own reputation, who have seen and suffered the honour and glory most justly acquired in their youth, extinguished in their own presence? And for three years of this fantastic and imaginary life we must go and throw away our true and essential life, and engage ourselves in a perpetual death! The sages propose to themselves a nobler and more just end in so important an enterprise:

"Recte facti, fecisse merces est: officii fructus, ipsum officium est."

["The reward of a thing well done is to have done it; the fruit of a good service is the service itself."—Seneca, Ep., 8.]

It were, peradventure, excusable in a painter or other artisan, or in a rhetorician or a grammarian, to endeavour to raise himself a name by his works; but the actions of virtue are too noble in themselves to seek any other reward than from their own value, and especially to seek it in the vanity of human judgments.

If this false opinion, nevertheless, be of such use to the public as to keep men in their duty; if the people are thereby stirred up to virtue; if princes are touched to see the world bless the memory of Trajan, and abominate that of Nero; if it moves them to see the name of that great beast, once so terrible and feared, so freely cursed and reviled by every schoolboy, let it by all means increase, and be as much as possible nursed up and cherished amongst us; and Plato, bending his whole endeavour to make his citizens virtuous, also advises them not to despise the good repute and esteem of the people; and says it falls out, by a certain Divine inspiration, that even the wicked themselves oft-times, as well by word as opinion, can rightly distinguish the virtuous from the wicked. This person and his tutor are both marvellous and bold artificers everywhere to add divine operations and revelations where human force is wanting:

"Ut tragici poetae confugiunt ad deum, cum explicare argumenti exitum non possunt:"

["As tragic poets fly to some god when they cannot explain the issue of their argument."—Cicero, *De Nat. Deor.*, i. 20.]

and peradventure, for this reason it was that Timon, railing at him, called him the great forger of miracles. Seeing that men, by their insufficiency, cannot pay themselves well enough with current money, let the counterfeit be superadded. 'Tis a way that has been practised by all the legislators: and there is no government that has not some mixture either of ceremonial vanity or of false opinion, that serves for a curb to keep the people in their duty. 'Tis for this that most of them have their originals and beginnings fabulous, and enriched with supernatural mysteries; 'tis this that has given credit to bastard religions, and caused them to be countenanced by men of understanding; and for this, that Numa and Sertorius, to possess their men with a better opinion of them, fed them with this foppery; one, that the nymph Egeria, the other that his white hind, brought them all their counsels from the gods. And the authority that Numa gave to his laws, under the title of the patronage of this goddess, Zoroaster, legislator of the Bactrians and Persians, gave to his under the name of the God Oromazis: Trismegistus, legislator of the Egyptians, under that of Mercury; Xamolxis, legislator of the Scythians, under that of Vesta; Charondas, legislator of the Chalcidians, under that of Saturn; Minos, legislator of the Candiots, under that of Jupiter; Lycurgus, legislator of the Lacedaemonians, under that of Apollo; and Draco and Solon, legislators of the Athenians, under that of Minerva. And every government has a god at the head of it; the others falsely, that truly, which Moses set over the Jews at their departure out of Egypt. The religion of the Bedouins, as the Sire de Joinville reports, amongst other things, enjoined a belief that the soul of him amongst them who died for his prince, went into another body more happy, more beautiful, and more robust than the former; by which means they much more willingly ventured their lives:

"In ferrum mens prona viris, animaeque capaces

Mortis, et ignavum est rediturae parcere vitae."

["Men's minds are prone to the sword, and their souls able to bear death; and it is base to spare a life that will be renewed." —Lucan, i. 461.]

This is a very comfortable belief, however erroneous. Every nation has many such examples of its own; but this subject would require a treatise by itself.

To add one word more to my former discourse, I would advise the ladies no longer to call that honour which is but their duty:

"Ut enim consuetudo loquitur, id solum dicitur

honestum, quod est populari fama gloriosum;"

["As custom puts it, that only is called honest which is glorious by the public voice."—Cicero, De Finibus, ii. 15.]

their duty is the mark, their honour but the outward rind. Neither would I advise them to give this excuse for payment of their denial: for I presuppose that their intentions, their desire, and will, which are things wherein their honour is not at all concerned, forasmuch as nothing thereof appears without, are much better regulated than the effects:

"Qux quia non liceat, non facit, illa facit:"

["She who only refuses, because 'tis forbidden, consents." —Ovid, Amor., ii. 4, 4.]

The offence, both towards God and in the conscience, would be as great to desire as to do it; and, besides, they are actions so private and secret of themselves, as would be easily enough kept from the knowledge of others, wherein the honour consists, if they had not another respect to their duty, and the affection they bear to chastity, for itself. Every woman of honour will much rather choose to lose her honour than to hurt her conscience.

Chapter XVII

—OF PRESUMPTION

There is another sort of glory, which is the having too good an opinion of our own worth. 'Tis an inconsiderate affection with which we flatter ourselves, and that represents us to ourselves other than we truly are: like the passion of love, that lends beauties and graces to the object, and makes those who are caught by it, with a depraved and corrupt judgment, consider the thing which they love other and more perfect than it is.

I would not, nevertheless, for fear of failing on this side, that a man should not know himself aright, or think himself less than he is; the judgment ought in all things to maintain its rights; 'tis all the reason in the world he should discern in himself, as well as in others, what truth sets before him; if it be Caesar, let him boldly think himself the greatest captain in the world. We are nothing but ceremony: ceremony carries us away, and we leave the substance of things: we hold by the branches, and quit the trunk and the body; we have taught the ladies to blush when they hear that but named which they are not at all afraid to do: we dare not call our members by their right names, yet are not afraid to employ them in all sorts of debauchery: ceremony forbids us to express by words things that are lawful and natural, and we obey it: reason forbids us to do things unlawful and ill, and nobody obeys it. I find myself here fettered by the laws of ceremony; for it neither permits a man to speak well of himself, nor ill: we will leave her there for this time.

They whom fortune (call it good or ill) has made to, pass their lives in some eminent degree, may by their public actions manifest what they are; but they whom she has only employed in the crowd, and of whom nobody will say a word unless they speak themselves, are to be excused if they take the boldness to speak of themselves to such as are interested to know them; by the example of Lucilius:

"Ille velut fidis arcana sodalibus olim

Credebat libris, neque si male cesserat, usquam

Decurrens alio, neque si bene: quo fit, ut omnis,

Votiva pateat veluri descripta tabella

Vita senis;"

["He formerly confided his secret thoughts to his books, as to tried friends, and for good and evil, resorted not elsewhere: hence it came to pass, that the old man's life is there all seen as on a votive tablet."—Horace, Sat., ii. 1, 30.]

he always committed to paper his actions and thoughts, and there portrayed himself such as he found himself to be:

"Nec id Rutilio et Scauro citra fidem; aut obtreptioni fuit."

["Nor was this considered a breach of good faith or a disparagement to Rutilius or Scaurus."—Tacitus, Agricola, c. 1.]

I remember, then, that from my infancy there was observed in me I know not what kind of carriage and behaviour, that seemed to relish of pride and arrogance. I will say this, by the way, that it is not unreasonable to suppose that we have qualities and inclinations so much our own, and so incorporate in us, that we have not the means to feel and recognise them: and of such natural inclinations the body will retain a certain bent, without our knowledge or consent. It was an affectation conformable with his beauty that made Alexander carry his head on one side, and caused Alcibiades to lisp; Julius Caesar scratched his head with one finger, which is the fashion of a man full of troublesome thoughts; and Cicero, as I remember, was wont to pucker up his nose, a sign of a man given to scoffing; such motions as these may imperceptibly happen in us. There are other artificial ones which I meddle not with, as salutations and congees, by which men acquire, for the most part unjustly, the reputation of being humble and courteous: one may be humble out of pride. I am prodigal enough of my hat, especially in summer, and never am so saluted but that I pay it again from persons of what quality soever, unless they be in my own service. I should make it my request to some princes whom I know, that they would be more sparing of that ceremony, and bestow that courtesy where it is more due; for being so indiscreetly and indifferently conferred on all, it is thrown away to no purpose; if it be without respect of persons, it loses its effect. Amongst irregular deportment, let us not forget that haughty one of the Emperor Constantius, who always in public held his head upright and stiff, without bending or turning on either side, not so much as to look upon those who saluted him on one side, planting his body in a rigid immovable posture, without suffering it to yield to the motion of his coach, not daring so much as to spit, blow his nose, or wipe his face before people. I know not whether the gestures that were observed in me were of this first quality, and whether I had really any occult proneness to this vice, as it might well be; and I cannot be responsible for the motions of the body; but as to the motions of the soul, I must here confess what I think of the matter.

This glory consists of two parts; the one in setting too great a value upon ourselves, and the other in setting too little a value upon others. As to the one, methinks these considerations ought, in the first place, to be of some force: I feel myself importuned by an error of the soul that displeases me, both as it is unjust, and still more as it is troublesome; I attempt to correct it, but I cannot root it out; and this is, that I lessen the just value of things that I possess, and overvalue things, because they are foreign, absent, and none of mine; this humour spreads very far. As the prerogative of the authority makes husbands look upon their own wives with a vicious disdain, and many fathers their children; so I, betwixt two equal merits, should always be swayed against my own; not so much that the jealousy of my advancement and bettering troubles my judgment, and hinders me from satisfying myself, as that of itself possession begets a contempt of what it holds and rules. Foreign governments, manners, and languages insinuate themselves into my esteem; and I am sensible that Latin allures me by the favour of its dignity to value it above its due, as it does with children, and the common sort of people: the domestic government, house, horse, of my neighbour, though no better than my own, I prize above my own, because they are not mine. Besides that I am very ignorant in my own affairs, I am struck by the assurance that every one has of himself: whereas there is scarcely anything that I am sure I know, or that I dare be responsible to myself that I can do: I have not my means of doing anything in condition and ready, and am only instructed therein after the effect; as doubtful of my own force as I am of another's. Whence it comes to pass that if I happen to do anything commendable, I attribute it more to my fortune than industry, forasmuch as I design everything by chance and in fear. I have this, also, in general, that of all the opinions antiquity has held of men in gross, I most willingly embrace and adhere to those that most contemn and undervalue us, and most push us to naught; methinks, philosophy has never so fair a game to play as when it falls upon our vanity and presumption; when it most lays open our irresolution, weakness, and ignorance. I look upon the too good opinion that man has of himself to be the nursing mother of all the most false opinions, both public and private. Those people who ride astride upon the epicycle of Mercury, who see so far into the heavens, are worse to me than a tooth-drawer that comes to draw my teeth; for in my study, the subject of which is man, finding so great a variety of judgments, so profound a labyrinth of difficulties, one upon another, so great diversity and uncertainty, even in the school of wisdom itself, you may judge, seeing these people could not resolve upon the knowledge of themselves and their own condition, which is continually before their eyes, and within them, seeing they do not know how that moves which they themselves move, nor how to give us a description of the springs they themselves govern and make use of, how can I believe them about the ebbing and flowing of the Nile? The curiosity of knowing things has been given to man for a scourge, says the Holy Scripture.

But to return to what concerns myself; I think it would be very difficult for any other man to have a meaner opinion of himself; nay, for any other to have a meaner opinion of me than of myself: I look upon myself as one of the common sort, saving in this, that I have no better an opinion of myself; guilty of the meanest and most popular defects, but not disowning or excusing them; and I do not value myself upon any other account than because I know my own value. If there be any vanity in the case, 'tis superficially infused into me by the treachery of my complexion, and has no body that my judgment can discern: I am sprinkled, but not dyed. For in truth, as to the effects of the mind, there is no part of me, be it what it will, with which I am satisfied; and the approbation of others makes me not think the better of myself. My judgment is tender and nice, especially in things that concern myself.

I ever repudiate myself, and feel myself float and waver by reason of my weakness. I have nothing of my own that satisfies my judgment. My sight is clear and regular enough, but, at working, it is apt to dazzle; as I most manifestly find in poetry: I love it infinitely, and am able to give a tolerable judgment of other men's works; but, in good earnest, when I apply myself to it, I play the child, and am not able to endure myself. A man may play the fool in everything else, but not in poetry;

"Mediocribus esse poetis

Non dii, non homines, non concessere columnae."

["Neither men, nor gods, nor the pillars (on which the poets offered their writings) permit mediocrity in poets." —Horace, *De Arte Poet.*, 372.]

I would to God this sentence was written over the doors of all our printers, to forbid the entrance of so many rhymesters!

"Verum Nihil securius est malo poetae."

["The truth is, that nothing is more confident than a bad poet." —Martial, xii. 63, 13.]

Why have not we such people?—[As those about to be mentioned.]— Dionysius the father valued himself upon nothing so much as his poetry; at the Olympic games, with chariots surpassing all the others in magnificence, he sent also poets and musicians to present his verses, with tent and pavilions royally gilt and hung with tapestry. When his verses came to be recited, the excellence of the delivery at first attracted the attention of the people; but when they afterwards came to poise the meanness of the composition, they first entered into disdain, and continuing to nettle their judgments, presently proceeded to fury,

and ran to pull down and tear to pieces all his pavilions: and, that his chariots neither performed anything to purpose in the race, and that the ship which brought back his people failed of making Sicily, and was by the tempest driven and wrecked upon the coast of Tarentum, they certainly believed was through the anger of the gods, incensed, as they themselves were, against the paltry Poem; and even the mariners who escaped from the wreck seconded this opinion of the people: to which also the oracle that foretold his death seemed to subscribe; which was, "that Dionysius should be near his end, when he should have overcome those who were better than himself," which he interpreted of the Carthaginians, who surpassed him in power; and having war with them, often declined the victory, not to incur the sense of this prediction; but he understood it ill; for the god indicated the time of the advantage, that by favour and injustice he obtained at Athens over the tragic poets, better than himself, having caused his own play called the Leneians to be acted in emulation; presently after which victory he died, and partly of the excessive joy he conceived at the success.

[Diodorus Siculus, xv. 7.—The play, however, was called the "Ransom of Hector." It was the games at which it was acted that were called Leneian; they were one of the four Dionysiac festivals.]

What I find tolerable of mine, is not so really and in itself, but in comparison of other worse things, that I see well enough received. I envy the happiness of those who can please and hug themselves in what they do; for 'tis an easy thing to be so pleased, because a man extracts that pleasure from himself, especially if he be constant in his self-conceit. I know a poet, against whom the intelligent and the ignorant, abroad and at home, both heaven and earth exclaim that he has but very little notion of it; and yet, for all that, he has never a whit the worse opinion of himself; but is always falling upon some new piece, always contriving some new invention, and still persists in his opinion, by so much the more obstinately, as it only concerns him to maintain it.

My works are so far from pleasing me, that as often as I review them, they disgust me:

"Cum relego, scripsisse pudet; quia plurima cerno, Me quoque, qui feci, judice, digna lini."

["When I re-peruse, I blush at what I have written; I ever see one passage after another that I, the author, being the judge, consider should be erased."—Ovid, De Ponto, i. 5, 15.]

I have always an idea in my soul, and a sort of disturbed image which presents me as in a dream with a better form than that I have made use of; but I cannot catch it nor fit it to my purpose; and even that idea is but of the meaner sort. Hence I conclude that the productions of those great and rich souls of former times are very much beyond the utmost stretch of my imagination or my wish; their writings do not only satisfy and fill me, but they astound me, and ravish me with admiration; I judge of their beauty; I see it, if not to the utmost, yet so far at least as 'tis possible for me to aspire. Whatever I undertake, I owe a sacrifice to the Graces, as Plutarch says of some one, to conciliate their favour:

"Si quid enim placet, Si quid dulce horninum sensibus influit, Debentur lepidis omnia Gratiis."

[If anything please that I write, if it infuse delight into men's minds, all is due to the charming Graces." The verses are probably by some modern poet.]

They abandon me throughout; all I write is rude; polish and beauty are wanting: I cannot set things off to any advantage; my handling adds nothing to the matter; for which reason I must have it forcible, very full, and that has lustre of its own. If I pitch upon subjects that are popular and gay, 'tis to follow my own inclination, who do not affect a grave and ceremonious wisdom, as the world does; and to make myself more sprightly, but not my style more wanton, which would rather have them grave and severe; at least if I may call that a style which is an inform and irregular way of speaking, a popular jargon, a proceeding without definition, division, conclusion, perplexed like that Amafanius and Rabirius.—[Cicero, Acad., i. 2.]—I can neither please nor delight, nor even tickle my readers: the best story in the world is spoiled by my handling, and becomes flat; I cannot speak but in rough earnest, and am totally unprovided of that facility which I observe in many of my acquaintance, of entertaining the first comers and keeping a whole company in breath, or taking up the ear of a prince with all sorts of discourse without wearying themselves: they never want matter by reason of the faculty and grace they have in taking hold of the first thing that starts up, and accommodating it to the humour and capacity of those with whom they have to do. Princes do not much affect solid discourses, nor I to tell stories. The first and easiest reasons, which are commonly the best taken, I know not how to employ: I am an ill orator to the common sort. I am apt of everything to say the extremest that I know. Cicero is of opinion that in treatises of philosophy the exordium is the hardest part; if this be true, I am wise in sticking to the conclusion. And yet we are to know how to wind the string to all notes, and the sharpest is that which is the most seldom touched. There is at least as much perfection in elevating an empty as in supporting a weighty thing.

A man must sometimes superficially handle things, and sometimes push them home. I know very well that most men keep themselves in this lower form from not conceiving things otherwise than by this outward bark; but I likewise know that the greatest masters, and Xenophon and Plato are often seen to stoop to this low and popular manner of speaking and treating of things, but supporting it with graces which never fail them.

Farther, my language has nothing in it that is facile and polished; 'tis rough, free, and irregular, and as such pleases, if not my judgment, at all events my inclination, but I very well perceive that I sometimes give myself too much rein, and that by endeavouring to avoid art and affectation I fall into the other inconvenience:

"Brevis esse laboro, Obscurus fio."

[Endeavouring to be brief, I become obscure." —Hor., Art. Poet., 25.]

Plato says, that the long or the short are not properties, that either take away or give value to language. Should I attempt to follow the other more moderate, united, and regular style, I should never attain to it; and though the short round periods of Sallust best suit with my humour, yet I find Caesar much grander and harder to imitate; and though my inclination would rather prompt me to imitate Seneca's way of writing, yet I do nevertheless more esteem that of Plutarch. Both in doing and speaking I simply follow my own natural way; whence, peradventure, it falls out that I am better at speaking than writing. Motion and action animate words, especially in those who lay about them briskly, as I do, and grow hot. The comportment, the countenance; the voice, the robe, the place, will set off some things that of themselves would appear no better than prating. Messalla complains in Tacitus of the straitness of some garments in his time, and of the fashion of the benches where the orators were to declaim, that were a disadvantage to their eloquence.

My French tongue is corrupted, both in the pronunciation and otherwise, by the barbarism of my country. I never saw a man who was a native of any of the provinces on this side of the kingdom who had not a twang of his place of birth, and that was not offensive to ears that were purely French. And yet it is not that I am so perfect in my Perigordin: for I can no more speak it than High Dutch, nor do I much care. 'Tis a language (as the rest about me on every side, of Poitou, Xaintonge, Angoumousin, Limousin, Auvergne), a poor, drawling, scurvy language. There is, indeed, above us towards the mountains a sort of Gascon spoken, that I am mightily taken with:

blunt, brief, significant, and in truth a more manly and military language than any other I am acquainted with, as sinewy, powerful, and pertinent as the French is graceful, neat, and luxuriant. As to the Latin, which was given me for my mother tongue, I have by discontinuance lost the use of speaking it, and, indeed, of writing it too, wherein I formerly had a particular reputation, by which you may see how inconsiderable I am on that side.

Beauty is a thing of great recommendation in the correspondence amongst men; 'tis the first means of acquiring the favour and good liking of one another, and no man is so barbarous and morose as not to perceive himself in some sort struck with its attraction. The body has a great share in our being, has an eminent place there, and therefore its structure and composition are of very just consideration. They who go about to disunite and separate our two principal parts from one another are to blame; we must, on the contrary, reunite and rejoin them. We must command the soul not to withdraw and entertain itself apart, not to despise and abandon the body (neither can she do it but by some apish counterfeit), but to unite herself close to it, to embrace, cherish, assist, govern, and advise it, and to bring it back and set it into the true way when it wanders; in sum, to espouse and be a husband to it, so that their effects may not appear to be diverse and contrary, but uniform and concurring. Christians have a particular instruction concerning this connection, for they know that the Divine justice embraces this society and juncture of body and soul, even to the making the body capable of eternal rewards; and that God has an eye to the whole man's ways, and wills that he receive entire chastisement or reward according to his demerits or merits. The sect of the Peripatetics, of all sects the most sociable, attribute to wisdom this sole care equally to provide for the good of these two associate parts: and the other sects, in not sufficiently applying themselves to the consideration of this mixture, show themselves to be divided, one for the body and the other for the soul, with equal error, and to have lost sight of their subject, which is Man, and their guide, which they generally confess to be Nature. The first distinction that ever was amongst men, and the first consideration that gave some pre-eminence over others, 'tis likely was the advantage of beauty:

"Agros divisere atque dedere

Pro facie cujusque, et viribus ingenioque;

Nam facies multum valuit, viresque vigebant."

["They distributed and conferred the lands to every man according to his beauty and strength and understanding, for beauty was much esteemed and strength was in favour."—
Lucretius, V. 1109.]

Now I am of something lower than the middle stature, a defect that not only borders upon deformity, but carries withal a great deal of inconvenience along with it, especially for those who are in office and command; for the authority which a graceful presence and a majestic mien beget is wanting. C. Marius did not willingly enlist any soldiers who were not six feet high. The Courtier has, indeed, reason to desire a moderate stature in the gentlemen he is setting forth, rather than any other, and to reject all strangeness that should make him be pointed at. But if I were to choose whether this medium must be rather below than above the common standard, I would not have it so in a soldier. Little men, says Aristotle, are pretty, but not handsome; and greatness of soul is discovered in a great body, as beauty is in a conspicuous stature: the Ethiopians and Indians, says he, in choosing their kings and magistrates, had regard to the beauty and stature of their persons. They had reason; for it creates respect in those who follow them, and is a terror to the enemy, to see a leader of a brave and goodly stature march at the head of a battalion:

"Ipse inter primos praestanti corpore Turnus Vertitur arma, tenens, et toto vertice supra est."

["In the first rank marches Turnus, brandishing his weapon, taller by a head than all the rest."—Virgil, *Aeneid*, vii. 783.]

Our holy and heavenly king, of whom every circumstance is most carefully and with the greatest religion and reverence to be observed, has not himself rejected bodily recommendation,

"Speciosus forma prae filiis hominum."

["He is fairer than the children of men."—Psalm xiv. 3.]

And Plato, together with temperance and fortitude, requires beauty in the conservators of his republic. It would vex you that a man should apply himself to you amongst your servants to inquire where Monsieur is, and that you should only have the remainder of the compliment of the hat that is made to your barber or your secretary; as it happened to poor Philopoemen, who arriving the first of all his company at an inn where he was expected, the hostess, who knew him not, and saw him an unsightly fellow, employed him to go help her maids a little to draw water, and make a fire against Philopoemen's coming; the gentlemen of his train arriving presently after, and surprised to see him busy in this fine employment, for he failed not to obey his landlady's command, asked him what he was doing there:

"I am," said he, "paying the penalty of my ugliness." The other beauties belong to women; the beauty of stature is the only beauty of men. Where there is a contemptible stature, neither the largeness and roundness of the forehead, nor the whiteness and sweetness of the eyes, nor the moderate proportion of the nose, nor the littleness of the ears and mouth, nor the evenness and whiteness of the teeth, nor the thickness of a well-set brown beard, shining like the husk of a chestnut, nor curled hair, nor the just proportion of the head, nor a fresh complexion, nor a pleasing air of a face, nor a body without any offensive scent, nor the just proportion of limbs, can make a handsome man. I am, as to the rest, strong and well knit; my face is not puffed, but full, and my complexion betwixt jovial and melancholic, moderately sanguine and hot,

"Unde rigent setis mihi crura, et pectora villis;"

["Whence 'tis my legs and breast bristle with hair." —Martial, ii. 36, 5.]

my health vigorous and sprightly, even to a well advanced age, and rarely troubled with sickness. Such I was, for I do not now make any account of myself, now that I am engaged in the avenues of old age, being already past forty:

"Minutatim vires et robur adultum Frangit, et in partem pejorem liquitur aetas:"

["Time by degrees breaks our strength and makes us grow feeble. —"Lucretius, ii. 1131.]

what shall be from this time forward, will be but a half-being, and no more me: I every day escape and steal away from myself:

"Singula de nobis anni praedantur euntes."

["Of the fleeting years each steals something from me." —Horace, Ep., ii. 2.]

Agility and address I never had, and yet am the son of a very active and sprightly father, who continued to be so to an extreme old age. I have scarce known any man of his condition, his equal in all bodily exercises, as I have seldom met with any who have not excelled me, except in running, at which I was pretty good. In music or singing, for which I have a very unfit voice, or to play on any sort of instrument, they could never teach me anything. In dancing, tennis, or wrestling, I could never arrive to more than an ordinary pitch; in swimming, fencing, vaulting, and leaping, to none at all.

My hands are so clumsy that I cannot even write so as to read it myself, so that I had rather do what I have scribbled over again, than take upon me the trouble to make it out. I do not read much better than I write, and feel that I weary my auditors otherwise (I am) not a bad clerk. I cannot decently fold up a letter, nor could ever make a pen, or carve at table worth a pin, nor saddle a horse, nor carry a hawk and fly her, nor hunt the dogs, nor lure a hawk, nor speak to a horse. In fine, my bodily qualities are very well suited to those of my soul; there is nothing sprightly, only a full and firm vigour: I am patient enough of labour and pains, but it is only when I go voluntary to work, and only so long as my own desire prompts me to it:

"Molliter austerum studio fallente laborem."

["Study softly beguiling severe labour." —Horace, Sat., ii. 2, 12.]

otherwise, if I am not allured with some pleasure, or have other guide than my own pure and free inclination, I am good for nothing: for I am of a humour that, life and health excepted, there is nothing for which I will bite my nails, and that I will purchase at the price of torment of mind and constraint:

"Tanti mihi non sit opaci Omnis arena Tagi, quodque in mare volvitur aurum."

["I would not buy rich Tagus sands so dear, nor all the gold that lies in the sea."—Juvenal, Sat., iii. 54.]

Extremely idle, extremely given up to my own inclination both by nature and art, I would as willingly lend a man my blood as my pains. I have a soul free and entirely its own, and accustomed to guide itself after its own fashion; having hitherto never had either master or governor imposed upon me: I have walked as far as I would, and at the pace that best pleased myself; this is it that has rendered me unfit for the service of others, and has made me of no use to any one but myself.

Nor was there any need of forcing my heavy and lazy disposition; for being born to such a fortune as I had reason to be contented with (a reason, nevertheless, that a thousand others of my acquaintance would have rather made use of for a plank upon which to pass over in search of higher fortune, to tumult and disquiet), and with as much intelligence as I required, I sought for no more, and also got no more:

"Non agimur tumidis velis Aquilone secundo,
Non tamen adversis aetatem ducimus Austris
Viribus, ingenio, specie, virtute, loco, re,
Extremi primorum, extremis usque priores."

["The northern wind does not agitate our sails; nor Auster trouble our course with storms. In strength, talent, figure, virtue, honour, wealth, we are short of the foremost, but before the last." —Horace, Ep., ii. 2, 201.]

I had only need of what was sufficient to content me: which nevertheless is a government of soul, to take it right, equally difficult in all sorts of conditions, and that, of custom, we see more easily found in want than in abundance: forasmuch, peradventure, as according to the course of our other passions, the desire of riches is more sharpened by their use than by the need of them: and the virtue of moderation more rare than that of patience; and I never had anything to desire, but happily to enjoy the estate that God by His bounty had put into my hands. I have never known anything of trouble, and have had little to do in anything but the management of my own affairs: or, if I have, it has been upon condition to do it at my own leisure and after my own method; committed to my trust by such as had a confidence in me, who did not importune me, and who knew my humour; for good horsemen will make shift to get service out of a rusty and broken-winded jade.

Even my infancy was trained up after a gentle and free manner, and exempt from any rigorous subjection. All this has helped me to a complexion delicate and incapable of solicitude, even to that degree that I love to have my losses and the disorders wherein I am concerned, concealed from me. In the account of my expenses, I put down what my negligence costs me in feeding and maintaining it;

"Haec nempe supersunt, Quae dominum fallunt, quae prosunt furibus."

["That overplus, which the owner knows not of, but which benefits the thieves"—Horace, Ep., i. 645]

I love not to know what I have, that I may be less sensible of my loss; I entreat those who serve me, where affection and integrity are absent, to deceive me with something like a decent appearance. For want of constancy enough to support the shock of adverse accidents to which we are subject, and of patience seriously to apply myself to the management of my affairs, I nourish as much as I can this in myself, wholly leaving all to fortune "to take all things at the worst, and to resolve to bear that worst with temper and patience"; that is the only thing I aim at, and to which I apply my whole meditation. In a danger, I do not so much consider how I shall escape it, as of how little importance it is, whether I escape it or no: should I be left dead upon the place, what matter? Not being able to govern events, I govern myself, and apply myself to them, if they will not apply themselves to me. I have no great art to evade, escape from or force fortune, and by prudence to guide and incline things to my own bias. I have still less patience to undergo the troublesome and painful care therein required; and the most uneasy condition for me is to be suspended on urgent occasions, and to be agitated betwixt hope and fear.

Deliberation, even in things of lightest moment, is very troublesome to me; and I find my mind more put to it to undergo the various tumbings and tossings of doubt and consultation, than to set up its rest and to acquiesce in whatever shall happen after the die is thrown. Few passions break my sleep, but of deliberations, the least will do it. As in roads, I preferably avoid those that are sloping and slippery, and put myself into the beaten track how dirty or deep soever, where I can fall no lower, and there seek my safety: so I love misfortunes that are purely so, that do not torment and tease me with the uncertainty of their growing better; but that at the first push plunge me directly into the worst that can be expected

"Dubia plus torquent mala."

["Doubtful ills plague us worst." —Seneca, *Agamemnon*, iii. 1, 29.]

In events I carry myself like a man; in conduct, like a child. The fear of the fall more fevers me than the fall itself. The game is not worth the candle. The covetous man fares worse with his passion than the poor, and the jealous man than the cuckold; and a man oftentimes loses more by defending his vineyard than if he gave it up. The lowest walk is the safest; 'tis the seat of constancy; you have there need of no one but yourself; 'tis there founded and wholly stands upon its own basis. Has not this example of a gentleman very well known, some air of philosophy in it?

He married, being well advanced in years, having spent his youth in good fellowship, a great talker and a great jeerer, calling to mind how much the subject of cuckoldry had given him occasion to talk and scoff at others. To prevent them from paying him in his own coin, he married a wife from a place where any one finds what he wants for his money: "Good morrow, strumpet"; "Good morrow, cuckold"; and there was not anything wherewith he more commonly and openly entertained those who came to see him than with this design of his, by which he stopped the private chattering of mockers, and blunted all the point from this reproach.

As to ambition, which is neighbour, or rather daughter, to presumption, fortune, to advance me, must have come and taken me by the hand; for to trouble myself for an uncertain hope, and to have submitted myself to all the difficulties that accompany those who endeavour to bring themselves into credit in the beginning of their progress, I could never have done it:

"Spem pretio non emo."

["I will not purchase hope with ready money," (or), "I do not purchase hope at a price." — Terence, *Adelphi*, ii. 3, 11.]

I apply myself to what I see and to what I have in my hand, and go not very far from the shore,

"Alter remus aquas, alter tibi radat arenas:"

["One oar plunging into the sea, the other raking the sands." — Propertius, iii. 3, 23.]

and besides, a man rarely arrives at these advancements but in first hazarding what he has of his own; and I am of opinion that if a man have sufficient to maintain him in the condition wherein he was born and brought up, 'tis a great folly to hazard that upon the uncertainty of augmenting it. He to whom fortune has denied whereon to set his foot, and to settle a quiet and composed way of living, is to be excused if he venture what he has, because, happen what will, necessity puts him upon shifting for himself:

"Capienda rebus in malis praeceps via est:"

["A course is to be taken in bad cases." (or), "A desperate case must have a desperate course."]

—Seneca, Agamemnon, ii. 1, 47.] and I rather excuse a younger brother for exposing what his friends have left him to the courtesy of fortune, than him with whom the honour of his family is entrusted, who cannot be necessitous but by his own fault. I have found a much shorter and more easy way, by the advice of the good friends I had in my younger days, to free myself from any such ambition, and to sit still:

"Cui sit conditio dulcis sine pulvere palmae:"

["What condition can compare with that where one has gained the palm without the dust of the course."—Horace, Ep., i. I, 51.]

judging rightly enough of my own strength, that it was not capable of any great matters; and calling to mind the saying of the late Chancellor Olivier, that the French were like monkeys that swarm up a tree from branch to branch, and never stop till they come to the highest, and there shew their breech.

"Turpe est, quod nequeas, capiti committere pondus,

Et pressum inflexo mox dare terga genu."

["It is a shame to load the head so that it cannot bear the burthen, and the knees give way."—Propertius, iii. 9, 5.]

I should find the best qualities I have useless in this age; the facility of my manners would have been called weakness and negligence; my faith and conscience, scrupulosity and superstition; my liberty and freedom would have been reputed troublesome, inconsiderate, and rash. Ill luck is good for something. It is good to be born in a very depraved age; for so, in comparison of others, you shall be reputed virtuous good cheap; he who in our days is but a parricide and a sacrilegious person is an honest man and a man of honour:

"Nunc, si depositum non inficiatur amicus,

Si reddat veterem cum tota aerugine follem,

Prodigiosa fides, et Tuscis digna libellis,

Quaeque coronata lustrari debeat agna:"

["Now, if a friend does not deny his trust, but restores the old purse with all its rust; 'tis a prodigious faith, worthy to be enrolled in amongst the Tuscan annals, and a crowned lamb should be sacrificed to such exemplary integrity."—Juvenal, Sat., xiii. 611.]

and never was time or place wherein princes might propose to themselves more assured or greater rewards for virtue and justice. The first who shall make it his business to get himself into favour and esteem by those ways, I am much deceived if he do not and by the best title outstrip his competitors: force and violence can do something, but not always all. We see merchants, country justices, and artisans go cheek by jowl with the best gentry in valour and military knowledge: they perform honourable actions, both in public engagements and private quarrels; they fight duels, they defend towns in our present wars; a prince stifles his special recommendation, renown, in this crowd; let him shine bright in humanity, truth, loyalty, temperance, and especially injustice; marks rare, unknown, and exiled; 'tis by no other means but by the sole goodwill of the people that he can do his business; and no other qualities can attract their goodwill like those, as being of the greatest utility to them:

"Nil est tam populare, quam bonitas."

["Nothing is so popular as an agreeable manner (goodness)." —Cicero, Pro Ligar., c. 12.]

By this standard I had been great and rare, just as I find myself now pigmy and vulgar by the standard of some past ages, wherein, if no other better qualities concurred, it was ordinary and common to see a man moderate in his revenges, gentle in resenting injuries, religious of his word, neither double nor supple, nor accommodating his faith to the will of others, or the turns of the times: I would rather see all affairs go to wreck and ruin than falsify my faith to secure them. For as to this new virtue of feigning and dissimulation, which is now in so great credit, I mortally hate it; and of all vices find none that evidences so much baseness and meanness of spirit. 'Tis a cowardly and servile humour to hide and disguise a man's self under a visor, and not to dare to show himself what he is; 'tis by this our servants are trained up to treachery; being brought up to speak what is not true, they make no conscience of a lie.

A generous heart ought not to belie its own thoughts; it will make itself seen within; all there is good, or at least human. Aristotle reputes it the office of magnanimity openly and professedly to love and hate; to judge and speak with all freedom; and not to value the approbation or dislike of others in comparison of truth. Apollonius said it was for slaves to lie, and for freemen to speak truth: 'tis the chief and fundamental part of virtue; we must love it for itself. He who speaks truth because he is obliged so to do, and because it serves him, and who is not afraid to lie when it signifies nothing to anybody, is not sufficiently true. My soul naturally abominates lying, and hates the very thought of it. I have an inward shame and a sharp remorse, if sometimes a lie escapes me: as sometimes it does, being surprised by occasions that allow me no premeditation. A man must not always tell all, for that were folly: but what a man says should be what he thinks, otherwise 'tis knavery. I do not know what advantage men pretend to by eternally counterfeiting and dissembling, if not never to be believed when they speak the truth; it may once or twice pass with men; but to profess the concealing their thought, and to brag, as some of our princes have done, that they would burn their shirts if they knew their true intentions, which was a saying of the ancient Metellius of Macedon; and that they who know not how to dissemble know not how to rule, is to give warning to all who have anything to do with them, that all they say is nothing but lying and deceit:

"Quo quis versutior et callidior est, hoc invisior et suspectior, detracto opinione probitatis:"

["By how much any one is more subtle and cunning, by so much is he hated and suspected, the opinion of his integrity being withdrawn." —Cicero, *De Off.*, ii. 9.]

it were a great simplicity in any one to lay any stress either on the countenance or word of a man who has put on a resolution to be always another thing without than he is within, as Tiberius did; and I cannot conceive what part such persons can have in conversation with men, seeing they produce nothing that is received as true: whoever is disloyal to truth is the same to falsehood also.

Those of our time who have considered in the establishment of the duty of a prince the good of his affairs only, and have preferred that to the care of his faith and conscience, might have something to say to a prince whose affairs fortune had put into such a posture that he might for ever establish them by only once breaking his word: but it will not go so; they often buy in the same market; they make more than one peace and enter into more than one treaty in their lives.